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# NEWSFROMTIBET

#### Human Rights and Surveillance in Tibet

**1 April**: *China Tibet Online's* report stated that the 17-point "Squash Rumors and Reactionary Activities" campaign rewards people who tip off authorities of illegal activities. Tipsters could earn between 1,000 to 10,000 Yuan for reporting on activities which are deemed illegal by the State such as distributing unauthorized publications, advocacy for autonomy in Tibet and any "misguidance" of religious followers through superstitious belief. These strict regulatory measures also specifically discuss "those who advocate illegal activities like calling for Tibetan independence." Special emphasis on the arrests for individuals demanding an independent Tibet will encourage surveillance within local communities across occupied-Tibet.

Similarly, according to notice issued by the Government in on 30 April, titled "Measures for Reporting and Rewarding on the Campaign for Eliminating Pornography and Illegal Content in the Tibet Autonomous region", citizens are being offered rewards up to 60,000 yuan for reporting information on the spread of "illegal" content in the region. The notice applies to the areas of central and western Tibet which are governed as the Tibet Autonomous Region. The informants are able to report to the government by phoning, sending emails, letters or faxes with the promise that their personal identification will be kept confidential and the offenders they report "shall be held accountable according to law and principle". Possible offences listed out in the notice include those that endanger "national unity, sovereignty and integrity, for example, advocating 'Great Tibet', 'a high degree of autonomy' and the 'Middle Way'' as well as acts that oppose the Communist Party of China and its leaders.

Such notices and campaigns, follow previous ones authorized by the CCP, encouraging Tibetans to report dissenting views among their communities to the government. A similar notice was issues on 28 February, 2019 which offered financial rewards up to USD 42750 for reporting illegal online activities, a throwback to the Mao and Stalin form of surveillance where citizens were asked to spy on their families and friends as part of their socialist duties, a practice that continues to this day and is compounded with the use of the world's largest use of surveillance cameras and technology.

**18 April**: According to a report by Tibet Watch, Gendun Sherab, a former Tibetan political prisoner, died from injuries sustained in prison. Gendun Sherab was a monk at the Rongpo Rabten Monastery in Sog County and was arrested in 2017 after sharing a message from the Dalai Lama through WeChat on the latter's recognition of Choegon Rinpoche from Sera Je Lhopa Khantsen. He was released from prison after three months but struggled to recover especially because he was blacklisted from accessing various health facilities in Lhasa, preventing him from receiving medication.

**22 April**: According to various sources in Tibet, as reported by RFA and Tibet Watch, Tibetan households have been reportedly forced to display portraits of CCP's leaders, in a continuing effort by the CCP to demand the loyalty of Tibetans to the Party. The policy was previously restricted to only those families receiving state support under the poverty alleviation programme but now has been extended to the wider community. As part of the programme, villagers across Tibet were assembled and images of the party leaders were distributed to be hung in homes, offices, and public spaces. An estimated 14000 images of Xi Jinping have been distributed.

**8 May**: Qinghai Province officials held religious policy classes for Tibetan Buddhist representatives. These classes were administered by the Qinghai Provincial Tibetan Buddhist Institution and included 9 days of training. The head of the Qinghai Provincial Party Committee United Front Work Department, Gonpo Tashi, spoke to the representative about the importance of supporting the leadership of the CCP,

the socialist system and taking a firm stance on issues like separatism. The representatives were reminded of their 'duty' to adhere to the leadership of the party and make contributions to national unification with religious and social harmony.

The CCP in recent years has ramped up its efforts to control the Buddhist institutions of Tibet, with the demolition of large parts of Yarchen Gar last year bearing testimony to this approach. Increasing surveillance of Tibetan monks and nuns, their forceful eviction, and the ongoing State efforts to legitimize its claims over the Buddhist reincarnation process are all part of this effort. In the Chinese version of *Tibet.cn*, news features of a series of animated videos released by the CCP were posted. These videos seek to reach to the Mandarin reading audience about the alleged 'historical' role of China in approving the reincarnations of Tibet.

**14 May**: Human Rights Watch reports that Chinese authorities in Tibet are using a national anti – crime campaign to crack down on peaceful expression by Tibetan suspected of dissenting views such as those activists defending human rights, Tibetan culture and environment and suspected supporters of the Dalai Lama. Since 2018, courts in Tibetan areas have used "gang crime" charges to sentence at least 51 Tibetans to up to 9 years in prison for peacefully petitioning or protesting issues related to religion, environmental protection, land rights and official corruption. \

Such measures are part of an ongoing drive by the CCP to limit the space Tibetans can use to peacefully express their grievances and complaints, a right guaranteed under the Chinese Constitution but rarely seen in practice. Equating legitimate, nonviolent petitions and protests with criminal acts is an attempt to legitimize the State repression of Tibetans and social groups.

**25 May**: According to a police hiring notice published on the website of the Lithang County's Government website, candidates have been barred from applying if they have "supported or funded ethnic separatist activities". The notice states that crimes ruling out Tibetan candidates are:

"Participating in, supporting, or funding of ethnic separatist activities; participating in or supporting illegal activities ...sheltering, or hiding or conniving with all kinds of illegal persons ... spreading rumors or false information that undermine social stability ... demonstrations, rallies, gathering, rallies and protests that are related to ethnic splitting and sabotage activities"

The notice also stated that those candidates whose family have left the country illegally also should not apply. Similarly, a job advertisement issued in Lhoka on 19 June, has a "political review" section for recruits. Tibetan job candidates are split into categories of "loyal" to the government or "problematic" with those who are seen to cause trouble.

