

Timo Schmitz

An Overview of Tibetan History

Bibliographic information by the German National Library

The German National Library (Deutsche Nationalbibliothek) lists this publication in the German National Bibliography (Deutsche Nationalbibliografie); detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at <https://dnb.dnb.de>

Imprint

An Overview of Tibetan History

Fourth, revised and extended edition

© Timo Schmitz

PDF published on 26 April 2024

Issuer: Timo Schmitz, An Luziakirch 12, 54531 Manderscheid, Germany

Website: <https://schmitztimo.wordpress.com>

E-Mail: schmitz-timo1@web.de

Content

Introduction to this edition.....	4
Chapter 1: The Yarlung Dynasty and the Era of Fragmentation	5
Chapter 2: The Mongolian Conquest and the Sakya Dynasty	10
Chapter 3: New dynasties – new conflicts. Tibet between 1346 and 1642	13
Chapter 4: Khoshut Khanate and the integration into the Chinese Qing Dynasty.....	19
Chapter 5: Tibet in the Chinese Qing Dynasty	24
Chapter 6: Tibet in Republican China	31
Chapter 7: Tibet in the PRC.....	42
From the Battle of Qamdo to the 1 st National People’s Congress	42
Excursion: Tibetan identities and ethnic minorities	44
The Way to the Democratic Reforms in 1959	47
The Sino-Indian War	53
Tibet in the Cultural Revolution.....	54
Tibet today	57
Chapter 8: Religious matters and problems throughout history	60
Buddhism and Bön	60
Christianity	64
Islam	66
Chapter 9: Timeline, Geographic Areas, Self-designation and Political Entities.....	68
Literature.....	78

Introduction to this edition

This book was first published as a nine-article series in 2015 and later republished as nine-chapter book. From the beginning, the aim was simply to provide a rough overview so that those interested in Tibet could find an initial clue to Tibetan history. From the beginning, the focus was not just on Central Tibet, which is usually what is first imagined in the West today, when one hears the word “Tibet”, but – as far as is possible for an overview – on the entire Tibetan-populated areas. Over the years it became clear that the first sketch was unfortunately far too rough and contained quite a few errors that needed to be corrected. This edition has the aim to be a scientifically sound work that takes into account the author’s personal curiosity for gaining more knowledge about China’s ethnic minorities and his striving for a fair representation of Tibet and the Tibetans in discourses.

I am aware that not everyone will agree with my perspective, especially since many misconceptions about Tibet have become firmly established in the West. Thus, it is all the more important that we do not close ourselves off to different perspectives and continue exchange ideas to broaden our views. My try in depicting 2,000 years of Tibetan history in this small booklet was indeed an ambitious goal and therefore I would be very grateful for any information about errors, misunderstandings or other valuable suggestions and hope that the read of this book will lead to fruitful discussions.

Chapter 1: The Yarlung Dynasty and the Era of Fragmentation

Most of Tibet’s early history is unknown and “clouded in myth, but it is known that nomadic tribes inhabited parts of the Tibetan Plateau as early as the second century BC” [Hattaway, 2021: 2]. Eventually, a small kingdom called Yarlung existed in Tibet before the 7th century. The first king of Tibet is said to be Nyatri Tsenpo, though he is not graspable for us at all and seems to be legendary: “The Yarlung dynasty began with him about the 3rd to 1st centuries BCE, which produced a total of 42 rulers, of which Songtsen Gampo was the 33rd king” [Schüler, 2010: 6; translation mine]. The traditional religion of Tibet, Bön, developed during the time from Nyatri Tsenpo to Tritog Jetsen’s rule, according to Dungkar Lobsang Thrinle [Li, 2019: 357]. According to Romain, “Songtsen Gampo (c. AD 605?–AD 649) was the first to unify the country — hence he is considered the first emperor” [2020: 6]. The Yarlung dynasty was founded near the Yarlung River which is where the name comes from. However, the geographical name is derived from a mountain goddess residing in the Yarlung Valley: “*Yar-lha-sham-po* is located in the *Yar-lung* River Valley, an agricultural region said to be the cradle of the Tibetan people. The material bounty that nature afforded the ancient inhabitants of this river valley induced them to deify the surrounding mountains, and *yar-lha-sham-po* was venerated as the greatest god. With the later interaction and amalgamation between the *Yar-lung* tribe and other tribes, the *Yar-lung* developed and prevailed, eventually becoming the rulers of the entire Tibetan people. Their principal mountain god, consequently, became the principal god for all Tibetan tribes” [Xie, 2001: 345].

A huge problem, however, was about to arise soon. While Tibet was expanding northwards, the Chinese were expanding southwest-wards. The Chinese Empire was already a superpower in the Tang Dynasty (618-907), which was one of the most flourishing dynasties in ancient China, and Tibet was about to be a competitor. As Chi and Liu note: “At the beginning of the seventh century, King Songtsen Gampo (604-649 AD) conquered Sumpa, Zhangzhung, and some scattered Tibetan tribes” [2021: 126]. The early Yarlung included ancient Nepal, the Lhoba-Monpa area in Southern Tibet, and expanded westwards after defeating the Zhangzhung: “its northeast neighbor was the Tuyuhun regime that ruled ancient Qinghai, with Tanggula Mountains acting as the natural barrier” [ibid.]. Within two hundred years, however, they

roughly expanded “helping the once loose tribal union grow into a plateau dynasty with an extremely large area and unprecedented power” [ibid.]. In 634, the Tibetans sent an envoy to the Tang requesting a marriage, but the proposal was refused [cp. Thomas, 1927; Pan, 1992: 118]. Some years later, Songtsen Gampo tried to invade Kōkōnur, nowadays Qinghai, to control the Chinese routes. The Chinese border was now somewhere in Kōkōnur, a melting pot. Pan explains: “It was only after Tibet had shown its insistence and military strength by attacking the Tuyuhun and the Tang frontier, that Taizong agreed to its request for marriage” [1992: 118]. In 641, Princess Wencheng (628-c.680) married Songtsen Gampo and brought Buddhism to Tibet. As a Chinese princess, she was a very powerful person, and she was even that powerful that she is venerated as Tara in Buddhism by Tibetans until today. “According to post-Yarlung Dynasty accounts (e.g., *Mani Kabum*; Wylie: *ma Ni bka’ bum*), Songtsen Gampo was responsible for the promotion of Buddhism into Tibet. Toward this end he built the Jokhang, Tradruk and other temples. He also established the capital at Lhasa and residency at the *Khritse Marpo* palace, later expanded to become the Potala” [Romain, 2020: 6]. This undermines the influence of Princess Wencheng on the Tibetan Emperor and Chinese-Tibetan ties. It is noteworthy though that Buddhism and Bön would become harsh competitors. Romain points out that “Tibetan emperors employed geomantic and magical practices in the design and siting of important religious structures. Geomantic magic was used to control indigenous demons that inhabited the land thereby obstructing the introduction of Buddhism and the building of Buddhist temples and monasteries” [2020: 2].

In 649 or 650, Songtsen Gampo died. It is known that already Songtsen Gampo’s father Namri Songtsen pursued expansionist policies which were continued by his son [Kapstein, 1997: 69]. Namri Songtsen was most likely assassinated by poisoning in a coup d’état attempt, but the revolt was torn down by his son who consolidated the reign. As Patterson remarks: “From the time of Srong-tsen Gampo [Songtsen Gampo] to that of Ralpa-chan [Ralpacan, i.e. Tritsuk Detsen], Tibet and China were constantly at war, with varying fortune. Following the death of Srong-tsen Gampo [Songtsen Gampo] in A.D. 650 the Chinese attacked and captured Lhasa. But during the reign of Ti-song De-tsen [Trisong Detsen], in the eighth century, Tibet became one of the great military powers of Asia, reaching from the Chinese capital of Changan, which its armies had captured to near the River Ganges in India, and from Turkestan to Burma” [1960: 88]. However, until the 660s, there was quite a peace between China and Tibet [Pan, 1992: 118]. In 670, the Tibetan forces finally invaded the last parts of the Tuyuhan after defeating Chinese

forces near Dafeichuan in Qinghai [Pan, 1992: 199]. In 678, the Tibetan forces defeated 180,000 Tang troops in Qinghai: “Tibetan expansion reached its peak” [ibid.]. In its peak despite the areas in China – where Tibet is situated nowadays – parts of nowadays Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the whole of Bhutan and Nepal, parts of India, Myanmar, Pakistan, as well as Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan belonged to the Tibetan Empire. However, the Tibetan Empire would already decline very soon, leading to different treaties between Tibet and China: “According to the historical records at present, the first Sino-Tibetan treaty was concluded in 706 when Tibet was weakened” [Pan, 1992: 127].

In Bhutan, there were several small kingdoms even during the time of the Tibetan Empire, such as the Bumthang Kingdom, which already received two Buddhist temples during the reign of Songtsen Gampo [Savada & Harris, 1993: 254]. “Buddhism replaced but did not eliminate the Bon religious practices that had also been prevalent in Tibet until the late sixth century. Instead, Buddhism absorbed Bon and its believers. As the country developed in its many fertile valleys, Buddhism matured and became a unifying element” [ibid.]. Later in 747, Guru Rinpoche, better known as Padmasambhava, came to Bhutan due to an invitation of one of the local kings [Savada & Harris, 1993: 254]. Padmasambhava is venerated in Buddhism until today, since it is said that he brought Buddhism to Tibet, though as explained before, Buddhism already existed in Tibet a century before. Just like in Central Tibet, Bön and Buddhism existed next to each other, and the Nyingmapa (“the red hats”) came to growth. Meanwhile, “The An Lushan rebellion of 755-763 forced the Tang court to withdraw most of its garrisons from the Central Asian front and leave the vast region of Hexi and Longyou almost unprotected from direct attacks by the Tibetans, who had already been engaged in skirmishes with the Tang for a long time” [Yang, 1998: 99 f.]. In 763, Tibetan troops conquered the Chinese Tang capital Chang’an and besieged the city for several weeks before moving westwards [Yang, 1998: 100]. Even further, “During the two decades that followed, nearly all of the major oasis cities and towns along the Gansu Corridor were annexed into the Tibetan Empire” [ibid.].

The Tibetan Empire came to its fall with “the murder of the last emperor of the early Tibetan dynasty, Langdarma (gLang Dar ma), by the Buddhist monk dPal gyi rdo rje [Palgyi Dorje]. A legendary description of this important event is an essential part of nearly every book on Tibetan history” [Schlieter, 2006: 133]. It was commonly assumed that under the reign of Langdarma, the state ministers supporting Bön religion started an assimilation policy against Buddhism.

Langdarma is portrayed as oppressor of Buddhism in Tibetan Buddhist mythical accounts. Therefore, it is even more astonishing that in recent times, research has brought forth that this view might be biased: “Non-Buddhist historical texts of more or less the same age found in the caves of Dunhuang do not mention the slaying of Langdarma. On the contrary, it is stated in one of these texts that Buddhism flourished at the time of Langdarma’s reign, although others do speak of confusing turmoil” [Schlieter, 2006: 134]. Therefore, it cannot be finally answered, if Langdarma was really assassinated at all. Anyways, according to the mythological accounts, Langdarma never had any children. As a result, a struggle for power broke out, and the Tibetan monarchy broke in itself, leading to a civil war – **the Era of Fragmentation**. It was also quite a change for Buddhism, if Buddhism really tended to flourish before. As Schlieter points out: “The following 70–150 years of the so-called ‘dark era’ of Tibet saw little Buddhist activity, until a ‘second propagation’ (*phyi dar*) of Buddhism led to a millennium of Buddhist dominion in Tibet” [2006: 133].

What is interesting though, is the time period of Tibet’s fall in general: “In 840, due to natural disaster, power struggles between noble lineages, and fierce military attacks from the Kirghiz, the Uighur Empire suddenly collapsed and disintegrated. Numerous nomadic tribes fled from the Mongolian Plateau in all directions” [Yang, 1998: 109]. Eventually, refugees from the Uighur Empire also arrived in Tibetan areas. The descendants are known as Yugur today (also sometimes called Yellow Uyghurs), living in Gansu and Qinghai, who speak two languages, one is classified as Turkic and one as Mongolic. Only two years after the collapse of the Uighur Empire, the Tibetan Empire fell over night with Langdarma’s death. There were at least two people who claimed to be legal successors who stood “in a confrontation with each other which used to be the most important front of the empire. In the next few years, nearly all of Tibetan military had been exhausted, and the Tibetan-dominated political order no longer existed there [i.e. in Dunhuang]” [Yang, 1998: 110].

The Era of Fragmentation was highly dominated by power struggles, civil wars and warlord reigns. The Amdo Tibetan territories in Kōkōnur gained independence, as well as the Qiang tribes. Neither the Tibetan areas in nowadays Qinghai nor the Tibetan areas in nowadays Sichuan were effectively controlled by monarchs of Central Tibet ever again after the fall of the Yarlung dynasty. As Atwood explains: “Contemporary Chinese records divided the plateau into four areas: Tufan (Tibetan, mDo-smad [Domai]), along the Qinghai-Gansu frontier; Xifan

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

(Tibetan, mDo-khams [Dokham]), along the Sichuan frontier; Dafan (Tibetan, dBus-gTsang [Wü-Zang]), or Central Tibet; and Xiaofan (Tibetan, mNga'-ris [Ngari]), or westernmost Tibet. Along the Chinese border Tufan and Xifan principalities flourished on the horse trade with China. In mNga'-ris [Ngari] and dBus-gTsang [Wü-Zang] from 978 on, local chiefs sent Tibetan monks to Kashmir and India and invited gurus to revive Buddhism” [2004: 538]. Note that Dokham is a collective term for the Kham and Amdo regions, Wü-Zang, known as Central Tibet, is situated around Lhasa (Wü area) and Xigazê (Zang area) and Ngari is known as part of Western Tibet.

At around 930, after the Ngari king Nyimagon died, Western Tibet was split among his sons. Nyimagon himself allegedly was a relative of Langdarma who “married Koryong ('k'or-syong) of the Dro ('bro) clan, a noble family which was linked to the Yarlung dynasty through previous marriages as well” [Singer, 1994: 90 with reference to Petech, 1977]. This led to the foundation of the **First West Tibetan dynasty** in Ladakh. Initially, also areas which are nowadays situated in Ngari Prefecture, especially around Rutog, belonged to that kingdom, which is often known as “Maryul”. The era is also known as Ladakh dynasty. The Ladakh dynasty adopted Buddhism and cultural influences from Kashmir. The fifth king of the Ladakh dynasty Lhachen Utpala conquered parts of Nepal and Baltistan.

Chapter 2: The Mongolian Conquest and the Sakya Dynasty

As the Mongolian Empire was growing and growing, the Mongolians had an interest in China, as well as the tribes surrounding the Chinese Empire. In 1206, Genghis Khan united Mongolian and Turkic tribes and founded the “Great Khanate”. According to the traditional account: “Chinggis became Khan of all the Mongols in 1206 and then planned the invasion of Tibet. Hearing this, Tibetan local lords convened a council and sent a delegation to submit their country to the Khan in 1207. Peace ensued for decades. Chinggis died in 1227 and the Tibetans stopped paying tribute; consequently, in 1240 Prince Köden sent a punitive expedition against them. An army commanded by Doorda Darkhan and others marched from the Kokonor region to central Tibet and put the torch to the monasteries of Rwa-sgreng [Radreng] and Rgyal-lha-khang [Gyal Lhakhang], killing some five hundred people” [Wylie, 1977: 104]. However, this traditional reading of history is highly doubted nowadays. As Wylie asked correctly: “Why would Chinggis plan an invasion of Tibet as soon as he became Khan of the Mongols in 1206? Mongolia and Tibet were not conterminous; the Tangut kingdom of Hsi-hsia (Mi-nyag) [Xixia/Western Xia] intervened. And even though the Tibetans did not have a unified government at that time, would they have been so afraid of a ‘rumored’ invasion that they would submit to the Mongols without so much as nocking a single arrow in defense?” [1977: 105]. In addition, the Tibetan rulers did not pay any tribute to the Mongolians. Wylie clarifies that the early goals of Genghis Khan were to defeat the Western Xia (also known as Tangut kingdom), Tibet was still out of reach [1977: 106].

In 1219, Genghis Khan launched a campaign against the Khwarazmian Dynasty in Central Asia and East Iran. He hoped for help from the Western Xia, but instead of sending military aid, they ridiculed him. It is reported that Asha, the Tangut military commander, stated that if Genghis Khan was not able to conquer the Khwarazmia, then he would have no right to be a super power [cp. Man, 2004]. For this disloyalty, Genghis Khan launched an attack of revenge against the Western Xia [cp. Emmons, 2012]. As the Western Xia army was tired from fighting against the Jin, they could not stand the Mongolian troops and emperor Xianzong died in 1226, after only three years in office. Genghis Khan conducted a cruel warfare and took over Ganzhou, the key

city of the Western Xia. He spared the city from being destructed, since it was the hometown of his commander Chagaan [Man, 2004].

The Mongolians were now next to the Tibetan lands. It is difficult to give a clear account on the time frame between 1220 and 1240, since many chronicle mistakes were made in the history books concerning this period of time, and it is difficult to say what is exactly true. It seems quite likely that the Mongolians mostly ignored Tibet for a long time as “Tibet was presumably as much a *terra incognita* to the Mongols of the thirteenth century as it was to its other neighbors” [Wylie, 1977: 109]. As we know today, “The earliest Mongol contact with ethnic Tibetans came in 1236, when a Tibetan chief near Wenzhou (modern Wenxian) submitted to the Mongols campaigning in Sichuan” [Atwood, 2004: 539]. In 1240, a campaign against Tibet was launched by the Mongolians. The reasons were quite unknown for a long time, and Wylie concludes that it is most likely “that its primary objective was reconnaissance” [1977: 110]. Several monasteries were burnt down, but the real casualties cannot be reported nowadays, due to chronicle mistakes. In the past, it was believed that the tarkhan Doorda even reached Lhasa, this seems to be unlikely however. Other monasteries were probably spared, as they were in a Tangut Buddhist tradition and Doorda was positively linked to the Tanguts. One reason might be that Doorda was probably a Tangut himself [cp. Atwood, 2004: 538]. According to Garri: “Haw suggests that Doorda may have been a Tibetan or Tangut general, who had formerly been in the service of the Xi Xia state, but was later enlisted by the Mongols to lead their campaign in Tibet in the 1240s” [2020: 5]. Soon after the invasion into Tibet in 1240, the troops were recalled to Mongolia [cp. Wylie, 1977: 110]. In 1244, they returned and the Sakya Lama had to capitulate on behalf of the Tibetans. After the Sakya Pandita died, the Mongolians launched an invasion on Tibet in 1251/2 under Möngke Khan, and in about 1252, Qoridai finally invaded Tibet and reached Damxung (not far away from Lhasa), leading to the surrender of the Central Tibetan monasteries. “Möngke Khan patronized Karma Baqshi (1204–83) of the Karma-pa suborder and the ’Bri-gung [Drigung] Monastery, while HÜLE’Ü, khan of the Mongols in the Middle East, sent lavish gifts to both ’Bri-gung [Drigung] and the Phag-mo-gru-pa [Phagmodrupa] suborder’s gDan-sa-thel [Densa Thil] monastery. In 1253 Prince Qubilai summoned to his court the Sa-skyapa [Sakyapa] hierarch’s two nephews, Blo-gros rGyal-mtshan [Lodro Gyeltsen], known as ’PHAGS-PA [Phagpa] LAMA (1235–80), and Phyag-na rDo-rje [Chagna Dorje] (d. 1267)” [Atwood, 2004: 539]. The Sakya Lamas gained the authority over Central Tibet which became now part of the Mongolian territory. Nonetheless, it would take up to 1275 to pacify the Kham people in Sichuan. The Tibetan territory and especially the

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

monks were supervised by the Xuanzheng Yuan, often described as ‘Bureau of Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs’. The office itself was already set up in 1264. After Chagna Dorje died in 1267, a revolt broke out against the Sakya-Mongol rule, which was torn down by the Mongolian forces eventually implementing “regular Mongol rule in Tibet” [ibid.].

In 1270, the Chinese Yuan Dynasty was founded and Kublai Khan claimed the Mandate of Heaven. Tibet was incorporated in the Yuan Dynasty and thus became Mongolian-Chinese. Anyways, the revolts would continue in 1275-76 and last until at around 1290 [Atwood, 2004: 539].

Chapter 3: New dynasties – new conflicts. Tibet between 1346 and 1642

Changchub Gyaltzen was born in 1302 into the Phagmodru family, which goes back to the 12th century, when Phagmo Drupa Dorje Gyalpo founded a Dagpo branch within the Kagyu school of Buddhism. Changchub Gyaltzen became a monk at the age of six, and at “the age of twelve he went to Sakya in order to become an official in the Sakya government” [Shakapa, 1981: 24]. Anyways, he soon decided to continue his study, since the ruling Sakya lama was of hot temper and therefore, Changchub Gyaltzen was afraid that becoming an official could bring damage to his family [cp. *ibid.*]. In 1322, after completing his studies, “Changchub Gyaltzen was appointed the Phagdru Tripon of Nêdong by the Sakyapas [...]. He was also given the Mongolian title of Teisitu, which means Learned Instructor, and presented with a seal carved in sandal-wood. In Nêdong, he appointed new civil administrators and new generals for his army” [Shakapa, 1981: 25]. Nêdong was since long in a brutal dispute with its neighbour Yasang. The situation would further escalate after the Sakyapa were bribed to appoint Sonam Gyaltzen the tripon of Nêdong, but Changchub Gyaltzen refused to hand over the office [cp. *ibid.*]. In 1351, fightings broke out between Nêdong and Yasang and finally, Changchub Gyaltzen started a revolt: “In 1358 the rule of Sakya Lamas were overthrown by Chang-chub-Gyaltzen who brought nearly the whole of Tibet under his sway. Thus began the rule Phamo Drukpa period which lasted till 1434. The Phamo Drukpa's family was closely connected with Sakya sects rival, Kargyupa sect” [Choedon, 1996: 23].

With the founding of the **Phagmodrupa Dynasty** [pronounced as Phagmozhuba], Changchub Gyaltzen wanted to revive the Tibetan national unity and the spirit of the old empire [cp. *ibid.*]. As the ruler of the Yuan dynasty Toghon Temür had its own troubles in China, he acknowledged the loss of Central Tibet and accepted Changchub Gyaltzen to be the legal successor. Nonetheless, the Phagmodrupa dynasty would never be able to gain the power which the Yarlung inherited, and as such, the Phagmodrupa only controlled Central Tibet, not the other Tibetan areas. Kham, for instance, never had a single king. Instead, there were quite a number of kingdoms. It is not exactly known, when each kingdom was founded, but we can assume that they appeared at around the 13th to 15th centuries, starting with the Mongolian decline and finishing its foundation when political order was re-established in the region. The Qiangic-

speaking Gyalrong had **18 principalities** which existed from the 13th until the 20th centuries AD [Gates, 2012: 2 f.].

