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Preface

Collapse of Time

Modern Tibetan literature, whether written within Tibet or outside among exile Tibetan population, it is difficult to elude reference to moments in their history that has changed the fabric of Tibetan society and its political trajectory. Two momentous years in the middle of 20th century, the years of 1958 and 1959. In the year 1958, in the eastern parts of Tibet, policies conceived in metropolitan China resulted in huge upheaval and large scale deaths. And the year 1959, a popular uprising in Tibet resulted in the escape of H.H. the Dalai Lama and over 80,000 Tibetans to modern South Asia.

Tibetan writers and artists to this day, re-remember those episodes through an atavistic transmission of memory. In a sense that despite official ban on discussion surrounding Tibet's recent past, somehow persistence of those memories still endures.

The political afterlife of traumatic memories during the advent of Chinese colonialism in modern Tibet has survived complete erasure. In contemporary Tibet, despite operating within authoritarian constraints on creative expression, a relative sizable body of scholarly works has documented retelling of those memories in prose, poems, songs and other forms of creative expressions.

Two divergent, parallel and irreconcilable retelling of modern Tibetan history has inevitably emerged. Take 1959 as an example. People's Republic of China portrays 1959 as a decisive moment that has heralded in the "liberation" of Tibet from its old "feudal" past. Notice the irony when successive Chinese propaganda asserts that Tibet is a part of China since an obscure and undefined "ancient time." As for Tibetans, particularly among exile Tibetans, the same moment is described as a moment in Tibetan history when time collapsed or the time is turned inside out (དུས་མོག་པ་ལམ་དུས་འགྲུབ་པ་).

There are three streams of time worth considering. At the intersection of these three streams of times, I believe lies numerous questions and forms a fertile ground for intellectual inquiry. And if possible, make necessary policy intervention.

Tibetan time for centuries is recorded in cyclical fashion. Tibetan calendar, a dating system based on a cycle of 60 Tibetan years, each of which usually has 354 days (12 cycles of the phases of the Moon). It is worth recalling K. Dhondup's two monumental works on Tibetan history, *The Water-Bird* and

Other Years (Early 20th Century History of Tibet) and The Water Horse and Other Years (Turbulent 17th and 18th Century history of early-modern Tibet). He has titled his two works based on traditional Tibetan calendar and subsequent years. A Tibetan historian can quickly place the event in Tibetan history when referenced to a historically important document employing Tibetan calendar. For instance, when a reference is made to the Testament of Water-Monkey, it is safely etched in the memory as the year of 1933 when the thirteenth Dalai Lama issued his final testament.

Globalization of time measurement and state simplification, as anthropologist James Scott would put it is based on Gregorian calendar. This has nipped the circle of Tibetan time and belted it in a linear conception of time, and hence Tibetan history. This linear conception of history in our modern world has consigned numerous societies to the “waiting room” of history, if I am to draw from Dipesh Chakrabarty’s work. In this conception of history, societies are placed along linear timeline. This informs our framework and sensibilities on advanced and primitive societies. Colonial discourse and ideology conforms and propagates inevitability as a means to control and asserts its rule. This discourse is foregrounded as a moralizing force to legitimize colonial rule over the “feudal” and “primitive.” Look no further than the last PRC’s State Council White Paper on Tibet, dishing out a laundry list of “developments” as its achievements in Tibet.

Shifting the scale to planetary history and time, scientific consensus have us living in the epoch of Anthropocene. That is to say that in the last couple of centuries, humans has become a formidable agent in altering our planet’s climate and ecosystems. Advancement in technology and the flow of capital have accelerated our dependency on the use of fossil fuels. Such extractive practice cannot continue unabated without the consequence of having to live in a damaged planet. As a matter of fact, a large number of people across the globe are already negotiating their way, demonstrating what Anna Tsing and her colleagues have described as an art of living in a damaged planet.

To my mind, these three streams of time that has shaped the conception of time in Tibetosphere have now collapsed in the high Himalayas. Cyclical conception of time is no longer the dominant way through which an average Tibetan would understand or impulsively think about time. Beijing’s imposition of a standard time across the length and breadth of what it assumes as part of PRC is seen a necessary tool to foster “national unity.” China’s colonial modernity in Tibet is testing its limits to transform Tibet into another Chinese

province. This includes fantastic infrastructure development -- improbable network of railways, multiple-lane highways and mind-bending colossal dams.

These are the questions, which to my mind has to be tackled heads on. This includes rethinking the foundational discourse of modernity in Tibet. Earlier, studies on climate change have remained within the confines of climate science. Novel and exciting ways through which humanities and social science could contribute to understanding climate change is a new frontier of academic study. Perhaps, it is worthwhile looking for answers at the interstice where the times are collapsing in Tibet and its cultural sphere.

Tenzin Desal
Dharamshala
December 2023

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The Prayer Wheel Calleth: Story of My Research on Tibetan Refugees

Tanka B. Subba

Abstract

What I am going to speak about this afternoon is how I came to research the Tibetan Refugees living in Darjeeling-Sikkim Himalayas. I will also try and explain how this was not entirely because I was a faculty member at the Centre for Himalayan Studies, North Bengal University, which, being an Area Studies centre, was mandated to study, among other places, Tibet. In 1985, when I started working on them, getting permission from the Chinese government to do fieldwork in Tibet was out of question. Hence, one of the best ways left for me then, or for that matter any other Indian, was to study the Tibetan refugees many of who had settled in and around my hometown Kalimpong. But, as I tell my story here, I see it more as a call of the prayer wheel than a call of duty.

Introduction

I begin my story as a small boy growing up in a hill village called Tanek in what is now the Kalimpong district of West Bengal, which between 1706 and 1864 was under Bhutan. My home was by the side of an old, cobbled, mule road that was once a rather busy road transporting articles of trade between the British India and Tibet via Jeleppla Pass. The road was about 8 feet wide, although at places, such as near my home, it was wider. Thus, about 30 mules could take rest during the day or at night near my home. Unfortunately, the trade stopped in 1959 or the year the Chinese overran Tibet, and the border with Tibet was sealed completely after the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962. Hence, the social life of the mule road next to my home had come to an end even before I started going to the primary school on the other side of the road where the mules and muleteers rested in the past. It was in this school that I first learnt my alphabets and numbers by arranging stone pebbles collected from the stream next to the school, and sitting on the ground between a banyan and a pipal tree.

The government of India did not wake up to the absence of a motorable road to Kalimpong, which bordered then with Tibet until the 1962 war with China happened, which was a century after the British had annexed it from

Bhutan. The mule road next to my home was the only road that connected the Kalimpong town, and through this town, Tibet with the rest of India. Hence, there would be some strangers walking on that mule road every day and the sound of the mules walking on the cobbled road could be heard from my home. Of those who took that road, I as a child was most scared of the Tibetan beggars who came to the courtyard of my home, asking for alms. I hid myself inside the house and peeped through the windows while our dog barked furiously to scare them away. But they would not budge without taking some alms, which was mostly in the form of some rice or maize. Some such beggars, on hindsight, were actually monks, as they wore red gowns and had rosary beads or small prayer wheels in their hands, but some of them were simply ordinary Tibetans who might have just fled their homeland and who were yet to be settled. Whenever my half-sisters wanted to discipline me, they would threaten to give me away to them and I would become an obedient child instantaneously.

After studying classes IV and V in an adjacent village, I started going to a higher secondary school in Kalimpong town, where some of my classmates had the same names as the Tibetan refugees did, but they were from Bhutan and not from Tibet. They treated me well because my father was one of the pioneers in school education in Bhutan, being the first headmaster of a primary school in Dogar, Shemgang District in eastern Bhutan.

Growing up with Tibetan Refugees

My emotional proximity with Tibetans grew as I started going to the local degree college. The college building was incidentally constructed for the purpose of storing and grading the raw wool, which arrived on mules from various parts of southern Tibet, before they were reloaded on mules and taken up to a place called Gel Khola on the National Highway No. 10, through the mule road next to my home. The wools would then be transported from there in a meter gauge train up to Siliguri and from there by a broad-gauge train to Calcutta. The wool was mostly exported to the USA on ship starting from the Haldia port. Our classrooms were separated with the same gunny bags that were used for packing the wools brought from Tibet. Hence, Tibet was, so to speak, all over our classroom walls.

Secondly, the ground floor of our college building had a central school for Tibetan children and the headmaster was the younger brother of my friend Late Professor Dawa Norbu, the author of the celebrated book titled Red

Star over Tibet. As someone who had fled Tibet at the young age of 11, he woke up at times in the middle of night, sweat-soaked, saying in Tibetan, “the Chinese are coming, let’s run”. I was lucky that he wrote the foreword to my book on Tibetan refugees, published in 1990 by the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Dharamsala, before his untimely and sad demise while still teaching at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Thirdly, but perhaps most importantly, I had two Tibetan refugee friends, one of who was together with me as a National Cadet Corp in the college. His family ran a small restaurant selling momo, thukpa, and other Tibetan dishes on the Harijan Road of Kalimpong town. It was at his restaurant that I first learnt how to make momos. The other Tibetan friend was a blind whose parents stitched bags and jeep woods for a living. He later did a diploma in physiotherapy and was appointed as a physiotherapist at the North Bengal Medical College & Hospital, near Siliguri, and served there till he retired. I visited him almost every Sunday on a bicycle till I was a student at North Bengal University.

I was also very close to one Tibetan family in 1977, while I lived with a friend in a rented room just below the college, as I was too weak to walk about 10 kms every day to go to the college and return home after a monthlong hospitalization on account of blood dysentery. This family was headed by a widower who we addressed as Pala. His knowledge of the Nepali language was very rudimentary, but his three daughters were fluent. He actually had four daughters the eldest of who was trained by the US army in guerilla warfare but I never saw her. We lived in different rooms in the same floor of the building and we were like one family, although Pala, on hindsight, might have been worried about his young daughters with two young college boys and one married man living in the same floor of the building. I came to know a lot about Tibetan culture from that family almost a decade before I actually started the research that led to the publication of 1 book, whose royalty goes to the Tibetan Relief Fund, 4 articles, 2 book reviews and it is still counting, as the last one, a book review, is scheduled to be published by The Tibet Journal soon. I also wrote the foreword to a book on Tibetan refugees based on fieldwork in McLeod Ganj and Majnu ka Tilla in New Delhi titled Behind the Bridge by Professor Fabienne Le Hourou (2019).

Up until I completed my graduation, I grew up in Kalimpong where Buddhist receptacles of worship like monasteries, chhortens, and manes are quite common in the rural areas, as the Lepcha, Bhutia, Sherpa, Gurung, Yolmu

and Tamang communities living there have their own monasteries, chhortens and manes. It was also common to see prayer flags tied to bamboos erected along the roadside. Hence, I grew up in a place where I was familiar with Buddhist religious paraphernalia, not to speak of my father, who having lived in eastern Bhutan for over three decades, had for all practical purposes embraced Buddhism as his faith.

All this changed, albeit not so completely, in the next ten years or so, as I spent most of that time in Siliguri, a place that had hardly any symbol of Buddhism until one of my close friends and colleagues at the Centre for Himalayan Studies, Ugen Chencho Lama by name, established a monastery at Salugara, on the outskirts of Siliguri. He was not just a family friend and colleague but also my language teacher, as he taught Tibetan to some of us at the same Centre where I taught sociology to MPhil students. But having been brought up in Viswabharati, where his father, C.R. Lama was a professor, I thought Ugen Lama was more comfortable with Bangla than Tibetan, as I hardly heard him speak in Tibetan with Dawa Norbu, who was also with us at the same Centre before he was appointed as a Reader at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, more or less at the same time I was appointed as a Reader at North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong. I must also add that one Buddhist monk named Ventrul Rinpoche from Kalimpong was with us in the ground floor of a two-storey building we had hired near North Bengal University campus till he completed his master's in English literature. We did not share the kitchen but we interacted very closely for two years.

My proposal to work on Tibetan refugees was approved soon after I joined the Centre for Himalayan Studies as a Lecturer in 1985. While I was on the project, Professor Michael Aris, one of the authorities on Bhutanese history and the deceased husband of the Nobel Laureate Aung San Soo Kyi, visited our Centre. One evening, as the two of us took a long stroll, he asked me what I was doing but when I told him what my research was about, he did not sound encouraging. He told me that so much was written on Tibet that there was hardly anything new to add. Although I looked up to him as a scholar par excellence I had more than academic reason to do that piece of research, as I explained in the Preface to my book, 'Having grown up with some of these refugees, studied and lived with them, the zeal to learn more about them was very much there even before I landed up in the Centre where I am employed now' (Subba 1990, xi).

My Research on Tibetan Refugees

The most important aspect of the Tibetan refugees that I wanted to study was adaptation. I thought that for a people who were forced to flee their homeland, adapting to the host societies and cultures would, hypothetically speaking, be the most challenging experience. It emerged from my study that the Tibetan refugees settled in the hill areas of Darjeeling and Sikkim had adapted much better than their counterparts living in agricultural settlements in Karnataka or Odisha, as Darjeeling-Sikkim Himalayas had a rather similar racial, religious and cultural atmosphere as they had in Tibet. Those Tibetans who still professed the pre-Buddhist religion called Bonism also had something in common with Animism, which was practiced quite widely in the region. However, without the land, avenues of self-employment, and training in various skills, which were provided by the government of India in collaboration with the Tibetan government-in-exile, they would perhaps not be as successful as they are.