Such notices and practices are part of a long term policy adopted by the authorities in Tibet and the CCP to weed out "undesirable" individuals and groups as well as conflate peaceful protests and rallies with violent crimes, an occurrent that can be also be seen in the recent passing of the National Security Bill for Hong Kong. With such basis of discrimination, the Chinese Government seeks to clamp down on any form of dissent, either through the use of direct force, surveillance, or institutional means such as employment requirements. Unemployment has been a recurring problem among Tibetans, as seen during the public protests that erupted over the matter in 2013.

**12 June**: Tibet Watch reports that influential Tibetan exile have been blocked from WeChat, which remains the predominant method of communication between Tibetans in Tibet and in exile. The accounts of monks and nuns among others have been targeted by the Chinese Government, amid the lockdown measures of the Covid – 19 pandemics.

Furthermore, starting from April, the CCP authorities investigated between 4000 to 5000 households in Tibet, according to Free Tibet, with family ties to exiles in Nepal and India. Officials involved with the investigation forced Tibetans in Dingri County to register their names and identification numbers of their WeChat accounts. This have reportedly been done in an effort to blacklist individuals and social groups whom the Government sees as being possible destabilizing influence and placed under constant surveillance. Additionally, on 3 April, three Tibetans were detained by Chinese authorities for spreading 'rumors' about the coronavirus. Those arrested are from Mangra county in eastern Tibet, a region governed as the Tibet Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province. They have been forced to do Chinese legal education training while authorities closed the online WeChat groups they were using on 20 February 2020.

Such clampdowns on the use of WeChat and other social media platforms is not surprising, since it remains immensely popular among Tibetans for facilitating communication between those in Tibet and outside. It also remains as an important source of news on occurrences inside Tibet. Internet Sovereignty and surveillance has been touted as an important part of Xi Jinping's goal of strengthening the Party and the increased Governmental control over how its citizens uses the internet is a vital cog in the functioning of the State Party Apparatus.

**12 June**: According to various reports by RFA, Tibet Watch, etc. Tibetan observing the holy Buddhist month of *Saga Dawa* have been notified of tight restrictions on their religious activities. The residents of Lhasa have been placed under tight surveillance by the police and military personnel who regularly stopped them and checked their phones. School going students have been prohibited from visiting these religious sites.

Furthermore, on 22 May, according to a report on the Chinese news website *Tibet Daily*, the Sakya Township Police Station, the Sakya County Justice Bureau and the Sakya Court jointly carried out legal education activities, with about 342 Tibetans from the Sakya Town in Shigatse participating. The authorities 'educated' these Tibetans on refraining from spreading "illegal and criminal information", "inappropriate political remarks", and "unhealthy public opinion".

Although restrictions have been placed in previous years, this year they have been significantly intensified as part of the ongoing State intrusion in the religious affairs of the Tibetan people. 2020 has seen increasing surveillance of religious sites in Tibet as well as "education camps" for monks and nuns. Experts and observers have noted that religious centers are seen as potential sources of dissent against the CCP and efforts have been made to preemptively deter them from happening.

26 June: 50 UN special procedures – special rapporteurs and other human rights experts – issued an indictment of China's human rights record and called on the UN Human Rights Council to "act with a sense of urgency". The experts denounced the Chinese government's "collective repression" of religious and ethnic minorities in Xinjiang and Tibet , the repression of protest and impunity for excessive use of force by police in Hong Kong, censorship and retaliation against journalists, medical workers, and others who sought to speak out following the Covid – 19 outbreak, and the targeting of human rights defenders across the country.

The experts called for a special session on China, creating a dedicated expert on China, and for UN agencies and governments to press China to meet its human rights obligations. The experts' statement noted the harsh repression of religious and ethnic minorities in Xinjiang and Tibet. The Chinese government's "Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Extremism" in Xinjiang has entailed mass arbitrary detention, surveillance, indoctrination, and the destruction of Uigyur and other Turkic Muslims' cultural and religious heritage. The authorities in Tibetan areas have also stepped up use of a nationwide anticrime campaign to encourage people to denounce members of their communities on the slightest suspicion of sympathy for the exiled Dalai Lama or opposition to the government.

#### **Religious Freedom in Tibet**

#### China-US war on faith

Amid rising tensions between U.S. and China over trade issues, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) on April released its 2020 Annual Report which continued to condemn deteriorating religious freedom conditions in China. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is an independent, bipartisan U.S. government advisory body that monitors religious freedom abroad and makes policy recommendations to the president, secretary of state, and Congress. It was created under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA). The 2020 annual report is an assessment of religious freedom violations and progress in 2019 in 29 countries.