The **Rinpungpa Dynasty** was installed in 1435 in Xigazê, being a threat to the Phagmodrupa dynasty, by Norzang, the prefect of Rinbung, who seized control over the whole of Zang [Komarovski, 2011: 18]. The Rinpungpa set up their capital in Samzhubzê, the city district of nowadays Xigazê [cp. *ibid.*]. This does not only mark the increasing power loss of the Phagmodrupa, but also the continuing constant struggles between Wü and Zang [cp. *ibid.*]. Despite the clashes among the two worldly dynasties, this also fueled the rivalry between the Karma Kagyü (supporting Xigazê) and Gelug school (supporting Lhasa), as political and religious life was strongly intertwined [*ibid.*]. However, the very early Rinpung were probably allied with the Sakya school. Norzang died in 1466, and his son Kunzang took over the power, but he is quite a shadow in Tibetan history and nothing is really known about him. He most likely died somewhere in the 1470s and was succeeded by Donyo Dorje in the late 1470s. The latter most likely became the most powerful leader of the Rinpungpa. After the Phagmodrupa refused his request to build a Karma Kagyu temple in Lhasa in 1480, Donyo Dorje led a retaliatory attack against Wü. He was victorious in a few small districts before he continued moving on to Nêdong, but his attack on Lhasa in 1481 failed [Berzin, n.d.]. The Rinpungpa ruled not only Zang (complete power over the region was established in 1488), but also most of Wü now, so the the Phagmodru family was left with no real power [*ibid.*]. Furthermore, the Rinpungpa also controlled parts of Ngari [Rheingans, 2010: 245] and nowadays Bhutan, such as the Bumthang kingdom [Whitecross, 2017: 92 f.]. Rheingans explains correctly that the “Fourth Shamarpa played an important role in these events and was one of the most interesting figures of this period; he had close ties to Dönyö Dorje and to the Pagmo Drupa. Like Gö Lotsāwa (1392-1481) he acted as teacher of Chenga Ngagi Wangpo (1439-90) who was installed by the Rinpungpa as Pagmo Drupa leader (*gong ma*) in 1481” [2010: 246]. After Ngagi Wangpo passed away, “the Fourth Shamarpa was officially installed as Chenga of Densatel Monastery, the highest religious authority of the Pagmo Drupa” [*ibid.*] since the successor of Ngagi Wangpo was still a minor. Thus, “the Shamarpa *de facto* shared political responsibilities with some ministers beginning in 1491” [*ibid.*]. Just for the sake of completeness, the Fourth Shamarpa was Chödrag Yeshe (1453-1524) [cp. Rheingans, 2010: 244]. Rheingans points out that: “Between 1498 and 1517, the Rinpungpa enjoyed unlimited rule of Ü [Wü] and Tsang [Zang]” [2010: 248]. During that time, the monks of Drepung and Sera monastery were

prohibited from celebrating the Monlam ceremony [cp. Berzin, n.d.; Rheingans, 2010: 248]. Although an agreement between Wü and Zang was made in 1518, the clashes still went on. In 1532, another threat was coming from the West. The Muslim general Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlat Beg, a Chagatai from the Mongol Dughlat clan and ruler in Kashmir who acted on the order of the ruler from Kashgar was about to invade Tibet, but his invasion failed already in Ladakh.

In 1557, Karma Tseten, the governor of Xigazê, rebelled against his own kingdom. In 1565, he attacked the king surprisingly and defeated him. This was the end of the Rinpungpa Dynasty and Karma Tseten thus founded the **Tsangpa Dynasty**. It is probably no surprise that the dynasty was named after Zang region, since Xigazê was its capital. The quarrels between Lhasa and Xigazê went on.

The Phagmodrupa lost a lot of its power during that time period, and new rivalry amongst different factions were rising. From a religious point of view, the Karma Kagyu school which was the patronage of the Tsangpa was in hostility with the Gelug school [McCleary & Van der Kuijp, 2010: 157]. The Phagmodrupa were caught in internal family quarrels which also weakened the position of the Gelug [cp. McCleary & Van der Kuijp, 2010: 170]. Sönam Gyatso allied with Altan Khan and became the 3rd Dalai Lama. The reincarnation of the deceased 3rd Dalai Lama was found in a great-grandson of Altan Khan which significantly increased the political and religious implications [McCleary & Van der Kuijp, 2010: 171]. Thus, the 4th Dalai Lama was a Mongol and the only non-Tibetan Dalai Lama besides the 6th Dalai Lama who would be an ethnic Mönpa. “In 1603, the Fourth Dalai Lama, Yönten gyatso (1589-1616), was brought at around the age of fourteen or fifteen from Inner Mongolia to Drepung monastery by a large Mongol escort. [...] By contrast, the ruling family in Shigatse [Xigazê], the so-called Tsangpa dynasty, and its political supporters, in particular the Sixth Zhamar incarnate (1584-1630), took steps to consolidate its authority over Central Tibet” [ibid.]. Between 1603 and 1621, Tibetan politics turned into a state of civil war. The causes of this conflict remain largely unclear, and the situation continued to be tense until 1642 [cp. ibid.]. Religious figures came more into power in Wü now, as the Phagmodrupa kings were almost powerless, although the dynasty would continue to exist until 1642, when the 5th Dalai Lama founded the **Ganden Phodrang** regime through military support of Güshi Khan who founded the Khoshut Khanate. The Mongolians invaded Xigazê in 1642, leading to the end of the Tsangpa dynasty. After a revolt, conducted by supporters of the Tsangpa, the last king Karma Tenkyong was placed in

an oxhide bag and drowned in a river [Ya, 1994: 41]. In Sikkim, the **Chögyal kingdom** was established in 1642, which existed until Sikkim joined India in 1975. After the death of Mipham Sonam Wangchuk Drakpa Namgyal Palzang, the last Phagmodrupa king, in 1671, the Lang family disappeared in historical chronicles.

As mentioned previously, Tibet was split among different rulers after the fall of the Yarlung and there was no common power anymore. Though, the dynasties of Lhasa and Xigazê are in the focus, when one reads about Tibetan history, there were nonetheless also different other political entities on the grounds of today’s Tibet Autonomous Region, which are often not so much in the foreground. These include **Mangyül Gungthang**, a kingdom in Ngari, which was intensively researched by Everding [see Everding, 2000]. Mangyül Gungthang was probably founded by the Sakya during the Sakya dynasty in the 1260s and came to fall at around 1620, when the Tsangpa dynasty invaded the territory. Everding also researched **Gyantse**, a principality in Gyangzê County in the city of Xigazê, which he described to be “known as one of the most famous ruling entities in Tibet’s history. Above all, this is due to its majestic monuments [...]” [Everding, 2017: 33]. Many of Gyantse’s monumental buildings were constructed during the reign of Rabten Künsang Phag (1389–1442), making Gyantse famous in whole Tibet [ibid.]. The rise of the Gyantse principality took place at around 1354 but suffered attacks from the Phagmodrupa in 1364 [cp. Everding, 2017: 39]. Yet, the success of this principality was unstoppable. In the 15th century, their success however came to a sudden end: “After Rab brtan kun bzang ’phags [Rabten Künsang Phag] died without offspring in 1442, his half brother bKra shis ’phags pa [Trashig Phagpa] (b. 1395) assumed the reign. From 1434 to 1438 when the Rin spungs pa [Rinpungpa] were gaining strength, he had excelled as the commander in different military campaigns” [Everding, 2017: 47]. The goal of these campaigns was to stop the rise of the Rinpungpa, while Gyantse itself had territorial ambitions. “The Phag mo gru pa [Phagmodrupa] invaded the Nyang chu valley and battles were fought in sPe dkar [Pekar] near to lHun grub rdzong [Lhünzhub Dzong]. Even though the Phag mo gru pa [Phagmodrupa] had to surrender, any ambitions of Gyantse to enlarge its authority by expanding its territories were quashed” [ibid.]. Until 1547, Gyantse lost territories and declined, and in “the second half of the 16th century, the lineage of the Shar ka ba [Sharkapa] disappears from the records” [Everding, 2017: 49].

In West Tibet, the **Kingdom of Guge** would receive a huge change when Antonio de Andrade, a Jesuit missionary, arrived in 1624. King Chadakpo warmly received de Andrade and his work

soon bore fruits [Hattaway, 2021: 30]. In June 1625, de Andrade and four colleagues departed from India for a second journey in the kingdom: “Andrade and his co-workers made good progress, and soon they were sharing their faith in Tibetan. [...] The king of Guge personally laid the cornerstone of the first church building of any description in Tibet, having paid all the construction costs” [Hattaway, 2021: 32]. “It is not known exactly how long Father Andrade remained in Guge. He probably was recalled by his superior in 1629, that his stay in the small Tibetan kingdom must have been five years, during which he also established a mission in Rudok [Rutog], near the Nyak-tso, as he tells us in his letters” [Le Calloc’h, 1991: 58]. Soon, there arose religious tensions, because “the chief of the lamas was his own younger brother, an ambitious person who aspired to the throne, ready for anything to gratify a private spite. [...] It should also be stated that the king's sudden sympathy for the foreigners soundly displeased the monks, who were exercised over the success of the missionaries. They dreaded nothing more than to lose their power over the people and the kind of monopoly of religion they had had till Andrade's arrival” [ibid.]. Soon after de Andrade returned to India, a revolt broke out in Guge's capital Tsaparang: “The plotters felt that, deprived of its strenuous founder, the Catholic mission could be easily struck down” [Le Calloc’h, 1991: 59]. But Le Calloc’h also mentions a second reason, the expansionist policies of the Ladakhi kingdom under Sengge Namgyal [ibid.] as well as a personal feud: the king of Guge married Sengge Namgyal's sister, “The new queen was already at a short distance from her future capital when she was ordered without explanation to go back to Ladakh. Such an injury was considered by the brother of the bride as ‘casus belli’. He declared war on Guge” [ibid.]. Thus, there was a rebellion against the king from within by Buddhist authorities who were jealous about the king's sympathies for Christianity and exterior struggles with Ladakh. As Hattaway points out, in 1630 “King Chadakpo was bound with chains and exiled to a dungeon in Ladakh, while according to Tibetan accounts the other royals were beheaded, and the women of the city were thrown over the edge of the citadel to their deaths hundreds of feet below” [2021: 34 f.]. When new missionaries arrived in Guge in 1631, they had to find out that the new king was not that friendly towards Christianity, and in 1642, only Manuel Marques remained in Tsaparang, who wrote a letter begging to be rescued after suffering from attacks [Hattaway, 2021: 35]. His fate remains unknown, but he most likely died in prison, the remaining Christians were sold into slavery at around 1650 [Hattaway, 2021: 35 f.]. A few decades later, the kingdom once and for all disappeared from the maps. It was probably conquered by Central Tibetan forces between 1670

and 1680. De Andrade already died suddenly in 1634 in India, where he was most likely poisoned.

Concerning Bhutan, it has to be mentioned that the state “was founded in a state of war with Tibet. As is well known, the Zhabdrung Rinpoche left Tibet in 1616 as a refugee, the exiled Drukpa hierarch of Ralung whose claim to be the legitimate reincarnation of the previous hierarch Padma Karpo (with the right to possess the ancestral Drukpa patrimony) was denied in court by the king of Gtsang [Zang]” [Ardussi, 2011: 35]. As a result, the Zhabdrung Rinpoche formed a new government in Bhutan in 1625: “Right from the beginning in 1625, defence and protection of resources became his uppermost concern” [ibid.].

Chapter 4: Khoshut Khanate and the integration into the Chinese Qing Dynasty

In 1642, after Gūshi Khan defeated the kingdoms, he made the 5th Dalai Lama to be the ruler of Tibet and installed the Ganden Phodrang regime¹. In return, the Dalai Lama gave him the blessings and made him the formal ruler of Tibet as **Khoshut Khanate**, which existed from 1642 to 1717 in Qinghai and Tibet. The strong ties between the Dalai Lama and the Mongolian Khans go back to the fraternization between Altan Khan and the 3rd Dalai Lama, and the 4th Dalai Lama was even a Mongol and a relative of Altan Khan. For completeness' sake, the Khoshut are one of four Oirat Mongolian tribes and descendants of Genghis Khan. As Thokmay explains the situation after Gūshi Khan's death in 1654: “Some scholars argue that Gushri Khan alone had real power, but his descendants ‘had been the King of Tibet in name only.’ After his death, the Khoshut Mongol kings’ influence in Tibet had rapidly begun to decline and finally disappeared” [2021: 77]. It is outstanding that the “Fifth Dalai Lama, perhaps more than any other Tibetan leader, used Tibetan history to legitimize his own rule. In the main, his version of Tibet's history consists of the stories of its ‘great men,’ many of whom, including all the Dalai Lamas, he suggests were manifestations of the deity Avalokiteśvara. Through this trope

¹ As Kitinov notes correctly: “In the beginning of the 17th Century the dominant tribe among Kalmyks (Oyirats) were the Khoshuts, and it was Khoshut's Gushri Khan who in A.D. 1635 marched into Tibet. He dispersed the troops of Eastern Mongols near Kokonor, came to Amdo, Kham, and in A.D. 1641 marched towards U-Tsang. When Gushri Khan suppressed the last rebellion in A.D. 1642, he proclaimed the Dalai Lama as the supreme ruler of the whole of Tibet” [1996: 38]. Gūshri Khan's Empire consisted of Central Tibet, Amdo and Northern Kham. Despite an invasion into Eastern Kham (Sichuan) and probably Southern Kham (Yunnan), Tibet was only reunified for a very short time and the Ganden Phodrang's power outside of Central Tibet remained limited, though at its peak it managed to violently submit Gyalrong principalities in Eastern Kham (Sichuan). However, the claim of a constantly unified Tibet through the Ganden Phodrang regime as sometimes claimed in the West is wrong. In fact, Tibet remained fractioned and there was no real unification under a single power since the Yarlung dynasty. The submission of the whole of Kham in 1641 therefore was only a small event, and the influence over many small kingdoms remained contested between Beijing and Lhasa. For instance, the Chakla Kingdom already rebelled in 1666 against Lhasa and allied with the Qing. As Gros writes “The Qing Dynasty grants the title of *Xuanwei shisi* (Pacification commissioner) to the Chakla king (Mingzheng *tusi*), placing him under the jurisdiction of the Sichuan Imperial Government” [2019: 21]. One year later, the Khoshut conducted a counter-attack. The Naxi king supported a revolt against the Khoshut in Kham in 1674 to limit the Gelug influence over the region but failed and in 1699 the Chakla king was killed, leading to a punitive expedition by the Qing in 1700 [Gros, 2019: 21 f.].

of manifestation, he creates an intimate link between himself and earlier Tibetan sovereigns” [Gamble & Yangmotso, 2015: 147]. It is also noteworthy that he was enthroned in Samzhubzê, the main place of Xigazê City [cp. Aguilar, 2016: 3] and not in Lhasa.

The 5th Dalai Lama built up the Potala Palace in Lhasa in the mid-1640s to reign from there. As the youngest of all Buddhist schools, the Gelug school, now was empowered and religious persecutions took place, leading to refugees coming to Bhutan [cp. Ardussi, 2011: 32 f.; 35 f.]. This might not be a surprise, since Sikkim and Bhutan were a center of the Nyingma, though the complexity of the region’s religious structure should not be underestimated: “In Sikkim and central Bhutan, the Nyingmapa were dominant, based on what we can learn from accounts of the various visiting monks. In western Bhutan many villages were allied with small monasteries founded by Drukpa Kagyudpa [Drugpa Kagyü] monks who had trained at the home monastery of Ralung in Tibet. A major exception was the ancient cliff-side shrine complex of Taktshang which belonged to the Nyingmapa. Eastern Bhutan and Tibetan Mon Yul [Mönyü] were the home of Gelugpa monasteries, while the Chumbi Valley separating Sikkim and Bhutan saw a mixture of Drukpa, Nyingmapa and Lhapa (by then an affiliate of the Gelugpa) sectarian influence” [Ardussi, 2011: 33 f.]. In the following years, Bhutan also expanded its power in the western area “including the districts such as Dagana south of the regional dzong of Paro. While most of the local residents offered their gifts and pledges of allegiance, it is reported that some who did not were driven out” [Ardussi, 2011: 35]. In the 1650s, Bhutan also expanded eastwards under Mingyur Tenpa (r. 1663-1680), who was a Tibetan expatriate [Ardussi, 2011: 36].

“The Zhabdrung Rinpoche [i.e. Ngawang Namgyal] died in 1651. But with Bhutan still in a state of war with Tibet, and in the absence of a clear line of succession, his death was concealed and his rule perpetuated by a series of civil regents called Deb Raja in British sources, or Desi (*Sde srid*) by the Bhutanese themselves” [Ardussi, 2004]. His death was concealed for 54 years, nonetheless, the troubles between Tibet and Bhutan continued: “Monpa Amchok went to Lhasa where he gained an audience with the 5th Dalai Lama during the 9th month of 1668, as recorded in the latter’s biography. As usual in such texts, the details of their conversation are not recorded, but two months later Tibet invaded Bhutan on behalf of both Monpa Amchok and the Merak Lama of eastern Bhutan” [ibid.]. The war, however, did not turn out to be in favor for Tibet and a peace treaty was negotiated by officials from Tashilhunpo, resulting in an armistice lasting

until 1675 [ibid.]. In 1675, Tibet attacked again, but the Bhutanese forces were once again victorious [ibid.].

Concerning the Khoshut Khanate in Tibet, “Since 1683, after the Fifth Dalai Lama’s death, the Regent Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho [Desi Sangye Gyatso] (1653-1705) dominated the government, and the Mongol-Tibetan Khan did not have much space to exercise his influence” [Thokmay, 2021: 77]. In the beginning, the death of the Dalai Lama was kept secret to avoid a destabilization in Central Tibet. In 1697, the 6th Dalai Lama came into office after the death of his predecessor was made public [Damdinsureng, 1981: 33]. The 6th Dalai Lama Cangyang Gyamco, sometimes spelled Tsangyang Gyatso, was an ethnic Monpa from Tawang in Mönzü, meaning “the land of the Mön”. The Monpa were always discriminated by the Tibetans since they claimed their own principalities in Southern Tibet and Bhutan. The 6th Dalai Lama was said to live a very worldly life, enjoying alcohol and women. His luxury life was financed at the expense of the people, of course, which led to heavy dissatisfaction. As a result, it is assumed that Lhasang Khan, the regent of the Khoshuts and the Chinese emperor Kangxi made a deal to get rid of the Dalai Lama. Another reason might have been a feud between the Dalai Lama and the Khan of the Khoshuts, thus, there might also be political motives. Nonetheless, the Dalai Lama had to leave Lhasa and most likely went to Qinghai. Whether he left voluntarily or was driven away is unknown today. Most histories today read that in 1706, Cangyang Gyamco was kidnapped on a journey in Qinghai and killed later. There is a certain doubt about this today, however. Indeed, the Manchu officially publicly declared him dead [ibid.]: “According to official reports Tsangs-dbyangs rgya-mtso [Tsangyang Gyatso] had died, but in actuality he had not and alive, wandered throughout Tibet. The biography by Dar-rgyas [Dargye] nomon Khan states that he followed a caravan, riding a yak with a blistering back, that he lost a cup of meal to brigands and lay alone, ill, and in piteous condition in the steppe for several days. Several years later he returned to Lhasa but because of Lha-bzang’s [Lhasang’s] persecution he hid himself in the attic of a country house and remained there for several months”, if we follow the accounts of a second biography [Damdinsureng, 1981: 33 f.]. He probably fled Lhasa again and lived in a monastery in Southern Tibet until Lhasang Khan found out about it and captured him to bring him to Lhasa, where he escaped once more and went to Nepal and India [Damdinsureng, 1981: 34]. In 1716, he returned to Lhasa and departed from there to Qinghai until the land of the Alashan Mongols. He later traveled to Beijing and at the request of Khalkha Mongols traveled to the Khalkha in 1724 [Damdinsureng, 1981: 34 f.].

In 1707, the 25-year old Ngawang Yeshey Gyatso was announced to be the true 6th Dalai Lama by Lhasang Khan. It is widely believed that it was Lhasang Khan’s own son [cp. Petech, 1966: 275]. The religious authorities in Tibet denied this choice [cp. Petech, 1966: 281] and thus, the office of the Dalai Lama was more or less vacant. As Wang points out, the Yellow Hat Sect turned to the Dzungars and asked for external military support, and “In order to destroy the legitimacy of Lha-bzang [Lhasang] Khan’s rule, the Yellow Hat Sect accused him of converting to the Red Hat Sect” [2021: 25 f.]. The Dzungars invaded Tibet in 1717 and persecuted the different Buddhist schools and Bön to strengthen the Gelug. Especially the Nyingma followers were once again a target of persecution: “The Yellow Hat Sect as a reformist emphasizing the precepts was different with the old Red Hat Sect in doctrines and rituals. The Dzungars also eliminated the “filthy” old doctrines and ritual elements within the Yellow Hat Sect by, for example, demoting monks who violated the precepts” [Wang, 2021: 26]. A reason behind the actual attack could be the fact that the Qing became so powerful that they blocked routes to Tibet which were important for Dzungar-Tibet trade. Wang [2021: 26] for instance points out that the Qing began a blockade of Tibet in 1701. “Moreover, the Qing controlled the cross-regional religious and political exchange institutions of the Yellow Hat Sect” [ibid.]. It could be possible that different Tibetan masters from other sects fled into the hinterland of Pemakö, though uncertain. Teachers who were well-educated in the old prophecies of Padmasambhava in Pemakö around that time assumed that the final wars and decline of Buddhism would be coming. And Sardar-Afkhami notes that “In the late 18th century, even after the fire of the Dzungar invasion subsided, the legendary land of Padma-bkod [Pemakö] continued to attract maverick Tibetan yogis in search of vision and adventure” [Sardar-Afkhami, 1996: 7]. Pemakö is a traditional area in Kham and South Tibet that has a special variety of culture that is different than that in Central Tibet, as well as that in Kham. The traditional capital of the area is Mêdog. Most of its history is mysterious.

Although Tsangyang Gyatso was regarded to be unworthy as Dalai Lama, he had nonetheless been the rightful Dalai Lama and was recognized as such by the Gelug. In “one of his poems he had darkly hinted that he would be reborn in Eastern Tibet. And when an unfrocked monk had a son born to him at Li-t'añ [Litang] in K'ams [Kham] (3rd September 1708) and the local people saw in him the marks of the reborn Dalai-Lama, the rumor spread like wildfire to Central Tibet” [Petech, 1966: 281]. Lhasang Khan ignored the matter, as “he could afford to do so, because his military hold on the country was absolute” [ibid.]. However, when the Dzungars

arrived in 1717, they killed Lhasang Khan and the power of the Khoshuts came to an end overnight. This coup came by surprise, since the Dzungar army did not come through Kōkōnur (Qinghai), but from the north-west. Kangxi appointed the boy from Litang to be the 7th Dalai Lama [Petech, 1966: 286]. Emperor Kangxi organized a large-scale expedition to help the Tibetans. This expedition was organized from two fronts: “The southern army, commanded by Galbi, which started from Szechwan [Sichuan] and eventually first to reach Lhasa (so to say from the back door), was composed of Manchu and Chinese only. The main northern army commanded by Yansin, who was to escort the new Dalai-Lama and on whom fell the brunt of the fighting, was not only larger, but was accompanied by the commander-in-chief prince Yūnt'i [Yunti], the 14th son of the emperor” [Petech, 1966: 286 f.]. So it was a very high state matter for the Qing to bring the Dalai Lama safely to Lhasa and to drive out the Dzungars of Tibet. After the Qing army defeated the Dzungars, the 7th Dalai Lama was enthroned in the Potala Palace. In Qinghai, Lobsang Danjin tried to restore the Khoshut Khanate in 1723 [Katō, 2004: 29]. On 16 September 1723, he attacked the Qing garrisons, which were still stationed in Qinghai as he counted for help from the Dzungars that however did not send troops since they were fighting the Kazakh and Kirgiz at that time [Katō, 2004: 30]. After the Khoshut princes realized that no Dzungar troops would come for help, they distanced themselves from Lobsang Danjin who fled to the Dzungars as the revolt was suppressed [Katō, 2004: 30 f.]. The Qing integrated Qinghai (Kōkōnor) into China [Katō, 2004: 31].

Chapter 5: Tibet in the Chinese Qing Dynasty

In 1720, the Qing installed a military tribunal to get rid of Dzungar collaborators and influences and in 1721, they installed a pro-Qing government and Tibet became a Chinese protectorate [Vanommeslaeghe, 2006/07: 36 f.]. In 1722, Qing emperor Kangxi died [Vanommeslaeghe, 2006/07: 39] and Yongzheng succeeded. This event caused new instability with Tibet (and also Qinghai, which might be why Lobsang Danjin saw a good possibility to rebel in Kōkōnor) [cp. Katō, 2004: 29].

The head of the new government was formed by the kashag, literally the High Council of the Ministers, as “According to Emperor Kangxi, the old form of government placed too much power in the hands of a few. Until 1728 the council consisted of the three Tibetan ministers or kalon Napodpa, Byaras and Lumpanas and was chaired by Kanchenas [Khangchenna]. The council was under the strict supervision of the commander of the Qing army garrison at Lhasa, who could interfere with any decision of the kashag as long as it directly concerned the Chinese cause” [Vanommeslaeghe, 2006/07: 38; translation mine]. Khangchenna became the “prime minister” of Tibet and Napodpa his assistant [Vanommeslaeghe, 2006/07: 39]. Vanommeslaeghe [2006/07: 38] explains correctly that this soon led to new conflict “as its four members each represented a different part of Tibet and saw the council primarily as an instrument to realize their personal ambitions” [translation mine]. According to this new government model, the three ministers were the ruling princes over Wü-Zang, Ngari and Kongpo (an area in nowadays Western Nyingchi’s Gongbo’gyamda County).