The Tibetan refugees of the region are perhaps exceptional in the sense that they could achieve both adaptation and identity, a feat not achieved by many minority communities in India or elsewhere. Talking about identity, the biggest threat to the Tibetan identity came from the much older and much better known Bhutia identity. It was not too wild to imagine the Tibetan identity being sucked up by the Bhutia identity. But this did not happen even though the Tibetans were brought under 'Bhutia' for the purpose of reservation in Sikkim. The gap between the Bhutias, the original inhabitants of the region, and Tibetans, coming from the same racial, religious and cultural stock but arrived in or after 1959, was never totally bridged because the former did not consider the refugees on par with them in terms of social status, while the Tibetans considered themselves superior to the Bhutias, not just in terms of the knowledge of literature and religious scriptures but also in terms of culture. The superiority of the Tibetans in these respects is also admitted by many educated Bhutias of the region.

In less than three decades of their settling in the region, the Tibetan refugees had started resenting being referred to or called 'refugees'. One possible reason for that was that the word 'refugee' was understood in a derogatory sense, meaning something similar to beggars or stateless people. Within two decades of their coming to India, begging had completely stopped and most of them had also overcome some of the infectious diseases like tuberculosis they suffered from in the initial period. While they are refugees technically, they, as human beings, have every right to live with dignity and honour. So, if they find being called or referred to as 'refugees' to be humiliating, the matter should stop there.

Besides fieldwork in my own hometown, this research took me to Darjeeling, Sikkim and Dharamsala. McLeod Ganj, where I lived, was then a small town with just a couple of small hotels, but there were large-hearted Tibetans who accepted me as their friend or well-wisher. Of them, I fondly remember Samphel, Tashi Tshering and Gyatsho Tshering.

Conclusion

No matter how closely they protect and maintain their identity, certain changes are inevitable, as the forces of change are often located outside of their settlements – the educational institutions, banks and offices, markets, media, internet, etc. and some such sources may even be invisible. Can the Tibetans in India keep themselves encysted from such forces forever? The answer is certainly no, nor do they expect so about themselves. The painful and often nightmarish stories of leaving their homeland have already started fading, as there are less and less survivors to tell those stories and even lesser number of Tibetan children interested to listen to them. This is the predicament of all societies that have been uprooted, displaced, or voluntarily migrated to alien lands. The new Internet-based technologies help them come together quickly and freely, but such technologies also tend to divide communities because the communities today are actually “imagined communities” in the sense Benedict Anderson defined it. The members of a community do not know always one another personally, speak the same dialect, share the same lifestyle and ideology, and have the same priorities in life, as some would want them to do. So, if the Tibetans have to maintain their solidarity and identity, they need to keep reinventing themselves according to time and place and even accommodate some diversity of thoughts within or some deviations from the official Tibetan ideology; they can ignore to do so only at their own peril. It is also a matter of concern for the well-wishers of the Tibetans in India about their future once His Holiness is no more. Although he may be reborn, he is not immortal. Will his successor have the same simplicity, humility and a sense of humour as he has? Will he or she have the charisma to draw the world’s attention to the Tibetan cause the way he does? Will he or she also be able to keep the Tibetans belonging to various dialects, sects, and schools of Buddhism under one umbrella? If his successor is not able to take care of some of these challenges, the very future of the Tibetan diaspora is uncertain.

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Resilience Amidst Displacement: Exploring Challenges and Adaptive Strategies of Tibetan Refugees in India

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(Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Abstract

This study aims to delve into the challenges, struggles, and adaptive strategies employed by Tibetan asylum seekers who migrated to India and currently reside as refugees. Focusing on the subjective experiences of diverse individuals, groups, and institutions, we seek to comprehend the means by which this distinctive group of refugees flourishes despite enduring displacement, political violence, and resettlement. Utilising qualitative research methods, including in-depth interviews, observations, and narrative analysis, we will investigate the social processes and community dynamics that contribute to the development of resilience among Tibetan refugees. By employing these methods, we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of the diverse forms of resilience exhibited by Tibetan refugees residing in India. One of the primary objectives of this research is to identify the different routes to resilience that these refugees have taken. By uncovering the adaptive strategies they employ, we can shed light on the remarkable ways in which communities sustain their growth despite the challenges of displacement. This knowledge will not only enhance our comprehension of the resilience demonstrated by Tibetan refugees but also illuminate the possible measures and support mechanisms that can foster the welfare and resilience of refugee communities. The findings of this study have significant implications for the exploration of migration issues within the broader context of Tibet. They contribute to our understanding of the factors that enable refugee communities to thrive despite adversity. This research provides valuable insights for policymakers, organisations, and institutions engaged in addressing the needs and enhancing the resilience of refugee populations.

Keywords: Tibet, migration, resilience, adaptive strategies, community dynamics

Introduction

In 1959, a significant number of Tibetan exiles arrived in India following the Dalai Lama's forced departure into exile. Throughout history, a significant number of Tibetan people have migrated to India. At the same time, a smaller proportion has chosen to settle in Nepal and Bhutan. The individuals who successfully arrived in India were received by the Indian government and granted permission for the Dalai Lama to establish the Tibetan Central Administration (CTA) in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh. Again, during the 1980s, around 3,100 Tibetans entered the country in the wake of the citizenship crisis when the Bhutanese government asked the Tibetans in exile to adopt Bhutanese culture and citizenship. A large number of Tibetans came in the 1990s and scattered in many places, including Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, West Bengal, Assam and Karnataka. Although India is not a part of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Refugee Protocol, Tibetans are considered refugees in India. The Government of India has provided them with land and other facilities for their rehabilitation. According to the latest data from the Ministry of Home Affairs of India, there are 1,10,095 Tibetan refugees in India as of 2009 (MoHA, 2014). The Citizenship Act provides that Tibetans born in India between January 26, 1950, and July 1, 1987, are citizens and thus eligible to apply for Indian passports(The Citizenship Act, No. 57 of 1955; India Code, as excerpted in See tharaman, A. 2020).

The concept of resilience was first used in 1626 in Francis Bacon's book *Sylva Sylvarum* and since has been defined by multiple disciplines, especially in psychology (Bourbeau, 2018). Etymologically, the term resilience has been derived from the Latin word *resilientia*, meaning the "act of rebounding" (Rogers, 2017). Resilience has become popular among many international organisations where resilience is taken as one of the agendas and is applied to areas from climate security, peacebuilding, and state building to individuals across countries. The United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) have taken resilience as their global strategy (Wagner and Anholt, 2016). But how do we define resilience? Resilience as a process means the positive adaptation of an individual or community regardless of the presence of disordered thoughts and feelings (Ungar, 2011). The American Psychological Association has defined resilience as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even source of stress (American Psychological Association, 2014). In a socio-ecological way, resilience is defined as the capacity of both individuals and their environment to interact in a way that leads to development (Ungar, 2013: 256). In a political sense,

resilience does not only mean bouncing back to previous normalcy but also bouncing forward despite adversarial conditions (Vuori, 2021). Trying to fix one particular definition of resilience will only lead to a narrower perspective by not allowing the diverse and complex process of understanding resilience (Humbert and Joseph, 2019: 215).

The former Sikyong of the Central Tibetan Association, Dr. Lobsang Sangay, in his farewell speech at Gaden Lachi, expressed that “a resilient Tibetan community is key to the Tibetan movement” (Central Tibetan Administration, 2021). Here, we want to discuss individuals not just a set of individual qualities but see it as a social and multifaceted process working at both individual and community levels (Bourbeau, 2018). In the realm of displacement studies, considerable attention has been given to the research surrounding trauma; the present paper aims:

1.To shift the focus towards exploring the various pathways to resilience in addition to challenges and struggles with a particular emphasis on the Tibetan communities residing in India. This does not mean undermining the challenges and the problems faced by Tibetan refugees.

2.To discuss the various institutional mechanisms that can foster the welfare and resilience of Tibetan refugees.

Methodology

A qualitative in-depth interview was conducted to understand the lived experiences of the individuals. All of them were informed regarding the objective of the interview. Drawing on this, we have conducted five in-depth interviews with Tibetan informants, three males and two females. Two of them grew up in Dharamshala, two in Leh, and one in the state of Tamil Nadu. The age cohort being examined falls within the range of 20-35 years. Two were born in Tibet and migrated from Tibet during their early childhood. Three of them were born in India. We hired a translator to conduct two interviews. With the prior consent of the participants, we audio-recorded the interview. The interview mostly centered on the individuals’ migration from Tibet to India, their arduous experiences as refugees in India, and the significant hardships they faced as young children who left Tibet at an early age, accompanied just by their uncles and were separated from their parents. We also engaged in a comprehensive discussion regarding the process of alleviating suffering through cultural practices that prioritise compassion. We also forced on

questions concerning when individuals experience feelings of sadness, in what ways do they engage in various coping mechanisms to cultivate resilience and compassion? E.g. Could you kindly provide information regarding the age at which you departed from Tibet, as well as a detailed account of your personal experience during that time? What do you do when you are not able to meet your family/ not able to visit Tibet? In instances of experiencing sadness, individuals often seek solace through interpersonal communication. For the three individuals who were born in India, we conducted interviews inquiring about the timing of their parents’ or grandparents’ departure from Tibet, their perceptions of Tibet’s images, and their willingness to visit or return to Tibet. We also discussed the community practices they maintain in order to keep the Tibetan culture alive.

The subjective experience of each Tibetans hold importance in accordance with their gender, the place they were born, language, etc. As a result, their experiences differ significantly from others who arrived in their middle ages, as they are not acquainted with the English and Hindi languages and possess distinct memories of Tibet.

Participants’ Demography

1. Tsering 22/23, (Male)	Born in Tibet, Came to India at the age of 11	Masters Student	Delhi
2. Tashi 27, (Male)	Born in India	Research Analyst	Delhi/ Tamil Nadu
3. Nawang (name changed) 32, (Male)	Born in Tibet, Came India at the age of 5	PhD Scholar,	Delhi
4. Anonymous (Female) 26	Born in India	Student	Delhi
5. Anonymous 28, (Female)	Born in India	M. Phil	Norway

Finding and Discussion

We started the interview by asking some questions about themselves, e.g. name, age, siblings, etc. Both Tsering and Nawang were born in Tibet. They left home when they were five and eleven, along with their uncles. They studied in Dharamsala, and two of them are staying in Delhi. Tsering is a Master’s student at

Jawaharlal Nehru University, and Nawang is a PhD scholar at Jawaharlal Nehru University. When asked about their memories of their home in Tibet, both of them shared that they can only remember their journey from Tibet, as everything else has faded. Tsering is connected with his parents through video calls, wherein the conversations primarily revolve around mundane daily routines. Tsering had a brief encounter with his father, lasting barely two days, on his father's single visit in the year 2016. Nawang is connected with his sister, who resides in India. The most recent interaction Nawang had with his family back in Tibet was in 2020, as there is no shared topic of conversation between him and his family.

Tashi, on the other hand, was born in India, specifically in the southern state of Tamil Nadu. Throughout his educational journey till the completion of his Master's degree, he attended schools in Karnataka and Dharamshala. As a result of his grandparents' compelled relocation from Tibet, the individual bears a heritage marked by ancestral turmoil and possesses a deep comprehension of the grave consequences of displacement. He has also undertaken various roles within Tibetan organisations, notably the International Tibet Forum. Our next participant wanted to keep her identity anonymous. She is a 28-year-old who recently completed her M.phil and moved to Norway for her education. The primary reason her family left Tibet was to find religious freedom and live near His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Our translator spoke with a 26/27-year-old Tibetan female living in Delhi, India. She was born in India, and due to privacy concerns, she chose not to disclose details about her current work or occupation. This interview provided valuable insights into the thoughts and concerns of a young Tibetan woman navigating life in exile and the evolving dynamics of the Tibetans. Her perspective adds depth to the understanding of the challenges and aspirations of Tibetan youth in India and abroad. She said the hope to get the freedom of the country back is what keeps them going.

Challenges and Struggles

Tibetan refugees who have sought asylum in India have endured numerous challenges that have shaped their lives in their adopted homeland. One of them said, "The challenges my family faced included homelessness, scarcity of food, and essentially starting our lives from scratch in a new land, far from our homeland," explains the initial struggles encountered by Tibetan refugees upon their arrival in India. Forced to leave their homeland due to political and cultural upheavals, many Tibetans found themselves without a place to call home and facing daily hardships, but gradually, they were well-settled in India.

Tsering and Nawang, who were separated from their family experiences, are different from those born in Tibet. Tsering, who is in touch with his family, has faced issues, particularly after COVID-19, due to the banning of WeChat and many other apps by the Indian government. Asking Tsering about his idea of home and if he wished to visit Tibet, he stated that if he had to apply for a Visa through China to visit Tibet, it felt like “asking for a key from someone else to enter your own home.”

One of the most pronounced challenges has been the limited job opportunities available to Tibetan refugees in India. Tibetans are barred from applying for jobs in the government sector, effectively closing a significant avenue for stable employment. The private sector becomes the primary option for Tibetan refugees seeking livelihoods, and this employment often presents its own challenges, including job insecurity and limited career advancement. The 28-year-old from Leh has moved to Norway in search of better educational opportunities. The lack of passports and citizenship substantially impedes Tibetan refugees’ freedom of movement. Restrictions on travel to certain areas and countries limit their ability to explore opportunities or visit their homeland, exacerbating the sense of displacement and confinement.

Discrimination based on facial features is an unfortunate reality faced by many Tibetan refugees in India. With Mongoloid features that distinguish them from most of the Indian population, Tibetans have reported instances of prejudice and discrimination, particularly in regions where the local populace may be less accustomed to ethnic diversity. Tashi has faced discrimination, particularly during COVID-19, when people were making discriminatory racial remarks.

These challenges faced by Tibetan refugees in India underline the complex interplay of socioeconomic, cultural, and political factors that shape their lives. While the Indian government and various organisations have extended support to the Tibetan refugee community, these issues persist and require ongoing attention and advocacy.