The USCIRF report displays with a map showing Countries of Particular Concern (CPC) in red color and Special Watch List countries in yellow color, with the greatest number of countries being drawn from the Asian continent. The illustration indicates that countries in Asia have the highest number of religious persecutions in the year 2019. Two of the most populous nation in the world, India and China are on the CPC list. India has not only denied visas to USCIRF teams that have sought to visit country in connection with issues related to religious freedom but downplayed the USCIRF report by calling it biased and prejudiced. China in particular has been on the list for 20 consecutive years, with USCIRF reports detailing Chinese government's creation of high-tech surveillance state to monitor religious minorities. The report notes an increasing number of Uyghur Muslims detained in concentration camps in Xinjiang. It also notes that the detainees in the camps were transitioned from reeducation to forced labor. The report has detail information on the human rights violations inside Tibet, from issues of forced assimilation to suppression of Tibetan Buddhism to the demolition of Yachen Gar Tibetan Buddhist center which displaced thousands of monks and nuns. However, CGTN shares the view that the camps in Xinjiang which they call "vocational education and training centers" have not breached Uygur's religious freedom. In fact, the official Chinese news source, Xinhua reported that "no single terror attack occurred in Xinjiang since the centers were opened and 480,900 urban jobs were created in the region in 2019".

The CGTN narrated the Chinese government's official position on Tibet, responding to the USCIRF report by stating that Tibet and the Dalai Lama is an internal issue and calling for defending the "national core interest" and safeguarding China's national sovereignty.

NDTV reported that the USCIRF's report comes after US President Donald Trump signed an executive order on June 2 to advance international religious freedom, instructing the State Department and the US Agency for International Development to 'develop a plan to prioritize international religious freedom' and to 'budget at least USD50 million per fiscal year for programs that advance international religious freedom.' The U.S. government under President Trump imposed restrictions on exports from 28 Chinese companies and organizations and the State Department announced visa restrictions on Chinese officials implicated in the mass internment of Uighur Muslims.

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo also announced plans to create the International Religious Freedom Alliance (IRF Alliance), a network of like-minded countries committed to opposing religious persecution and advancing freedom of religion or belief for all. The IRF Alliance officially launched in February 2020, with 27 countries signing onto its Declaration of Principles, which is grounded in international human rights standards.

However, in a revealing book titled, "The Room Where It Happened" by former National Security Advisor John Bolton, the author claims that President Trump prevented Nikki Haley, the former United States ambassador to the United Nations from meeting the Dalai Lama in 2018 over possible rift with China. The former NSA revealed in his book that President Trump agreed and approved of Chinese President Xi Jinping's policy of building concentration camps to detain Uighur Muslim minorities. In September 2019, Owen Churchill of SCMP reported that President Trump failed to mention China's mass internment of Uygurs in Xinjiang at the United Nations, while calling for governments around the world to end religious persecution.

Notwithstanding Trump's mixed signal and its reaction against Beijing's religious persecution and human rights violations, the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo continues his strong objection towards Chinese government's treatment of Uyghur and other ethnic minorities. He condemned the continuing mass detentions of Uygurs in Xinjiang and repression of Tibetan Buddhists, Falun Gong practitioners and Christians.

#### June 18, 2020: Living Buddhas under CCP

With Xi Jinping ascent to power in 2012, measures to control and policies adopted to intervene in religious and spiritual communities have increased. In Tibet, new measures of repression and control over the practice of Tibetan Buddhism have intensified. Besides harsher punishment, cancellation of Buddhist festivals and surveillance in Tibetan monasteries, there have been new ways adopted to influence and interfere in the selection of monks and nuns. There are state sponsored events to highlight the importance of upholding party's national religious policies.

For instance, on June 18, the opening ceremony of the "Reincarnation of Tibetan Buddhist Living Buddhas Special Exhibition" in Diqing Prefecture (*Dechen Zong*), Yunnan Province was held at the Buddhist College of the Tibetan Department of Yunnan Province. The ceremony was attended by officials from the United Front Work, Propaganda Department, Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee and research institutes. The purpose behind the exhibition, as explained by Feng Zhi, deputy director and researcher of the Institute of History, China Tibetology Research Center, is to enable people to understand the reincarnation system of Tibetan Buddhism in a more "comprehensive, three-dimensional, and true way".

A similar exhibition was launched in Shannan city (*Lhoka*) on May 8. Evidently, the official head of the United Front Work Department clearly explained the rationale behind celebrating the opening of the exhibition. He said that it was aimed to promote the party's national religious policy such as the Religious Affairs Regulations and Tibet Buddhist Living Buddha Reincarnation Management Measures. He also mentioned that the exhibitions' purpose was to enhance and adapt Tibetan Buddhism with socialism and cultivate patriotism, constantly strengthen the ideological importance, and contribute to long-term peace and stability. The Chinese Communist Party uses these policies as a guise of public safety and interest to increase religious repression.

#### April 15: Implementation of "Four Standards" education

In order to create a good environment for the rule of law the United Front Work Department of the Chengguan District Committee of Lhasa, Tibet has strictly organized monastery committees and employed full-time special commissioners to carry out law-related publicity and education activities. The United Front Work Department of the Chengguan District Committee included the activities of various temple management committees and full-time special commissioners in the scope of daily supervision, and carried out the promotion and education of the rule of law as an important measure to deepen the educational practice of "observing the four standards and striving for advanced monks and nuns".

The 'Four Standards' policy was introduced in TAR in 2018 where Tibetan monks and nuns are required to act as propagandists for the government and Communist Party. Under the policies for Sinicizing religion, the Chinese government compelled the monks and nuns to demonstrate "political reliability", moral integrity capable of impressing the public", and willingness to play an active role at critical

moments" apart from demonstrating competence in Buddhist studies. The Human Rights Watch states that it is an attempt to forestall or stop any protest against the state policy.