Another important historical figure at that time was the Tibetan military commander Pholhaney who already made a military career under Lhasang Khan. As Shim [2020: 78] points out, Pholhaney and his soldiers often patrolled Nagtsang and even the wilderness north of it, and he sent out scouts in every direction: “Since Pholhané [Pholhaney] and his Tibetan troops had a firm knowledge of the region, there was reportedly no need to worry about the Zunghars [Dzungars] stealthily re-entering Tibet” [ibid.]. This talented military commander most likely became a close ally of Khangchenna and governor of the Zang region. From the very beginning, there was a conflict among the ministers, some supporting the Dalai Lama and the others supporting Khangchenna and Pholhaney who supported the Qing. During those years, “The Dalai-Lama was limited to the ecclesiastical field, where he of course exercised his powers directly” [Petech, 1959: 381]. In 1727, Khangchenna was assassinated leading to a civil war. Pholhaney and his military turned out victorious and the Dalai Lama was exiled from 1728 to

1734 (most likely to Kham), while the power was transferred to Pholhaney [Sheel, 1989: 28]. “Pholhaney dominated Tibetan politics for nineteen years from 1728 up to his death in 1747 [...]” [ibid.]. Petech [1959: 381] dated the return of the Dalai Lama to Lhasa on the 3rd September 1735.

Pholhaney’s death, however, led to a new destabilization of Tibet. In 1750, the anti-Qing forces tried to conduct a riot and killed Han-Chinese and Manchurians living in Lhasa. As a result, a new political model was introduced in 1751 and the rioters – like in 1728 – were executed. The position of the Dalai Lama was restored, the role of the kashag was strengthened, while the title ‘desi’ was formally abolished [Kychanov & Melnichenko, 2005: 90]. The kashag now consisted of four ministers [ibid.]. One minister had to be a monk, the other three had to be secular [ibid.]. Kychanov and Melnichenko point out that the reforms also included the creation of a Tibetan army. Every family who owned land had to provide one soldier [ibid.]. In Wü, there has been 1,000 soldiers, in Zang even 2,000 soldiers [ibid.]. “From 1750 onwards the amban system was put into its final form. Excluding some changes in 1766 and 1792, it would not change again until the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911” [Vanommeslaeghe, 2006/07: 48].

In the second half of the 18th century, the Gurkha in Nepal became powerful and first took over Nepal in 1769 and then Sikkim in 1775 [Vanommeslaeghe, 2006/07: 52; Theobald, 2020: 117]. Attracted by the wealth of the Tibetan monasteries, the Gurkha invaded the Central Tibet region by falling into Nyalam and Gyirong in 1788 [Vanommeslaeghe, 2006/07: 48], leading to the First Gorkha War, also known as the First Sino-Nepalese War. Killigrew points out the background of the war as following: “The crisis was set off as result of a sequence of events after the death of the Panchen Lama III in Peking in 1780. The Panchen Lama, with his monastery at Tashilhunpo near Shigatse [Xigazê], in what the Ch’ing [Qing] termed Outer Tibet, had considerable political as well as religious freedom of action within his geographical jurisdiction. A dispute over his inheritance led a disgruntled brother to flee to Nepal where he proceeded to encourage the Gurkhas to take a firmer and more aggressive stance in reference to Tibetan affairs” [1979: 45]. When the Gurkha invaded, Qing troops were sent to Xigazê to evacuate the Penchen Lama and on 24 March 1789, the Qing troops liberated the border towns to Nepal [cp. Theobald, 2020: 121]. Before the Qing troops liberated Zang region, the local administration in Central Tibet “apparently promised to pay the Gorkha court 300 gold bars annually, corresponding to 9,600 taels of silver or 50,000 Rupees” without informing the Qing court [ibid.]. Or to put it in modern terms: A local government made a decision by surpassing the central state government. Thus, unsurprisingly, “the Qing court felt bypassed by this

decision” [ibid.]. As Theobald mentions: “The truce between Tibet and Nepal had however found support from the Qing commander Bajung (Bazhong 巴忠), who had been *amban* in Tibet since 1788, spoke Tibetan from prior service there, and therefore knew the local situation better than the Qing court in Beijing” [2020: 122]. The question now is why the Qing pushed back the Gurkhas despite the truce. A first option would be that the Qing ignored the truce, as Tibet, which was only a special region within China, was not responsible for foreign relations. A second option could be that the Qing did not know about the truce, which actually seemed to be the case: One account for this is given by Bajung himself who committed suicide after the second invasion by Nepal, confessing that he did not inform the Qing about the truce and that the details were kept secret [ibid.]. Another account is given by Shakapba who proposed “that the peace treaty had been initiated by officials on the Chinese side” while the Tibetan people did not agree to a peace treaty [ibid.]. Kunwar explains the event as following: “To avoid being overrun by the Gorkhas before reinforcements could arrive, the Tibetan officials as well as the Chinese generals made proposals of peace, with a promise to pay an annual subsidy of Rs. 50,000 to Nepal, and to facilitate the passage of a Nepalese embassy to Peking” [1962: 288]. And Kunwar also states that “The emperor was kept in ignorance of the exact nature of the incidents in Tibet that had brought about the embassy” [1962: 289]. In other words, there seems to have been a miscommunication. Shakapba’s report is not in contradiction with Bajung’s confession if the Chinese generals acted on their own behalf without informing the emperor. In this case, it makes sense that local Tibetan rulers and Chinese generals were involved into the truce, but not the Qing court itself which stayed uninformed. The Second Gorkha War, also called Second Sino-Nepalese War, lasted from 1791 to 1792. As Theobald explains: “In autumn 1791, the Gorkhas staged a second invasion of Tsang [Zang] because the Tibetan government had not met its promises of annual tribute” [2020: 125].

Kunwar points out that “stimulated by Shemarpa's tales of the wealth of Tashilhunpo, [the Gorkhas] decided to go and collect what they considered to be their just dues” [1962: 289]. Though they managed their way into Tibet, the way back turned out very difficult due to the harsh weather conditions, leading to great losses [Kunwar, 1962: 289]. Finally, the “Imperial troops opened hostilities with spirited attacks on the lightly manned Gorkha out-posts on conquered Tibetan territory” [Kunwar, 1962: 291]. The Qing army advanced into Nepal and made its way towards Kathmandu: “The last engagement of the Sino-Nepalese war took place on Mount Dhaibung above the town of Nuwakote, some twenty-five miles away from the Kathmandu valley” [Kunwar, 1962: 292]. Though the Qing troops had a large problem, as the

deeper they moved into Nepal, the more they lacked the infrastructure to continue the war [Killigrew, 1979: 55-57], the Qing were successful as the Battle of Nawakot “appears to have been a tactical standoff” [Killigrew, 1979: 59], and “[o]ne scholar believes that Fu-k'ang-an dealt the Gurkhas a thorough and decisive defeat at Nawakot and that he decided to accept their petition for surrender without going on to sack Katmandu because of the tenuous line of supply through the mountain passes which would have been aggravated by worsening weather” [ibid.]. In historical books, these two wars are sometimes generally referred to as Sino-Nepalese War which consisted out of two Nepalese invasions. For instance, Kunwar and Killigrew speak just of one war, while Theobald speaks of two wars, calling them the Gorkha Wars. I prefer Theobald’s stance regarding both events to be classified as two separate wars, with the second war being started as a result of Nepal’s dissatisfaction that the annual payments which formally ended the first war (Treaty of Kerung) were not paid. In fact, however, the first war ended when the Qing pushed back Nepal’s army out of Tibet. Anyways, concerning the terminology, I prefer the term “Sino-Nepalese Wars”, since it mentions the countries which were involved, the Qing protecting their land and Nepal which attacked.

In 1834, the Sikh Empire started a conquest in Ladakh. As Rinchen Dolma notes: “The conditions of Ladakh, when it faced Dogra invasion was in a disorder state, the later rulers of Ladakh were weak and were unable to check foreign invasions. In fact it has become an easy prey for its neighbours, as it became for the Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu and his lieutenant Zorawar Singh in 1834” [2018/19: 459]. The Sikhs probably had economic interests in Tibet to be able to stand against the British. The economic points are also clearly expressed by Rinchen Dolma: “According to C.L. Datta, in addition to the internal weakness of Ladakh, the lucrative shawl wool trade of the Himalayan principality attracted Ladakh to the Dogras. The Raja of Jammu wanted that shawl wool produce in Ladakh as well as the produce of West Tibet which passed through that country, should be exported to the Indian plains through his possessions around Jammu rather than being exported to and through Kashmir” [ibid.]. In May 1841, an army of 6,000 men in three divisions marched into Tibet’s mainland situated on the other side of the Himalaya. At that time, Wü-Zang and Ngari had tensed relationship with Ladakh which goes back to the Tibet-Ladakh-Mughal war from the 17th century. Since Ladakh supported Bhutan during the Tibetan invasions, and since the Ladakhis did not accept the Gelug rule of Tibet after 1642, the 5th Dalai Lama sent troops for punishment to Ladakh. The Muslim Mughal Empire supported the Ladakhis as they probably wanted to enlarge their sphere of influence. The Mughal Empire helped defeating the Tibetans and Ladakh was partly independent for some

time. The Namgyal dynasty ended in 1834, when the Ladakhi king was dethroned and sent in a small prairie village outside of Leh. When the Sikh entered Western Tibet’s Ngari area in 1841, the Sino-Sikh War (Dogra War) started. The Dogra army occupied areas situated in nowadays Rutog County, Gar County and Burang County in Ngari Prefecture [cp. Kychanov & Melnichenko, 2005: 98]. The Dogra Commander Zorawar Singh fell in the battle [ibid.], which turned out to be very harsh during winter in Tibet. Tibetan military groups entered Ladakh but were defeated in 1842 [ibid.]. In the aftermath, negotiation for a peace treaty began in Leh [ibid.], leading to the status quo ante bellum. The treaty was probably signed in September 1842, the war actions stopped a month earlier. A third war between China and Nepal took place in Tibet from 1855 to 1856, sometimes being called the Nepal-Tibet War, though the name “Third Sino-Nepalese War” would suit better since it was fought on Chinese territory. As Arun Kumar Sahu noted: “In the 18th century, after the Sino-Nepalese war (1789–1792), Nepal accepted the suzerainty of the Qing emperor and the Qing emperor assured Nepal protection from any external aggression. However, as the power of the Qing waned, it was unable to assist Nepal during the Anglo-Nepalese war (1814–1816)” [2015: 197]. The Treaty of Thapathali ended the Third Sino-Nepalese War. Under that treaty, “Nepal took the responsibility of protecting Tibet in case of any external aggression and a Nepali courtier was appointed in Lhasa” [ibid.].

In the 1860s, a political turmoil appeared in Sichuan, when Gönpo Namgyal tried to unify Kham. As noted before, Kham was not part of the Tibet special region and the principalities and kingdoms in Kham had their own rulership, despite some of them having strong ties with Lhasa on religious matters. Gönpo Namgyal is described as “local charismatic leader and fierce warrior” [Gros, 2019: 24] who “attempted a forced political unification of Kham’s polities from his stronghold in Nyarong, not far from Dartsedo [Kangding]. Because Gönpo Namgyel’s expanding rule over neighbouring polities, including the powerful kingdom of Derge [Dêgê], posed a challenge to both the Lhasa government and the Chinese provincial authority of Sichuan, they endeavoured to strengthen their grip on Kham” [ibid.]. Since the Qing were facing a lot of crisis at that time and therefore could not intervene, it “gave Tibetan central authorities the opportunity to send in troops who successfully defeated Gönpo Namgyel (1865) and allowed them to extend their administrative rule over parts of Kham by appointing a high commissioner (*chikhyap*)” [ibid.].

Meanwhile, Great Britain did not recognize the border between India and China, and therefore made claims on Tibet. On 20 March 1888, British troops attacked Tibetan troops at Mount

Lungdo [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 83]. As the Tibetans were poorly equipped, the Tibetan military failed to stop the invasion and the British came into the country. The Chinese Qing sought peace talks and as a result, they had to give away Sikkim to Great Britain [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 84]. In 1904, the British came again leaving a blood trace in Tibet. Wang Jiawei and Nyima Gyaincain state that “In early March 1904, the British invaders confronted the Tibetan troops in Qoimishango and Gulhu” [2000: 88]. It came to on-the-spot negotiations, however, after 15 minutes of negotiations between Younghusband and Tibetan representatives in Qoimishango, a British officer took a pistol and killed the Tibetan representatives [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 89] and then went on killing over 500 Tibetan troops (that had removed their weapons, since they trusted in the peace talks). In the end, over 1,000 Tibetans were killed in a massacre that became famous as the **Massacre of Qoimishango**. The British troops continued their advance: “All along the way, they set fire to Buddhist monasteries, ransacked the homes of the Tibetans and performed other evil deeds” [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 90]. On 11 April 1904, Younghusband’s troops reached Gyangzê. From there, he left Gyangzê with troops to attack the Tibetan troops in Kari La, but “Under the cover of night, more than 1,000 Tibetan troops attacked the British stationed in Pala Village, narrowly failing to kill Younghusband” [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 90 f.]. On 26 May, British reinforcements came to Gyangzê from Yadong to recapture Pala Village [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 91]. But also the Tibetan strengthened their reinforcements leading Younghusband to retreat to Yadong “in early June, where he plotted with Macdonald to attack Lhasa to force the Tibetan government to surrender” [ibid.]. Both set off for Gyangzê in late June [ibid.] and managed to defeat the Tibetans at Nai’nying Monastery [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 92]. The British troops went on to capture Gyangzê castle and also Palkor Monastery fell [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 93]. From there, they went on to Lhasa reaching the city on 3 August 1904 [ibid.]. On 30 July 1904, the 13th Dalai Lama secretly left Lhasa and went to Kulun, which is known as Ulan Bataar today [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 97].

As the Dalai Lama was not in Lhasa, Younghusband forced other political offices to sign the **Treaty of Lhasa**, which was finally signed by the local Tibetan government on 7 September. Tibet thus got under the British sphere of influence and had to fulfill duties to Great Britain. The treaty was succeeded by the 1906 **Anglo-Chinese Convention**, reaffirming that Tibet belongs to China. The British declared not to intervene in Tibet or even to annex it, and the Chinese were not allowed to let any other country administrate or interfere into Tibet. In this way, the British interests were ensured, especially that Russia could not interfere.

Already in 1905, the British wanted to impress the Penchen Lama who refused to cooperate and supported China only. As a result, the British “turned to buying over people of the 13th Dalai Lama group” [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 99], promising advantages and benefits in British trade, “persuading them [i.e. upper-ruling-class people] to see the British as the source of economic income” [ibid.]. Western Tibet’s Ladakh and Southern Tibet’s Sikkim were under British influence as well as Bhutan that fought the Bhutan War in 1864. It is also noteworthy that “Nepal did not oppose the invasion of Tibet by the British in 1904 and from 1908 it stopped paying tribute to China” [Sahu, 2015: 197], even though Nepal committed itself to ensuring the security of Tibet in 1856.

It has to be noted that even though the Qing had their bureaucrats in the Kham kingdoms, they did not interfere into the politics of the local rulers. This was changing in the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, when the Qing started interfering in political and religious issues in these small entities which belonged formally to the Western part of the province of Sichuan: “Not only were political structures and local hierarchies being dismantled but religious institutions were also challenged at times if not abolished, with the Qing often supporting the Geluk school of Buddhism (that of the Dalai Lama) and favouring it over other schools” [Gros, 2019: 24]. In 1904, Feng Quan, who was the appointed assistant amban in Qamdo, decided to further reduce the power of the local chiefs. He was killed by rioters during the Batang Uprising in 1905 [cp. Gros, 2019: 25]. As a result, “A punitive expedition was then led by Ma Weiqi (1846-1910), the commander-in-chief of Sichuan’s provincial troops. The Han Bannerman Zhao Erfeng (Chao Er-feng) completed the campaign against the city of Bathang [Batang], followed by a wave of military conquests and the destruction of monasteries” [Gros, 2019: 25]. As a result, the special region of Xikang was founded (from time to time it also bore the name “Chuanbian Special Region”), which consisted of today’s Qamdo, Nyingchi, Garzê and Ngawa regions. As such, the Kham chiefdoms were unified in a new Chinese province and the patchwork of various local powers was dissolved. Indeed, Zhao Erfeng consolidated a tyranny within the newly founded province and in 1907, he reached Southern Kham (Dêqên) in Yunnan, where he continued his atrocities. In 1908, he marched into Central Tibet. When the Chinese Revolution broke out in 1911, Zhao was captured and beheaded. It has to be noted though that it was only in the beginning of the 20th century that the highly fragmented Tibetan areas were unified. There has never been something such as a province of Kham, but the power was always decentralized. It was only with the founding of Xikang that Kham was centralized.

In the same way, there has never been a province of Amdo, but the Amdo Tibetans living in the province of Qinghai always had tribal lands and small decentralized powers.

Chapter 6: Tibet in Republican China

The early 20th century is a very important spot in the Tibetan history, since the falsification and/or confusion of historical events in the West spread the myth of an independent Tibet that never existed in the 20th century, and which is meant to damage the Chinese territorial integrity. In the 19th century, the British already tried to weaken China, not only in the Opium Wars, but also in two invasions of Tibet. At the same time, the Qing forces had to handle dissatisfaction from all parts of China. The Opium Wars, the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) which ended in a victory for Japan and the Boxer rebellion from 1899-1901 brought trouble into all parts of China. After the Second British Invasion, the Qing suspended the Tibetan autonomy and Zhao Erfeng led a military campaign to fight against any uproar. Zhao killed anyone who resisted against him, leading to the nickname ‘Zhao, the slaughterer’. In 1911, when the Chinese Revolution broke out and hit the Qing dynasty in its core, Zhao was caught and beheaded by Chinese Republicans. As Tenpa explains correctly: “On January 1, 1912, with the establishment of the Nanjing Provisional Government of the Republic of China, Sun Yatsen announced the beginning of a formal era of the Republic of China and declared himself the first provisional president. After one month, on February 12, 1912, the Imperial abdication of Emperor Xuantong Puyi was announced through a formal edict mediated by Yuan Shikai” [2012: 4]. With the abdication of Puyi, not only the Qing dynasty came to an end, but also the 2,000 years of Imperial reign.

“At the end of 1910 the majority of the Chinese troops from Lhasa had to be sent to Po to fight king Kanam of Po, situated 200 miles to the south-east of Lhasa [...]. Despite the political upheaval in China, the Chinese still held on to the idea of subjugating Tibet. So when the troops from Po returned to Lhasa led by General Chung, he reasserted Chinese authority [...].” [Gelek, 1982: 13], though Gelek argues that only the lack of weapons held the Tibetans back from a revolt. He even further argues that “Though the Tibetans were united in their fight against the Chinese, there was much dissension among themselves” [ibid.]. However, I doubt that there was a common anti-Chinese sentiment: In fact, it turned out to be as always before – there were

different local rulers who had different interests. The situation becomes even more complex: “Over the years, the expanding Chinese and British Indian empires nibbled at the edges of the Dalai Lama's realm, making it difficult if not controversial even to define what Tibet is. In broadest terms, it is the area inhabited by persons speaking Tibetan or related languages and recognizing the spiritual leadership of the Dalai Lama” [Bradsher, 1969: 751]. And even here, it is quite tricky, because the leadership of the Dalai Lama was always contested, not only by the Penchen Lama within the Gelug school, but also by other Buddhist schools, especially as some were persecuted, such as the Nyingma, who settled in remote areas. Thus, though the Nyingma did not accept the Dalai Lama, they were no less Tibetans. Even further, the Dalai Lama is not even the spiritual leader of the Gelug, as the leader of the Gelug is the Ganden Thripa, also spelled Gandain Chiba.

Anyways, soon after the founding of the Republic of China under military dictator Yuan Shikai, the 13th Dalai Lama contacted him. The Dalai Lama sent representatives to the Chinese government headed by Silun Qamqen [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 113]. Both parties signed a peace treaty in July 1912. The Han-Chinese agreed to pay a compensation for the “losses inflicted by Sichuan troops” [ibid.] (Sichuan troops is probably referring to Zhao's former army). In return, the Chinese officials stayed in office in Tibet [ibid.]. On 19 July 1912, Yuan Shikai's government set up an office being in charge for Tibetan and Mongolian affairs, headed by Goingsang Norbu [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 114]. In 1913, the relations between the government of the Republic of China and the Tibetan officials supporting the Dalai Lama seemingly became more tensed.

Wang Jiawei and Nyima Gyaincain point out that after the Wuchang Uprising in October 1911, “at least 14 out of 18 inland provinces declared independence” [Wang & Gyaincain, 2000: 116], which means they declared independence from the Qing dynasty, but not from China itself.² While many Western sources try to propagate the image that China separated the Tibetan areas and joined them in several provinces, in fact it was the opposite. The splitted royal territories were now joined together. Again, this was rather formally in the beginning and the factual realization would take time until the founding of the People's Republic of China. Also Tenpa, who rather belongs to the camp of point of view claiming that the Dalai Lama proclaimed independence from China, admits that different provinces tried to split from the central

² See also Rubin who points out: “It has been asserted that the Dalai Lama declared Tibet's independence of China at the beginning of 1912. Even if this assertion were clearly correct, and it is far from that, the legal effect of the declaration must be doubtful” [1968: 121 f.].

government and that Yuan Shikai continued to all kind of efforts to keep the country together, including Tibet [cp. Tenpa, 2012: 4]. There were also other local areas which tried to establish their own governments which had different intentions. Two areas for instance soon ceded from China and became independent with Soviet help, Tuva and Outer Mongolia, though Tuva was later absorbed into the Russian Socialist Republic, while Mongolia became a proxy-state of the Stalinist USSR.³ Yuan Shikai made clear that China is a multi-ethnic country and “asked the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu [from Mongolia] to retrace his declaration of independence and join the new initiative among ‘the five races: Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Muhammadans [sic!] and Tibetans’ for the complete integrity of the territories to make a great state of the Republic of China” [Tenpa, 2012: 9].

Nonetheless, there were different factions in Tibet and the Dalai Lama seemingly wanted to take advantage of the situation in 1913 when China destabilized and restore Tibet in its former borders, thus also had claims on Qinghai and Xikang, or to sum it up in Kobayashi’s words: “After the collapse of the Qing dynasty, China planned to incorporate Tibet and Mongolia into Chinese territory by declaring the ‘the Republic of Five Races’. In opposition to this, the Dalai Lama Government attempted to achieve full independence as the country integrating all areas in which Tibetan people lived. During this process, the question of political status of Tibet and a border dispute between Tibet and China arose” [2014: 91]. However, whether he wanted to achieve full independence is of debate nowadays.⁴ Nowadays, some claim that a “Declaration of Independence” would have finally been conducted on 8 February 1913 [Rubin, 1968: 122]. But as Rubin notes correctly: “Read closely that document will not bear the weight ascribed to it by Shakabpa, a former official of the Lhasa Government now in exile. While it recites in the name of the Dalai Lama the acts of the Lhasa Government in 1913 in attempting to drive out

³ It is also noteworthy in this context that “In January 1913, a treaty was concluded between the Lhasa authorities in Tibet and the authorities asserting a right to govern an independent Mongolia. This treaty included mutual recognition by the two authorities of each other's sovereignty and independence of China. Although, many years later, the Dalai Lama affirmed that the treaty was entered into on his predecessor's authority, at the time in fact the Lhasa authorities denied the authority of their supposed negotiator and denied that Tibet was bound by any such treaty” [Rubin, 1968: 123]. Thus, while Mongolia actively sought to gain independence from China, Tibet did not do so wholeheartedly.

⁴ The fact that the Dalai Lama wanted to expand its territory is not a sign for independence. Back then, many armies wanted to expand their influence, and so a Yunnanese army attacked Sichuan, but was driven back by Sichuanese forces in 1920 [on the latter see Lawson, 2013: 301]. Therefore, wars between different provinces were quite regular at that time.