Resilience Among the Tibetan Refugees

Tibetan refugees show comparatively high levels of resilience. The concept of “resilience” is frequently characterised as an individual’s capacity to flourish or sustain stability when confronted with challenging circumstances, as described by Walsh (Walsh, 2006; McGoldrick, 2004). Scholars have distinguished between the concepts of “resilience” and “coping.” According to Folkman and

Lazarus, coping is a psychological construct that refers to the ongoing cognitive and behavioural strategies employed by individuals to effectively handle external and/or internal stressors that are perceived as overwhelming or surpassing their available resources (Folkman and Lazarus, 1984: 141). The relationship between coping styles and stress appraisal, as proposed by Lazarus, suggests that coping styles are influenced by individuals' interpretations of the severity and duration of stress (Lazarus, 1999). According to Beasley, it is important to recognise that coping does not always lead to positive consequences (Beasley et al. 2003). While the concept of coping can be interpreted as either "healthy" or "unhealthy," resilience consistently pertains to constructive and adaptive mechanisms. According to Bonanno and other scholars, it is contended that persons who possess resilience may undergo temporary moments of acute distress, although they eventually retain a continuous ability to maintain healthy functioning throughout time (Bonanno, 2014). When queried about their sentiments on their residence in India, a considerable distance from their place of origin, Tsering and Nwang expressed their belief in leading a meaningful living in the current moment. Initially, Tsering harboured enthusiasm upon his arrival from Tibet, as he possessed limited knowledge of the prevailing political circumstances in his homeland. However, subsequent to his arrival, he acquired an understanding of political conditions. Instead of contemplating, they engaged in a discussion regarding their educational experiences throughout their formative years in Dharamshala. Until the completion of their ninth grade, the educational institution they attended was referred to as home. However, once they reached their ninth standard, they were transferred to an alternative boarding school. Both individuals have a strong bond with their respective uncles, while Nawang shares a close relationship with his sister. Tashi, who was born in India, shares a close relationship with his family. Although his family stays in Tamil Nadu and he stays in Delhi, he is in close contact through audio calls and video calls.

The significance of faith in the Dalai Lama in enhancing resilience has been highlighted by a 28-year-old who recently shifted to Norway. The steadfast faith and profound spiritual counsel offered by His Holiness Dalai Lama serve as a symbol of optimism and motivation for Tibetan refugees across the globe. The profound bond established with their spiritual guide empowers individuals to effectively manage the obstacles inherent in their altered circumstances. She stated:

Our unwavering faith in the Dalai Lama, combined with our daily hard work and acceptance of this new reality, helped us overcome these challenges. His

Holiness Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in exile played a crucial role in nurturing our resilience. Every Wednesday, we do everything Tibetan.

For Tibetan refugees, the concept of home is not dependent upon a specific geographical place but rather hinges upon the fundamental aspect of familial presence. This attitude surpasses geographical boundaries, underscoring the significance of familial connections in their existence. Irrespective of their geographical location, individuals derive comfort and resilience from their familial bonds. This unwavering support system sustains their resilience in unfamiliar surroundings. Tashi said:

Home is where my family is, irrespective of the place, and Ooty (Tamil Nadu State) has a very close affinity with me. I haven't seen Tibet through my own eyes but read a lot about it and heard it through the stories of my grandparents.

The preservation of a profound connection with Tibetan culture serves as an additional foundation for survival. The act of celebrating occasions such as the Tibetan New Year and the birthday of the Dalai Lama serves to instil a sense of happiness and cultural belonging in the lives of individuals. The cultural traditions function as a means of reinforcing individuals' connection to their origins and contribute to the preservation of a collective feeling of identity and inclusion. A 26-year-old from Delhi said, "We celebrate every year with enthusiasm Tibetan New Year and Losar. This celebration of Tibetan culture brings happiness to them".

The longing to visit Tibet continues to serve as a significant driving force for several individuals who have been displaced from their homeland. Despite the geographical separation, the aspiration of going back to their native land to those born in India serves as a source of motivation and fortitude, propelling individuals to persist in their unfamiliar surroundings. The persistent longing observed in individuals demonstrates their ability to adapt and maintain a strong bond with their cultural heritage.

Institutions

In the realm of crisis management, the role of institutions is pivotal, and the concept of institutional resilience is widely recognized as a valuable attribute. As pointed out by Alice Hills, institutions play an indispensable role in crisis management and are often tailored to address specific crises (Hills, 2000). These institutions can carry the cultural imprints and biases of the governing regime or state. In the context of our discussion, it's important to note that

the four selected institutes operate under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. This connection underscores the influence and utility of established institutions recognized by governments in addressing crises.

Furthermore, the regional UNDG (United Nations Development Group) has advocated for a resilience-based development approach, emphasizing the importance of strengthening institutional resilience during crises (UNDG 2014, as cited in Bailey and Barbelet, 2014:11). This approach acknowledges that institutions are crucial in effectively managing and responding to crises. The Excellence Scholarship was provided by the Tibetan government in exile. This scholarship program is an example of how institutions, in this case, a government in exile, can contribute to the resilience and well-being of their community members. Such initiatives demonstrate the role that institutions play in supporting individuals and communities during challenging times. Tsering is a recipient of the Excellence scholarship.

The study conducted by Sang and Fielding highlights the efficacy of collaborative inquiry procedures in promoting collective resilience through the recreation of community structures among refugees. Furthermore, it is imperative to foster stronger ties with the host society in order to cultivate supplementary resources and enhance long-term resilience. This observation underscores the interdependence between institutions and communities in their endeavours to enhance disaster resilience. When asked about India, each individual expressed gratitude towards the Indian Government for their assistance. All individuals possess the ability to communicate in Hindi, while Tashi exhibits a high level of proficiency in the Tamil language. They celebrated Indian festivals, culture and tradition and, at the same time, kept their Tibetan culture and identity intact.

In a related context, academic institutions, such as universities, can also play a significant role in mitigating refugee crises. As noted by Marc Mezard, academic institutions often take proactive steps in addressing refugee crises, sometimes even preceding government efforts (Mezard 2021). For instance, French universities have shown a commitment to assisting during crucial periods of refugee crises. Such an institution is the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS), initially established in 1967 with the primary objective of imparting education in religion, culture, and language to the younger Tibetan generation. It expanded its offerings to include courses in Tibetan Medicine (Sowa Rigpa), Tibetan Astrology, and Fine Arts. The vision and mission statements of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS) underscore its profound commitment to preserving Tibetan culture and

heritage while providing educational opportunities for Tibetan refugee students in the Indian Himalayan region and others who may have lost the chance for advanced studies in Buddhism in Tibet.

The second institution of the concerned study is the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS), established in 1959 by Tibetan refugee community, focusing on the comprehensive study of Buddhist philosophy, logic, history, art, and culture. Beyond traditional Buddhist canons, CIBS delves into subjects such as Indian history, political science, economics, mathematics, and general science. Additionally, the institute is committed to preserving culturally significant artefacts, including Tibetan Medicine (Sowa Rigpa), Thangka paintings, traditional wood carvings, and sculptures related to Buddhism.

The third subject institution of this paper is Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, located in Bihar's Nalanda district and designated as a Deemed University, which has a dedicated Tibetan Studies department. This department's primary objective is to explore and research Indo-Tibetan cultural relations. Graduates from this program have diverse career prospects, ranging from academia to non-academic roles, including positions as foreign embassy interpreters, intelligence department personnel, and tourist guides. The Central Institute of Himalayan Culture Studies (CIHCS) in Dahung, West Kameng District, Arunachal Pradesh, was founded under the auspices of the Buddhist Culture Preservation Society (BCPS), led by H. E. 13th Tsona Gontse Rinpoche. It commenced its first academic session in August 2003.

Apart from these institutions, Majnu ka Tila (MKT), located in Delhi, plays a significant role in preserving and showcasing Tibetan culture and cuisine. This area has emerged as a major cultural hub for Tibetan refugees and the Tibetan community living in Delhi, as well as a popular destination for locals and tourists interested in experiencing Tibetan traditions. The area often hosts cultural festivals and events celebrating Tibetan traditions, such as Losar (Tibetan New Year) and other religious and cultural festivals. These events draw both Tibetan and non-Tibetan attendees, fostering a sense of unity and celebration. For tourists and locals alike, MKT offers an opportunity to learn about Tibet's rich culture and history. It raises awareness about the Tibetan refugee community's struggles and resilience, contributing to a broader understanding of the Tibetan cause.

The resilience of Tibetan refugees in India through the lens of educational institutions, shedding light on their remarkable commitment to preserving Tibetan culture and heritage. The selected institutions, the Central Institute

of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS), the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS), Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, and the Central Institute of Himalayan Culture Studies (CIHCS), have played pivotal roles in imparting education, fostering cultural exchange, and promoting the resilience among Tibetan refugees.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the narratives and experiences of Tibetan refugees in India paint a vivid picture of their resilience and determination in the face of immense challenges. Forced to leave their homeland due to political and cultural upheavals, these individuals have embarked on a journey marked by trials and tribulations. Homelessness, scarcity of food, and the struggle to build a new life from scratch were initial hurdles that many had to overcome. The contrast between those born in Tibet and those born in India is striking, yet both groups share a deep connection to their Tibetan heritage. Discrimination based on their distinct facial features has been an unfortunate reality, highlighting the need for greater understanding and acceptance in the host society.

Despite these challenges, Tibetan refugees have demonstrated remarkable resilience. Their unwavering faith in the Dalai Lama and their strong familial bonds have provided them with the strength to navigate unfamiliar surroundings.

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(Un)Freedom, Modernity and Tibet

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Abstract

Sinification is a process of nation building undertaken by China in Tibet as well as in its other ethnic minority regions. The PRC as a nation-state has 56 ethnicities or minzus, of which the largest are the Han ethnicity. The rise of China in the 21st century is in fact the growth of the Han nation state. It is here that the ideology of the ‘modern’ assumes an important role as the birth, evolution and the subsequent rise of China is a product of modernity, more precisely western colonial modernity. The nation state as a mode of political organisation emerged only after the treaty of Westphalia in 1648. However, as Ashis Nandy writes, the notion of a ‘contractual element between an apparatus of power and the general public had already entered civic space by the 13th century in parts of Europe, the treaty of Westphalia gave formal institutional status to the emerging concept of a state in Europe’.

Keywords: Tibet, China, Modernity, Coloniality, Nation-State

This paper starts with the story of Tashi Wangchuk, a Tibetan businessman from Kyegudo in eastern Tibet, who was released from a Chinese prison in 2021 after serving a five-year sentence for “inciting separatism”. He was arrested for the crime of campaigning for Tibetan education, the direct cause being an interview to the Times in 2015. In the same year, he had travelled to Beijing to make his case to Chinese officials and the state media. Tashi Wangchuk was alarmed with the growing dominance of the Chinese language, which is replacing Tibetan in schools. Recently he was physically assaulted by some unknown assailants in his hotel room. Tashi Wangchuk’s story highlights the process of sinification that is currently taking place in Tibet, a region occupied by the PRC since the 1950s. Sinification is a process of nation building undertaken by China in Tibet as well as in its other ethnic minority regions. The PRC as a nation state has 56 ethnicities or minzus, of which the largest are the Han ethnicity. The rise of China in the 21st century is in fact the growth of the Han nation state. It is here that the ideology of the ‘modern’ assumes an important role as the birth, evolution and the subsequent rise of China is a

product of modernity, more precisely colonial modernity. The nation state as a mode of political organisation emerged only after the treaty of Westphalia in 1648. However, as Ashis Nandy writes, the notion of a 'contractual element between an apparatus of power and the general public had already entered civic space by the 13th century in parts of Europe, the treaty of Westphalia gave formal institutional status to the emerging concept of a state in Europe' (Nandy 2012:2).

He further writes how with the French Revolution, the state was linked with nationalism. It was seen as the best guarantor of the stability of the state. This nation building entailed the cultural and ideological homogenization of a country's population, which became the stated or implicit goal of the modern state (ibid). In turn, the nation state is understood as a modern entity as it was organized in lines of rationality, capitalism and the individual. Statecraft was now invested in professionalism that linked the individual to the state. Moreover, the state became associated with an ethnicity and it became the main institution of social change (ibid, 3). The nation state sees itself as a repository of specific cultural values, which in turn are equated with a territorial concept of nationality. With the eventual colonization of Asia and other non-western cultures by the European imperial powers, the project of the nation state came to the colonies.

In the case of China or India, the colonial project encountered 'surviving concepts and structures of the state that differed from and were antagonistic to the new project' (ibid, 4). However, in the initial years, atleast till the 1850s for India, the British colonial powers were somewhat tolerant of the existing sovereignties in the subcontinent. For instance, Lokesh Ohri, in his book titled 'Till Kingdom Come – Medieval Hinduism in the modern Himalayas' writes about the Mahasu deities, a set of four divine entities, who exercised sovereignty over parts of the Western Himalayas. Ohri writes how till 1857, the British officials proactively engaged with the divine rulers. As long as Mahasu sovereignty complemented British expansionist designs, they played along and treated him as a king, even accepting his adjudication in matters they were themselves unable to bring to closure. They gave the divine rulers the status of a sovereign (Ohri 2019: 177-78). However, the earlier compromises gradually came to an end with the concept of the nation state triumphing over other surviving notions of the state outside the West. Ashish Nandy further elaborates how indigenous intellectuals and political activists confronting the colonial power found in the idea of the nation state the clue to the West's economic success and political dominance. Thus, the idea of a native nation

state was seen as a cure for all the ills of the Third World (Nandy 2012:5). The elites of civilisations like China and India uncritically accepted the twin notions of modern science and development, which could be achieved through the medium of the nation state. Thus, it is possible to argue that the story of the modernization of Asia that began in the 19th century is the story of the internalization and enculturation of the idea of the modern state by individuals as diverse as Rammohun Roy, Sun Yat Sen and Kemal Ataturk (ibid). After independence, countries like India and China, the latter was an informal colony embraced the structure of the nation state. Postcolonial states in Asia have all adopted the nation state as a model for organising their communities. All political arrangements and all state systems are judged by the extent to which they serve the needs of – or conform to – the idea of the nation state. This idea has seeped into the consciousness of the general population of the Asian countries.