From April 14 to 16, the Standing Committee of the Party Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region, the deputy secretary and deputy chairman of the Party Committee of the District Political Consultative Conference, and Dan Ke, the head of the United Front Work Department of the District Party Committee, went to Shannan and Shigatse to investigate and supervise the field of religion to "follow the four standards and strive to be advanced monks and nuns." Danke emphasized the in-depth implementation of the "Four Standards" education. He stated that it was necessary to further improve various working systems in the field of Tibetan Buddhism, and formulate "Tibet Tibetan Buddhist Temple Regulations" and "Tibetan Buddhist Temple Regulations and Monks' Covenants", establish a "four standards" long-term mechanism for educational practice, to thoroughly solve the fundamental problems of Tibetan Buddhism's politically reliable and critical role, and to promote educational and practical activities to achieve institutional, theoretical, and practical results.

#### 10 April: Patriotism in monkhood

A video conference on "Practicing the four standards and striving to be an advanced monk and nun" was held in TAR. The meeting pointed out that in 2020, it was vital to follow the four standards and strive to be advanced monks and nuns through education and strengthen political guidance. The meeting emphasized that all party members and officials should preach "religious rituals and custom history, customization of the reincarnation of the living Buddha with historical facts and reality."

Monks who were involved in these activities of teaching about reincarnation, religious rituals and historical customization are called patriotic monks. A monk who was aware of the importance of national unity and social stability and could explain the principle that religion is compatible with a socialist society, propagated the various religious policies of the party and contributed to the ideological development of the monks in the temple was deemed as a patriotic monk.

It was also reported that in recent years, the Tibet Autonomous Region had adopted a policy of benefiting monks and nuns. The monks and nuns in the region enjoy medical insurance, old-age insurance, personal accident insurance, minimum living guarantee and free medical examination. If the monks supported the Party Central Committee, shared the same mind in ideology and followed the movement, they would win the respect of society and the government and would be provided with honorary certificate of the advanced patriotic law-abiding monks and nuns issued by the TAR Committee of the Communist Party of China and the People's Government of TAR. The ultimate purpose of these activities is to maintain the national unity, and actively guide religion to adapt to the socialist society. The report also claims that the reincarnation of Tibetan Buddhism has always been carried out by the central government.

After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government accorded appreciation for a monk named Tashi Phuntsok who is a member of the CPPCC National Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region. It was reported that he performed his duties and responsibilities as well as abided by the duties and missions of CPPCC members. After the pandemic, he paid attention to the ideological development of the monks in the temple, explained to the monks the knowledge of epidemic prevention and control, publicized the party's various religious policies and played the role of a bridge and link between the party and the government and the people. These policies to honor and recognize individual monks and nuns are put forward by state appointed individuals who also monitor politically loyal monks and nuns.

#### Gender and religious Issues in Tibet

April 4, 2020: According to the China Tibet Network, the United Work Font Department recently organized initiatives to carry out law-related propaganda and activities among the monastic committees. The law entails the implementation of rules and regulations in temples, monasteries and nunneries and consists of the 'Prevention and Infectious Disease, the Criminal Law", and the Law on the Protection of Wild Animals." In addition, the law of "Four Standards" has to be learned by monks and nuns in order to strive for national security.

April 10, 2020: As reported by the China Tibet Network, the Tibet Autonomous Region held a video conference on "Practicing the four standards" and "striving to be advanced monks and nuns". Based on the principles of 'Four Standards" that actively promotes the idea of "national security" for monks and nuns, the conference highlighted the greater need for implementation of the Four Standards and Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism based on socialist values. It has also stressed on the "reincarnation policy" among its many themes. Chinese authorities have introduced a series of policies in monasteries and nunneries in Tibet in the past. The infiltration of the State into Tibetan monastic institutions can be viewed as the Chinese attempt to dismantle the seed of any dissent in the monasteries and nunneries which has been a breeding ground for dissent in the past, especially in 1980s and 2008. Tibetan Buddhism is pervasive in the lives of Tibetan people, so controlling the top monastic abbots or introducing policies into the monastic institutions can be viewed in the context of China's campaign of indoctrination to stamp out dissent.

April 22, 2020: China Tibet Network reports that "Shigatse City's religious field" initiated numerous 'National Security Day' educational activities. The program's primary purpose was to enhance the awareness on 'National Security' for monks, nuns and people who practice religion. The main aspect of the programme stressed on "actively learn to master national security laws and achieve the unity of knowledge and action and encourage monks and nuns to strive for a scared land with clear thinking and a firm patriotic position".

May 6, 2020: According to a report by Radio Free Asia, on January 11, the so-called The People's Congress of Tibet Autonomous Region adopted a new ethnic law called the 'Regulations on the Establishment of a Model Area for Ethnic Unity and Progress in the Tibet Autonomous Region." The law stresses on the active participation of all sectors of the society to adhere to the policy and maintain 'unity' for the greater good of the national interest. Many rights group have condemned the move by calling it a further move to 'Sinicize' Tibet by the Chinese.