Chinese troops and circumvent the Chinese intention of colonising Tibet, the Proclamation does not purport to cut the governmental ties between Peking and Lhasa in areas in which Peking had actively exercised authority in the past. There is nothing in the Proclamation inconsistent with the Dalai Lama deriving temporal authority from Chinese delegation of some years before. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the Proclamation was in fact delivered to any Chinese authorities or to the world in general” [ibid.].

Anyways, the provinces of Qinghai and Xikang remained under the full control of Republican warlords, and “Tibet [...] lacked a centralized political entity overseeing the entire territory” [Kobayashi, 2014: 93]. However, with Yuan Shikai’s death, the Republic of China was torn in a state of war, leading to chaotic situations. Indeed, during this time, the autonomy of Tibet increased, however – once again – the Tibetans never left China and at the same time, they could not found an own national state due to religious and political tensions within their territory, even if we assumed that some factions would have wished a secession. There was also no international recognition of a hypothetical Tibetan nation state [cp. Kobayashi, 2014: 92 pointing out that Tibet lacked “clear international recognitions of its political status”, though in the same phrase he speaks of an annexation by China, a term on which I do not agree in this context]. Kobayashi [2014: 96] also points out that Yuan Shikai did not accept any secessionist attempts from the Tibetan side and the army by Sichuan governor Yin Chengheng was mobilized to keep the status quo. It is also well documented that some principalities in Eastern Tibet explicitly aligned with the Republic of China: “Historical documents of the Republic of China specifically mentioned the Derge [Dêgê] Kingdom and the Chakla Kingdom [...] as the indigenous leaders that declared obedience, as a result of the Sichuan Governor Yin Chengheng’s invasion to Eastern Tibet in the summer of 1912” [Kobayashi, 2014: 101]. It is noteworthy that the Xikang region stood under the influence of Sichuan and was only nominally a province. It should also not be surprising that the Chakla Kingdom agreed to stay in China, since it already rebelled against the Dalai Lama and Central Tibetan influences in the 17th century, when the Ganden Phodrang tried to unify Kham with Tibet. However, the Chakla king “was not in sympathy with democratic ideas, and deplored the change from Empire to Republic”, as Louis King, the British Consul to Dartsedo (Kangding) noted [cited after Kobayashi, 2014: 101]. Lawson points out that “the Sichuanese force regained a degree of control in some towns, as tax records and petitions from overburdened communities in Kham demonstrated” [2013: 300].

Meanwhile, “Factional strife among the Chinese warlords in the 1920s helped the Muslim warlords in Northwest China, and especially in Qinghai, to enlarge their own sphere of influence. Thus, Ma Qi and his family members rose to a prominent position in Qinghai starting in about 1912 and they remained in power until 1949” [Horlemann, 2009: 68]. The first governor of Qinghai was most likely Ma Fuxiang in 1912 who later fought in Inner Mongolia against Mongolian resistance to Yuan Shikai’s rule. In 1915, Ma Qi became governor of Qinghai. He formed the Ninghai Army in 1915 and suppressed Tibetan unrest and took over the Labrang monastery (in Gansu) in 1917. In 1918, he defeated the Tibetans, though in 1925 a new Tibetan rebellion broke out which he defeated until 1927. In 1927/28, a “‘Muslim’ rebellion in Liangzhou/Wuwei and rising anti-Feng Yuxiang sentiment among Muslim warlords of Gansu and Qinghai” took place [Horlemann, 2009: 70], Ma Zhongying, who was a relative of Ma Qi, “started [an] anti-Feng Yuxiang campaign wreaking havoc in several Gansu and Qinghai locales” [ibid.]. In 1928, the province of Qinghai was formally established in today’s form.

The Gansu official and former Feng Yuxiang subordinate Sun Lianzhong was appointed governor of Qinghai [Horlemann, 2009: 71]. One year later, Feng Yuxiang’s warlord career came to an end and Sun resigned as governor [ibid.]. In the aftermath, the Ma clique received Guomindang appointments over Qinghai [cp. ibid.], officially representing the Republic of China in Qinghai. The Ninghai Army of Ma Qi became the 26th division of the National Revolutionary Army, the military arm of the Guomindang and official army of the Republic of China, soon after he aligned with the Guomindang and Chiang Kai-shek. In 1929, the Bureau of Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs was renamed to Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission. In 1932, the Qinghai-Tibet War broke out. The Tibet special region ruled under the Dalai Lama, with an increased autonomy (and not as an independent state) as mentioned before, wanted to re-establish Tibet in its old borders and therefore attacked its neighbor provinces Qinghai and Xikang (both areas known as “East Tibet”). However, since East Tibet was never fully governed by (Central) Tibet after the fall of the Yarlung Dynasty in 842 (with the exception of a small period under the Khoshuts), and since the Tibetan tribes in Kham and Amdo were hostile to those in Wü-Zang, there was no wish from Qinghai and Xikang to join Tibet. Both in the Qinghai-Tibet War and the parallel Sichuan-Tibet War, the Tibetan armies were quickly defeated as the Ma clique and Sichuan clique around Liu Wenhui worked hand in hand in the war. It is also noteworthy that the Tibet special region within the Republic of China also nominated a general governor over Kham which were most likely stationed in Qamdo, the first

one being Jampar Tendar from 1913 to 1922. During the two wars, Ngapo Tenzin Phuntsok (in office 1929-1932) and Gyurme Gyatso Tethong (in office 1932-1935) served this office and most likely sided with the Tibetan forces. The term “Sino-Tibetan War” which is sometimes used is a misnomer, of course, since it was a war within China and not between two nations. Both, the Ma Clique and the Sichuan Clique formally sided with the Guomintang: “Since the mid-1930s Liu Wenhui (刘文辉) and Ma Bufang (马步芳) had been dominating Xikang and Qinghai (青海) respectively, and were only giving nominal allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek” [Lin, 2006a: 453]. Even after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, though formally supporting the Guomintang rhetorically, “their resistance to Nationalist infiltration into their satrapies remained as staunch as before” [ibid.].

Concerning the situation in Sichuan, Lawson states: “In 1927 Liu wrestled control of the Frontier Defense Force from Liu Chengxun and became the paramount leader of the Chinese military and political bodies in Kham. [...] The territories controlled by Liu Wenhui were combined into ‘Xikang Province’ in 1939, an idea from the Qing that had stalled in the turmoil of the early Republic” [2013: 301]. The province consisted of traditional Kham areas, excluding Dêqên, Yüxu (Yushu), and Nagqu, and thus joined most of the Kham people in one province, just as most Amdo people were joined in one province (i.e. Qinghai), too⁵. Despite the goal to unify the Kham Tibetans in one province, these decisions were of course also driven by military strategic decisions, including a consolidation of power of the respective warlords.⁶ Thus, the provincial upgrades of Qinghai (1928) and Xikang (1939) out of loose areas were also the result of the warlord claims of rulership over the respective territory.⁷ And this was not always met

⁵ Though Qinghai is not exclusively Amdo Tibetan, as one can also find other Tibetan groups, such as the Kham in Yüxu and the Golog. In return, not all Tibetans in Sichuan are Kham Tibetans, there are for instance also small pockets of Amdo Tibetans.

⁶ Which is the reason why at certain times, the province also consisted of parts of Ya’an City and today’s Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture. In 1950, the western part of Xikang became an own provincial-level entity called Qamdo Region.

⁷ Other sources claim that Xikang’s province from a special region to a status was already changed in 1928. For instance, Jagou writes: “In August of the same year (1928), Xikang’s status of Special Administrative Region was changed to ‘province’ (*sheng*). However, still no civil provincial government was tasked with administering Xikang province even though some counties were administered by military officers. It was only several years later that a Preparatory Committee for the establishment of Xikang province (*Xikang jiansheng weiyuanhui*) was created (1935) and set up in Ya’an, headed by Liu Wenhui” [2019: 342]. Jagou also points out that the Nanjing government had the goal to recover the whole territory as it was during the Qing dynasty: “At the time of the promulgation of

with pleasure. For instance, in Qinghai, many Tibetans wanted to continue their autonomy and denied subduing to Muslim warlords, leading to a wave of unrest and uprising between 1917 and 1949.

In the same way, Liu’s rule did not mean the total end of autonomy of the Kham Tibetans: “While Liu’s regime left many parts of Kham untouched, it exercised real authority in significant areas of the east. In 1932, Chinese authorities in Rongdrak (Ch. Danba), Litang, Gyezur (Ch. Jiulong), and Nyakchu (Ch. Yajiang) collected a combined total 1,509 Sichuanese *dan* of grain and 10,984 *zangyang* yuan in various kinds of tax” [Lawson, 2013: 301]. And though Kham already formally belonged to China for a very long time, it was now that there were different tries to integrate the region completely in the Chinese society as part of the national republic. For instance, “Chen Zhiming, in his work tracing the evolution of the territory and history of Kham, also cites the historical and geographical records of the successive Chinese dynasties with the aim of proving that Kham had been part of China since time immemorial. In particular, by demonstrating that the history, geography, territories, and customs of Kham are different from those of Tibet, he emphasizes that Kham and Tibet are two distinctive regions [...]. In sum, there were so many publications that advocated recovery of lost territory with an emphasis on distinguishing Kham from central Tibet that this feature became one of the hallmarks of publications about Kham during the Republican period” [Tsomu, 2013: 326]. Though Yudru Tsomu seemingly tries to understand the Chinese identity of the Kham Tibetans as a Republican construction, I do not agree to this point of view, since the Kham Tibetans were aligned to the Chinese emperor before and the Qing sent bureaucrats into the region, so there was a Chinese presence, even if many officials were Manchurians, same as the ruling dynasty which consisted of Manchu. Furthermore, the Central Tibetans and the Khampa are quite distinctive, and as mentioned before, they had no common political identification, though they shared a religious identification, i.e. that of the Tibetan variety of Buddhism, which always made it possible for the Gelug and thus for the government in Lhasa since 1642 to influence the region, even if they did not govern it for most of the time. Furthermore, during the whole Republican period, it was the goal of the Republic to win back the authority over Central Tibet, replacing its autonomous rule: “Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist

its Provisional Constitution in June 1931, the Nanjing government strove to implement new policies regarding the management of all its provinces and the *de facto* integration of independent regions of Mongolia and Tibet into its territory” [ibid.]. Thus, several regions were only *de facto* independently governed, but not *de jure*, and thus, there was no formal independence of Tibet.

regime, known as the Kuomintang (KMT) [Guomindang], in particular, is portrayed as having consistently sought to defend the far-flung borders that the Chinese Republic had inherited from the Manchu empire, intending to reunify the fragmented nation and defend its endangered sovereignty over its border areas. Throughout his governance in China between 1928 and 1949, Chiang Kai-shek was unable to completely achieve his cause in Tibet” [Lin, 2006b: 210]. If it was the goal of the Republicans to topple the Tibetan autonomy, then we must assume that it was even more so the goal of the Nationalists to replace the feudal kingdoms among the Kham Tibetans step by step. Lin [2006b: 213 f.] observed that: “Chiang Kai-shek's visibly pro-active policy towards Tibet and its adjacent regions succeeded in attracting a group of ambitious Khampa elites who were at odds either with the Tibetan Government in Lhasa or with the southwestern Han Chinese warlords, to serve for his new regime in Nanking [Nanjing]. Among these non-Han minority figures, Kesang Tsering was perhaps the most prominent”. Kesang Tsering, born 1905 in Batang, originally joined the Sichuanese warlords, but when the warlord he served was defeated, he went to Nanjing in 1928 to serve for the Guomindang [cp. Lin, 2006b: 214]. “In 1929, Kesang Tsering was made a member of the KMT's newly established Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission, a ministerial organ that was responsible for the administration of Mongolia and Tibet. Considering himself a native Kham Tibetan qualified to speak for his fellow people in the Southwest, Kesang Tsering became a keen advocate of the realization of a new Xikang provincial government that was to be dominated not by Sichuan warlords, but by the Khampa natives” [ibid.]. This of course did not please the Sichuanese warlords, especially Liu Wenhui who was in charge of the Xikang region at that time. As mentioned before, in the early 1930s, the Sichuan-Tibet War took place, and thus, there was not only a political struggle between different politicians claiming to represent the Republic or being legitimate ruler over the province, but also different clashes between the Republican values propagated by the Nationalists and theocratic values defended by Dalai Lama sympathizers [for the example of Pehru monastery versus Targye monastery, see Lin, 2006b: 215].

In 1932, the Chinese warlord Liu Wenhui from Sichuan signed a treaty with the local Khampa leaders. The treaty split up Kham in two regions: West Kham and East Kham. The Western Kham areas gained Tibetan autonomy (probably under leadership from Lhasa) and are nowadays part of Tibet Autonomous Region, the Eastern Kham areas remained under Liu's leadership. But this division led to dissatisfaction, since the rich Pandatsang family had dissents with Lhasa. Pandatsang Ragpa and his family thus started a rebellion in 1934, but the revolt

failed. In 1939, he founded the Tibet Improvement Party, which was an anti-feudal, anti-communist, pro-Republican party. Thus, the Tibet Improvement Party challenged the order in Tibet, which was still under feudal reign. But there were also on-going tensions among the Gelug themselves: “The Kashag led by the 13th Dalai Lama was close to the British empire which had colonised India, while the ninth Panchen Lama — who was persecuted by the Dalai Lama’s clique — was forced to leave Tibet and go into exile in mainland China. In 1931, the Panchen Lama attended the Fourth National Congress of the Chinese Kuomintang (KMT) [Guomindang] held in Nanjing, where he upheld the position that Tibet belonged to China, and won strong support from the Nationalist government leaders as a result. In late 1936, the Nationalist government deployed troops to escort the Panchen Lama back to Tibet, but met with resistance” [Hsu, 2020]. As such, there were various attempts by the Nationalist government to reintegrate the Tibet special region. Although the attempt failed, there were still two different camps among the Tibetans. A pro-British camp and a pro-Chinese one.

In the 1930s, we also find Communist forces trying to establish themselves among the Tibetans. As Jagou points out: “One of their [i.e. the Communists] armies, the Fourth Front Army entered Xikang territory. There the communists set to work to create a revolutionary base and strove to control the Tibetan population by setting up several Tibetan revolutionary bases. The most important of these was the ‘Böpa People’s Republic’ which was established in Kandzé [Garzê] in May 1935” [2019: 343]. The People’s Republic in Garzê was only short lived and soon abandoned and the Nationalists took over power in the region again in 1937, drafting the formal borders between Xikang and Sichuan [cp. Jagou, 2019: 344]. Jagou explains that “The advance of the communists in Sichuan and Xikang clearly provided the Nationalist government with an opportunity to strengthen its relationship with the Lhasa government. After the death of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in 1933, Lhasa had agreed to meet and negotiate with representatives of the Nationalist government” [ibid.]. The reason for the aversion of Lhasa’s rulers against Communism was the fact that the Communists were against feudalism, which, as mentioned before, was still practiced in Tibet at that time.

The very remote area and scattered small population was also seen as a potential area for economic development at that time. Anyways, it is also noteworthy that the Kham region was still unknown to many people in the inner lands, and there had been quite wrong visions by the Nationalists though: “Huang Fengshen’s *Handbook* spoke of ‘limitless virgin land’ and beckoned youths to ‘create an ideal environment upon the white paper of this swathe of nature’ (1946, 192). Ignoring local ecologies and indigenous peoples, these agrarian nationalists

imagined the Inner Asian borderlands as an empty scroll upon which migrant farmers might inscribe the nation. Their optimism lacked any clear evidentiary basis” [Frank, 2019: 225]. Thus, the interest of unifying Kham under one provincial rule was not only of political, but also of economical interest for nationalist forces, based on false premises though. It seems to me that in the eyes of the Nationalists, these areas were mainly inhabited by barbarians and needed culturalization which, in their worldview, could only be achieved by the Republic. The distinctive features of the indigenous lands were thus completely ignored. But as demonstrated before, the Guomindang in the inner land received local support, both from Kham Tibetans in Xikang and by anti-feudal, anti-communist secular forces in Tibet.

In 1943, the Kham Tibetan Communist Phunstok Wangyal founded the Tibetan Communist Party, which merged into the Communist Party of China in 1949. The Tibetan Communist Party was the successor organization of the Tibetan Democratic Youth League, being founded in Lhasa in 1939. A teacher “at the special academy run by Chiang Kaishek’s Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission [...] first introduced the sixteen-year-old Phünwang to Lenin’s *Nationality and the Right to Self-Determination*” [Shakya, 2005]. As Tsering Shakya [2005] points out: “The strategy of the tiny Tibetan Communist Party under his leadership during the 1940s was twofold: to win over progressive elements among the students and aristocracy in ‘political Tibet’—the kingdom of the Dalai Lama—to a programme of modernization and democratic reform, while building support for a guerrilla struggle to overthrow Liu Wenhui’s rule in Kham”. At around the same time, most likely in 1942, Chiang Kai-shek tried to win back full control over the Tibet special region, sometimes being called the “Sino-Tibetan border crisis of 1942/43”. As Lin pointed out: “at the diplomatic level, the Sino-Tibetan border crisis brought discord between the Chinese and the British governments since the former regarded Tibet as part of China whereas the latter had long considered it to fall within British India’s sphere of influence” [Lin, 2006a: 447 f.]. Great Britain regarded Tibet to be an independent country and sought to expand its power sphere beyond the Himalayas, whereas the British view was internationally contested and “the Nationalist government eventually won the sympathy of US President Roosevelt over this issue. Facing Sino-British disagreement over Tibet’s political status, the US government continued to recognize Nationalist Chinese suzerainty in Tibet, however fictitious, weak and illusory that suzerainty was” [Lin, 2006a: 448]. Chinese discontent with Great Britain grew further, when “in July 1942, the British government of India openly welcomed the establishment of a Tibetan ‘Foreign Affairs Bureau,’ a gesture widely perceived by Chinese officials both in Lhasa and Chongqing as evidence of a ‘sinister attempt’

by the British imperialists to turn Tibet's *de facto* autonomy into a bolder *de jure* independence” [Lin, 2006a: 450]. The governor of Qinghai, Ma Bufang, received the order from Chongqing to prepare for a war with Tibet. He “viewed the move as an opportunity to advance his sphere of influence further south into the Qinghai-Tibetan no-man's land, and indeed moved thousands of his Muslim cavalry towards the border by spring 1943” [Lin, 2006a: 456]. However, Liu Wenhui in Xikang did not follow Chongqing’s order as he was suspicious of Chiang Kai-shek’s motives, and indeed, Lin [2006a] argues that the primary goal of the Chongqing government was to strengthen the Guomindang’s position in these areas, especially as Chiang Kai-shek saw it in a global view of the situation in South Asia in World War II: After key cities in Burma fell, he was also afraid that India could fall and that Japan would invade Tibet. “On hearing of Burma's fall, mass opinion in Chongqing seemed convinced that a domino effect would ensue, whereby the whole of the Indian subcontinent, Tibet and other Himalayan states would fall sooner or later into Japanese hands” [Lin, 2006a: 452]. As such, it was in Chiang’s interest that Qinghai and Xikang would be able to resist an invasion coming from Tibet: “Chiang Kai-shek understood very well that without genuine economic, political or military control over these provinces, his uprooted ‘central government’ in Chongqing was too weak to control the proposed Sino-Indian pack route, to handle national defence and regime survival on its back doorstep, and what was worse, it would very probably have to fight the Japanese on two fronts” [Lin, 2006a: 454].

To put it in a nutshell, we can say that the Kham region in Tibet was mainly under local control of Khampa leaders, in Xikang parts were governed by Chinese warlords or pro-Chinese Khampas, while some kingdoms continued to exist and exercised control over their territory within Xikang Province. In Qinghai, the Ma Clique advanced southwards expanding its *de facto* rule over Qinghai leading to heavy clashes with the self-governing Golog tribes.

In 1949, the civil war between Chinese nationalists and Communists ended. Mao Zedong took control over all provinces, while the Guomindang only controlled Taiwan Province. As Tibet was regarded part of China all the time, Mao Zedong also wanted to fully reintegrate Tibet into China. On 4 November 1949, the Tibetan regent Taktra declared unilateral independence from the People’s Republic of China [Kychanov & Melnichenko, 2005: 156], founded by Mao Zedong on 1 October in the same year. This unilateral Tibetan claim for independence was not recognized by any independent state.

Chapter 7: Tibet in the PRC

From the Battle of Qamdo to the 1st National People’s Congress

In October 1950, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) came to Tibet to fully reintegrate the Chinese special region into the newly founded People’s Republic. There has been a small resistance by a Qamdo-based army, which was led by Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, leading to the Battle of Qamdo. However, seeing that his army is inferior in power and to avoid a bloodshed, Ngapoi capitulated soon and the PLA had no more obstacles to go to Lhasa. It is also noteworthy that Ngapoi, who was of aristocratic descent, switched the sides and allied with the PRC. Ngapoi was sent by the 14th Dalai Lama as head of a delegation to Beijing in February 1951 for negotiations with the Chinese government. As Hsu [2020] points out: “In 23 May 1951, delegates of the Tibetan cabinet (Kashag) met with delegates of the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) at Qinzheng Hall in Zhongnanhai, signing what is known as the 17-point agreement, or in full, the Agreement of the Central People’s Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet. This agreement settled the question of Tibet’s status amid the complex and changeable global environment following the Xinhai Revolution of 1911, and it took place 18 months after the establishment of the PRC”. The 17-Point-Agreement ensured that Tibet would receive a great autonomy and religious freedom. The 10th Penchen Lama also showed support for the PRC, and many Tibetans hoped for an end of Tibet’s feudal reign.⁸ And here comes the point, Tibet has suffered from a feudal system in its whole history, in which kings, high officials and clerics had privileges over the normal people. Thus, the Tibetan clerics had to come to terms with the Chinese communists, who not only had a much larger army. There was also an increasing anti-feudal enlightenment among the Tibetan population, as was shown with the

⁸ As Anna Louise Strong wrote in Chapter 3 of her book *When serfs stood up in Tibet*: “Tibet’s modern history dates from May 23, 1951, when the Dalai Lama signed with Peking the Agreement of Seventeen Articles, which affirmed Tibet’s long existence ‘within the boundaries of China’ and her present ‘return to the motherland’. [...] Whatever the Dalai Lama later said about it, he needed that agreement for his own status, as much as Peking needed it for the unification of China” [1959a]. Therefore, there should be no doubt about the validity of the 17-Point-Agreement, even though the Dalai Lama “repudiated” the agreement after he left China.

founding of the Tibet Improvement Party and the Tibetan Communist Party. In 1949, the Tibetan Communist Party dissolved and merged into the Communist Party of China [cp. Goldstein et al., 2004]. It is an interesting fact that the former chairman of the Tibetan Communist Party served as translator for the Dalai Lama in the 1950s [ibid.]. On his reception, Tsering Shakya [2005] points out: “Popular views of Phünwang fall into two camps: for traditionalists he is a collaborator and the man responsible for bringing the People’s Liberation Army to Tibet; for the liberal section of the Tibetan community he is the leader we never had, and his personal loss was a loss to the nation”.

The Tibet-based General Zhang Jingwu of the Chinese central government explained the central government’s policies to Tibetans in Lhasa in 1951 [cp. Hsu, 2020] and in 1952, the Penchen Lama could finally return to Tibet, escorted by the central government of the PRC who lived in the Chinese mainland before [Hsu, 2020], due to the persecution by the Dalai Lama sympathizers. It is also very interesting that Hsu [2020] writes: “Over the following three years, there was relative peace between the PRC central government and the Tibetan local government. The Tibetan regional troops were absorbed into the PLA, while Tibet’s economy slowly recovered with the assistance of the central government”. Most intriguingly, the Dalai Lama did not leave Tibet in 1950 or 1951, but even cooperated with the CPC. Even further, both the Dalai Lama and Penchen Lama were members of the 1st National People’s Congress and they both went to Beijing in September 1954 to attend the session together [ibid.]. While they were in Beijing, Mao also convinced them to join the Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet (PCART) [ibid.]. What is fascinating once again is that it was chaired by the Dalai Lama [cp. ibid.]. In other words, the Dalai Lama was prepared to become the governor of Central Tibet and Western Kham under the CPC in form of an autonomous region and as we can see, the idea that Tibet was annexed or occupied is just a Western myth. The Chinese central government worked hand in hand with the local Tibetan rulers. In fact, the latter ones had no other choice because the Tibetan people emancipated and realized their class standpoint, which was a threat for the Tibetan aristocracy. In 1950, Western parts of Xikang (Qamdo and Nyingchi) were granted an own provincial status as Qamdo Region, independently from the eastern areas of Xikang. The Qamdo Region became part of Xizang in 1955 and Xikang was dissolved. (The eastern parts of Xikang went back to Sichuan.) In other words, the Tibet region which was placed under Lhasa’s rule became bigger now. Thus, unlike Western claims that the Chinese separated Tibet in different parts, the exact opposite is the case.