After decolonisation, the nation state has continued as it has been adopted as the dominant marker of the state system in the postcolonial countries. An onto-epistemic violence is embedded in the project of the nation state. This is visible in postcolonial China and India, where nation building in terms of the discourse of the nation state is still an ongoing process, which is witnessed in the so called borders of the nation state. Significantly, postcolonial India and China come to share borders in the Himalayas, which have remained contested between both countries. Both countries fought a bitter war over these borders in 1962. Constant military standoffs in the borders between India and China have taken place as evidenced from the 2020-2021 Galwan valley skirmishes. Berenice Guyot Recharad in her book on India, China and the Himalayas elaborates how the story of China and India is that of two postcolonial and imperial polities seeking to deepen their rule over Himalayan regions where they encounter people starkly different from their 'core' citizenry. China and India's brutal experience of Western colonialism transformed their outlook towards the so called peripheries. Thus, she states how the PRC that was established in 1949, employed colonial policies on China's geographic peripheries – Tibet included (Recharad 2017:3). Postcolonial India and China's entry into the Himalaya should be directly linked to the British colonial policies in the region. The creation of borders such as the McMahon Line in India's Arunachal Pradesh are a direct outcome of British colonial ideas. These borders are the direct product of modernity as they are based on ideas of scientific rationality. The demarcation of the territory was done through a process of surveying, which is an activity steeped in scientific methods and knowledge systems. This was also done clandestinely by the locals incorporated by the British from their

Indian territories as the Tibetan state had prevented the British from carrying out such activities on their soil. In many cases, the Tibetans looked for survey instruments in individuals entering their country.

The colonial state introduced borders in the Himalayas demarcating territories between Tibet and the Indian subcontinent. These were fixed, rigid and regulated the flow of people, which was however initially not the case. A gradual standardization of the Indo-Tibetan borders with the emergence of a rigid notion of territoriality and sovereignty, which in turn is termed as the highpoint of political modernity has taken place. Moreover, the duality linked with the project of modernity was boosted through the demarcation of fixed borders. It helped in the creation of the 'other' for the nation state. The heralding of the fixed borders in the Himalayas has led to disruptions, disconnections and dislocation of communities, cultures and practices, which became more acute with the Chinese invasion of Tibet, the subsequent exile of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama and the 1962 Sino-India war. Previously, the borders were spaces of plural interactions, with them being understood as 'contact zones'. Even the human landscape is complex in these spaces, with the northern edge straddling areas populated by Tibetan populations (Rechard 2017:6). Besides them, variety of groups practicing Tibetan Buddhism, Bon, local forms of Hinduism and animism are seen to be present in the Himalayan borderlands. These diverse groups interacted with each other as well as with plainsmen from India. The linguistic, cultural and religious diversity and ambiguity betrayed the historical fluidity of human settlement in the region. Migration was not a single, en-masse movement but a constant, protracted, small scale process. People moved for trade, in search for a better land or to escape famine, feud, for religious reasons or because of war and political strife (Rechard 2017: 7-8). Many migrated to escape punishment as understood historically through the 17th century Buddhist migration into Pemako, southeastern Tibet, near the borders with Arunachal Pradesh (ibid). Similarly, migration from Tibet took place in Sikkim around the 16th-17th century, which was to escape the Mongol invasion in central Tibet that led to the persecution of the followers Nyingma and Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism. Their followers created the imagination of the 'beyuls' or 'hidden lands', majority of which are present in the Himalayan borderlands. These 'hidden lands' have attracted pilgrims from across the Tibetan Buddhist world (ibid 9). Beyul Demazong or Sikkim is considered to be an important 'beyul', which was opened by the Nyingma lama, Rinchen Godemchen.

The Himalayan borderlands were vibrant spaces with the presence of multilayered connectivity that stood in contrast to the imagination of these

spaces as created by the British colonial powers and carried forward by the postcolonial states. These political entities portray the Himalayas as remote regions, frozen in time and backward spaces that needed a benevolent hand to bring development or progress to its people. The Himalayas were also spaces for the presence of multiple sovereignties, which stand in contrast to modernity and its political project, the nation state that believes in the idea of singular sovereignty. The British colonial state in South Asia encountered the traditional Tibetan state established in 1642, ruled by the Dalai Lamas, a line of Tibetan reincarnated monks. Known as the Ganden Phodrang government, it was a fully functional state that derived its legitimacy from Tibetan Buddhism. The Tibetan state enjoyed a unique form of sovereignty and it did not exercise direct, unlimited, or exclusive control over land and its people. Lhasa ruled through both spiritual and temporal mechanisms. The latter consisted of government officials and bureaucrats such as the dzongpons, in charge of the districts where they had much day to day autonomy, which included both lay and ecclesiastical officials. They also exercised legitimacy through the influence of Gelukpa monasteries, with authority diminishing the farther one got from the capital (ibid 9). This unique system of sovereignty started from the period of the Fifth Dalai Lama, who aided by Gushri Khan, leader of the Qoshot Mongols and Desi Sonam Rapten had established the Ganden Phodrang government. The Great Fifth had instructed the establishment of a series of Geluk affiliated monasteries which became modes of exercising sovereignty by the Lhasa based government. The Tawang monastery, established by Mera Lama and the 'Gon-di chusum' or thirteen great monasteries in Tehor region, Kham, eastern Tibet was established by Hor Choje Ngawang Phuntsok, both after receiving instructions from the Fifth Dalai Lama.

One mode of comprehending this unique sovereignty exercised by the traditional Tibetan government is through Stanley Tambiah's idea of the 'galactic polity'. Tambiah brings forth the idea of the mandala in understanding South and Southeast Asian kingdoms. Under this, the mandala is an arrangement of a centre and its surrounding satellites. There is the presence of graduated power on a scale of decreasing autonomies. Further, in a galactic polity, political control was indirect and decreased in the outer circles. There was a faithful reproduction on a reduced scale of the centre in its outlying components and control was indirect in the form of overlordship (Tambiah 2013: 508-10). The centre derived legitimacy through the idea of an 'exemplary centre' and in such polities, boundaries were seen to be fluid depending on the diminishing or increasing power of the centre (ibid 514). In the case of Tibet, the religious hierarch, the Dalai Lamas assumed the centre of the mandala and he created

the required paradigm for exercising sovereignty through rites and rituals. Even the Himalayan polities such as Sikkim, Bhutan and Ladakh emulated a similar model. Furthermore, the kingdom of Sikkim and Bhutan and the Tibetan state under the Dalai Lamas were established around the same time. They had strong diplomatic relationship with each other as well as with other countries. For instance, the pre-modern diplomatic ties between Tibet and China can be understood through the 'cho-yon' relationship. Under this 'priest-patron' relationship, the Chinese emperors patronized Tibetan Buddhist hierarchs, who in turn provided them with Buddhist teachings and empowerments. In exchange, the patrons provided military aid and political support to the Tibetan hierarchs. The genesis of this unique diplomacy can be traced to the 13th century Sakya-Mongol ties when the Mongol emperor Kublai Khan took the Sakya Pandita and his nephew as his teachers. Subsequently, the Yuan dynasty granted the Sakya Lamas temporal powers over Tibet, with them providing the necessary troops to quell rebellions and opposition to Sakya rule.

The 'cho-yon' relationship continued during the reign of the Dalai Lamas and the Qing dynasty. There are several instances when the Dalai Lama especially the Fifth Dalai Lama had united Tibet and Chinese imperial presence in Tibetan affairs was minimum. With the coming of the European powers especially British colonialism, the priest-patron diplomatic relationship was wrongly translated as suzerainty where Tibet enjoyed domestic autonomy, while its external affairs were controlled by China. Whether it was the rewarding commercial ties with China or the lack of comprehension regarding non-western diplomatic practices, the British portrayed the fluid relationship between Tibet and China through the lens of the nation state. Dawa Norbu terms this as the 'Europeanisation' of Sino-Tibetan relationship. For the British, Tibet grew in prominence in strategic terms but as it was too costly an affair to maintain their colonial dominance, protectorship or independence of Tibet, they brought the notion of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, with the caveat that the Chinese would provide autonomy to Tibetans. This would safeguard the Himalayan frontiers of the British Empire in India as well as secure their economic interests in China (Norbu 1990:44). For the security of the NEFA (North East Frontier Agency), a peaceful and contended Tibet was important. Hence, Tibet was to be created as an autonomous buffer between India and China, but with Chinese suzerainty over Tibet (ibid 46). Under this formula, the Chinese had the right to advice Tibet in its foreign relations. However, the British saw Tibet as a separate entity with treaty making powers even though Tibet was declared as a part of greater China (ibid 48).

The idea of Chinese suzerainty also means that the British recognised the formal traditional ties between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese imperial court. However, they resisted the attempts made by the Chinese nationalists to translate such traditional ties into modern language of power politics and imperialism (ibid 48). The Chinese learnt this language of statehood from the west, which was then applied on Tibet. The earlier form of priest-patron ties was dismissed by them and one sees the transformation of traditional conceptions of relations into the political language of nationalism. Much of this happened with a number of Chinese officials educated in the western enclaves in China and who spoke in the western political discourses in relation to Tibet. The series of negotiations between China and Britain on Tibet conceptualized the Chinese views on Tibet in modern terms (ibid 51). The Chinese started viewing Tibet in terms of a security dilemma after the Younghusband military expedition of 1904-05. They perceived Tibet as a backdoor to China (ibid 54). There was an emergence of a new consciousness among the Chinese in terms of Tibet being of strategic value to the Middle Kingdom. Tibet was then described through the modern vocabulary of security, strategy and nationalism, negating the traditional modes of statehood. The creation of the modern nation state of PRC by the communists in 1949 and their takeover of Tibet in 1950-51 was the first step in the culmination of this project. It is still an ongoing process in Tibet for the Chinese. Subsequently we see the emergence of India, a newly independent nation that had broken the chains of British colonialism. With both being modern entities, not much space was provided for the former traditional ideas of statehood and sovereignty (Lama 2017:40). There was a transformation in the pattern of traditional Sino-Tibetan relations with the entry of western powers in the region. The former non-coercive regime in the form of Tibet depended on the idea of symbolic dominance by Confucian China that transformed with the entry of modern structural dominance in centre-periphery relations. Furthermore, with the emergence of nationalism, there was no halfway house political arrangement in which the pre 1911 Tibet tended to fit. There was a transformation from culturalism to nationalism (Norbu 1990:67-68).

The ideology of the modern nation state percolated into the psyche of the traditional Tibetan elites. This is witnessed in early 20th century Tibet under the reign of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, who through a few measures tried initiating modernization in Tibet. He had sent young Tibetans to study in schools established by the British in the Indian Himalayas, sending a few to study in England as well as introduced western modern schools in Tibet. Along with modern education, the Tibetan government sought to modernize the

Tibetan army and the local police. They had invited a Japanese military expert, Jasijiro Yajima, to train a special group of the Tibetan army in Japanese method of warfare (Rapgay 29). The Sikkimese police officer SW Ladenla was tasked with modernizing the Lhasa police force. The intrusion of western modernity had a significant impact on Tibetan politics. This is reflected in the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's government attempting to centralise power and sovereignty in Tibet. His government desired to modernize for which there was a need for funds that the Dalai Lama's government could get from taxes. Lhasa wanted to extract taxes from the Tashilhunpo monastery of the Panchen Rinpoche. In terms of hierarchy, the Panchen Rinpoche is the second highest ranking lama in Tibetan Buddhism and has power and properties in the western regions of Tsang, central Tibet. In 1917, the Lhasa government announced that households belonging to the Panchen Rinpoche in the Gyantse district would be charged taxes and in 1922, the new Tibetan Revenue Investigation Office levied more taxes that included all of Tsang. The Tashilhunpo administration refused to pay the taxes, citing the absence of funds (Gardner 2023). In response, the Lhasa government arrested a number of Shigatse officials. The Panchen Lama fearing his own safety yet unwilling to submit to Lhasa, decided to leave the country (ibid). In 1923, he and his entourage left his monastery and eventually arrived in China. This event is historically significant as it led to the Panchen Rinpoche and his future reincarnations eventually coming under the influence of China.

Modernity was also adopted by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama as understood through the declaration of independence in 1912 and the signing of a treaty between Tibet and Mongolia. The Tibetan leader wanted to prove to the outside world that Tibet was and is a sovereign country. His successor, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama attempted to carry forward the project of modernization, which was primarily done through the land reforms and bureaucratic changes, which were however opposed to by the conservative aristocratic-monastic section of the Tibetan society and eventually by the invading Chinese communists. It is ironic that the revolutionary Chinese communists initially did not encourage the 'progressive reforms' in Tibet. Maybe it was a realpolitik strategy adopted by them as they did not want the Dalai Lama and his government to gain legitimacy from the Tibetans or it was due to the gradualist strategy adopted by the communists that the reforms were not introduced immediately in Tibet. Nevertheless, the Tibetans (people) and Tibet (land) experienced the full onslaught of modernity with the Chinese invasion of Tibet. The communists with their revolutionary idealism and nationalist zeal arrived to liberate Tibet and Tibetans. In the land and its people, the communist Chinese saw the 'other'

to their 'self', the other end of the spectrum of duality that is championed by modernity. The cultural practices and belief systems of the Tibetans were portrayed by the communist outsiders as archaic, feudal and backward. For them, Tibetans were behind a linear comprehension of time, an idea adopted by the Chinese from the colonial west. The communists saw Tibet and Tibetans as appendages that had to be reunited with motherland China. It is through a modernist project of nation state building that Tibet could be assimilated in the PRC. Thus, Dawa Norbu mentions how the primary reason for the Chinese invasion of Tibet was nation building and not some high ideals of revolution and egalitarianism. He states, how the main objective of the PLA's occupation of Tibet was to complete the strategic and security capabilities of China. The communists under the leadership of Mao Zedong, saw Tibet as the backdoor through which hostile states could attack China's southwestern regions. There was a need to secure China's frontiers, an idea that had been inherited by them from the Qing and the nationalists. These regimes in turn had comprehended Tibet from a purely strategic and security perspective due to the British colonial interferences in these regions. Hence, a direct relationship can be drawn between colonial modernity and the Chinese actions in Tibet and in East Turkestan or Xinjiang.