On May 6, Radio Free Asia reports that the implementation of the law through inter-racial between Chinese and Tibetans was already underway at Shigatse. However, this is not the first time that such a law has been carried out. On August 14, 2014, the Washington Post had reported that the promotion of inter-racial marriage between Tibetan and Chinese was carried out by displaying and writing stories of inter-racial marriage between Chinese and Tibetan on local newspapers. The Chinese authorities incharge had also adopted promising policies for the people who adopted the law of mixed marriage. Chen Quanguo, Chinese official, had a photo-op with 19 mixed families in order to promote mixed marriages. The report also had stated that mixed marriages in Tibet had increased from 666 couples to 4,795 couples from 2008 to 2013, respectively. There has been a lot of outrage. China's ethnic unity law in Tibet can also be seen as a move by the Chinese to retain the narrative of "Tibet as an integral part of China" with the promotion of so-called "inter-ethnic unity" and marriage. This law also elicits China's policy of undermining Tibetan culture by violating Tibetans' consent through adoption of inter-racial marriage into its legislation.

# COMMENTARIES

### China's Women Empowerment Discourse in Tibet

Tashi Chodeon

#### Chinese nationalism and gender discourse in the Mao era

After the People's Republic of China (PRC) usurped the reigning Chiang Kai-Shek led nationalist government in China from 1949 onwards, it culminated in a series of reforms wherein women were also promised equal rights. Moa Zedong's famous quote "women hold up half the sky" encapsulated the growing aim of the PRC to 'uplift' women and help tread them towards the path of empowerment and emancipation. Although the PRC support for women's movement can be traced back to the May Fourth Movement (1910s –1920s), one of the major women's movements in China, it is only after 1949 that they could incorporate transformational changes into China's legislation with the introduction of the Marriage and Land Reforms.<sup>1</sup> Apart from that women and men were equally mobilised to enter into the workforce to build the country's economy from a scratch. However, as the Marriage Reform was garnering a lot of opposition from the male members of the Chinese society, the party had to regulate the reform and it shifted the concentration of women's individual freedom to "collective stability" of the Chinese people to receive mass support from the people.<sup>2</sup> With the transition of the CCP's faltering hold to its firm control of China now, the concerns for gender quality also transitioned.

#### CCP's colonisation of Tibet and Tibetan women

The PRC's dominance in Tibet was carried out with the same air of superiority. The so-called 'reforms' that were being imposed across Tibet were reminiscent of repeating strands of colonialist attitude. Charlene Makley, when taking on the Chinese narrative of Tibetan women's status in Tibet, in her essay "The Meaning of Liberation: Representations of Tibetan Women", points out how the Chinese, when they first came to "liberate" Tibet, viewed Tibet's socio-political structure as essentially making Tibetan women "slaves of society and family".<sup>3</sup> This categorisation led them to:

- a) Establish Han-centric family structure and
- b) Abolition or regulation of monastic arrangement.<sup>4</sup>

The formation of such new ways of maintaining society, the Chinese believed, would in due course end asymmetric power dynamics between Tibetan men and women vis-a-vis labour. However, such imposition puts Tibetan women into an oriental format of as being only oppressed, while at the same time giving no regard to diverse range of family structures present within the Tibetan family system in different Tibetan regions where Tibetan women held agency. Makley of course argues the points by presenting a different view where Tibetan women's status and their relation to agency can be viewed, especially, within local and regional context.<sup>5</sup> Chinese state project on Tibetan women's 'liberation' has fundamentally been an act to impose and gain political legitimacy within Tibet with the disbanding of Tibetan traditional system while, paradoxically, disregarding the sentiments of Tibetan women.

This Orientalist lens through which the Chinese first saw 'Tibetan women' resonates with Chandra Talpade Mohanty's argument of looking at 'women' from 'other ' culture as a single entity devoid of any

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> li, Yuhui, 'Women's Movement and Change of Women's Status in China,' *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 1(1), January 2000, Bridgewater. Massa chutes 30-31

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ibid, 32

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Makley, Charlene, 'The Meaning of Liberation: Representations of Tibetan Women.' pg, 8. The Tibet Journal,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> ibid, pg. 8. In the essay Charlene Makley gives polarized narratives of Tibetan women's status defined by the Chinese, Tibetans and western feminists. She debunks and critiques them and presents an alternative view where Tibetan women's status and their relation to disempowerment and empowerment can be viewed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> ibid, pg, 12-21

complexities and nuances. This assertion divulges two aspects from the Chinese thought process, one by proving the uncivilised nature of the deep patriarchy of Tibet which gave them the opportunity to 'save' Tibetan women in a manner akin to Frantz Fanon's assertions in his "Algeria Unveiled" where the veil becomes the contention between Algerians and French colonisers. For the French, the veil symbolised 'exotic' Arab women and the deeply inherent patriarchal nature of the Maghreb community in Algeria wherein these women are subjugated and oppressed. Thus, unveiling of the Algerian women becomes a colonial project to 'liberate' women from patriarchy.<sup>6</sup>

The CCP, by imposing their conception of family structure into the Tibetan society or by liberating Tibetan women, can be seen as penetrating tier values into a country where worldviews hugely differed. The Chinese project on gender equality in Tibet becomes a pawn in their project to colonise Tibet.