Excursion: Tibetan identities and ethnic minorities

And while in Tibetan communities outside of China, the different Tibetan groups promote a unity and solidarity, this was and is much different in their home, as Central Tibetans, Kham Tibetans and Amdo Tibetans always were in a tense relationship. Though all of them share a common religion, they have a different regional dialect, their own customs and were ruled by different local entities, leading to the fact that there is no unitary Tibetan national history, as each of the groups has its own identity and history.

The rich ethnic diversity in Tibetan lands was well researched by Hattaway [2000], and Schmitz [2023: 21-30] proposed the following classification built upon Hattaway’s research: Central Tibetans, Kham Tibetans, Amdo Tibetans, West Tibetans, Gansu Tibetans, Golog Tibetans, and South Tibetans. The Kaqê, Pemako Tibetans, Shanyan Tibetans, Xiangcheng, Baima and Walang remain unclassified. The Qiangic-speaking Tibetans, i.e. Qiangic peoples which are classified as Tibetans by the Chinese government are not included in this classification as they are not really Tibetan. “The Ngari, Balti (mostly Pakistan), and Ladakhi (mostly India) form the West Tibetans; also the Nubra and Changpa can be included here, as they both speak Ladakhi dialects. [...] The Hbrogpa, Rongba, and Rongmahbrogpa can be classified as Amdo-Tibetan; the Eastern Khampa, Northern Khampa, Southern Khampa, and Western Khampa can be identified as Kham-Tibetans; the Lhasa (Central/ Wü) Tibetans and Xigazê (Zang) Tibetans can be classified as Central Tibetans. The Boyu, Jone, Zhugqu and Tebbu are all native to Gannan in Gansu and therefore could be called Gannan or Gansu Tibetans for simplification, though I prefer the term Gansu Tibetan. The Hdzanggur and Yonzhi are seemingly very close to the Golog or might even be a Golog tribe and therefore will be included to the Golog Tibetans. The Groma, Kyerung and Sherpa will be counted to the Southern Tibetans, which have in common that they either speak a dialect of the Dzongkha-Sikkimese branch, Sherpa-Jirel branch or Kyirong-Kagate branch. Groma belongs to the Dzongkha-Sikkimese branch, Sherpa to the Sherpa-Jirel branch and Kyerung to the Kyirong-Kagate branch” [Schmitz, 2023: 22].

With the establishment of the PRC, the different ethnic minorities were intensively researched and classified. The Tibetans in whole China are called ‘Zangzu’ (藏族) now, going back to the traditional area ‘Zang’ and its capital Xigazê in which the Penchen Lama has its seat. This should not be surprising, since the Han-Chinese always had good relations with the Zang region, so from time to time they became representative for the whole ethnic group. Most Qiangic-speaking groups are classified as Tibetans, as they share Tibetan Buddhism as religion, even

though they are quite distinct. The probably most famous ethnic Qiangic group are the Gyalrong, speaking Gyalrong (嘉绒), Ergong (尔龚) and Lavrung (拉乌戎) language, all the three being classified as Gyarongic languages by Sun Hongkai in 2001. Ergong is also known as Horpa or Stau language. Jesse P. Gates has conducted a lot of research in the field of West Gyalrongic languages [see for instance Gates, 2012]. The distinct Tangut language, which was the main language of the Western Xia, also belonged to the Qiangic languages. The Northern Qiang in Sichuan are classified as an own ethnic nationality by the PRC. These include the Cimulin, Luhua, Mawo, and Yadu [Hattaway, 2021: 314]. The Southern Qiang such as the Bolozi are classified as Tibetan according to a table in Hattaway [ibid.]. Other Qiangic ethnicities, such as the Queyu and Zhaba are classified as Tibetan [ibid.], though the Pumi are only classified as Tibetan in Sichuan, while they are an official nationality in Yunnan.

The Lhoba and Mönpa mainly live in the south of Wü-Zang, in southwestern parts of Kham and partly in the very north of South Tibet. Note that -pa/-wa/-ba is the Tibetan ending for ‘people’, thus the Lhoba refers to a heterogenous ethnic group which lived in Lhoyü, the land of the “Lho”, and the Mönpa lived in Mönnyü, “the land of the Mön”. The Lhoba includes speakers of Tani languages, such as the Adi, who mainly live in Mêdog County in Nyingchi City, the Bokar, who live mainly in Mainling and Mêdog Counties in Nyingchi City, and the Damu, who live in Damu village in Mêdog County, as well as the Tangnam, Ashin and Shimon in the Indian-Chinese border area, and speakers of Digaro languages, such as the Digaro and Mishmi, who live in Zayü County in Nyingchi City. The Deng who live in Zayü County are usually not included to the Lhoba, as far as I know. The Mönpa speak a set of related languages, which are spoken mainly in China and Bhutan, such as Tshangla language. There is commonly a distinction between the Cona Mönpa, though some of them live in Mêdog [see Hattaway, 2000: 361], and the Mêdog Mönpa who mainly live in Mêdog County and who are linguistically distinct from the Cona Mönpa [Hattaway, 2000: 362]. In Cona County in Shannan Prefecture, the townships Lai, Gomri, Gyiba and Narmang are dedicated to the Mönpa who make up the majority in these entities. Mêdog is also home of a Pemakö dialect which seems to be a dialect of Tshangla under heavy Tibetan influence. Whether the speakers are part of the Cona Mönpa, Mêdog Mönpa or should be identified as Pemakö Tibetans is beyond my knowledge. I can also not tell whether the term Pemakö Tibetans is meant synonymous with one of the two Mönpa groups or whether the Pemakö Tibetans are a distinct group.

There might be a few Thami in or around the town of Zhangmu in Nyalam County in Xigazê City. Zhangmu lies directly next to the border to Nepal. The Daman people live in Gyirong

County in Xigazê City. They are believed to be descendants from the Nepalese Gurkha army who did not return to Nepal after the failed invasions. Since they lived in very remote areas – mostly as slaves – and only made up a very small number, their existence was long not known. As they had no citizenship, the Chinese State Council approved in 2003 that they would be granted Chinese citizenship which they received until 2005 [China Tibet Online, 2018]. Furthermore, the Daman received their own village [ibid.]. The Kaqê (Muslim Tibetans) are classified as Hui. The Sogwo Arig (Amdo Mongols) speak Amdo Tibetan, but I would regard them rather as Tibetan-speaking Mongols than Tibetan in the narrow sense.

But there are also plenty of other ethnic groups living among the Tibetans. In Dêqên in Yunnan, which is inhabited by the Southern Khampa, one can also find the Lisu, Yi, Naxi, Bai, Pumi, and Miao among others. Weixi County is dedicated to the Lisu which make up the majority within the county and in Dêqên County, Tuoding and Xiaruo townships are dedicated to the Lisu. In the city of Shangri-La, Sanba township is dedicated to the Naxi. In Sichuan, Garzê Prefecture is dedicated to the Tibetans, but the region is also home to Qiang, Yi and Hui among others. In Jiulong County, the following townships are dedicated to the Yi people: Duoluo, E'er, Sanya, Taka, Wanba, Xiaojin, and Zi'er. The Yi make up the majority in the county. Ngawa Prefecture is dedicated to the Tibetans and Qiang. The Qiang make up 90 % of the population of Mao County. The prefecture is also home to a significant number of Hui. Jin'an and Shili townships in Sungqu County are dedicated to them.

In Qinghai, only Xining City and Haidong City are not dedicated to an ethnic minority, while the other prefectures in Qinghai are autonomous prefectures, however, there are autonomous counties in both cities. Datong County in Xining is dedicated to the Hui. Within Datong, two townships are dedicated to the Tibetans. In Haidong, the following counties are dedicated to the Hui: Hualong, Huzhu and Minhe. Xunhua County is dedicated to the Salars. In Minhe County there is one township dedicated to the Tibetans, while in Huzhu County there are two townships dedicated to the Tibetans, and in Hualong County there are four townships dedicated to the Tibetans. There are also four townships dedicated to the Tibetans in Xunhua County, but the majority population of the county are the Salars. Other ethnic minorities which are widespread in Qinghai are the Mongols, Monguors (Tu), Yugur, Bonan, and Dongxiang. In Gansu, Gannan Prefecture is dedicated to the Tibetans. Other ethnic groups in the prefecture among others are the Hui, Tu and Dongxiang. Within Wuwei City in Gansu, one can find the Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County. Other ethnic minorities in this county include the Tu, Hui, and Mongols.

As we can see, the Tibetans do not live in an ethnically homogenous area, but share the land with plenty of other peoples, but also different religions. While the Tibetans, Mongols, Tu, and Yugurs follow mainly Tibetan Buddhism, the Hui, Bonan, and Dongxiang are Muslims. The Lhoba follow their own ethnic religion, and the Han follow mainly Chinese religions or Buddhism. Christianity is very scarce in Qinghai and Xizang. We have to keep these demographic facts in mind, if we want to understand the complexity of modern-day Tibet and its development. As such, one has to see the heterogeneity among the Tibetans, the interaction of the Tibetans with other ethnic groups, the religious sphere (especially Buddhism and Islam) and the local history which build a complex situation in different parts of the Tibetan-inhabited areas. Therefore, it is important to overcome stereotypes which are still very widespread. For instance, “It is commonly believed that to be Tibetan is to be Buddhist, and conversely, that to be Muslim precludes one from being Tibetan. Yet, evidence of sustained and permanent Muslim Tibetan communities in Tibetan society for centuries is widespread” [Atwill, 2014: 33]. Even further, it is important to keep in mind that there were also many Christian missionaries on Tibetan soil, not few were martyred.⁹ Thus, acts of extremism by Buddhist lamas against Christians should also not be forgotten, and the myth of a harmonious, peaceful coexistence of the different ethnic and religious groups has to be further deconstructed.

The Way to the Democratic Reforms in 1959

Both the Dalai Lama and Penchen Lama were present at the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in December 1954 [see Hsu, 2020]. In early 1955, “the Seventh Plenary Meeting of China’s State Council passed a decision on the establishment of the PCART” [ibid.]. At that time, the Dalai Lama met the Indian prime minister in Beijing. In April 1956, “the PCART’s inaugural meeting was held at the Lhasa Hall [...] with Vice Premier Chen Yi

⁹ As Li points out: “By virtue of religious power, rulers of the old Tibet also brought about a relatively closed cultural environment, in which any new thought was prohibited. Any new thought or concept in violation with the religious doctrine, or in violation with interests and concepts of the three major seigniors would be regarded as heresy, and would be excluded and jugulated” [2009: 48]. Therefore, it should not surprise us that there were many Buddhist temples which were hostile towards Christianity and there were Buddhist hardliners fighting against converts. Many parts of Tibet were under theocratical rule or under strong religious influence, and therefore, there was no freedom of religion.

leading the central government delegation” [ibid.]. Ginsburgs and Mathos described the role and goal of the PCART very accurate: To establish Tibetan autonomy, the Committee aimed “gradually to assume ever greater public responsibilities, lay the groundwork for the official establishment of a single Tibetan autonomous region and implement concrete measures for the formation of a single region” [1959: 251], ensure coordinated local development, foster unity “by bringing together delegates from the various strata of the population” [ibid.], enhance education and anti-imperialism efforts, protect all residents’ rights and properties, and uphold religious freedom and the interests of Lamaist monasteries, guided by legal and constitutional frameworks [ibid.]. The question that one has in mind is of course: Why should the theocratic rulers of Tibet work together with the CPC? On the one hand, the PLA was much stronger than the scattered Tibetan forces which had no chance to wage any war, and on the other hand, the Committee did not work on abolishing religious positions per se, so the theocratic rulers would still be in charge of Tibet. We can also see a double strategy from the Chinese side: on the one hand, reforms should be conducted which free the Tibetan serfs and slaves from their misery, on the other hand, the central government did not abolish the theocratic leaders of the region, since Buddhism played a very crucial role in the people’s everyday lives, shaping the design of the majority Tibetan society, as other religions were only small minorities.

However, Tibet never was the peaceful paradise in the past for the Tibetans as is often described in the Western world. As Neuss [2009] explains: “Until 1959 [...] around 98% of the population was enslaved in serfdom. Drepung monastery, on the outskirts of Lhasa, was one of the world's largest landowners with 185 manors, 25,000 serfs, 300 pastures, and 16,000 herdsmen. High-ranking lamas and secular landowners imposed crippling taxes, forced boys into monastic slavery and pilfered most of the country's wealth – torturing disobedient serfs by gouging out their eyes or severing their hamstrings”. Tashi Tsering writes in his autobiography *The Struggle for Modern Tibet* “that China brought long-awaited hope when it laid claim to Tibet in 1950” [ibid.]. And as Li points out: “Feudal land tenure and serfs were attached to personal occupations of serfowners, which was the ruling foundation of feudal serf system in Tibet. Before the democratic reform in 1959, the three major seigniors in Tibet, namely, feudal officials, lords and temple monks, occupied all Tibetan land, including arable land, pasture, forests, wasteland, mountain ranges, and rivers, etc.” [2009: 46].

Furthermore, “Tibetan serfs and slaves were classified into three hierarchies, namely, ‘Khral-pa’, ‘Dui-chun’ and ‘Lang-sein’” [Li, 2009: 46]. The latter were slaves who had no property and had to work for free for the slaveowner [ibid.]. “They were private property of their owners

because they were occupied by them all their life and were dominated by them at will. They might be resold, mortgaged, given as a present, and granted at will” [ibid.]. The Dui-chun lived their life as helpers and also had seignors [ibid.]. In contrast to that, Khral-pa were serfs which “had some production materials, while slaves hadn’t” [ibid.]. Thus, the CPC wanted to conduct a transition but based on the reality on ground and the government offered the necessary means. In case of financial difficulty “the Dalai Lama's Government, the Panchen Lama's Council of *Khen-Pos* and the National-Liberation Committee of the Chamdo [Qamdo] area were allowed to appeal for assistance directly to the State Council” according to Article 13 [Ginsburgs & Mathos, 1959: 253]. As such, the Committee included the region of Wü, Zang and the provincial-level Qamdo Region, the latter one being the former western region of Xikang until 1950. The new Tibet Autonomous Region which was to be created therefore should unify many previously fragmented regions being hostile to each other and sought to bring a permanent peace to Tibet. Ginsburgs & Mathos [1959: 253] described correctly that the Chinese central government enlarged its power within the Committee from time to time. I argue, however, that this was supposed to be to conduct reforms. The long-term goal was to conduct reforms from which the proletariat would profit, and this means the peasants and craftsmen, which were slaves and serfs and a liberation from serfdom was inevitable to reach this goal. On the other hand, the central government seemingly did not plan to abolish the traditional rulers as rulers, since the CPC relied on them and their authority among the people, they were meant to change their role from slaveowners to revolutionaries. It is noteworthy that the systematical change was only a question of time as Tibet was a feudal, backwarded region and already before the establishment of the PRC, anti-feudal values were brought to Tibet, such as the Republican values promoted by the Tibet Improvement Party, and the Communist values spread by the Tibetan Communist Party. With the reach of these modern values, the old feudal, theocratical values were challenged and a secular sphere was introduced to Tibet which did not exist before in this form. Thus, an enlightenment of the people was in reach, and the power of the lamas already began to shake. Thus, “In 1959, when the Chinese government declared thorough abolishment of feudal serf system and a democratic reform in Tibet, millions of Tibetan serfs cheered at their liberation, singing and dancing. For the first time, they had their own land, and their own property” [Li, 2009: 48].

It is important to emphasize that the 1959 uprising was not a general Tibetan uprising against the Chinese, but an unrest organized by the biggest serfowners [Strong, 1959b]. “As Britain’s power waned, some of this group still kept the British connection, others transferred to rising

Indian capitalists, of the type Peking called ‘Indian expansionists,’ still others aspired to connections with America. [...] They promoted an ‘independent Tibet’ in which they should rule under Washington’s protection, in the style of Syngman Rhee of South Korea or Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam” [ibid.]. Furthermore, Anna Louise Strong outlines in her book *Tibetan Interviews* in 1959: “The March rebellion in Lhasa did not break from a clear sky. It was a storm that smouldered long, giving many thunders of approach. I have many accounts of eye-witnesses and participants, the most complete of which is from Captain Yang King-hwei of the People’s Liberation Army, who left Szechwan [Sichuan] in 1950 on the long, slow approach to Lhasa, reaching it in October of 1951. He was stationed there eight years and took part in the Lhasa fighting in March 1959. [...] Captain Yang replied that ‘ever since the arrival of the army in Lhasa it was clear that some of the upper strata were hostile. In 1953, a top member of the local government named Lokongwa organized a demand that the army and the Hans be driven out, but the Dalai Lama dismissed him and he left Tibet. During these years the people have shown that they want a change, but many of the upper class hinder reform, wishing to keep serfdom. At the beginning of 1958 we began to hear of a secret conspiracy that planned a rebellion. Now the people are giving us the details.’” [ibid.]. Captain Yang explained to Strong that “Air-drops of weapons began in 1958 in the Loka Area south of Lhasa. Possibly this was from American bases in Thailand or from Chiang’s forces still in the Burma hills; to fly from Taiwan would be rather far. Disorders increased by those defeated rebels from other provinces, who were looting the local people in Tibet. [...] In 1958 they also began raiding our transport” [cited after Strong, 1959b]. On the events surrounding the so-called Tibetan Uprising, Strong wrote in her book: “‘The bandits [i.e. upper-class people who fought for keeping up theocracy] are raising havoc through the city,’ said Shan Chao’s diary for March 15th. ‘The worst atrocity was at the nunnery near Jokhan Monastery; not one of the scores of young nuns escaped being raped. The bandits also broke into many shops and carried off goods. In the afternoon incense was being burned in front of Potala. The rebels were forcing the women to swear to drive out the Hans and “establish Tibetan independence.”’ On the 16th the diary reports that a tall, dark Tibetan news photographer of the Central Newsreel Studio drove around and made documentary pictures of rebel demonstrations and of fortifications they were digging in various places and of posters that called for the liquidation of the Hans. [...] On the 18th word came that the Dalai Lama was missing. [...] Ordinary citizens of Lhasa were coming to the Working Committee to complain that the rebels were ‘press-ganging people,’ beating to death on the spot men who refused to join them” [1959b]. The situation became tense the following days, but the

stronghold temples of the rebels were not destroyed. As Strong reported, “the artillery had orders not to hit Norbu Lingka, Potala or Jokhan. They were shelling concealed pill-boxes outside Potala at its base. Our Tibetan workers were amazed. They thought it a very ‘polite’ way to fight a battle” [ibid.]. On 22 March 1959, all rebels in Potala and Jokhang surrendered, and already on 23 March 1959, the people were already walking freely again, according to the diary which Strong [1959b] cited. Thus, the peaceful liberation of the Tibetan people was successfully fulfilled.

As a result, the Dalai Lama and his loyalists had to leave the country and most stayed in India. In contrast to that, the Penchen Lama stayed in China, and it has to be pointed out that he was a CPC member for the rest of his life. It is an interesting observation that the Wü and Zang region was historically always in competition and there was hardly peace, and as such, the Dalai Lama and Penchen Lama were usually hostile to each other.¹⁰ We can also make the observation that the Penchen Lama traditionally supports the Chinese, while the Dalai Lama usually served an anti-Chinese fraction.

As shown before, it is wrong to state that China annexed Tibet and dethroned the aristocracy. After Tibet was fully reintegrated within China in 1951, the Dalai Lama had political ambitions within the PRC and even was granted chairman of the PCART. He represented the Tibetan people in Beijing on different congresses together with the Penchen Lama and visited different regions in China in the early 1950s. When he left China, the country was in its Great Leap

¹⁰ This is given evidence by the description of Anna Louise Strong who wrote in Chapter 3 of her book *When serfs stood up in Tibet*: “The relations of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Erdeni to each other and to the Chinese Emperors, were far too complex and changing to be briefly summarized. Emperor Chien Lung [Qianlong] (1736-1795) favored the Panchen, and built him a palace in Jehol next to the emperor's own summer palace where each summer he received the tribute of the nomads, with the Panchen Erdeni's advice and help. Again in the mid-nineteenth century, the Panchen Erdeni was the strong man of Tibet, who sent to the emperor for an ‘investigator’ when the regent in Lhasa was murdering successive Dalai Lamas before they reached the age to assume power. [...] In the present century, the Dalai Lama was long dominant, and the view grew in the West that he was overlord also of the territories of the Panchen Erdeni. This was because the Thirteenth Dalai Lama was a man of ability — the only Dalai Lama besides the Fifth who ever exerted real political power, — and because he had the support of the British in the years when China was weak” [1959a]. As such, there was not even no unified Tibet but also no unified Central Tibet with the regions of Wü and Zang each having their own governments. Strong wrote on this: “The *kashag* was a small cabinet of nobles, known as *kaloons*, who formed the secular arm of government under the Dalai Lama; it was authorized by emperor Chien Lung [Qianlong]. A similar body, known as the *kampo lija*, was authorized for the Panchen's territories” [ibid.].

Forward, which is known as “Three Years of Hunger”, as three out of the five years of the campaign were marked by a famine. The PRC was still a young state and only existed for a few years at that time, so Nationalist forces still tried to undermine the power in Beijing. For instance, in Qinghai, Gansu and other provinces, Islamic groups which were fond of the Guomindang conducted insurgent activities from 1950 to 1958 which peaked in the Xunhua Incident in 1958. Many of the insurgents served the army of the Ma Clique before, and it is assumed that the Guomindang dropped arms to support the insurgency. We can assume that the same happened in Tibet in 1958, Strong [1959b] states that her sources all agreed that there was a military support of the Guomindang to the Tibetan elite. Just one year earlier, the Anti-Rightist campaign targeted the conservative groups in the party, and indeed, the Tibetan elite must have feared even more that the reforms of the CPC would also soon advance in Tibet. The difficult situation and troubles during the Great Leap Forward therefore were likely seen to be the ideal chance by the Tibetan elite to stage an unrest with the aim of keeping up feudalism. Thus, to put it in a nutshell, we have to agree to Strong’s assessment that “Foreign headlines about ‘suppressing unarmed, peaceful Tibetans’ bring grim smiles to those who know Tibet. No feudal land is peaceful, but few so bristle with arms as did Tibet” [ibid.].

In India, the Dalai Lama loyalists organized under the Dalai Lama in a pseudo-government, a so-called “government in exile”, which is not recognized as legitimate government by any UN member state, and thus, has no international recognition and no relevance. In 1965, the Tibet Autonomous Region was officially established and it is internationally uncontested as integral part of China and thus, the government of the TAR is the legitimate government. It is also worthy to point out that the China Tibet Broadcasting was finally installed in 1959, broadcasting radio programs in Tibetan language (Central Tibetan dialect) throughout Xizang. CTB also started to broadcast a radio channel in Mandarin in 1973 and in Kham Tibetan in 2001. Broadcasting in Amdo Tibetan dialect in Qinghai already began in 1952 (which continues today as part of the Qinghai Radio & TV Network), making information accessible to the very remote areas.