The decolonisation process in South Asia and China saw the newly independent postcolonial nation states in South Asia rushing to strengthen their peripheries. Unfortunately, for Tibetans, Beijing viewed Tibet as their periphery that had to be secured. A major project of modernity is the modern nation state, an institution that is all encompassing, bureaucratic and imbued in technocratic rationality. A hallmark of the modern state is its ability to conjure meta-projects, initiatives and enterprises, which are nigh-omnipresent. Nowhere in human history has the state permeated deeply in the lives of its population than now. These meta-projects provide power to the state but are the basis for the creation of the modern as they herald modernity in a society. Bureaucratic rationality of the modern Chinese state broke Tibet into administrative divisions. From 1955-56, there was the establishment of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region (PCTAR), which till 1959 also included the Dalai Lama. Under this, historic Tibet was to be divided into the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), with Lhasa as its capital, while the northeastern and eastern provinces of Kham and Amdo were incorporated in the neighbouring Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai and Yunnan. This division was done by the communists following the idea that Lhasa and the Dalai Lama's government had no direct authority over these regions. Here they failed to understand the diverse traditional sovereignties exercised by the Dalai Lama and the Lhasa

government over Kham and Amdo. Apart from the unitary bureaucratic division of Tibet, the Chinese enforced multiple projects in Tibet which would in turn herald modernity for the Tibetans. These were large scale, centralized social engineering projects that had devastating impact on the lives of the Tibetans. While these policies were implemented throughout China, the effect on Tibet and Tibetans was disastrous.

A few of these mega-projects techniques of government imposed on Tibetans were the democratic reforms of the mid 1950s, followed by the Great Leap Forward and the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution (GPCR) that lasted from 1966-76. Due to the remoteness of certain regions in Tibet, the Cultural Revolution continued till 1978-79. Due to the Great Leap Forward, which was Mao's policies of accelerating modernity, the entire country, including Tibet suffered from famine causing the death of millions. What is shocking as recounted in a number of memoirs written by Tibetans who survived these tribulations was the dehumanization that was imposed on the living. Naktsang Nulo in his memoir 'My Tibetan Childhood – When Ice Shattered Stone', writes how Tibetans were forced to eat human flesh due to the Chinese induced famine in the Tibetan regions (Nulo 2014:246). He also writes how the Chinese officials and the soldiers in their camps had plenty to eat while Tibetans were dying of hunger. The Cultural Revolution that lasted for a decade and even more for Tibetans was a project of bringing enforced modernity among Tibetans. The policies under the GPCR directly attacked the 'old', the traditional, which were termed as backward, conservative and thus needed to be exterminated. Under this, everything 'Tibetan' was categorised as a part of the 'Four Olds' that had to be replaced with the new. It was during this period that frenzied Maoist activists, which also included young Tibetans indulged in the destruction of numerous monasteries, temples and other cultural institutions inside Tibet. Any Tibetan associated with the 'old' were forced to undergo 'struggle sessions' or *thamzing*, which in many cases led to their deaths. With the death of Mao, the arrest of the 'Gang of Four' and rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping, the GPCR came to an end. It also initiated the 'reform and opening up' policy in PRC that was subsequently extended to the Tibetan regions. There was a brief respite from the earlier Maoist excesses, which was reflected through Tibetans displaying their religious practices. Liberal economic policies were also implemented in Tibet. Several monasteries were rebuilt and a number of exiled reincarnates could visit and teach their communities inside Tibet.

Since the 1990s, the Chinese state has focused on gaining legitimacy in Tibet through economic modernization. Through the discourse of welfare and

development, the communists have attempted to transform Tibet and Tibetans. However, the economic development in Tibet has a dual objective – prosperity for the people in Tibet and strengthen the strategic capabilities of the PRC in the Tibetan regions. The economic modernization of Tibet and Tibetans is based on the narrative of how the Chinese led development has created a ‘New’ Tibet, which stands as a contrast to ‘Old’ Tibet. Under this narrative, the latter is associated with backwardness, conservatism and feudalism while the former is connected to science, rationality and modernity. There is an ethnic angle associated with the modernization project that the Chinese state has brought in Tibet. From the 1980s, they have started the ‘Aid-Tibet’ project, through which Han Chinese are transferred to the Tibetan regions. The Han population is dubbed as the carriers of modernity, who would transplant modernization in Tibet. This has encouraged and facilitated Han migration into Tibet. The main goal of economic development in Tibet is nation building, to assimilate Tibetans into the larger economy of the PRC. This goes parallel with ‘sinification’, a process where Tibetans are forced to learn Mandarin and send their children to boarding schools. In conclusion, the postcolonial nation state of China is seen to be embracing the project of western modernity, which promises freedom to its devotees. However, as understood through the example of Tibet, modernity brought by the Chinese state has stifled freedom but is also seen to be fanning the flames of freedom in the hearts and minds of the Tibetans.

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Re-identification Yeshi Gonpo Temple in Nalanda: A Study with special Reference to the Biography of Chak Lotsawa

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Abstract

This study focuses on the re-identification of Yeshi Gonpo Temple near Nalanda, with a special emphasis on the biography of Chak Lotsawa. Situated three kilometers from the Nalanda Mahavihara ruins, close to Jagdishpur village in the southwest direction, the temple features a large Buddha statue in the Pala carpet, assuming a land-touch posture. An authorized excavation was conducted from 2014 to 2016 near the temple, yet the findings remain undisclosed. However, archaeologists have provided insights into the situation. Some recognize it as the Gyananath temple, while others disagree. Historical records, including those of Francis Buchanan and Prof. C.S. Upasak, propose varying names for the temple, like Yagynespur. The biography of Dharmaswamin indicates that during Bakhtiyar Khilji's attack on Nalanda Mahavihara, Dharmaswamin and his mentor Acharya Rahul Sribhadra sought refuge in the Gyannath temple, now referred to as Yeshi Gonpo Lhakhang in Tibetan. This study delves into different perspectives on the temple's identity and history, shedding light on its significance in the larger historical context of Nalanda and its surrounding region. The study encourages further research by archaeologists, historians, and enthusiasts to unearth hidden facts about this intriguing site.

Keywords: History, Literature, Archaeology, Yeshi Gonpo Temple, Nalanda Mahavihara, Chak Lotsawa

Introduction

The study presented here delves into the re-identification of the Yeshi Gonpo Temple, located near the renowned historical site of Nalanda, with a particular focus on the biography of Chak Lotsawa. Situated in close proximity to the Nalanda Mahavihara ruins, the Yeshi Gonpo Temple stands as an enigmatic structure, housing a substantial Buddha statue in the iconic Pala carpet assuming land-touch posture. This study seeks to unravel the intricate historical tapestry

woven around this temple and its connections to various narratives and perspectives.

An authorized excavation effort was conducted over the span from 2014 to 2016 in the vicinity of the Yeshe Gonpo Temple. Despite the efforts, the details of the findings remain undisclosed to the public. However, experts in archaeology have offered insights into the situation. Divergent viewpoints regarding the temple's identity emerge, with some identifying it as the Gyananath temple, while others dissent.

The historical records relating to the temple's nomenclature further complicate the matter. Sources such as Francis Buchanan and Prof. C.S. Upasak propose different designations for the temple, including Yagynespur. An exploration of the temple's identity and history is undertaken here, shedding light on its significance within the broader historical context of the Nalanda region. This study invites the attention of archaeologists, historians, and enthusiasts, urging them to further unravel the hidden facts surrounding this intriguing site.

The study encompasses diverse keywords, such as YesheGonpo Temple, NalandaMahavihara, Chak Lotsawa's Biography, Gyananath temple, Yagynespur, Dharmaswamin, Acharya Rahul Sribhadra, historical significance, archaeological research, and Nalanda's heritage. It also delves into local landmarks, like Jagdishpur and RukmaniSthan, and key figures like Buddhasen and Jayadeva. Furthermore, it discusses the contributions of Alexander Cunningham and Francis Buchanan in recording historical details.

The narrative of the study extends to the legendary dimensions attributed to the temple. Local villagers associate the temple with legends of Rukmini's wedding procession, intertwining mythology with history. The conflicting narratives regarding the temple's identity are brought into focus, with the former director of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Prof. C.S., asserting its association with Gyannath temple through references from the Biography of Dharmaswamin.

The study also sheds light on a pivotal historical incident described in the biography of Dharmaswamin, recounting the harrowing times of Bakhtiyar Khilji's attack on Nalanda Mahavihara. The study highlights the preservation efforts undertaken by Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, collaborating with the Bihar government, to safeguard the rich historical heritage of the Magadha region. Notably, the excavations conducted from 2014 to 2016 have yielded significant artefacts and insights into the temple's history, making it a treasure trove and significant archaeological value.

In summary, this study is a comprehensive exploration of the Yeshe Gampo Temple's historical identity, examining its ties to the Nalanda Mahavihara ruins and the intriguing biography of Chak Lotsawa. It engages with diverse perspectives, historical records, and local legends to offer a multidimensional understanding of the temple's significance. The call for further research resonates, encouraging scholars and enthusiasts to delve deeper into the hidden narratives of this remarkable site.

Identity Controversy: Unravelling the Historical Enigma

The historical site at the heart of this debate has become a focal point of divergent perspectives among archaeologists, historians, and scholars. This locus of intrigue, known variously as the Gyananath temple, Yagynespur, and Gyannath temple, stands as a testament to the complexities of historical interpretation.

The controversy is marked by several key viewpoints. Francis Buchanan's early 19th-century visit marked the inception of this discourse. He identified the site as Yagynespur, affiliated with the deity Yagnes, and noted its worship of Jagdamba Devi. This depiction contrasts with Alexander Cunningham's characterization of the temple's Buddha statue as a Tantric representation, indicating a diverse spiritual heritage.

Prof. C.S. Upasak's assertion as the Gyannath temple further adds to the intrigue. His perspective, supported by the biography of Dharmaswamin, links the site to a pivotal historical event during BakhtiyarKhilji's invasion. This view posits that the temple provided sanctuary to Dharmaswamin and his Guru, Rahul Shribhadra, as they sought refuge from the invaders. This interpretation lends a dynamic narrative to the site's identity, intertwining it with historical struggles and spiritual devotion.

Adding to the complexity is the local legend associating the site with Rukmini, a character from Hindu mythology. The villagers' belief in the statue depicting Rukmini's wedding procession underscores the local lore's influence on the site's identity.

Nalanda's historical significance further enriches the controversy. The ancient university and its surroundings, including the mounds of Begumpur, Daman Khandha, JuafarDih, and RukmaniSthan, have only partially revealed their secrets through excavation. This realization amplifies the importance of continued research, as the majority of Nalanda's heritage remains hidden beneath the earth's surface.

The recent excavations conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India, under the guidance of Shri K.C. Srivastava, have unearthed artefacts spanning Gupta, post-Gupta, and Pala periods. This discovery underscores the site's historical value and potential for shedding light on the past.

The controversy over the temple's identity fuels a captivating historical exploration. While various experts hold divergent views—ranging from Tantric Buddhism to Gyannath's temple—the site's historical and archaeological value remains undeniable. As the mystique surrounding Jagdishpur's temple persists, ongoing research and investigations promise to unveil hidden truths and reshape our understanding of this enigmatic landmark.

Historical Context

Situated at the core of the historic location of Nalanda, the temple perched atop an old hill near Jagdishpur village stands as a serene protector of numerous events and stories that have shaped the regional legacy throughout time. The historical significance of the temple is closely interwoven with the march of time, its narrative merging with the impactful events linked to Bakhtiyar Khilji's assault on the revered Nalanda Mahavihara.

At the center of this significant historical scene are Dharmaswamin, a Tibetan translator, and his respected teacher Acharya Rahul Sribhadra. Faced with the violent invasion of Bakhtiyar Khilji, these two individuals sought safety within a temple's protective walls. The temple itself has sparked debates and scholarly discussions about its name, background, and history. While some know it as the Gyannath temple, others propose alternate names like Yagynespur. This dilemma highlights the captivating mystery that history often presents, veiling remnants of the past with various interpretations and educated guesses.

Nalanda, deeply rooted in ancient times, holds immense historical significance that reverberates through history. It's a place where Lord Mahavir chose to spend his Chaturmas, where Gautam Buddha himself discovered moments of tranquility in meditation, and where notable figures like Sariputra, one of Buddha's disciples, were born. The unexplored mounds encircling Nalanda Mahavihara silently bear witness, hinting at the wealth of history concealed beneath the earth's surface. Merely a portion of these mounds has been excavated, promising undiscovered stories waiting to be brought to light.

Journeying southwest of Nalanda, one encounters the temple in Jagdishpur, cradling within its walls a remarkable Buddha statue. This statue embodies a

bygone era, while the temple's name and history hold diverse interpretations. Yet, even the temple's name and historical journey diverge along varying trajectories. Rukmani, Gyannath, and Yagynespur are among the names that historians have associated with this sanctum, each invoking different narratives and historical contexts.