#### Deng's reform era, post-reform era and Tibetan women

Fast forward to the reform era, with Deng Xiaoping's reform, the whole of the state attitude towards economy changed. It had a lasting effect on the labour-force market and though women and men were equally subsumed within the labour-oriented production, women were especially put up to bear the brunt of sexist values.<sup>7</sup> For example, there was an unequal distribution of jobs between men and women. There were increasing cases of job discrimination against women. New laws entailed women and men to conform to stricter gender roles. The state, though, did rally support for women by introducing "the anti-discrimination law" in 1993<sup>8</sup> yet it did not improve the lives of the women at all. This time, family needs were prioritised, and so were role of women as sole caretakers. Family needs were considered as collective interest-as opposed to Mao's ideology for which family interests were considered an anathema to collective interests.<sup>9</sup> This imposition of strict traditional gender roles for women hindered them from accessing jobs as family interests were prioritized. During the early years of reforms, there was a perceived transition of women's role to "socialist housewives" from the Mao's marker of women as 'iron women".<sup>10</sup>

How can this be seen in the context of Tibetan women in Tibet? Deng's reform or the open door policy opened new forums for the Chinese women to exercise their right to access jobs, notwithstanding how unsuccessful they might have been. It paved way for a relatively relaxed social milieu. Religious institutions were opened and people were allowed to practise their religion. But the relaxation was allowed with another form of supervision and state-intrusion that would define China in the reform and post reform era and its treatment of, especially, its colonial subjects. The 'open door policy' ushered with it another form of discourse, the *suzhi* discourse that essentially places the strength of a nation on an individual's 'quality'.<sup>11</sup> By its logic, an individual's failure to go upward the social ladder is because they lack innate human 'quality'. It completely cancels out the complex and layered forms of oppression and discrimination that are at play. In an increasingly market-oriented environments, Tibetans who did participate faced discrimination but Tibetan women were further disadvantaged in accessing jobs.<sup>12</sup> China claims of not implementing on the One Child policy on its "minority citizens", but just a quick

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Fanon, Frantz, 'Algeria Unveiled'. *DECOLONISATION, perspective from now and then.* Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London and New York ,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Leung. S.M. Alicia, 'Feminism in Transition: Chinese Culture, Ideology and the development of Women's movement in China,' *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 2003, Kluwer Academic Publishers, The Netherlands, 359-374

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> ibid

<sup>9</sup> ibid

<sup>10</sup> ibid

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Kipnis, Andrew, Suzhi, A Keyword Approach, The China Quarterly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> 'Violence and Discrimination Agonist Tibetan women,' Report by Tibet Justice Center, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights, Women's Commission for the Refugee Women and Children to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 1998, December

glance at a testimony by a Tibetan woman who was arrested while distributing pamphlets to Tibetans about the child policy in the 1990s directs us to another reality.<sup>13</sup>

#### The conception of Female agency amongst Tibetan women

Equality amongst all genders has become a great phenomenon in the present world. Oppression and inequalities faced by women have become a rallying cry for the fight for equality. But women cannot be viewed as a single entity for which oppression is homogenized to portray their status which Chandra Mohanty has said in the context of viewing Third World Women, but this can also be applied within the "Global North". How the experiences of women can be viewed to account for their true status in any society? And how this can be done and achieved in the context of a colonial setting?

Tibetan women in Tibet are considered an 'ethnic minority'. As evidenced from the above points, there is, on the one hand, the state-sponsored feminism that has infiltrated the Tibetan society building on the narrative of "backward and oppressed" status of the Tibetan women before the 'reforms' and how they have evolved ever since.<sup>14</sup> While there is an upsurge in intersectional feminist consciousness in China that challenges the state every now and then, there is almost no lens where the status of Tibetan or Uighur women can be taken into consideration.<sup>15</sup> With the integration of 'sinicization' policy into the state's legislation and modernisation project akin to neo-liberal capitalist tendencies, Tibetan women and their relation to agency can be mired into the Han-centric discourse of Feminism. However, any project related to women empowerment and agency should not be based on assumptions. The concept of agency, particularly related to that of female agency, is a complex terrain; it varies for women based on their cultural, religious and historical context and to invoke Saba Mahmood's invocations:

"What do we mean when we as feminists say that gender equality is the central principle of our analysis and politics? ... Are we willing to countenance the sometimes violent task of remaking sensibilities, life worlds, and attachments so that women of the kind I worked with may be taught to value the principle of 'freedom'? Furthermore, does a commitment to the ideal of equality in our own lives endow us with the capacity to know that this ideal captures what is or should be fulfilling for everyone else? If it does not, as is surely the case, then I think we need to rethink, with far more humility than we are accustomed to, what feminist politics really means."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Barnett, Robert, 'Women in Contemporary Tibet'. *Women in Tibet* (eds) Janet Gyatso, Hanna Havenik, Columbia University Press, 2006

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> 'Tibet establishes first ever league of women intellectuals to empower females' Global Times, October28, 2019, <u>https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1168210.shtml</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Kehoe, Seagh, 'Global Connections: Chinese Feminism, Tibet, and Xinjiang', Made in China (Smashing the bell Jar). April 18, 2019 <u>https://madeinchinajournal.com/2019/04/18/global-connectios-chinese-feminism-tibet-xinjiang/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Mahmood, Saba, 'Politics of Piety, *The Islamic Revival and The Feminist Subject*', Princeton University Press, 2005, Princeton New Jersey,