The Sino-Indian War

In 1953, Indian forces marched into southern parts of Tibet and occupied the Tawang area. These include parts of Mêdog County and Zayü County in Nyingchi City, and parts of Cona County, Lhünzê County, Lhozhag County and Nagarzê County in Shannan Prefecture. This led to an uprising by tribal leaders because the area was traditionally self-administered by local tribal leaders and the Tawang monastery, and thus highly autonomous. In 1954, China and India negotiated the Sino-Indian Agreement which includes the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. In 1959, tensions became stronger since India accommodated the 14th Dalai Lama and his loyalists. In 1960, Indian and Chinese officials met to solve the border dispute, but the negotiations failed [cp. Sen, 2014: 1307]. The Indian government proclaimed its “Forward Policy” to advance into Chinese territories building outposts on territory which they claimed to belong to India, which factually led to a division of the Mönpa and Lhoba lands between India and China. This division exists until today and separates these two ethnic groups. In 1962, the Indian military set up the Dhola Post, advancing north of the McMahon Line, eventually leading to the Sino-Indian War. “In India, the elite consensus coupled with effective media management has led citizens to believe that India was an innocent victim of Chinese aggression in 1962 and that China has occupied thousands of square miles of territory that legitimately belongs to India. Indeed, politicians, military officials, journalists and scholars in India have said and written as much along these lines” [Srikanth, 2012: 38]. But in fact, the land which India occupied was self-administered tribal territory which is traditionally part of Tibet, and the Tibet special region (now the Tibet Autonomous Region) is part of China. Thus, it is Chinese territory. Any claim which goes back to legitimizing the border with the Simla accord of 1914 has to be refuted, because “It is now a well-known fact that China never ratified the Shimla Agreement of 1914 and that the British officials attempted to incorporate the McMahon Line as the border between Tibet and India without China's knowledge” [Srikanth, 2012: 38 f.]. As Sen points out: “Neville Maxwell states that McMahon had been instructed not to sign bilaterally with Tibetans if China refused, but he did so without the Chinese representative present and then kept the declaration secret” [2014: 1314]. Thus, “Partly because of relentless nationalist and imperialist propaganda and partly due to the legal or informal ban on information that contradicts nationalist assumptions, common citizens believe that China mounted an unprovoked attack on India” [Srikanth, 2012: 39].

The border war began on 20 October 1962. Within a few days, China recaptured Tawang and after reoccupying the territory “Zhou Enlai appealed personally to Nehru. He offered a ceasefire and withdrawal of the PLA to positions behind the McMahon Line, calling for India, in return, to end its forward probing and open negotiations ‘to seek a friendly settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question’” [Maxwell, 1999: 913]. However, Nehru rejected Zhou’s offer instantly [ibid.]. “Three weeks later a second Chinese offensive took only three days to crush all Indian resistance in the disputed areas [...]. Panicking, Nehru appealed for American military intervention in terms so hysterical that the Indian ambassador delivering the message wept with humiliation. The PLA troops stopped their advance when they reached China's claim lines” [ibid.]. After that, China declared a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew the troops back behind the McMahon Line [ibid.]. Seemingly, China’s goal was to bring India back to the table to continue negotiations, however, Nehru did not move, and so the dispute continued and exists until today with India keeping the Chinese territory occupied.

Tibet in the Cultural Revolution

The next big event in Tibet’s history was the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. “When Jiang Qing and her allies complained in late 1965 that various cultural productions were openly criticizing the Communist leadership, Mao decided that China needed a new revolutionary movement. Beginning in May 1966, Jiang Qing’s allies purged key figures in the cultural bureaucracy and criticized writers of articles seen as critical of Mao” [Spence, 2007]. The Cultural Revolution then started after Nie Yuanzi published a big-character poster in her university in Beijing, “criticizing Lu Ping, head of Peking University, for refusing to revise the curriculum and teaching methods [...] Following that big character poster put up by the young instructor of philosophy in Peking University, Red Guards appeared in schools and universities, leading the movement to criticize state and party bureaucrats” [Lai, n.d]. On 19 August 1966, the Cultural Revolution was celebrated in Lhasa by thousands of people, and few days later, Tibetan students started marching on the streets to take over control. What followed was an outraged pro-Mao youth marching through Tibet, destroying everything they deemed counterrevolutionary. As Wang sums it up: “At the height of the Cultural Revolution hundreds

of thousands of Tibetans turned upon the temples they had treasured for centuries and tore them to pieces, rejected their religion and became zealous followers of” Mao Zedong [2002: 79]. Like in other parts of China, the Cultural Revolution in Tibet also was a struggle for power among different factions and same as in other regions of China, the Red Guards fought openly against each other defending the party cadre they thought to be the true Mao supporter. In Lhasa, two opposing Red Guard groups fought on the streets. It has to be pointed out that the very majority of the Red Guards in Tibet were ethnic Tibetans, and not Han Chinese. Wang even argues that ““only a limited number of Han (ethnic Chinese) Red Guards actually reached Tibet. Even if some did participate in destroying temples, their actions could only have been symbolic’ (Wang Lixiong 2002: 97) for, as Wang argues, most of the destruction was done by Rebels of Tibetan ethnic origin” [Gao, 2008: 24]. But why was the Cultural Revolution hitting Tibet so hard? At first, the Cultural Revolution strongly inherited anti-religious elements and as the Tibetan society is strongly intertwined with religious virtues and activities and as the well-established religious authorities were understood as feudal element of the old Tibet, it therefore bore the perfect projection screen for the Red Guards who saw Tibetan Buddhism an integral part of Tibet’s miseries. “Wang explains Tibetan participation in the destruction of their own religious institutions by arguing that these Tibetans believed in Mao and his ideas and even took Mao as their god” [Gao, 2008: 26]. Some Tibetans believed at that time “that Mao was a living Buddha” [Gao, 2008: 27], because he liberated the Tibetans from serfdom. Thus, the anti-religious nature of the Cultural Revolution was interpreted religiously in Tibet as the old authorities were finally defeated and a new authority replaced them: “The support of the ‘emancipated serfs’ was perceived rather as evidence of Marxism’s universal validity [in Beijing]. In reality, however, it was impossible to overthrow centuries of worship without playing the role of a new god who came trampling on the old one, proclaiming the dawn of a new era and instituting a new system of punishment and rewards” [Wang, 2002: 94 f.].

Today, the Cultural Revolution is heavily debated and controversially discussed. For instance, Zhang [2012] came to the conclusion that “Now in the whole of China, no one does not admit that the Cultural Revolution was a disaster. This disaster not only affected every corner of the interior, even the remote areas of Tibet were not missed” [translation mine]. In contrast to that, Gao argues that “there were many constructive and creative developments during the Cultural Revolution that have been ignored or denigrated by the post-Cultural Revolution narrative; and that the destruction of culture and tradition has been exaggerated” [Gao, 2008: 9]. After Mao Zedong’s death, successor Deng Xiaoping ended the Cultural Revolution and became the lead

figure of enormous reforms. He dared to openly criticize Mao’s politics without diminishing Mao’s authority as father of the nation of the New China. This period is known as *Boluan Fanzheng*, meaning “eliminating chaos and returning to a normal state”. Many temples were restored and the religious repression was loosened. Tibetan Buddhism is since then practiced in the many monasteries again and religious scriptures are reprinted and spread. When the Cultural Revolution is discussed today, Tibet is often brought up as prime example for cultural genocide and suppression of local people. However, Gao refers to “Sautman (2006) who argues that the Western world in particular has been hugely misled by claims of the Tibetan exiles that ethnic or cultural genocide has been committed there, and that the same conception that should inform our opinions about China generally applies with regard to Tibet” [Gao, 2008: 9]. Therefore, the discussion in the West on this issue is often biased. In interviews with Tibetans on the Cultural Revolution conducted by Wei Se, “Many of the interviewees hold that there was not much ethnic conflict in the era of Mao. One interviewee of Hui ethnic background states that the Hans and the Tibetans were the same in making revolution” [cited after Gao, 2008: 27]. And finally, “The interview findings by Wei Se give support to scholars like Sautman who refutes the claims of cultural genocide in Tibet (Sautman 2001, 2006) that was supposedly carried out by the Chinese” [ibid.]. As Wang points out correctly, the CPC today has a negative attitude towards the Cultural Revolution “and which, it hopes, the rest of the world will soon forget” [2002: 79]. For Tibetan participants, recalling the Cultural Revolution is a painful memory they rather prefer not to discuss, or which they attempt to dismiss by claiming that they acted ‘under pressure from the Han’ [cp. ibid.]. However, as discussed above, the Tibetan youth back then voluntarily participated out of their own conviction believing that Mao would be a new buddha and Mao enjoyed a god-like position. Nonetheless, it cannot be ignored that the Cultural Revolution itself was a violent era which brought much pain: the Red Guards inflicted terror in the whole of China and these ten years which are known in China as “Ten Years of Chaos” today took the life of many innocent people.

Tibet today

A very important task of the Chinese government after reintegrating Tibet into its territory was to promote education, though “the Cultural Revolution represented a major setback” [Ram, 2000]. Ram [2000] explains that “BEFORE 1951, Tibet had nothing like a modern educational system. Monastic education, going back a thousand years and focussing on the study of Buddhist scriptures and to some extent the Tibetan language, was the leading form of education”. (Though it seems that in the Republican era, there have been a few schools led by the Mongolian and Tibetans Affair Commission which targeted Tibetans, but I do not have enough information on this.) After Tibet’s liberation from feudalism, modern education flourished and “According to official educational statistics, in 1999 the Tibet Autonomous Region had 820 primary schools, 101 middle schools, and 3,033 teaching centres with a combined enrolment of 354,644 students” [ibid.]. A modern criticism is the existence of boarding schools and the adoption of the Chinese curriculum. But there are also good counterarguments: First, since some Tibetans live extremely rural and scattered, boarding schools seem to be the most convenient solution to offer education to everyone. Second, ethnic minorities have special rights in China, which also means that there are subjects instructed in Tibetan besides subjects in Chinese language within majorly Tibetan inhabited areas. However, the extent to which the Chinese language should be present has always been a debate among Tibetans, yet such a debate does not mean that there is a Sinicization (Hanisation), it just means that there are discussions on which subjects suit best to be instructed in Chinese and which suit better to be instructed in Tibetan. Indeed, the Chinese language is a door-opener for many young Tibetans who move away from their rural, scarcely populated home area into the big cities all over China, where many of them adopt urban life and are rather “invisible”. Thus, highly educated Tibetans profit very much from China’s economic development in the pursuit of having a better future than their ancestors. Another common key theme of pro-separatist voices “is that China's 'colonialism' in Tibet is expressed in a state-sponsored policy of population transfer and Hanisation, that is, bringing in large numbers of Han settlers, administrators, and military and security personnel so as to swamp sparsely populated Tibet and render Tibetans a minority in their own land” [ibid.]. This is fueling “international anti-Chinese and anti-Communist propaganda in relation to Tibet” [ibid.]. In fact, as of 2011, “The number of permanent residents in southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region has topped 3 million, at least 90 percent of whom are native Tibetans” [Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2011].

Despite supporting education and local development, a third big step was the opening of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway: “Tibet was the last province in China to accommodate trains, due to its high altitude and complex terrain. In August 2006, with the opening of the Golmud–Lhasa section of the Qinghai–Tibet Railway (QTR), trains were introduced to Tibet” [Li et al., 2018]. Before that, railway service was only available from Xining to Golmud, after that section was opened in 1984 [ibid.]. As Li et al. point out: “The opening to traffic of the QTR effectively relieved the pressure of highway transportation. Railway freight kilometers were higher than highway freight kilometers in 1990–2013, significantly reducing transport pollution and improving the sustainability of transportation system and economic development in the Third Pole. In addition, the QTR has been termed a green railway and is carefully managed to ensure sustainability on the Tibetan Plateau” [ibid.]. As such, the Qinghai-Tibet Railway has an important function to connect Lhasa with the rest of China and thus to make it possible for Tibetans to effectively participate in economic life outside of their area. The Chinese government therefore has a strong interest in improving Tibet’s economy and advancing Tibet’s progress.

In contrast to that, reports in the West often claim that there would be a suppression of Tibet and when an unrest broke out in 2008, it was labeled a Tibetan unrest against the Chinese. However, the context was completely misunderstood. At first, the Tibetans living in China are also Chinese citizens, and therefore, it cannot be called anti-Chinese. However, it also was not really an anti-Han uprising. In fact, it was of religious nature and can mainly be regarded as an anti-Muslim unrest. As Demick [2008] noted correctly: “Among China’s dozens of minorities, few get along as badly as Tibetans and Muslims. Animosity has played a major — and largely unreported — role in the clashes” during the 14 March riots. “During the March 14 riots in the Tibetan region’s capital, Lhasa, many of the shops and restaurants attacked were Muslim-owned. A mob tried to storm the city’s main mosque and succeeded in setting fire to the front gate. Shops and restaurants in the Muslim quarter were destroyed” [ibid.]. As Demick noted, “The riot began with a customer’s complaint about her dinner” [ibid.]. So I think it was completely wrong to stylize the riots as “anti-Chinese protest”. It was clearly a result of the tensions among Buddhists and Muslims which exist in Tibet since long ago. Anti-Muslim incidents in Tibet are not rare, but there are only scarce reports about them. A special focus on Muslim Tibetans can be seen in the researches conducted by Atwill, who has made the Muslim community in Tibet visible, as many people immediately associate Tibet with Buddhism,

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

especially Gelug Buddhism, ignoring the diversity of Tibet today, though indeed, Muslims and Christians just make up a tiny minority among Tibetans.

In the same way, several unrests in between 1987 and 1989 seem to be mainly fueled by religious figures, as the protests were started by Buddhist monks, and thus it is possible that Buddhist fundamentalists in their wish to recreate a theocratic society were the sparks of the event. It does not seem to me that it was a movement led either by peasants and common people or by high school and university students (the latter was the case during the pro-Mao Cultural Revolution, when students in Tibet formed Red Guards and showed their support for Mao Zedong). So here again, the religious component has to be emphasized and it must be at least questioned in how far it was a popular movement.

Thus, we can put in a nutshell that Tibet developed very much in the last 30 years, giving the Tibetan people modern education and economic progress. Tibetans are well integrated in the Chinese society and the ethnic groups live peacefully together today. However, religious fundamentalism remains a threat to that harmony, sparking tensions at times. In the same way, there are foreign campaigns which want to destabilize China. Many foreign claims, however, seem to me to be anti-Chinese propaganda and therefore do not depict the truth.

Chapter 8: Religious matters and problems throughout history

Buddhism and Bön

Religious problems and tensions occurred very early in Tibetan history. When Buddhism was introduced in the 640s through the Chinese Princess Wencheng who was married to Songtsen Gampo, the range of Buddhism was mostly limited to the aristocracy. However, Buddhism and Bön, the native religion, started to be in a competitive state as soon as the first mentioned arrived. At that time, Buddhism was already a highly developed religion in the Chinese dynasties, the native Tibetan religion was still in the stage of magic (which is known as “Black Bön” nowadays), but it would develop into a shamanic religion during the centuries.

Despite that, a common Tibetan narrative is that Padmasambhava introduced Buddhism at around 750. But in fact, “The master’s role in the Tibetan imagination grew and evolved in dramatic ways during the ninth to eleventh centuries, so that by the time of his first complete biography, the twelfth-century *Zangs gling ma* [Zanglingma] by *Nyang ral nyi ma’i ’od zer* [Nyangral Nyima Öser] (1124-1192), Padmasambhava had become the single most important figure in Tibetan narratives of their early conversion to Buddhism” [Dalton, 2004: 759]. Thus, his historical role is far from clear and we lack scientific evidence of almost all of his life story. The only thing we know for sure is that Padmasambhava was not the one who introduced Buddhism to Tibet, even not to Bhutan, but the religion already existed on Tibetan (and Bhutanese) soil before. However, Padmasambhava is called the founder of the Nyingma school. The Nyingma school belongs to the ‘old transmission’ and is the eldest documented Buddhist school which is practiced by Tibetans until today, which most likely came to Tibet via India. The Nyingma school is very heterogenous, which makes it difficult to speak of ‘one Nyingma tradition’, but rather of several Nyingma lineages. The main center of the Nyingma can be found in Bhutan, which was their center from the beginning as Indian Buddhism reached Bhutan in the 8th century, and thus one century after the arrival of Chinese Buddhism in Tibet. At the time of Langdarma, it is said that Buddhism and Bön stood in a fierce competition and that the

Tibetan ruling elite wanted to re-establish Bön religion. However, this might be at least partly contested today as explained before.

In the 11th century, the ‘new transmission’ was founded. For instance, the Sakya school’s seat is said to be founded in the year 1073. In the same century, Marpa – a famous translator – founded the Kagyü School. There are two more schools, the Jonang school that was founded in the early 12th century and the Gelug school (founded by Je Tsongkhapa) in the 14th century.¹¹ The Sakyas, who have their origins in Xigazê, could gain political influence through Kublai Khan as the Sakya Trizin Drogön Chögyal Phagpa was a personal advisor of Kublai Khan. Both became that strong partners that after the creation of the Yuan Dynasty the Sakyas received the power over Tibet. Changchub Gyaltsen, who would later overthrow the Sakya rule, was a very influential worldly governor within the Sakya service. As governor of Phagmodru district in Nêdong and holder of the Lang lineage, he preserved the legacy of Phagmo Drupa Dorje Gyalpo (1110-1170), the founder of Phagdrü Kagyü within Dagpo Kagyü. After the rebellion against the Sakya and the creation of the Phagmodrupa Dynasty in Lhasa, political and religious fragmentation was about to come. A civil war broke out in the 1430s or 1440s, leading to the split between two famous families, the Lang and the Ger (the latter one controlling Rong and Shang (near Xigazê)). The Ger clan, establishing the Rinpungpa Dynasty in competition to the Phagmodrupa, were the patrons of the Karma Kagyü school. The Karmapa lamas had strong ties to the Chinese Empire, being advisors to the Chinese court. Meanwhile, the Phagmodrupa strengthened their ties with the Gelug and switched allegiance to them. Gendün Gyatso (1475-1542) introduced the Zhügu system for Gelug monasteries, in which a reincarnation of a previous master was set up. The Gelug received political influence through Altan Khan who titled Sönam Gyatso as 3rd Dalai Lama, giving Gendün Drup and Gendün Gyatso posthumously the titles “Dalai Lama”. Altan Khan tried to weaken Ming China (which were allied with the Tibetans of Zang) and allied with the Gelug which tried to receive political power in Wü’s capital Lhasa. These strong ties are a key point for understanding the later events in 1642. The Kagyü and Gelug school stood in a seemingly everlasting competition in sought for power. The political situation between the two worldly dynasties was tensed and complexed even further, when a Rinpungpa came to throne in Phagmodrupa’s Lhasa in 1491, since the Phagmodru heir was still a minor. The Gelug monks of Drepung and Sera monasteries were now prohibited to celebrate the Monlam festival for almost the next two decades which fueled the rivalries even further. When Ngawang Drakpa Gyaltsen entered the Phagmodru throne in 1576, the dynasty

¹¹ There is also another Tibetan Buddhist school, the Bodong tradition, but it will be left aside in this book.

was almost completely powerless and defunct. The 4th Dalai Lama was a Mongol prince (and a relative of Altan Khan’s family) and the Mongolians now wanted to establish rule over Central Tibet. In 1642, Güshi Khan invaded Tibet, dismissed the Phagmodru rule, and defeated the Tsangpa Dynasty (the successor dynasty of the Rinpungpa which fell in 1565). The Gelug school was now in power in whole Central Tibet persecuting other schools for their own benefit’s sake. The Nyingma monks had to flee to Bhutan, since they were especially persecuted for belonging to the ‘old transmission’. The 5th Dalai Lama forcibly converted the Jonang monasteries into Gelug schools, and the Jonang were harshly suppressed. For centuries, it was believed that the Jonang were extinct. Recent research however led to the surprising discovery of plenty of Jonang monasteries in Sichuan and Qinghai, since Central Tibet could never establish political power over Dokam after the fall of the Yarlung Dynasty, despite gaining an increase of religious power in some of these regions. As a joke of history, although a past Dalai Lama suppressed the Jonang and Nyingma and though the Dalai Lamas never had any importance for these schools, many Western sources emphasize on the Dalai Lama’s “importance” for Tibetan Buddhism in general, although these Tibetan Buddhist schools are seemingly opposing the Gelug school.

During the Dzungar invasion (1717-1720), Bön and Nyingma adherents became victims of Dzungar suppression, which was probably supported by (some) Gelug clerics. According to local myths they had black tongues for reciting magical mantras. Thus, every Tibetan had to stick out the tongue when seeing a Dzungar official. In this way, the Dzungars hoped to indicate Bön and Nyingma followers [Norbu, 1980: 8]. When the Chinese defeated the Dzungars, they were celebrated as liberators. However, soon after, a rivalry between the spiritual leaders and the worldly leaders arose. Furthermore, there has been a strong rivalry in history between the Penchen Lama and the Dalai Lama, or to put it in Lin’s moderate words: “the history of the relationship between these two dignitaries has not always been harmonious and agreeable” [Lin, 2003: 129]. The 1st Penchen Lama was a teacher of the 5th Dalai Lama and the most powerful Gelug teacher of his lifetime, and even though Penchen Lama and Dalai Lama are two positions which need each other, they always stood in a fierce opposition to each other. After the Dalai Lama faction assassinated Khangchenna, a civil war broke out. One of the reasons why there were tensions between the government and the clergy was the restoration of Nyingma monasteries by the cabinet. As a result of the civil war, the 5th Penchen Lama Lobsang Yeshe was made the head of spiritual matters, but the position of the Dalai Lama was restored in 1751.

The other Buddhist schools felt so disadvantaged by the Gelug supremacy that Jamjang Kyênzê Wangbo – sometimes alternatively spelled Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo – and Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayä founded the Rime movement in the 19th century. The Rime approach combined the main teachings of the Sakya, Kagyü and Nyingma, and by joining the three teachings they wanted to strengthen their position against the Gelug. Repo points out that “the non-sectarian Rime (*ris med*) movement [...] encouraged practitioners of all schools to take up a more eclectic approach to the study and practice of Tibet’s varied Buddhist lineages. The movement was an apparent response to the supremacy of the Gelug tradition, as is also suggested by the fact that the principal founders of this movement [...] promoted primarily Nyingma, Kagyu and Sakya teachings”, although Gelug lineages were not excluded per se [2015: 136].

The competition between the Dalai Lama and Penchen Lama went on and after the fall of the Qing dynasty, a new feud between the Dalai Lama faction and the groups being represented by the Penchen Lama, who supported the Chinese government, broke out. This conflict peaked in 1923: “[...] the relationship between the 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso, and the 9th Panchen Lama, Chokyi Nyima, was seriously ruptured in 1923, owing to differing opinions on the matter of tax collection. Ultimately, their conflict resulted in the Panchen Lama fleeing to China proper, where he and his followers maintained a close relationship with the Han-Chinese regimes, and actively cultivated an immense influence over the Buddhist minorities” [Lin, 2003: 129]. After the death of the 13th Dalai Lama, the Penchen Lama saw “an opportunity to return to his homeland under Chinese assistance” [ibid.], but he had to turn around in 1937. The reasons are given variably. For instance, Chinese works emphasize that the failure to return to Tibet was due to an “imperialist influence by the West in an attempt to prevent China from asserting its sovereignty over Tibet” [Lin, 2003: 130], while Western works “tend to argue that it was the Lhasa faction in power at that particular time” [ibid.] which tried to prevent the Penchen Lama’s return.

After Mao Zedong declared the founding of the PRC, some spiritual figures have sided with the CPC. Most famously, the Penchen Lama is traditionally a supporter of China and against influences of foreign powers in Tibet. The 10th Penchen Lama Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltzen (1938-1989)¹² was a member of the CPC and even gained high positions such as the vice chairman of the National People’s Congress (NPC). His successor, the 11th Penchen Lama Gyaincain Norbu

¹² He was enthroned in 1949 under the Guomindang in Qinghai, but turned out to support Mao Zedong. After his recognition but before Tibet’s reintegration, he was refused to return to Central Tibet to take his seat.