Professor C.S. Upasak of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara identifies with the temple as Gyannath, drawing from the "Biography of Dharmaswamin." This account highlights its role as a refuge during Bakhtiyar Khilji's aggression, adding emotional depth to the ancient stones.

A collaborative effort by Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Bihar's government, and Archaeological Survey of India conducted a significant excavation (2014-2016). This revealed Gupta to Pala artifacts – Buddha statues, seals, terracotta items – unveiling artistic nuances. Beyond artifacts, platforms, votive stupas, and a potential vihara intrigue archaeologists, prompting exploration of their significance.

Despite its historical and cultural significance, the temple attracts fewer foreign tourists than Nalanda Mahavihara, preserving its peaceful atmosphere for in-depth exploration. This site makes history tangible, where it's alive and eager to share secrets.

While recent excavations have unveiled much, the temple's tale remains incomplete. Historians and archaeologists continue to uncover hidden truths, unveiling its intricate past. This pursuit honors past lives and stories, embodying history's resilience. The temple stands as a testament to history's endurance, awaiting those who seek to unravel its enigmas.

Recent Excavations and Findings

Between 2014 and 2016, the Archaeological Survey of India conducted excavations at Rukmani Sthan, also known as the Jagdishpur Temple, near Nalanda Mahavihara. Led by Shri K.C. Srivastava, these efforts were a collaboration between Nava Nalanda Mahavihara and the Bihar government. The temple, atop an ancient mound, holds historical and cultural significance. Protected since 1923, the site's identity and history have intrigued scholars and locals.

Notable discoveries from the excavations include a Buddha statue in the Dharmachakrapravartana posture, displaying scenes from Gautam Buddha's

life. Numerous terracotta idols, artifacts, and depictions of the Vaishali Miracle were found, reflecting artistic practices of the Gupta, post-Gupta, and Pala periods. Seals featuring the Sarnath symbol and votive stupas around the main temple platform were uncovered, hinting at religious and monastic activities. Stone idols, including one of Vishnu in meditation posture with Ganesha, were also part of the findings.

These excavations deepen our understanding of Rukmani Sthan's historical and archaeological importance, shedding light on ancient cultural practices and beliefs. Unexplored potential at the site suggests that further research will uncover more insights into this captivating historical location.

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Motion of Masses & Reimagining of Belongingness: The Case of Western Migrated Tibetan Youth-in-Exile

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Abstract

Tibetan political profile is ambiguous. Correspondingly, a large proportion of Tibetan people suffer from the anxiety of vacillating ‘political belongingness’ and their stateless identity. The fleeing of the Dalai Lama to exile and the subsequent exodus of over 80,000 Tibetans to India after the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959 triggered the question of the belongingness of Tibetans. Interestingly, nearly 44 percent of the Tibetan exile/asylum community in India have further migrated to many developed countries in the world. The existing scholarship on Tibetans in exile has focused on the sense of belongingness and identity of Tibetan exile communities living in India, Nepal, and Bhutan. Yet the scholarship has overlooked the Indian-born western migrated Tibetan exile youth and map their memory of dual belongingness -- India as a place of birth and Tibet as a motherland. For India-born and western-migrated Tibetan youth, the identity is Tibetan, the memory of Tibet is through oral histories, the continued struggle for independence, and the belongingness is to the transnational geographies. This converts Tibetans to what political anthropologist Arjun Appadurai calls “masses in motion.” Based on the researchers’ ethnographic data collected through a series of field visits to Dharamsala (a Tibetan settlement of India), this paper explores how the Tibetan exile youth born in India and migrated to Western countries imagine and negotiate their belongingness both politically and sociologically.

Keywords: Identity, Memory, Belongingness, Tibet, Diaspora

Who wants to be an untitled one? Nobody
Who wants to be an entitled one? Everybody
Mao’s regime made us nobody.
We scream and shout for our rights,
Seems like world has gone deaf.
We are scattered like spirits,
Yet world stays dumb.

Introduction

The above stanza, borrowed from a celebrated Tibetan poet Dargyap Jigme Dorjee's poem, introduces the context of displacement, statelessness, and the ambivalence over statehood and belongingness of the Tibetan community in exile.¹ Tibet and Tibetans have unfortunately now slipped into a state of geopolitical marginalization of being 'untitled nobodies.' Corresponding to the rise of China and Chinese highhandedness, Tibetan socio-cultural identities and political aspirations are now expressed in the realms of poetry and in the agony-filled narratives of exiled and migrant Tibetan memories. For the Tibetans, the question of 'Political legitimacy' is a theme of asymmetrical negotiation. In the contemporary geopolitical framework and unto a distant future, Tibetans can ill afford the luxury of imagining a state of Tibet that is politically free and independent, and the Tibetans alone can decide the nature of their governance. Unlike Ukraine, Hong Kong, or Taiwan, Tibet is neither in the international mainstream media focus nor figures in the hotly debated international geopolitical topic of focus. Away from international focus, today, Tibet is only a political by-line and a story of political agony without too many listeners. China's increasing infrastructure development in Tibet to integrate the mountainous region into mainland China.

Tibetan forced migration seems to have occurred in many waves and is interpreted as a multi-phase process. The initial phase of Tibetan migration is characterized by forced displacement from their homeland to India. The second phase of Tibetan migration, initiated in the protracted exile, also referred to as out-migration, is characterized by a voluntary movement of first and second-generation Tibetans from India to Western countries, including but not limited to the reasons such as a search for better educational and employment opportunities available in the Western countries (Aleinikoff 2015; Balasubramaniam 2022; Dolma 2019).

With the failure of the Lhasa uprising in 1959, the Chinese army ruthlessly killed around 1.2 million Tibetans and occupied Tibet. As a result, the spectacular flight of the Dalai Lama into exile and the subsequent exodus triggered the question of political belongingness of around 90,000 Tibetans. Although India granted asylum and treated H.H. the Dalai Lama as an "honored Guest," the dispossession of the sovereign territory and the psychological trauma of the loss of home, family, and identity was more severe than the humanitarian

1. Dargyap Jigme Dorjee is a Tibetan poet who lives in Sikkim, India. Several Tibetan Poets and writers living in India and many parts of the world continue to write on the Tibetan plight.

gestures of the host state (Sachs et al.,2008). This question of belongingness during the initial phase of exile was related to complex socio-cultural, political, and emotional challenges associated with adaptation, negotiating political identity, preserving their cultural heritage in the host country, and loneliness (Sapam 2020).

During the six decades of exile, the Tibetan diaspora has managed to cultivate and maintain a positive global image of a thriving refugee community, acquiring material and political support from the international community (French 1991; Norbu 2003; Kauffmann 2018). They have successfully reconstructed their social, political, and religious institutions in exile (Choedon 2018). As a consequence, there has been a discernible trend of Tibetans relocating, specifically the youth from India to Western countries, for various sociological, economic and political reasons. According to the demographic survey of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) 2009, there were 1,28,014 Tibetans in exile, among which 94,203 in India, 13,514 in Nepal, 1,298 in Bhutan, and 18,999 in the rest of the world. However, according to the “baseline study of the Tibetan diaspora community outside South Asia” conducted by CTA in 2020, approximately 62,477 Tibetans live outside the three traditional exile community spaces of India, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Tibetan migration studies have focussed on looking at Tibetan migration through the theoretical lens of diaspora studies (Choedup 2015; Yeh 2007; Houston and Wright 2003). Scholars such as (Anand 2002; Frilund, 2020) have looked at Tibetan migration from the theoretical lens of post-colonialism. Scholars such as Bloch (2018, 2022) has examined Tibetan migration from the inter-generational change. Carrying forward the research, in this paper, I explore the migration aspect of the second-generation Tibetan youth born in India within the specific framework of the “motion of masses” propounded by political anthropologist Arjun Appadurai. Then I explore how they imagine and negotiate their belongingness to Tibet and the transnational cartographies, including India and the West, sociologically, culturally, and politically. The paper is based on ethnographic research that has been conducted in the Tibetan settlement of McLeod Ganj from the period of November 2021 to July 2022. The ethnographic research technique applied for the research is entirely based on personal interviews. Personal interviews included interviews of political activists, government officials, and educational ministers directly and indirectly associated with the Tibetan migration out of India. In-depth interviews of five Tibetan youths born in India and migrated to the West were conducted to understand their approach.

Literature Review

The legal terminologies related to migration have received more scholarly attention since the immigration crisis in Europe started around 2015-16. Refugees are considered people “fleeing violence and war,” while immigrants are described as “moving to our country.” A 2019 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center found that individuals residing in various immigrant-receiving nations are more inclined to endorse the entry of “vulnerable refugees” in contrast to those identified as “vulnerable migrants.”(Gonzalez-Barrera and Connor 2019). Regarding Tibetans, the vulnerability lies in their status of statelessness, citizens of no State and people of no home. The first scholar to theorize migration systematically was statistician E. G. Ravenstein. In his *Laws of Migration*, Ravenstein argues that people tend to choose long-distance migration destinations because of factors such as a preference for great centers of commerce and industry, misgovernance in the country of origin, unattractive climate, and uncongenial social surrounding (Ravenstein 1889). In 1966, Everest Lee defined migration as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence (Lee 1966). He has defined the push and pull factors of migration where push factors include forces that oblige people to move to other new places and pull factors attract people towards the new destinations. However, mainly the mal-governance in the country of origin has been considered a primary migration factor according to the Marxist theorist that fits the narrative of migration of the second and third generation of Tibetans born in India.

Why Motion?

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) clearly states that “refugees are not migrants” (Feller 2005). The question then arises, how to call Tibetans “masses in motion” or their movement as migration when they are recognized as a refugee/exile community. This led to the distinction between the generation of Tibetan exiles (first generation) who moved from Tibet to India due to their precarious security condition in communist China and Tibetan generations (second generation) born in refugee settlements of India and migrated to Western countries. A generation is considered a shared collective identity among individuals situated in a specific historical context within the broader social process (Mannheim 1952). Experiencing specific historical events, particularly crises, allows a generational cohort to develop a collective “consciousness” that forms the foundation for their group solidarity (Mannheim 1952). In the context of exile Tibetans, for the first-generation exiles, the movement was characterized by insecurity and fear associated with

the forceful occupation of the homeland (Basu 2018). The solidarity in exile was thus based on the shared painful memory of occupation and cultural and religious genocide in communist China (Gyatso 1989). The belongingness thus identified by the first generation is specifically foundational to the freedom struggle and the aspiration to return home.

Conversely, the movement of the second-generation exiles is tied to economic uncertainties and ambiguous positions taken by the Indian government within the Tibetan settlements (Purohit 2019). The Indian government's treatment of Tibetans oscillates between designating them as either 'refugees' or 'foreigners.' The Foreigner's Act of 1946 and the Registration of Foreigners Act of 1939 regulate legal status and rights, subjecting Tibetans to a range of restrictions that hinder property ownership, employment rights, freedom of movement, speech, and assembly (Centre 2016). Consequently, second-generation Tibetans in India grapple with an uncertain status, limited rights, and vulnerability to shifting political currents (Centre 2016). This generation of Tibetans faces significant challenges in areas like university admissions and employment opportunities (R. Frilund 2017). As per the Second Tibetan Demographic Survey, more than 17 percent of the workforce is unemployed or underemployed (Office 2010). Thus, the politics of nation-states, as Appadurai argues, where refugees lack the legal rights the citizens enjoy, create a perpetual motion machine where refugees move from one nation to another resulting in social exits (Appadurai 2003).

Despite India's efforts to rehabilitate Tibetan population in India, the community remains cautious due to perceived limited prospects and opportunities for their children. The uncertain legal status and constrained economic and social horizons prompt many Tibetans to question the wisdom of having children in India. This sentiment is powerfully expressed in the statement, "If our kids have no rights or future in India, why should we give birth to them in India?" (Personal Communication 2022), driving some Tibetans to migrate out of India.

Within this trajectory of leaving and living, Tibetan exile youth engage in the process of imagining and reimagining their sense of belonging (Jha and Singh 2022). New generations of refugees endeavor to reconcile the past and prepare for a distinct future (Feldman 2018). In understanding life backward, the Tibetan exile youth also tries to live life forward. The younger generations contextualize the exile experience differently than the older generations. While older generations shape their present through memories of Chinese occupation and the imperative of cultural preservation, the younger cohorts approach

the present with a more pragmatic lens, envisioning different, potentially more adaptive politics and futures. Nevertheless, the notions of home and belonging, deeply ingrained in the migrant's psyche, persist even when they leave their place of origin (Jha and Singh 2022). These concepts continue to exert influence over the migrant's self-perception, identity, and interactions within their new environment.

In the broader narrative of Tibetan exile, the dynamics of generational shifts, changing motivations, and evolving perceptions of home and belonging create a nuanced tapestry. The experiences of both the first and second generations reflect the interplay of history, identity, and aspirations, underscoring the complex trajectories of Tibetans in motion.

Negotiating Belongingness and Mapping Memories

The Tibetan concept of belongingness has been historically anchored in the preservation of the nation's core elements: identity, religion, culture, race, and language. As the younger Tibetan generation grapples with negotiating their sense of belonging, intricate interplays emerge between their loyalty to the Tibetan nation, their steadfast commitment to the pursuit of justice, independence, or autonomy, and their affiliations with countries of exile, where they have found refuge, obtained citizenship, and sought political representation. These attachments transcend political considerations, extending into the realm of emotions. Consequently, these Tibetan youth experience a dual sense of belonging—both to their current host countries (India/West) and to Tibet, their ancestral homeland.