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᠊᠍᠊ᢔ᠂ᡆᢅ᠙᠐ᡐᢩᡜ᠆ᢁ᠋᠋᠋ᡠᢂ᠂᠋ᢋ ᠹᡇ᠄ᢥᡃᡗᢆᡆᡩᡊᡄ᠋ᢆᢍᢋ᠋᠊ᡚᢆ᠋᠄ᢩᡆ᠋ᠧᢎ᠂ᡜᠮ᠆ᡇᠿᠵ᠍ᡇᢋᢋᢋᢋᢋᠴᠴᢑ᠋ᢆᢍᢋᠧᡁᠴᠴ᠆ᢘᡧ᠋᠋ᢇᠯᡧ᠈ᡆ᠍ᡱ᠆᠄ᢩᢖ᠆ᠴᡭᢋ᠇ᠯᢋ᠉ᡪᡩᠬ᠉ᡁ᠉ᢋᡁᠴᢋᢋ ᡆᢩᢟᡇ᠂ᠴ᠋᠋ᡝ᠂ᡎᡆᡰᢂ᠄ᡬᡇ᠄ᡘᡝᢆ᠋ᢆ᠋᠊᠋ᡠ᠂ᢋᢂ᠆ᡘᢋᢋ᠋᠋ᠬ᠊ᢋ᠋᠉ᠴᡭᡆ᠋ᡷᢂ᠄ᡭᡄᡊᡆᢆ᠋ᡎ᠄ᡬᡇ᠄ᢅᡘ᠋᠄ᢅᡚᠱᡘ᠊ᢁᡬᢋ᠉ᡷᡇ ᠀ᡘᠹᡇ᠄ᡬᡇ᠄ᠯ᠋ᡬ᠋᠋᠋᠊ᠬᠯᡬ᠄ᡆᠯᢂ᠉᠄ᡬᡇ᠉ᡊᢋ᠉ᠴᡆᡭ᠊᠋ᡷᢂ᠉ᡷᡄᡬᡆᢆ᠋ᡎ᠄ᡬᡇ᠄ᢅᡘ᠋᠄ᢅᡚᢄᢜᡄ᠉᠋ᢩ᠒ᡘᢂ᠉᠄ᡆᢌᢋ᠆ᡆᢟᡇ᠂ᡆᢩᢓᢋ᠉ᡬᡬᢋ᠋᠋ᢋ᠉ᡬᡬᢋ᠋᠍ ᠀ᡘᠹᡇ᠄ᡬᡇ᠈ᠴ᠋ᢤ᠋᠋᠋᠋ᢤ᠋᠋᠋ᡡ᠄ᡬᢋ᠋᠋᠋ᡡ᠆ᢋ᠆ᢋᡍᡎ᠋ᢃ᠕᠃ᡘᡭᡆᡷ᠋ᢤᢂ᠄ᡭᡄᡊᡆ᠋ᡎ᠄ᡬᠼ᠄ᢅᡘ᠋᠄ᢅᡚᢄ᠋ᡇ᠋᠋ᢩᢓ᠆᠈ᡬᡬᢋ᠋᠋᠋ᡬ᠋ᢋ᠉ᡬᡬᢋ᠄ᡬ᠍᠍ ᠀ᡘᠹᡇ᠄ᡬᡆ᠄ᡬ᠋᠋᠋ᡬ᠋᠋᠋ᡬ᠋᠋᠋ᡬ᠆ᠴᢃᡷᢋ᠉ᡄᢋ᠃ᡆᢂ᠉ᠺᡆᢋᢂ᠉ᡬᡬᡆ᠋᠋ᡬᡆ᠉ᡷᡘᡆ᠉ᡷ᠖᠉ᡩᡆ᠋᠋ᢓ᠆᠉ᡬᡬᡀ᠋ᢤ᠋᠋ᠥ᠉ᢋᠥ᠉ᠼ ᠈ᡘᠻᢦᡆ᠄ᡬᡆ᠋᠋ᡩᡆ᠉ᡷᡭᡆ᠋᠋ᡇᡊᠼ᠆ᡆᢋ᠉ᠼᢁᡊᡆ᠋ᢩᢂ᠂ᡬᡬᡆ᠉ᡬᡬᠴ᠋᠋ᢓ᠆ᡬᡬᢋ᠋᠋ᢓ᠆ᡬᡬ᠋ᢓ᠅ᠴᡭ᠅ᡬᡆ᠋ᢅ᠆ᡘ᠆ᡬᠼ᠋ᡩ᠋ᡬᠼ᠉ᡷᢋ᠉᠈ᡬᡆ᠉ᡩᡇ᠉ᡷᢋ᠉ᡩᡇ ᡆᡏᡄᢂ᠂ᢩᢓᠧ᠄ᠴᡗᡬᠴ᠋ᡆᠺ᠉ᡩᡆ᠉᠋ᡆ᠋ᡎ᠉ᡷᡚᢂ᠄ᡬᡆ᠋᠋᠋ᡊᡆ᠋ᢂ᠉ᡬᡗ᠋ᡜ᠋ᡩᢋᡘᡇᢋ᠋ᡩᢋ᠋᠋ᡇ᠋ᢋᠺ᠋ᡬᠼ᠋ᡬᠼ᠋ᡬᡆ᠋ᡬᠼᡬᡬᡬᡆᡸᡭᡭᡆ᠋ᡬᠯᡬᡭᡩᡇᡘᡭᡇ