(born 1990)¹³ is also a member of the CPC and – like his predecessor – has been a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) several times. The 11th Qamdo Pagbalha Hutuktu Pagbalha Geleg Namgyai (born 1940) became vice chairman of the NPC twice and also was vice chairman of the CPPCC several times. In general, it is important to emphasize that the Western claim that Tibetans are excluded from political participation is nothing but a myth. Famous politicians in China which belong to the Tibetan ethnicity are Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme (1910-2009), Raidi (born 1938), Dorje Tseten (1926-2013), Dorje Tsering (born 1939), Legqog (born 1944), Qiangba Puncog (born 1947), Padma Choling (born 1952), Yangling Dorje (born 1931), Losang Jamcan (born 1957), Qizhala (born 1958), Gama Cedain (born 1967), Norbu Dondrup (born 1960) and Yan Jinhai (born 1962). One of the earliest Tibetans to join Mao's fight for communism is Sanggyai Yexe (1917-2008), he later made a career as politician. Though he formally belongs to the Tibetan ethnicity, he might be of Qiangic (maybe Gyalrongic?) descent. Tashi Gyaltzen is a NPC member of the Lhoba ethnicity.

Christianity

Christian history in Tibet is probably older than long time thought. We do not know exactly when Christianity first reached Tibet, but it seems quite likely that the Nestorians already built up church communities which flourished in the 8th century [cp. Palmer, cited after Hattaway, 2021: 22]. Nonetheless, much of Christianity in Tibet around that time remains in the dark. An important event for Christianity in Tibet was the arrival of Antonio de Andrade in Tsaparang. De Andrade's arrival would change everything in the Guge kingdom since it would openly witness a competition between Christianity and Buddhism for the first time. On the whole, the conflict was primarily characterized by the rivalry between the two brothers, who were vying for control of the kingdom, so Guge was certainly not brought down primarily because of the Christian mission. Rather, the king's sympathies for Christianity could be used by the king's

¹³ Just for completeness sake, some religious figures claim another candidate to be the legitimate Penchen Lama. However, it is not unusual in Tibet's history that disputes over legitimate successors of reincarnations came up.

brother to finally incite the Buddhist clerics against the ruler.¹⁴ The end of Christianity in Guge became an omen for the entire kingdom, and soon after it disappeared from the map.

Christianity would again experience a great boom in Tibet when the Jesuit Ippolito Desideri reached Lhasa. Desideri dealt intensively with Buddhism and tried to take a conciliatory path between Christianity and Buddhism, which brought him a lot of sympathy. It was the Vatican's church politics which would smash any efforts for the Catholic church, as the Vatican decided to assign Tibet to the Capuchins, taking Tibet away from the control of the Jesuits [cp. Hattaway, 2021: 41]. When a new convert refused to bow in front of the Dalai Lama in 1742, Christianity was de facto declared unwelcomed and soon banned in Central Tibet – the last Capuchin missionaries had to leave in 1760 – and missionaries were refused entrance or were deported if they sneaked inside secretly, such as Huc and Gabet [cp. also Hattaway, 2021: 41-44; 60]. Among the ones who would still try to get into Central Tibet was Annie Taylor, “a single woman whose rugged individualism and boundless determination resulted in her being the first recorded Western woman to set foot in central Tibet” [Hattaway, 2021: 65]. In 1892, Taylor decided to go on a journey to Lhasa through the Qinghai route and despite all odds, she almost reached the city, and only could not go any further because she was stopped by Tibetan soldiers [Hattaway, 2021: 68-70]. She was not allowed to enter the city and had to return into the Chinese mainland, eventually arriving in Sichuan alive [Hattaway, 2021: 71]. Her entire journey was very hard and there were many people who sought her life. Additionally, she faced the severe climatic conditions. It should therefore come as no surprise that this brave and courageous woman became a hero and serves as a role model for many Christians to this day. Christianity was not only unwelcomed in Central Tibet, but there have been many anti-Christian riots in East Tibet as well. For instance, the 1905 Batang Uprising was accompanied by anti-Christian sentiments. Famous martyrs are among others André Soulié (1858-1905), Jean-Théodore Monbeig-Andrieu (1875-1914) and Maurice Tournay (1910-1949).

¹⁴ And there were two other factors which should not remain unmentioned here. One was that the Ladakhi ruler was personally hurt and declared war on Guge and the other was of Buddhist nature: “the king was a follower of the reformed Gelugpa order, though most of the monasteries of his country belonged to the non-reformed ‘red cap’ order” [Le Calloc'h, 1991: 58].

Islam

The history of Islam in Tibet is a history of coexistence and confrontation. Islam already came to Tibet very early, most likely in the 8th century and started to flourish due to trading. One reason for its early arrival might be the geographical closeness of the frontiers of the Abbasid Empire and the Tibetan Empire. The Tibetan word for Muslim today, which is *Kaqê*, literally means Kashmiri, since many Tibetan Muslims are of Kashmiri descent, though not exclusively. However, the Tibetan ethnicity was always understood to be strongly intertwined with Buddhism which means in return that non-Buddhist Tibetans faced exclusion to some extent in different eras (e.g. the case of Tibetan Christians). As Ian Buruma [2001] points out in a reply to Jamyang Norbu concerning the relationship between Tibetan Buddhists and Muslims: “Trouble between Tibetans and Muslims goes back at least to the early twentieth century, when there were wars in eastern Tibet between Tibetans and Chinese Muslims. And most Tibetans I have spoken to agree that Muslims were never regarded as fully Tibetan”. And as “Robert Ekvall noted [...], the Tibetan term *nang pa* [...] literally meaning 'insider,' is virtually synonymous with being Tibetan Buddhist and *phyi pa* [...], or outsiders, are largely non-Buddhists ‘who are no longer recognized by the Tibetans as being unequivocally Tibetan’” [cited after Atwill, 2014: 35]. But Tsering Shkaya denotes that “Tibetan has ‘no indigenous term which encompasses the population denoted by Western usage’” [cited after Atwill, 2014: 34 f.]. Indeed, the term for Tibetan “böpa” is hardly used and generally, Tibetans call each other after region (e.g. Khampa, Amdowa) or religion (such as Bönpa, Nyingmapa, etc.), which is also why there is not a common Tibetan identity.

Concerning religious tensions, a Tibetan Muslim told Buruma [2001] “that things have been better for Muslims since the Communists took over in Tibet”. Nonetheless, Buddhist extremism did not vanish: In 1959, Buddhist fundamentalists burnt down a mosque in Lhasa [cp. *ibid.*] and in 2008 once again, Buddhist extremists tried to set fire to a mosque during anti-Muslim riots in Lhasa.

Today, there are two groups of Muslims in Lhasa: “First one is the group of Tibetan Muslims, namely Tibetanized Muslims or Tibetan-speaking Muslims, who live mainly near Barkor Street in the old urban area of Lhasa” [Liu, 2021: 31]. Some migrated to Lhasa from Kashmir, Ladakh, and Nepal during the 14th and 15th centuries, while others were Muslims “who garrisoned Lhasa as soldiers in the Qing dynasty and later settled here” [*ibid.*]. As Liu points out: “they live mainly in Wapaling in Lhasa” [*ibid.*]. Furthermore, following the Hui-Han conflict in the

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

era of Qing Emperor Tongzhi, several Muslims from northwestern China sought refuge in Lhasa and integrated themselves into the Tibetan Muslim community [ibid.]. The second group are “the Chinese-speaking Muslims, commonly called Chinese Muslims (khui rigs), who are mainly from Gansu and Qinghai Provinces in northwestern China” [ibid.].

Chapter 9: Timeline, Geographic Areas, Self-designation and Political Entities

Timeline

- 618:** Songtsen Gampo formally establishes the Yarlung Dynasty (see Chapter 1).
- c. 627:** Tibetan forces defeat the Sumpa (see Chapter 1).
- 640:** Princess Wencheng starts her journey to Tibet to marry Songtsen Gampo.
- 641:** Princess Wencheng arrives in Tibet and marries Songtsen Gampo, introducing Buddhism in Tibet (see Chapter 1).
- 649 or 650:** Songtsen Gampo dies (see Chapter 1).
- 670:** Tibetan forces defeat the Tuyuhan (see Chapter 1).
- 678:** Tibetan forces defeat 180,000 Tang troops in Qinghai (see Chapter 1).
- 706:** Sino-Tibetan treaty (see Chapter 1).
- 747:** Guru Rinpoche a.k.a. Padmasambhava arrives in Bhutan and introduces Buddhism in Southern Tibetan areas (see Chapter 1), however his exact role is disputed until today as his life was glorified and mystified later (Chapter 8).
- 763:** Tibet conquers the Chinese Tang capital (see Chapter 1).
- 838:** Enthronement of Langdarma.
- 840:** Displaced people from the collapsed Uigur Empire flee to Tibet (see Chapter 1).
- 842:** The Yarlung Dynasty collapses after Langdarma’s death leading to the beginning of the Era of Fragmentation (see Chapter 1).
- 870:** The Yellow Uyghurs known as Yugurs found the Ganzhou Uyghur Khaganate in Gansu and probably Northern Qinghai.
- 930:** The First West Tibetan dynasty in Ladakh is founded (see Chapter 1).
- 1036:** Fall of the Ganzhou Uyghur Khaganate after the Tangut Conquest in Gansu.
- 1073:** The seat of the Sakya School is founded in Xigazê (see Chapter 8).
- 1140:** Lhachen Naglug, probably the last ruler of the First West Tibetan Dynasty, dies.
- 1206:** Genghis becomes Khan over all of Mongolia (see Chapter 2).
- 1236:** First contact of Mongolians with Tibetans (see Chapter 2).

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

1240: The Mongolians launch a campaign against Tibet, but the troops are called back to Mongolia soon after (see Chapter 2).

1244: The Mongolians come back to Tibet; the Sakya Lama has to capitulate on behalf of the Tibetan people (see Chapter 2).

1250/1: Mongolian invasion of Tibet; the Mongolians finally submit the Tibetans (see Chapter 2).

1264: The Mongolians set up the ‘Bureau of Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs’ (see Chapter 2).

1260s (probably 1265 or 1266): The Sakya Lamas set up the kingdom Mangyül Gungthang in Ngari (see Chapter 3).

1270: The Yuan Dynasty is established, Tibet becomes part of the Chinese Yuan dynasty (see Chapter 2).

1322: After finishing his studies, Changchub Gyalsten becomes the ruler of Nêdong within the Sakya Dynasty (see Chapter 3).

1351: Fierce fightings between Nêdong and Yasang (see Chapter 3).

1354: Changchub Gyaltsen reaches Lhasa, establishing the Phagmodrupa Dynasty (see Chapter 3); the Gyantse principality begins its rise (see Chapter 3)

until 1358: The Phgmodrupas finally overthrow the Sakya dynasty (see Chapter 3).

1419: Sakya Yeshe of Zel Gungtang founds Sera monastery.

1435: Norzang, the grandson of Namkha Gyaltsen, who was governor of Rinbung for the Phagmodrupa’s, declared the Rinpungpa Dynasty in Xigazê as a feud broke out (see Chapter 3).

1447: Foundation of Zhaxilhünbo (Tashilhunpo) monastery in Xigazê.

1466: Norzang, the founder of the Rinpungpa dynasty dies (see Chapter 3).

1470: Lhachen Bhagan reunites Ladakh, declaring the Namgyal dynasty.

1480: The Rinpungpa start a conquest on Wü and march towards Lhasa (see Chapter 3).

1481: Agreement between the Phagmodrupa and Rinpungpa, tensions however continue (see Chapter 3).

1491: As the Phagmodrupa king Ngagi Wangpo dies while his son is still a minor, a Rinpungpa is declared ruler of Lhasa until the Phagmodrupa king is adult; however, tensions continue (see Chapter 3).

1512: Rinpungpa king Donyo Dorje dies; decline of the Rinpungpa (see Chapter 3).

1547: The Gyantse lose territory and decline; the lineage would soon disappear out of records (see Chapter 3).

- 1555:** The Mangyül Gungthang kingdom starts an invasion on territories of the Rinpungpa.
- 1557:** The governor of Xigazê, Karma Tseten, rebels against his own kingdom (see Chapter 3).
- 1565:** Karma Tseten surprisingly kills the Rinpungpa king and declares the Tsangpa Dynasty (see Chapter 3).
- 1576:** Ngawang Drakpa Gyaltsen enters the Phagmodru throne (see Chapter 8).
- 1603-1621:** Civil War in Central Tibet (see Chapter 3).
- 1616:** The state of Bhutan is founded (see Chapter 3).
- 1620:** Mangyül Gungthang is invaded by the Tsangpa (see Chapter 3).
- 1624:** Antonio de Andrade’s first journey to Guge (see Chapter 3).
- 1625:** Antonio de Andrade’s second journey to Guge (see Chapter 3). Christianity begins to flourish in the kingdom.
- 1630:** Ladakh declares war on Guge (see Chapter 3).
- 1634:** Antonio de Andrade is murdered in India (see Chapter 3).
- 1640:** The Khoshut Mongolians conquer Kōkōnur and thus rule most of the cultural region of Amdo.
- 1642:** Khoshut invasion on Tibet, the Tsangpa Dynasty and Phagmodrupa Dynasty come to an end with the establishment of the Ganden Phodrang regime of the Dalai Lama, controlling Central Tibet, which is formally incorporated into the Khoshut Khanate, ruled by Gūshi Khan in Kōkōnur (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 4); in the same year, the Chōgyal Dynasty is founded in Sikkim (see Chapter 3); a joint Mongolian-Tibetan army invades Bhutan to kill Nyingma refugees, the army was supported by rivals of the Bhutanese king Ngawang Namgyal, however the Tibetan army was defeated (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 4).
- 1650:** The Christians in Guge are sold into slavery (see Chapter 4).
- 1651:** Ngawang Namgyal dies; his death is kept secret for 54 years (see Chapter 4).
- 1666:** Uprising in the Chakla Kingdom against the Khoshuts; Chakla switches allegiance to the Qing dynasty (see Chapter 4).
- 1671:** The last Phagmodrupa king dies (see Chapter 3).
- 1679-84:** Tibet-Ladakh-Mughal War (War between the Ganden Phodrang regime and thus the Gelug school of Tibet and the ruling Drukpa Kagyu School of Ladakh, as the Ladakhis supported the Bhutanese; the Mughal Empire helped the Ladakhis after the capital of Ladakh was surrounded by the Tibetans) (see Chapter 5).
- c. 1680:** Tsaparang is abandoned, Guge no longer exists (see Chapter 3).
- 1682:** The 5th Dalai Lama dies (see Chapter 4).

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

1697: The 6th Dalai Lama comes into power (see Chapter 4).

1699: The Chakla king is assassinated (see Chapter 4).

1700: The Qing send a punitive expedition against the Khoshuts to Chakla (see Chapter 4).

1706 or 1707: Cangyang Gyamco, the 6th Dalai Lama is kidnapped and allegedly killed in Kōkōnur on the order of Lhasang Khan, the Khoshut ruler, proclaiming a new 6th Dalai Lama who is assumed to be his son (see Chapter 4).

1717: The Dzungars start an invasion on the Khoshut Khanate killing Lhasang Khan (see Chapter 4).

1720: Kangxi appoints Kelsang Gyatso from Litang kingdom to be the 7th Dalai Lama, who in return requests Kangxi to help Tibet. In the same year, the Qing army defeats the Dzungars and protects the enthronement of the 7th Dalai Lama, who was accepted and recognized by Tibetan clerics (see Chapter 4). Tibet is finally integrated into China.

1721: Chinese ministers arrive to form a government together with the Tibetan generals Pholhaney and Khangchenna (see Chapter 5).

1722: The Qing emperor Kangxi dies (see Chapter 5).

1723: Lobsang Danjin tries to revive the Khoshut Khanate in Qinghai but fails (see Chapter 4).

1727: Assassination of Khangchenna by the Dalai Lama fraction leads to a civil war (see Chapter 5).

1728: Pholhaney wins the civil war, the Dalai Lama has to go into exile (see Chapter 5).

1734 or 1735: The Dalai Lama returns from exile (see Chapter 5).

1747: Pholhaney dies (see Chapter 5).

1750: Outbreak of a civil strife (see Chapter 5).

1751: Introduction of a new political model, restoration of the position of the Dalai Lama (see Chapter 5).

1788-89: First Sino-Nepalese War (see Chapter 5).

1791-92: Second Sino-Nepalese War (see Chapter 5).

1834: The Sikh Empire conquers Ladakh (see Chapter 5); The Namgyal Dynasty in Ladakh ends (see Chapter 5).

1841: After the Sikh also marched into Ngari, the Chinese try to defend the country, thus leading to the Sino-Sikh War (see Chapter 5).

1842: The Sino-Sikh War ends with the status quo ante bellum (see Chapter 5).

1855-56: Third Sino-Nepalese War (see Chapter 5).

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

1864-65: Bhutan War (British India victory, Bhutan has to give away parts of its territory to British India).

1865: Defeat of Gönpo Namgyal in Kham. Extension of power of the Lhasa government in Tibet Special Region into neighbouring Sichuan (see Chapter 5).

1888: First British invasion on Tibet. China has to give Sikkim to Great Britain (see Chapter 5).

1904: Second British invasion on Tibet leading to the Massacre of Qoimishango, in which Tibetans who put down their arms, since they trusted in negotiations, are cold-bloodedly assassinated (see Chapter 5); the invasion ends with the Treaty of Lhasa (see Chapter 5).

1905: Batang Uprising (see Chapter 8)

1905-06: The small Kham chiefdoms are forcefully dissolved by Zhao Erfeng and unified into the Xikang Region (Chapter 5).

1906: Signing of the Anglo-Chinese Convention (see Chapter 5).

1907: Zhao Erfeng invades Southern Kham (see Chapter 5).

1908: Zhao Erfeng marches into Tibet Special Region (see Chapter 5).

1911: Zhao Erfeng is captured and beheaded (see Chapter 5).

1912: Fall of the Qing Dynasty; most parts of Kham are part of the newly founded Xikang Province at that time (see Chapter 5); A Tibetan delegation headed by Silun Qamqen on behalf of the Dalai Lama meets with the Chinese government, agreeing that the Chinese officials stay in office in Tibet (see Chapter 6); the Chinese government sets up an office for Tibetan and Mongolian affairs making Goingsang Norbu the governor of Tibet (see Chapter 6); Ma Fuxiang (an ethnic Hui) becomes governor of Qinghai (see Chapter 6).

1913: The Dalai Lama sees an opportunity to secede from China and makes a treaty with Mongolia, however Chinese forces soon retain the control over Tibet (see Chapter 6).

1914: The Simla Accord is signed between the local Tibetan government and Great Britain.

1923: Due to a dispute with the Dalai Lama, the Penchen Lama has to flee to Inner Mongolia (see Chapter 8).

1928: Qinghai formally becomes a province (see Chapter 6)

1932-33: Qinghai-Tibet War and Sichuan-Tibet War (see Chapter 6).

1932: Chinese warlord Liu Wenhui (from the Sichuan Clique) signs a treaty with the local Kham leaders; West Kham becomes part of Tibet Special Region (see Chapter 6).

1933: The 13th Dalai Lama dies (see Chapter 6).

1934: Rebellion of the Khampas led by the Pandatsang family in the Tibet Special Region (see Chapter 6).

1935: Communist forces set up the Böpa People’s Republic in parts of Xikang (see Chapter 6).

1936: The Böpa People’s Republic is abandoned (see Chapter 6).

1939: Xikang formally becomes a province, Kesang Tsering becomes the head of the provincial government (see Chapter 6); In the Tibet Special Region, Pandatsang Ragpa founds the Tibet Improvement Party which is anti-feudal and pro-Guomindang (see Chapter 6).

1949: Proclamation of the People’s Republic of China (see Chapter 6).

1950: The Chinese government sets up a Bureau for South-West Affairs to deal with Tibet’s status; Battle of Qamdo (see Chapter 6); Qamdo Region receives provincial status.

1951: Signing of the Seventeen Point Agreement, the Chinese government prepares the full reintegration of Tibet (see Chapter 6).

1952: Return of the Penchen Lama to Tibet (see Chapter 6); Amdo Tibetan radio broadcast in Qinghai begins (see Chapter 7).

1954: The CPC establishes the Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet, which is chaired by the Dalai Lama (see Chapter 7).

1955: Dissolution of Xikang Province. Nyingchi and Qamdo become part of Tibet Region, while Garzê and Ngawa go back to Sichuan (see Chapter 7).

1958: Tibetan serfowners and their allies start raids in Tibet (see Chapter 7).

1959: Tibetan serfowners rebel against Chinese rule, the PLA liberates Tibet from feudalism and introduced democratic reforms in a Maoist frame (see Chapter 7); The CTB is established and begins to broadcast radio programs in Central Tibetan dialect (see Chapter 7).

1962: Sino-Indian War (see Chapter 7).

1965: The Tibet Autonomous Region is formally established (see Chapter 6).

1966: Start of the Cultural Revolution, thousands of Red Guards march through Lhasa; destruction of cultural relics by Tibetan participants (see Chapter 7).

1975: Sikkim decides to join India (see Chapter 6).

1976: Mao Zedong dies; the Cultural Revolution comes to an end (see Chapter 7).

1984: Opening of the Xining-Golmud section of the Qinghai–Tibet Railway (see Chapter 7).

1985: As the Kazakhs left Haixi, the prefecture is renamed in ‘Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture’.

2003: The Daman people are granted Chinese citizenship (see Chapter 7).

2006: Opening of the Golmud–Lhasa section of the Qinghai–Tibet Railway (see Chapter 7).

2008: Anti-Muslim riots in Lhasa (see Chapter 7).

Geographic and cultural areas

Amdo (ཨ་མདོ , **a mdo**): Areas mainly inhabited by the Amdo people (Amdo Tibetans) speaking Amdo dialect of Tibetan language; Amdo is a very multicultural area however (mainly under Mongolian influence).

Baltistan (བལ་ཏི་ཡུལ , **bal ti yul – yul meaning ‘land’**): Often referred to as “Pakistan’s Little Tibet”; area inhabited by Muslim Tibetans in Pakistan, ethnic Western Tibetans; Balti language is close to Ladakhi.

Changtang/ Qangtang (བྱང་ཐང , **byang thang**): Mainly the traditional area of Zhangzhung in nowadays Nagqu Prefecture, but also covers the Kham area in Southern Qinghai and parts of West Tibet (Ngari and Ladakh).

East Tibet: The Tibetan areas in China outside of Xizang; such as Amdo in Qinghai and Kham in Western Sichuan.

Kham (ཁམས , **khams**): Areas inhabited by the Kham Tibetans speaking Kham dialect of Tibetan; In Kham region, also Qiangic people can be found.

Kongpo (ཀོང་པོ , **kong po**): A small region in Gongbo’gyamda County in Nyingchi, which is the transition between Kham and Wü-Zang; small parts of the area probably can be found in Bomê County; Lower Kongpo is situated south of Nyingchi, probably in Mainling County.

Lhoyü (ལྷོ་ཡུལ , **lho yul**): Traditional area in Southern Nyingchi and Tawang, where the Lhoba live.

Mönyü (མོན་ཡུལ , **mon yul**): Traditional area where the Mönpa live.

Pemako (པཨ་མ་བཀོད , **pad ma bkod**): Pronounced ‘pämakö’ in Standard Tibetan; traditional area in Kham and South Tibet that has a special variety of culture that is different than that in Central Tibet, as well as that in Kham; the traditional capital of the area is Mêdog; Pemako lies in Mêdog and Zayü Counties, reaching from Druk to Shirang and Pe to Rirung Tso; Upper Pemako goes from Chayul to Zayü; Lower Pemako goes from Bishing to Tashi Gong; it is inhabited by the Pemako Tibetans, Lhoba and Mönba.

Powo: Region in Kham, east of Kongpo and north of Pemako.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

Pöyü (བོད་ཡུལ་ , **bod yul**): Traditional word for self-reference to people in Wü-Zang and Ngari meaning “Tibetan land”; the area of Pöyü begins west of Pemako and Kongpo and does not include Kham areas.

South Tibet: Tawang area in Arunachal Pradesh (India), Bhutan, Sikkim (India), Mustang and Dolpo (Nepal).

Tawang Area: Parts of Mêdog and Zayü Counties of Nyingchi City, and parts of Cona, Lhünzê, Lhozhag and Nagarzê Counties of Shannan Prefecture (PRC) that are occupied by India; Tawang is part of South Tibet; Tawang partly consists of Lower Pemako; the main ethnic groups seem to be the Lhoba and Mönpa.