Their affinity for Tibet often draws from oral histories shared by their forebears, encapsulating the pain, trauma, and immense losses experienced during their displacement. Vahali's research underscores that first-generation survivors may withhold these painful narratives, aiming to shield their children from the negative repercussions of their own traumatic pasts (Vahali 2022). Post-memory research has proved that powerful experiences, including traumatic memories and losses, are passed across generations through imaginative storytelling and emotional processes (Spitzer and Hirsch 2010). These haunting memories, even if not directly experienced, can continue to influence individuals, shaping their perceptions and emotions.

Within the complex interplay of shared and personal histories of the past and an uncertain future, the Tibetan youth embark on a journey of reimagining

their sense of belonging. Often labeled as second-generation Tibetan exiles, they possess distinct memories of their homeland, varying attitudes toward repatriation, and novel forms of political resistance compared to their first-generation counterparts (Bloch, 2018). Their perceptions of belonging extend to the transnational landscapes of their birth and resettlement, shaping the very spaces of their existence.

In this intricate web of intersecting narratives, the younger Tibetan generation confronts questions of identity, memory, and aspiration. Their negotiation of belongingness exists at the crossroads of the past and the present, the diaspora and homeland, and the memory and imagination. As they navigate these dual allegiances, they play an instrumental role in shaping the evolving contours of Tibetan identity and the redefinition of belonging in a rapidly changing globalized world.

Reimagining Belongingness: Socio-Cultural Perspective

The concept of belongingness within the Tibetan community has undergone a profound reimagining over the years, primarily rooted in religious and cultural foundations threatened by communist China. This unique form of belonging has led to internal and external stereotyping of Tibetans, perpetuating expectations of strict adherence to Buddhist cultural practices encompassing attire, language, and religion. This dynamic is exemplified by Lobsang, a Tibetan now residing in the USA, who expresses the ongoing need to validate their Tibetanness in the West by constantly demonstrating their unwavering commitment to Tibetan culture, considering the past cultural genocides they endured. In her words:

In the West, we are constantly judged based on our being ‘pure Tibetan Buddhist’ notion. We must constantly prove our Tibetanness and ensure that we are refugees who have been in exile because we faced cultural genocides”(Personal Communication 2022).

However, the trajectory of belongingness has shifted with successive generations, ushering in a new era of complex identity navigation. As refugees traverse multiple cultural norms, transnational networks, and intergenerational dynamics, the concept of belonging has expanded beyond its traditional contours. Culture understood as an evolving amalgamation of dynamic processes, hybridization, and transformation, can sometimes elude conventional clinical interpretations due to its individual and evolving nature (De Voe 2022). Central to culture is the intricate exchange of meanings between individuals, a concept (Hall 1997) aptly characterized as the “giving and taking of meaning.”

The younger Tibetan generation, in stark contrast to their forebears, views cultural belonging as adaptive and fluid rather than rigidly tied to traditional markers. Tenzin Tsundue, a notable Tibetan activist and writer, encapsulates this perspective, suggesting that embracing Tibetan Buddhist practices, clothing, and cuisine does not solely define Tibetanness. Instead, shared beliefs, practices, and customs are the gateway to inclusion within the Tibetan cultural realm, extending membership beyond ethnicity or place of birth. In his own words:

If an Indian or a Western person follows Tibetan Buddhism, wears Tibetan clothes, and eats Tibetan food, he/she can also be Tibetan” (Personal Communication 2022).

This broadened outlook facilitates the incorporation of diverse backgrounds into the Tibetan cultural community, united by a shared commitment to Tibetan culture.

Crucially, Tibetanness is no longer confined to geographical or biological parameters; it transcends both boundaries and external symbols. Dolma’s assertion that adherence to traditional clothing, language, and diet is not the sole criteria for being Tibetan underscores this perspective. She said,

Wearing the traditional Tibetan attire everyday, eating Momo’s everyday, or talking in the Tibetan language everyday does not make you Tibetan. A Tibetan can wear Western clothes, eat Dal-chawal, speak Hindi and English, and still be a Tibetan” (Personal Communication 2022).

As the younger generation perceives, authentic cultural belonging is contingent upon a profound understanding of Tibetan history, traditions, and values. This appreciation enables individuals who may not externally exhibit overt Tibetan markers to embody the essence of Tibetan identity by embracing the community’s worldview and practices. Remarkably, the younger Tibetan generation adeptly incorporates foreign languages like Hindi and English into their lives without compromising their Tibetan identity, highlighting their remarkable ability to fuse various cultural elements seamlessly. At the same time, their collective memory of displacement and the reasons behind their migration remains a potent influence on their cultural practices and identity, as Ugyen’s reflections emphasize:

Every Tibetan knows their identity in the back of their mind. We do remember what and why our parents and grandparents came here. We always remember the Tibetans we left in Tibet” (Personal Communication 2023).

These memories perpetuate a profound connection to their homeland and shape their cultural expressions within their current environments.

The intertwining threads of identity, economic necessity, and familial ties are also evident among Indian-born Tibetans who have migrated to the West. While compelled by economic realities, they maintain deep connections to India due to family bonds, cultural representation, and friendships. Their reflections underscore that while the West may provide opportunities, India remains integral to their identity. One participant argued:

Moving to the West is not my choice but an economic necessity. I miss India. I also miss the Dal-Chawal we used to eat there. In the West we cook Dal-Chawal only when we come together for some specific Tibetan gathering”(Personal Communication 2022).

The concept of belongingness within the Tibetan community has experienced a remarkable transformation. As younger generations navigate the intricate intersections of culture, identity, and heritage, they redefine the parameters of Tibetanness. Anchored in a shared commitment to Tibetan values and history, this evolving understanding of cultural belonging transcends conventional markers, embracing both continuity and adaptation. The interplay of memory, diaspora, and cultural expression continues to foster a sense of unity and continuity, even in the face of evolving circumstances and global relocations.

Reimagining Belongingness: A Political Perspective

Contemporary research into transnationalism and globalization underscores the evolving landscape of rights, citizenship, and national affiliation, challenging conventional notions tied to the confines of territorial nation-states (Basch, Schillar and Blanc 2005; Ong 1999). Among Tibetans, an intriguing paradox unfolds as they grapple with the demand for unwavering loyalty to the Tibetan nation while eschewing citizenship in host countries, particularly India. Evidently, the Tibetan community approaches Indian citizenship with caution, citing a potential conflict of allegiance. Tenzin Lekshay, Additional Secretary at the Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), articulates this sentiment, stating:

Upon embracing Indian citizenship, one pledges exclusive loyalty to India, precluding allegiance to any other nation, including Tibet”(Personal communication, July 7, 2022).

The community contends that embracing Indian citizenship necessitates an allegiance to India that might contradict their fidelity to Tibet. This intricacy resonates deeply among Tibetans, whose profound connection to their homeland fuels their dedication to the Tibetan cause. Yet, the allegiance and identification of young Tibetan refugees to both their “home” and “host” contexts manifest intricate and multifaceted dynamics, occasionally revealing apparent contradictions.

The interplay between loyalty and identity prompts individuals to embrace transnational frameworks, even as the allure of citizenship forges ties to territorial states (Appadurai). Moreover, migration to Western nations has been viewed by some analysts as a potential avenue to eventually return to Tibet. However, Duk Tsering, the Education Director of TCV School, offers a nuanced perspective in an interview, positioning:

I do not envision the younger Tibetan generations born in India returning to Tibet. Their aspiration is not solely to return to Tibet, but rather to secure the choice of doing so.

This complex interweaving of political loyalty, diasporic identity, and the potential trajectories of return underscores the intricate landscape faced by Tibetan exile youth. As they navigate the realms of allegiance and citizenship within the context of transnational realities, their motivations and aspirations reveal a delicate balance between historical roots and contemporary possibilities.

Conclusion:

The intricate issue highlighted in the paper centers around the perceived lack of citizenship for the Tibetan exile community residing in India. India’s challenge lies in effectively integrating this community within its national framework, whereas Western countries showcase a more flexible approach to refugee integration. The West’s adaptable stance, driven by their multicultural frameworks, mitigates the citizenship demand debate. In contrast, India adheres to a stricter nation-state perspective where state-defined criteria delineate citizens from others. India’s historical and moral positioning in global politics, including its acceptance of Tibetan refugees, necessitates a departure from this paradoxical stance. To provide a sustainable solution, India should proactively develop a comprehensive framework accommodating the unique needs of refugees.

As the exile community negotiates their sense of belonging, they are actively transforming transnationalism into transculturality. It is imperative to move beyond stereotyping and instead engage with their individual beliefs, fostering an environment where a spectrum of service options is made available. This approach recognizes and respects the diverse paths of identity formation within the exile community, paving the way for a more inclusive and harmonious coexistence.

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Reminiscing Phayul in India: A Negotiation between 'fatherland' and Mother-India

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Abstract

The idea of Phayul when seen out of context can be dangerously reductive and may lead one to think in gendered binaries of 'her and him', land of men-fathers or the land of mothers. So, then, we may ask, why is Tibet called Phayul? It may have the bearing of the ancient tale of thirteen humongous mountains that were recognized by the Tibetans to be symbolic of home, strength and also regarded as the property to look after. In the old mythical narratives, a mention goes to show that Phayul is perhaps the rich cultural heritage to be taken care of. It has nothing to do with the gendered notion of father or mother but rather a common lineage to be carried forward. However, in exile, the geographical significance has been of utmost importance and conceding that Phayul has come to be associated with the fatherland or a more neutral term a homeland, I read Phayul in conjunction to the dream.

Keywords: Tibet, Identity, Diaspora, Memory, Phayul

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

Langston Hughes in his poem 'Harlem', explores the idea of a deferred dream, he concludes the poem and suggestively leads us to ponder upon the possibility of a future where the dream may explode (?). When examined more closely, the dream is one amongst many things. It is to return to a homeland, a return

to one's own Phayul. The dream is to be a rightful citizen, and in so many ways, have the dignity accorded to human beings. The dream is to imagine an alternate life where there is no exile. The dream is- in so many ways, a rightful return to one's own land, whenever that may be. My paper is an attempt to study that liminal space where the dream, when not fulfilled-explodes.

The idea of Phayul when seen out of context can be dangerously reductive and may lead one to think in the gendered binaries of 'her and him', land of men-fathers or the land of mothers. So, then, we may ask, why is Tibet called Phayul? It may have the bearing of the ancient tale of thirteen humongous mountains that were recognized by the Tibetans to be symbolic of home, strength and also regarded as the property to look after. In the old mythical narratives, a mention goes to show that Phayul is perhaps the rich cultural heritage to be taken care of. It has nothing to do with the gendered notion of father or mother but rather a common lineage to be carried forward. However, in exile, the geographical significance has been of utmost importance and conceding that Phayul has come to be associated with the fatherland or a more neutral term a homeland, I read Phayul in conjunction to the dream.

The need to write this paper arose from two significant incidents that occurred in my tenure as the GyakarInjiGenla of the Dalai LamaCollege located in the suburbs of the silicon valley of India, Bangalore. The first episode took place in the month of October, 2022, when we lost one of our colleague in a brutal hit and run accident, right in front of the college entrance. Just like everyone around, I was deeply distressed, however, it was not the first time that I had encountered death so closely, yet the discomfort I felt was not the same. There was something that did not feel right. So, I sat with my discomfort for some days, while the entire college community took care of the funeral, the rituals, the prayers, and we went on like that for forty-nine days, as was the norm. I attended the prayer ceremony, I saw people and the shock on their faces, yet no tears ran by. We were told that if we cried, the soul will feel the pain and it will be difficult for the 'genla who passed away' and we must therefore, not take his name anymore.

I sit in the hall, and cry nevertheless. I observe how wonderfully everyone has come together in suffering, I see for the first time in my life the way a community operates from within. Everyone is so tightly knit to each other in pain that it looks to me, an interloper of sorts that it is perhaps not just a Genla we lost, but a member of our very own family. A member of the Tibetan family, a family build in exile, build in suffering, and always building from beginning.

I am immediately reminded of Benedict Anderson's concept of an "imagined community" which refers to the idea that a nation is not simply a physical or concrete community of people who all know each other. Instead, it is a community that people imagine themselves to be a part of, even though they may never personally meet or interact with all the other members of that community. The notion of an imagined community recognizes that nations are socially constructed entities that exist in people's minds. People feel a sense of belonging to a nation based on shared cultural symbols, language, history, and a common identity. Despite the vast number of people in a nation, individuals can develop a sense of connection and loyalty to their fellow citizens because they share a collective imagination of being part of the same community.

This collective imagination is fostered through various means, including shared narratives, cultural practices, and symbols such as flags, anthems, or even sports teams. These elements help create a sense of unity and solidarity among individuals who consider themselves part of the same nation, even if they have never met or interacted with all other members.

It is precisely at this moment of death, of grief that I begin to formulate a question to which the answer is anything but simple. And before I ask anyone else, I ask myself, do Tibetan lives matter? Of course the tone in the question echoes the Black Lives Matter movement, where it is rhetorically as well as assertively stated that yes, Black Lives Matter. Going back to the epigraph I began with where Hughes is perhaps going to help us understand that yes when the dream is deferred for far too long, it may actually explode. The lack of political representation of a Tibetan refugee dying in exile, and dying suddenly is that explosion what Langston Hughes may want us to hear.

Keeping in lieu, the above stated points, my paper today will seek to understand that nuances of life in exile and the perils of uncertainty in the life of a refugee. Will the loss of a member of the family be compensated by prayer alone? Why are we not able to think of how justice may be delivered to the untimely death in the community. I am perturbed by the questions I have in my head and I don't know whom to ask around. So I call my friend, who had just been my best friend for the longest time, before she became my Tibetan best friend. I call her and say, why are people not thinking about filing a case and fighting? Why are we letting the person go unaccounted? Who is responsible for the damage? I have a series of questions, but my friend has only one answer. She says, and I quote, "All of it does not matter, you look at the larger picture, that's what we do when the system does not recognize us, we recognize each

other and we have each other's back. And in doing so we need to pray for his peace, we need to pray that he finds an easy exit, we need to pray because that's all we can do. By all I mean all. And anyway, without getting into the vacuum of legality and the lack of rights of a refugee, need I remind you that we are basically guests in India, guests cannot demand justice without being reminded about the generosity bestowed upon them."