ᡆᢅ᠋᠋᠆᠊᠋ᡚᡃ᠋ᢍᠴ᠈ᢤ᠋᠋᠋᠆᠃ᠴ᠋᠋ᢅᡷ᠋᠋ᢋᡘᠴᠴᢄᠯᢋᡎᡄᡇ᠋᠋ᠵᢁ᠋ᢋ᠋ᡬ᠋ᢋ᠋ᢋ᠋ᠴᢋᢂ᠉᠈ᡬᢧᢅ᠆ᡱᠯ᠋ᢆᠬ᠄ᢩᠼᡄᢄ᠋ᢤ᠕᠄ᡬ᠅ᡫᡄ᠇ᠴ᠋ᡘᡊᡪ᠉᠂ᡱᠮᡄ᠉᠄ᢓᢋ᠉᠂ᡬ᠋ᡜ ᠋᠊᠋᠋᠋ᡎ᠋᠋᠋᠊᠋ᠿ᠋᠋᠋᠋᠋ᢤ᠋᠋᠋᠋᠋᠋᠊᠆᠋ᡷ᠋ᡷ᠆᠈ᡷ᠆᠉᠄ᡬᡆ᠋᠋᠋᠋᠋ᢤ᠋᠆᠋ᡬ᠋᠋ᢩ᠆᠋᠋᠋ᢩᡩ᠆᠋᠋᠋ᢩ᠆᠋᠋᠋ᢩ᠆᠋᠋ᢩ

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### য়য়ঀয়য়ৼঀ৾ঀ৾ৼ৽ঀঀয়৽য়ৗ৾ৼয়৽য়ৢ৽য়৾য়ৢয়৾য়য়৾য়য়ড়৾য়৽য়য়

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### ᡊᢟᢋ᠄ᢆ᠋ᢆ᠋᠋᠋ᡠᠯᢂ᠂ᠺᡆᠯᢂ᠂᠋᠋᠋ᡢᠯ᠆ᢣᢅᠱᡏ᠄ᢍ᠄᠗᠆᠄ᡷ᠍ᢖ᠋ᢋ᠄ᢣᡗᡭ᠂ᡆ᠋ᢩᡰᠲᢂ᠄ᠼᢩᡝᢁᡃᡍ᠋ᡵ᠆ᡭᡅ᠄ᢆᢆᢆᢠᡆ᠋᠋᠋᠄ᠴᡭ᠃ᠴᡢᡆ᠆ᠴ᠖ᢋ᠈ᡬᡝ᠂ᡆᡰ᠋᠀᠆᠈ᡐ᠋ᢩᠫ᠇

### नवे हेन क्रम्स केग रेन

### <u> નગામ ફેંદ રુ. વનુય વેંદય શુ છે</u> વરુવા

### અમ गविन : શन : સ્वा क्रु अ : સે : શુન : અથવ અમ બન આ ર્શેન અ : શુ: છે સ બન વ

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### ૹુભાર સુવે કેવા વેંદ્ર દેવા સાન પ્રતે સુન છે. સુ વાલુ દ વી શા સિયય ગઢદ્ર સેવાય પર છે. વેંદ્ર સાદ દ સે દેવાય છે.

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### विग सर्वे नई गुरु कें न रन

## <sup>60</sup>न नावन हेन नगेंग क्रेंन नहेंन कर ना

᠋᠊᠋᠋᠋᠊᠋᠋ᢅᢨᡆᠴ᠋ᡪ᠊ᡚᢆᡃ᠋ᡎᡆᡪ᠄ᡩᢆᢋ᠄ᢅᢔᢩ᠋᠆ᡃᡪ᠆᠄ᡷ᠋ᡪ᠄ᡃᢆᢧᡃ᠋ᡢᡲᡆᡃ᠋ᡷᡃᡪᠫ᠋ᢩᠴ᠆ᡱᠯᢆ᠋ᡎᢂ᠋ᠴ᠊᠋᠋᠋᠊ᠽᢆᡁ᠉᠄ᡷᢅᡪ᠄ᢒᠣ᠋᠋ᡩ᠋ᢋ᠄ᡘᡭᢋ᠋ᡆ᠋ᡘ᠉ᡩᢁᡃᡪᡆᠮ᠉᠄᠔᠆᠄ᡷᡎᢂ᠋ᢇᡐᡗ᠊᠍᠋᠋ᠥ ᠊᠋᠊᠋ᢧ᠋ᢩᢁ᠋ᡊᡆ᠋᠄᠋᠊ᢧ᠋᠍᠄ᢩᡭᡆᢂ᠋᠆᠋ᡗ᠊ᠺ᠋ᡎ᠋᠆᠋᠋ᠺ᠋᠕᠄ᡩ᠆᠋᠋ᢋ᠋᠕᠄᠋ᢍ᠄ᡆ᠋ᢋᠺ᠋ᠴᢋᡀ᠋᠋᠆ᠴ᠆ᡬᡭᡆᢂ᠋᠄ᠴ᠋ᡬ᠋ᢋ᠋᠋᠄᠋ᡘᡬ᠋ᢋ᠋ᡬ᠋ᢋ᠋ᢤᢂ᠋᠉ᡩ᠋ᠺ᠋᠕᠋ᡩᢂ᠋᠆᠋ᡘᠼ᠋