Xizang (西藏) : ‘Western Tibet’, referring to the Tibet Autonomous Region which is traditionally known as Western Tibetan cultural area in contrast to the Eastern Tibetan cultural which are situated outside of the Tibet Autonomous Region; Xizang contains Central Tibet (Wü-Zang), the eastern parts of West Tibet (Ngari) and Western Kham region (Qamdo and Nyingchi), as well as Changtang (Nagqu).

Some autonyms and exonyms among Tibetans

Amdowa (ཨ་མདོ་བོད་པ་ , **a mdo pa**): Amdo-Tibetans, self-reference as ‘Amdo people’, Chinese: 安多人.

Bönpa (བོན་པ་ , **bon pa**): Followers of Bön, the traditional Tibetan religion; Chinese: 苯教徒.

Changpa (བྱང་པ་ , **byang pa**): “Northerners”; Tibetans living in the north of Central Tibet, as well as in West Tibet (Qangtang/ Changtang Plateau).

Drenjongpa (བྲོ་འཇོག་པ་ , **’bras ljongs pa**): Bhutia, native ethnic Tibetan group of Sikkim.

Kaqê (ཀ་ཇེ་ , **ka che**): Muslim Tibetans, probably used as reference by the Tibetans. The word is believed to derive from ‘Kashmiri’, since the Muslim Tibetans have their roots in Kashmir.

Khampa (ཁ་མམ་པ་ , **kham pa**): Kham-Tibetans, self-reference as ‘Kham people’, Chinese: 康巴人.

Lhopa (ལྷོ་པ་ , **lho pa**): ‘Lhoba’, a cluster of several tribes speaking Thani-Digaro languages; they are settling in Pemako, Chinese: 珞巴族.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

Monpa/ Mönpa (མོན་པ་, **mon pa**): An ethnic group mainly speaking Tshangla (tribes closely related to the Sharchops), Limbu language, Tawang language and Dakpa language in Tawang, as well as a few other languages; Chinese: 门巴族.

Ngalongpa (སྒལ་ལོང་པ་, **snga long pa**): Ngalong, a Tibetan ethnic group in Bhutan speaking Dzongkha.

Nyingmapa (རྩིང་མ་པ་, **rnying ma pa**): ‘Red Hats’, followers of the Nyingma school, the oldest Tibetan Buddhist school, widely spread in Bhutan.

Pemaköpa (པམ་ཚུལ་ལོ་པ་, **pad ma bkod pa**): “Pemako Tibetans”; Ethnic Tibetans speaking a dialect of Tshangla language, mostly residing in Western Kham (including Southern Tibet’s Tawang area).

Poi/ Pö (པོའ་, **bod**): Tibet, Tibetan, Tibetic (anything that has to do with Tibet). In Amdo dialect it is pronounced “wo”, since in this dialect b is pronounced as w and the diphthong rule does not apply.

Poirig/ Pörig (པོ་རིག་པ་, **bod rigs**): Tibetans in general, self-reference used by Tibetans in Xizang, traditional self-reference used in Wü-Zang.

Pöskä (པོ་སྐད་, **bod skad**): Tibetan language, reference to Standard Tibetan. In Amdo dialect it is called “wo skel”.

Sherpa (ཤར་པ་, **shar pa**): ‘Eastern people’, an ethnic Tibetan group living in China’s TAR and in Nepal, as well as Bhutan and Sikkim (in India). They are linguistically related to the Jirel people, who speak a Tibetic language (both languages are often classified as South Tibetan languages).

Political Entities

Batang (?-1906): Kham kingdom in Batang County, incorporated into Qing dynasty Sichuan at around 1725 or earlier.

Bhutan (1616-today): Modern state in the traditional Southern Tibetan lands.

Bumthang (?-1616): Kingdom in Bhutan which was probably established before the 7th century.

Chakla (?-1911; 1913?-1950): Kham kingdom in Kangding; incorporated into the Qing dynasty’s Sichuan Province between 1666 and 1725; dissolution in 1911, but probably restored in 1913.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

Chögyal kingdom (1642-1975): The national state of Sikkim, which joined India in 1975.

Dêgê (?-1950): Kham kingdom in nowadays Dêge County in Sichuan.

Guge (c. 912-1630s, final dissolution 1680): A kingdom in Western Tibet in nowadays Ngari Prefecture. Its capital was Zaparang/ Tsaparang.

Hor States (?-early 20th century): five principalities in Sichuan’s Kham area. These principalities were Beri, Drango (Zhaggo), Khangsar, Mazur, and Trehor.

Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1940/1947-today): Country in South Asia.

Khoshut Khanate (1642-1617): Khanate of the Khoshut tribe which belongs to the Oirat Mongols.

Mangyül Gungthang (c. 1265-1620): A kingdom in Western Tibet which was set up by the Sakya lamas.

Maryul (c. 930-1842): Also known as kingdom of Ladakh. Situated in today’s Ngari (China), Ladakh (India) and Gilgit-Baltistan (Pakistan).

Nangqên: Former Kham kingdom in nowadays Nangqên County in Qinghai.

People’s Republic of China (1949-today): The successor state of the Republic of China, representing the whole Chinese people. The PRC is inhabited by 56 nationalities.

Phagmodrupa (1354-1642): A dynasty in the Wü area of Central Tibet founded by Changchub Gyaltzen. The Phagmodrupa controlled the whole of Central Tibet until 1434/35 when their power declined and was only restricted to the Wü area.

Qing dynasty (1644-1912): Central Tibet joined the Qing dynasty in 1720 and has been part of China ever since.

Republic of China (1912-1949): Successor of the Qing dynasty. Tibet was a de facto autonomously governed province in the ROC.

Republic of India (1947/1950-today): Country in South Asia.

Rinpungpa (1435-1565): ‘people from Rinbung’. A dynasty in the Zang area in Central Tibet founded by Norzang.

Sakyapa: A monastic dynasty of the Sakya lamas, while Tibet was subdued to the Mongols (1244-1354). They were finally overthrown until 1358.

Tsangpa (1565-1642): ‘people from Zang’. A dynasty in the Zang area after toppling the Rinpungpa.

Yarlung dynasty/ Tibetan Empire (?-842): Originating in the Yarlung valley as a small kingdom and became the only Tibetan Empire.

Literature

Aguilar, Mario I: *Ngawang Lopsang Gyatso, chösi nyitrel, and the Unification of Tibet in 1642*. *The Tibet Journal* 41 (2), 2016, pp. 3-20.

Ardussi, John: *Lepcha Chieftains of the 17th–18th Centuries, Based on Tibetan and Bhutanese Sources*. 2004. Taken from <https://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/>.

Ardussi, John: *Sikkim and Bhutan in the crosscurrents of seventeenth and eighteenth century Tibetan History*. *Buddhist Himalaya* ; 2: The Sikkim papers. Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, 2011.

Atwill, David G.: *A Tibetan by Any Other Name: The Case of Muslim Tibetans and Ambiguous Ethno-religious Identities*. *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 23, 2014, pp. 33-61.

Atwood, Christopher Pratt: *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire*. New York: Facts On File, 2004.

Berzin, Alexander: *Die Hegemonien der Pagmodru, der Rinpung und der Tsangpas*. Übersetzung ins Deutsche von Julian Piras. <https://studybuddhism.com/de/fortgeschrittene-studien/geschichte-und-kultur/buddhismus-in-tibet/die-tibetische-geschichte-vor-dem-5-dalai-lama/die-hegemonien-der-pagmodru-der-rinpung-und-der-tsangpas>, retrieved on 1 January 2023.

Bradsher, Henry S.: *Tibet Struggles to Survive*. *Foreign Affairs* 47 (4), 1969, pp. 750-762.

Chi Mengjie & Liu Yi: *Analyzing the Road Network Structure of Tang-Tibet Road and Building a Spatial Information System for its Tibet Section*. *The International Archives of the Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Sciences*, Volume XLVI-M-1-2021, 28th CIPA Symposium “Great Learning & Digital Emotion”, 28 August–1 September 2021, Beijing, China.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

China Tibet Online: *Das Leben der Daman*. China Tibet Online, 8 August 2018. http://german.tibet.cn/de/index/story/201808/t20180808_6158202.html, retrieved on 29 January 2019.

Choedon, Yeshi: *Review of Socio-Political Development in Tibet (600-1950)*. Bulletin of Tibetology 32 (1), 1996, pp. 21-29.

Dalton, Jacob: *The Early Development of the Padmasambhava Legend in Tibet: A Study of IOL Tib J 644 and Pelliot tibétain 307*. Journal of the American Oriental Society 124 (4), 2004, pp. 759-772.

Damdinsureng, Ts.: *The Sixth Dalai Lama: Tsangs-Dbyangs Rgya-Mtso*. Translated from the Mongolian by Stanley Frye. The Tibet Journal 6 (4), 1981, pp. 32-36.

Demick Barbara: *Tibetan-Muslim tensions roil China*. Los Angeles Times, 23 June 2008. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2008-jun-23-fg-muslims23-story.html>, retrieved on 2 January 2023.

Dolma, Rinchen: *The Early Years of the Dogra Conquest of Ladakh (1834-1846)*. Proceedings of the Indian History Congress 79, 2018-19, pp. 457-465.

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Zimbabwe: *Tibet's population tops 3 million; 90% are Tibetans*. Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Zimbabwe, 4 May 2011. http://zw.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/xwtd/201105/t20110506_6419789.htm, retrieved on 13 April 2024.

Emmons, James B.: *Genghis Khan*. In: Li Xiaobing (ed.): *China at War – An Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2012.

Everding, Karl-Heinz: *Das Königreich Mang yul Gung thang, Teil 1: Die Chronik Gung thang rgyal rabs. Edition und Übersetzung*. Bonn: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag, 2000.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

Everding, Karl-Heinz: *Gyantse: Rise, Prime and Decline of a Tibetan Principality in the 14th-16th Centuries*. In: Volker Caumanns & Marta Serensi (Eds.): *Fifteenth Century Tibet: Cultural Blossoming and Political Unrest*. Proceedings of a Conference held in Lumbini, Nepal, March 2015. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2017, pp. 33-62.

Frank, Mark E.: *Wheat Dreams Scientific Interventions at Chinese Model Farms in Kham, 1937-1949*. In: Stéphane Gros (Ed.): *Frontier Tibet: Patterns of Change in the Sino-Tibetan Borderlands*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019, pp. 217-253.

Gamble, Ruth & Yagmotso: *Servant-like Lords and Heavenly Kings: Jangchup Gyeltsen and the Fifth Dalai Lama on Governance and Kingship*. *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 24, 2015, pp. 145-168.

Gao, Mobo: *The Battle for China's Past. Mao and the Cultural Revolution*. London/ Ann Arbor (MI): Pluto Press, 2008.

Garri, Irina: *The rise of the Five Hor States of Northern Kham. Religion and politics in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands*. *Études mongoles et sibériennes, centrasiatiques et tibétaines* 51, 2020, pp. 1-23.

Gates, Jesse P.: *Situ in Situ: Towards a dialectology of Jiāróng (rGyalrong)*. M.A. thesis, Trinity Western University, 2012.

Gelek, Surkhang Wangchen: *Tibet: The Critical Years (Part 1): The Thirteenth Dalai Lama*. *The Tibet Journal* 7 (4), 1982, pp. 11-19.

Ginsburgs, George & Mathos, Michael: *Tibet's Administration During the Interregnum, 1954-1959*. *Pacific Affairs* 32 (3), 1959, pp. 249-267.

Goldstein, Melvyn C.; Sherap, Dawei; Siebenschuh, William R.: *A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Political Life and Times of Bapa Phüntso Wangye*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

Gros, Stéphane: *Chronology of Major Events*. In: Stéphane Gros (Ed.): *Frontier Tibet: Patterns of Change in the Sino-Tibetan Borderlands*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019, pp. 19-36.

Hattaway, Paul: *Operation China: Introducing All the Peoples of China*. Carlisle: Piquant, 2000.

Hattaway, Paul: *The China Chronicles, Volume 4. Tibet: Inside The Greatest Christian Revival In History*. Carlisle: Piquant, 2021.

Horlemann, Bianca: *The Divine Word Missionaries in Gansu, Qinghai and Xinjiang, 1922-1953: A Bibliographic Note*. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 19 (1), 2009, pp. 59-82.

Hsu Chung-mao [Xu Zongmao]: *[Photo story] Chinese central government and the Dalai Lama: 1950–1956*. Translated by Candice Chan. ThinkChina, 4 December 2020.

<https://www.thinkchina.sg/photo-story-chinese-central-government-and-dalai-lama-1950-1956>, retrieved on 3 March 2024.

Jagou, Fabienne: *The Dispute between Sichuan and Xikang over the Tibetan Kingdom of Trokyap (1930s-1940s)*. In: Stéphane Gros (Ed.): *Frontier Tibet: Patterns of Change in the Sino-Tibetan Borderlands*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019, pp. 337-362.

Kapstein, Matthew: *The Royal Way of Supreme Compassion*. In: Donald S. Lopez Jr. (Ed.): *Religions of Tibet in Practice*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 1997, pp. 69-76.

Katō, Naoto: *Warrior Lamas: The Role of Lamas in Lobjang Danjin's Uprising in Kokonur, 1723-1724*. *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 62, 2004, pp. 29-43.

Killigrew, John W.: *Some Aspects of the Sino-Nepalese War of 1792*. *Journal of Asian History* 13 (1), 1979, pp. 42-63.

Kitinov, Baatr: *Kalmyks in Tibetan History*. *The Tibet Journal* 21 (3), 1996, pp. 35-46.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

Kobayashi, Ryosuke: *Tibet in the Era of 1911 Revolution*. The Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies 3 (1), 2014, 91-113.

Komarovski, Yaroslav: *Visions of Unity: The Golden Pandita Shakya Chokden's New Interpretation of Yogācāra and Madhyamaka*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2011.

Kunwar, Mayura Jang: *China and War in the Himalayas, 1792-1793*. The English Historical Review 77 (303), 1962, pp. 283-297.

Lai, Cynthia: *Historic Lessons of China's Cultural Revolution*. Marxists.org.
<https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/nem-7/cwp-cr/part-3.htm>, retrieved on 12 January 2016.

Lawson, Joseph D.: *Warlord Colonialism: State Fragmentation and Chinese Rule in Kham, 1911-1949*. The Journal of Asian Studies 72 (2), 2013, pp. 299-318.

Le Calloc'h, Bernard: *Francisco De Azevedo's Travels in Guge and Ladakh*. The Tibet Journal 16 (2), 1991, pp. 55-66.

Li Qiang: *Silk Road: The Study Of Drama Culture*. Translated by Gao Fen. Hackensack (NJ)/ London: World Scientific, 2019.

Li Sha: *Contribution of “Abolishment of Serf System” in Tibet to Human Rights Campaign --- In Memory of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Democratic Reform in Tibet*. Asian Culture and History 1 (2), 2009, pp. 45-48.

Li Shicheng; Gong Jian; Deng Qinghai; Zhou Tianyu: *Impacts of the Qinghai–Tibet Railway on Accessibility and Economic Linkage of the Third Pole*. Sustainability 10, 2018.

Lin Hsiao-ting [Lin Xiaoting]: *A reassessment of the Issue of the 9th Panchen Lama's Return to Tibet, 1934-1937*. Journal of Asian History 37 (2), 2003, pp. 129-154.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

Lin Hsiao-ting [Lin Xiaoting]: *War or Stratagem? Reassessing China's Military Advance Towards Tibet, 1942-1943*. *The China Quarterly* 186, 2006a, pp. 446-462.

Lin Hsiao-ting [Lin Xiaoting]: *Making Known the Unknown World: Ethnicity, Religion and Political Manipulations in 1930s Southwest China*. *American Journal of Chinese Studies* 13 (2), 2006b, pp. 209-232.

Liu Zhiyang: *Ethnic Composition and Livelihoods of Lhasa Muslims in Tibet*. *International Journal of Business Anthropology* 11 (2) 2021, pp. 31-45.

Man, John: *Genghis Khan – Life, Death, and Resurrection*. New York: Bantam, 2004.

Maxwell, Neville: *Sino-Indian Border Dispute Reconsidered*. *Economic and Political Weekly* 34 (15), 1999, pp. 905-918.

McCleary, Rachel & Van der Kuijp, Leonard W.J.: *The Market Approach to the Rise of the Geluk School, 1419-1642*. *The Journal of Asian Studies* 69 (1), 2010, pp. 149-180.

Neuss, Sorrel: *What we don't hear about Tibet*. *The Guardian*, 11 February 2009.
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/feb/10/tibet-china-feudalism>, retrieved on 5 March 2024.

Norbu, Jamyang; reply by Buruma, Ian: *The Muslims of Tibet*. *The New York Review of Books*, 4 October 2001. <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2001/10/04/the-muslims-of-tibet/>, retrieved on 24 April 2024.

Norbu, Namkhai: *Bon and Bonpos*. *Tibetan Review* 15 (12), 1980, pp. 8-12.

Pan Yihong: *The Sino-Tibetan Treaties in the Tang Dynasty*. *T'oung Pao*, Second Series, 78 (1/3), 1992, pp. 116-161.

Patterson, George: *China and Tibet: Background to the Revolt*. *The China Quarterly* 1960 No. 1, 1960, pp. 87-102.

Petech, Luciano: *The Dalai-Lamas and Regents of Tibet: A Chronological Study*. T'oung Pao 47 (3/5), 1959, pp. 368-394.

Petech, Luciano: *Notes on Tibetan History of the 18th Century*. T'oung Pao 52 (4/5), 1966, pp. 261-292.

Ram, N.: *Tibet - A Reality Check*. Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, 2000. http://un.china-mission.gov.cn/eng/gyzg/xizang/200009/t20000915_8410840.htm, retrieved on 13 April 2024.

Repo, Joonas: *Phabongkha and the Yoginī: The Life, Patronage and Devotion of the Lhasa Aristocrat, Lady Lhalu Lhacham Yangdzom Tsering*. JOCBS 2015 (11), 2015, pp.109-142.

Rheingans, Jim: *Narratives of Reincarnation, Politics of Power, and the Emergence of a Scholar – The Very Early Years of Mikyö Dorje and Its Sources*. In: Linda Covill; Ulrike Roesler and Sarah Shaw (eds.): *Lives Lived, Lives Imagined*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2010, pp. 241–299.

Romain, William F.: *Subduing the Demons of Tibet: Geomantic Magic during the Yarlung Dynasty – A landscape archaeology assessment*. 2020.

Rubin, Alfred P.: *The Position of Tibet in International Law*. The China Quarterly 35, 1968, pp. 110-154.

Sahu, Arun Kuma: *Future of India–Nepal Relations: Is China a Factor?*. Strategic Analysis, 39 (2), 2015, 197-204.

Sardar-Afkhami, Hamid: *An account of Padma-bkod: A Hidden Land in Southeastern Tibet*. Kailash 18 (3-4), 1996, pp. 1-22.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

Savada, Andrea Matles & Harris, George Lawrence: *Nepal and Bhutan – country studies*. Wahington, D.C. : Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1993.

Schlieter, Jens: *Compassionate Killing or Conflict Resolution? – The Murder of King Langdarma according to Tibetan Buddhist Sources*. In: Michael Zimmermann (Ed.); Chiew Hui Ho & Philip Pierce (Co-Ed.): *Buddhism and Violence*. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2006, pp. 131-158.

Schmitz, Timo: “*For wisdom is a defence*”. Manderscheid: Timo Schmitz, 2023.

Schüler, Sebastian: *Vom Synkretismus zum Padmaismus: Zum Verhältnis von Religion und Politik im frühen tibetischen Buddhismus unter Padma Sambhava*. *Journal of Religious Culture* 137, 2010, pp. 1-17.

Sen, Subashis: *Sino-Indian Border Dispute*. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 75, 2014, pp. 1307-1316.

Shakapa, Tsepon W.D.: *The rise of Changchub Gyaltsen and the Phagmo Drupa Period*. *Bulletin of Tibetology* 1, 1981, pp. 23-30.

Shakya, Tsering: *The Prisoner. Tsering Shakya on Melvyn Goldstein et al, A Tibetan Revolutionary. Memoirs of an indigenous Lenin from the Land of Snows, and his long imprisonment by the Mao government*. *New Left Review* 34, 2005.

<https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii34/articles/tsering-shakya-the-prisoner>, retrieved on 5 March 2024.

Sheel, R.N. Rahul: *The Institution of the Dalai Lama*. *The Tibet Journal* 14 (3), 193-32.

Shim, Hosung: *The Zunghar Conquest of Central Tibet and its Influence on Tibetan Military Institutions in the 18th Century*. *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 53, 2020, pp. 56-113.

Singer, Jane Casey: *Painting in Central Tibet, ca. 950-1400*. *Artibus Asiae* 54 (1/2), 1994, pp. 87-136.

Spence, Jonathan: *Introduction to the Cultural Revolution*. Spice Digest, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Fall 2007.

Srikanth, H.: *The Sino-Indian Border Dispute Overcoming Nationalist Myopia*. Economic and Political Weekly 47 (39), 2012, pp. 38-41.

Strong, Anna Louise: *When Serfs Stood up in Tibet*. Peking: New World Press, 1959a [online available in the Marxists Internet Archive: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/strong-anna-louise/1959/tibet/>, retrieved on 12 March 2024].

Strong, Anna Louise: *Tibetan Interviews*. Peking: New World Press, 1959b [online available in the Marxists Internet Archive: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/strong-anna-louise/1959/tibetan-interviews/index.htm>, retrieved on 12 March 2024].

Sun Hongkai: *On the Qiangic branch of the Tibeto-Burman languages*. Languages and linguistics 2 (1), 2001, pp. 157-181.

Tenpa, Lobsang: *The 1913 Mongol–Tibet Treaty and the Dalai Lama’s Proclamation of Independence*. The Tibet Journal 37 (2), pp. 3-29.

Theobald, Ulrich: *Tibetan and Qing Troops in the Gorkha Wars (1788–1792) as Presented in Chinese Sources: A Paradigm Shift in Military Culture*. Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines 53, 2020, pp. 114-146.

Thokmay, Darig: *The Clash of Dramatis Personae: the Early Eighteenth-Century Tibetan Political Power Struggle*. The Tibet Journal 46 (1), 2021, pp. 75-100.

Thomas, F.W.: *Tibetan Documents concerning Chinese Turkestan. I: the Ha-za*. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 59 (1), 1927, pp. 51-85.

Tsomu, Yudru: *Taming the Khampas: The Republican Construction of Eastern Tibet*. Modern China 39 (3), 2013, pp. 319-344.

Vanommeslaeghe, Willem: *De Wisselwerking tussen China en Tibet in de Qing-Dynastie. Het Amban-systeem in Tibet*. Universiteit Gent, 2006/07.

Wang Jiawei; Nyima Gyaincain: *The Historical Status of China's Tibet*. Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2000.

Wang Lixiong: *Reflections on Tibet*. Translated by Liu Xiaohong and A. Tom Grunfeld. *New Left Review* 14, 2002, pp. 79-111.

Wang Xinyang: *The Tibet-Dzungar Ideological Alliance's Challenge to the Qing empire and the Adaptation of Qing Ideology in the mid-18th century*. Master thesis, Uppsala Universitet, 2021.

Whitecross, Richard: “*Like a Pot without a Handle*”: *Law, Meaning and Practice in Medieval Bhutan*. *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 26, 2017, pp. 87-103.

Wylie, Turrel V.: *The First Mongol Conquest of Tibet Reinterpreted*. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 37 (1), 1977, pp. 103-133.

Xie Jisheng: *The Mythology of Tibetan Mountain Gods: An Overview*. *Oral Tradition* 16 (2), 2001, pp. 343-363.

Ya Hanzhang: *Biographies of the Tibetan Spiritual Leaders Panchen Erdenis*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1994.

Yang Jidong: *Zhang Yichao and Dunhuang in the 9th century*. *Journal of Asian History* 32 (2), 1998, pp. 97-144.

Кычанов Е.И.; Мельниченко Б.Н. [Kuchanov & Melnichenko]: *История Тибета с древнейших времен до наших дней*. Москва: Восточная литература, 2005.

Timo Schmitz: “An Overview of Tibetan History”

张晓明 [Zhang Xiaoming]: “文化大革命”的后遗症. 中国西藏网, 19 June 2012.

http://www.tibet.cn/xzbk/xzgs/ggkfhxss/201206/t20120619_1753657.html, retrieved on 24 January 2023.