As my friend tries her best to calm the fury behind my questions, I begin to see right in front of my eyes, what had been invisible to me for so long. The statelessness of a life in exile. The lack of access to justice in the life of a refugee became the turning point to understand that generosity a host country offers is frugally limited, and strictly timed. One can use the concept of hospitality developed by Derrida to further understand the exclusion within a purportedly inclusive act. Jacques Derrida's concept of hospitality is a philosophical exploration of the ethical and political dimensions of welcoming the other. Derrida's ideas on hospitality are primarily presented in his work "Of Hospitality" ("De l'hospitalité"), as well as in his broader body of work on deconstruction and ethics.

Derrida challenges traditional notions of hospitality, which often presuppose a host-guest relationship based on reciprocity and control. Instead, he argues for an ethics of unconditional hospitality that embraces the inherent uncertainty, vulnerability, and openness involved in encounters with others. He problematizes the host-guest relationship, suggesting that it is inherently asymmetrical and hierarchical. He questions the power dynamics and conditions that often accompany hospitality, calling for a more inclusive and equal encounter.

Politics and justice: Derrida extends the concept of hospitality to the political realm, examining the implications for justice, democracy, and human rights. He critiques exclusionary practices, borders, and the limitations imposed on hospitality by political structures.

So how do we then take help from Derrida's hospitality? Here the word 'we' is instrumental, as it is the Gyakar's- the Indians who may wish to refashion the host and guest dyad to grant some autonomy, some rights to the Tibetans who have stayed over half a century in India already. In what ways can we accommodate the figure of the refugee in the legal fabric of the country? In order to develop this argument I will be relying on a reading of two essays which are 'Nation of Two' by Tsering Wangpo Dhompa. Dhompa in her poignant essay, 'A Nation of two' narrativizes an outline of how nations are associated with people in the life of a refugee. She says that it was her and

her mother that made the nation. So wherever they went, it was a nation of two. They were the not just mother-daughter but also the paperless citizen of Tibet for each other. The things they carried and left behind became an important lesson to remember the Buddhist concept of impermanence. She says, exile was the only form of belonging she knew and there is no guidebook to living in exile. And it was in exile that the associations with the past became a turning point to recognize the present. It was homesickness that became a sentimental disease at the same time the nostalgia for the past did not develop into becoming the purpose of life.

Gender and Nation

Teaching gender to students in general is an exercise that involves a lot of listening and empathy. And it requires the level of patience which can be found in a monastery. As someone who has been born and brought up in India it is second to my nature to see the construction of gender in our everyday lives. The patriarchal structure surpasses all forms of oppression in the literature that I teach.

Insightful responses emerge when I teach my students a paper on Indian Literature, where we cover authors like Mahasweta Devi, Girish Karnad, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Sudhir Kakkar and many more. It is noteworthy that any criticality about the social landscape of India is met with a lot of resistance as the porous double identities i.e. of being a Tibetan, but born in the republic of India-creates a crucial impact on how they perceive the struggles around nation and liberation. The version of India which is more acceptable to my students is one that of a pristine, clean, sanitised, romanticised land. The India of their imagination remains more often than not- a land which is idyllic- or so to say, bereft of any current social evils. I will illustrate this by referring to a short story by a veteran writer, Gita Hariharan. The short story titled, 'The Remains of the Feast' discusses the rigid caste boundaries endowed upon a brahmin widow. The grandmother ultimately cannot keep up with the Brahmanical patriarchal structures, which not only limit her food choices but also her everyday life and minute details about the clothes she can or cannot wear. The story is a lucid rendering of a two generations bonding over rebellion. Prompted by the responses I receive when I try to explain the social reality of a widow in India, my students are in disbelief. How is that even possible? Why can she not eat what she likes? Why can she not wear a red colour saree? To be honest, I am glad that these questions have emerged as we delve deep into the story. But the most telling, perhaps, baffling experience is when after a screening of the iconic Deepa Mehta trilogy, *Water* (2005) takes place. My students have announced

that India is no more that. Thus, it is a dated version of the predicament of the widows in India, and women have more autonomy than what is written in the story. Well, perhaps yes, one can say that it is dated, but not irrelevant so it cannot be dismissed on the grounds of relevance whether we read the story in 2023 or years later.

The rejection of the film has led me to think about the way students in exile consume India. Or it could also be that my Indian identity as I teach them is hyper visible. So, anything that the students may actually feel about the experiences *visa vis* the reality in India, is edited and made into a gratitude story before it can be anything else. I repetitively hear words like, kindness and compassion and how gratefulness is way of life. And to speak-out about the host country in any other way is to unkind and ungrateful. Not only does this set a trap of endless thank you, and a loop of jingoistic mention of 'Jai hind' in the answer scripts but also lead us to think about the twice removed identity of a refugee living in exile. The refugee is and must show how grateful they are to the host environment. While doing so, they must also be aware of their uprooted reality. All of this combined creates a dissonance where without much thought the host environment succeeds in taking primacy in the order of hierarchy. Therefore even without knowing it, the refugee with R printed on its head, has claimed India to be mother-India by being overly protective of it by being silent about issues which need to be acknowledged if not addressed.

The question of patriarchal standards in India remains a myth, which was once the dominant discourse in the past. So the question then arises that while the fight for liberation of one's country goes on, what of the liberation from other occupations in the neighbouring areas? How do they then empathise not just with others but with the self too? If Tibetans are in exile, so are Rohingyas too. It is perhaps in the here and the now that we must address the questions which emerge from this conflict, how do Tibetan students see the future of Tibet? Is the return a deferred dream or a constant struggle of negotiation in exile? How does one love the idea of a country, and a nation state when all that there is a memory of long forgotten country?. Is it possible to situate the self in the larger history of the country, nation or memory handed down through stories and narratives?

Thus, when we learn to see the value of conflict in the everyday lives around and we are also perhaps able to situate the political injustices meted out to the refugees in the name of hospitality.

Conclusion

In conclusion, exile is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that goes beyond geographical displacement. It involves adisruption of personal and collective identities, challenging notions of home, belonging, and community. While exile entails loss and hardship, it also offers a glimpse of potential for personal growth, cultural exchange, and the creation of new narratives. By understanding and empathizing with the experiences of exiles, we can develop a deeper appreciation for the human capacity to adapt, survive, and thrive amidst the challenges of displacement.

In exile, the dominant discourse is to adapt but while doing so, the borrowed environment may demand reintegration into everyday life, where certain criticality about the existing flaws within the system needs to be acknowledged. Counterintuitively, the consumption of India by the Tibetans living in exile and vice versa, the consumption of Tibet by the Indians need to be re-examined in order to be able to arrive to a truth closeto reality of the contemporary times in both 'Phayul' and 'Mother India'.

In essence, when we look at the construction of nation visa vis the memories carried we are also looking forward to the future and asking a pertinent question. How do we imagine a future or a return to a homeland when the self remains so conflicted, entwined between holding onto the traditional and reaching out to the modern? From this conflict both outward and inward emerges a discourse on memory, injustice and belonging.

To put it simply, I would end with the answer one of my students gave when I asked whatwould you do if you could go back to Tibet?. He said, he would first visit the Potala Palaceand then meet his relatives, after all of it was done, he would like to come back to India andlive with his friends as it was here that he learnt about living a life without hiding.

Thus, in ways more than one, we are always returning and never completely returning home.

In other words I would like to borrow and add to one of Khalil Gibran's oft quoted lines, which are – "I have learned silence from the talkative, toleration from the intolerant and kindness from the unkind; yet, strange, I am ungrateful to those teachers." And if I dare add a few lines here, I must say that I have learned about my 'Indianess' from the Tibetans, and I am not very proud to be wearing that hat.

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Mining in Tibet: Environmental, Political and Economic Aspects

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Abstract

This paper examines environmental, political, and economic dimensions of Chinese state's push for mining in Tibet. Looking at mining as part of the Chinese state's push for extraction of resources and state-building in Tibet, it examines the environmental impact, labor rights issues, its impact on disempowerment of Tibetan population and their access to resources, and finally, a part of state-building in border regions. The Chinese state has engaged in mining in Tibet for decades. However, it has expanded in recent years with new mining being planned in sensitive ecological and border areas, which also impinge upon current India-China border dynamics. In addition, the paper contextualizes mining in the context of recent policy initiatives namely, administrative changes, push for urbanization, sedenterization of population through forced relocation, and establishing of protected areas.

Keywords: Tibet, Mining, Mineral Resources, Rights, Environment, Borderland

Introduction

The Chinese state has expanded its investments in mining sector in Tibet (including Tibet Autonomous Region, autonomous prefectures in Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan, and Yunnan) in the last two decades or so. The increasing mining operations accompany enhanced investments in transport and other kinds of infrastructure that help in carrying out mining operation. Several North American and European companies have also invested in some of the biggest mining projects during this period. Although new investments by such companies is less likely amid human rights violations in Tibet, Xinjiang. Also, other issues becoming highlighted in China's relations with US and its European allies. Labor rights in Tibet and other ethnic regions like Xinjiang is becoming salient in the politics of global supply chains in the wake of the US-China Trade War, technological and economic rivalries in the last few years.

However, the Chinese mining companies continue to expand their operations with new mining to extract lithium, gold, Copper, and other metals and minerals in Tibetan areas including counties and prefectures close to its borders with South Asia. Mining in Tibetan areas is politically and ecologically sensitive. On the one hand, the Chinese state has unveiled several ecological conservation projects since the beginning of the new century, aimed at rejuvenating grassland and other types of ecosystems. These ecological conservation projects have political dimensions in terms of local community participation, restriction to access to ecological, economic, and cultural resources in protected areas in Tibetan areas, particularly nomadic groups. Several studies have pointed at the disempowering impact of these projects on local Tibetan population. As well as expanding the legal, administrative, and political control of natural resources in these vast areas under different types of protected areas namely, nature reserves, forest parks, national parks, and other historical and culturally important areas.

On the other, the state has attempted to expand mining projects, big infrastructure projects namely transport, military related infrastructure, numerous small scale infrastructure projects, and increased tourism, which has put pressure on ecologically sensitive landscape, while they do generate economic benefits. In this context, this paper examines mining projects in Tibet in recent years and contextualizes them within China's evolving Tibet policy in response to the crises in terms of large-scale protests in 2008 across Tibetan areas. It maps mining sector in Tibet, its environmental, economic, and political aspects, and contribute towards understanding China's Tibet policy as well as in the ways in which minerals and metals extracted from Tibet or for that matter, "ethnic areas" in its periphery, play role in its economic development and national economic strategy, which is heavily becoming focused on self-reliance. In addition, it also looks at the disempowering impact of mining sector on Tibetan population, workers' rights issues, and potential impact on India and other South Asian countries, particularly in terms of environmental impact of mining on rivers.

The remainder of the paper is divided into five sections. The first section provides an overview of mining sector in Tibet and emphasises its economic significance within China national economic strategy as well as economic strategy in Tibet, which is increasingly aimed at reducing dependence on subsidies, and hence there is a greater focus on mining and tourism to generate local revenue. The second section then examines environmental, economic, and political aspects of mining. The third section focusing on the ways in

which local population is responding to these projects. The fourth section looks at labor rights, safety, and other related issues in the context of several mining accidents in Tibet as well as other areas in China. The final section summarizes the arguments of the paper.

Mining Sector in Tibet: A Profile

Mining and its significance in Chinese policymakers' mind in Tibetan areas is not new. However, Tibet has come under intensive attention for mining as the region was opened for outside investment in a large scale in several sectors namely, big infrastructure, transport networks, as well as military related infrastructures in the 1990s during Jiang Zemin's period.

Tibet has huge deposits of some of the crucial minerals namely, copper (estimated by Chinese geologists to be the largest in the country) (Xinhua 2023), Chromium, Lithium, Zinc, Gold, etc. For long, the Chinese state focused on non-TAR areas in Sichuan, Gansu, Yunnan, and Qinghai for mining. However, this has been changing in the last few years with increased connectivity and transport networks in the TAR, which enable mining companies to dig out natural resources from remote areas in border prefectures and transport them. It is estimated that the total mineral resources of the entire Qinghai-Tibet Plateau can reach 80 million tons of copper, 2,000 tons of gold, and 30 million tons of lead and zinc. Tibet is expected to become China's largest resource reserve base (Kuangchan 2017).

As per available data, the investment in fixed assets in the mining sector has gone up five-fold between 2006 and 2017. During this period, however, it went up 18-fold with high investment figures reported between 2010 and 2015, when it started to decline relatively, however it still remains much higher. Similarly, the investments in manufacturing, a sector linked to mining as subsidiary industries are required to extract natural resources, process, and transport them. In the manufacturing sector, investment has increased by more than 19-fold from 2006 to 2017, although in-between it has fluctuated. Transport, storage, and postal services have seen an 8 to 9-fold increase since 2006. All these data points towards a reality where the Chinese state has started to extract natural resources in a big way in the last two decades. In addition, the above-cited data also indicate that the investments in mining as well as other sectors have increased manifold and suddenly, as China's focus became intensive to integrate Tibet economically, ideologically, and invested heavily in security related infrastructure.

For a long time, China has faced problems namely harsh geographical terrain with high altitude, physical access due to the lack of connectivity, and local means of sustaining greater number of people, which, unlike its plans in other border areas where it could implement policies to integrate border regions easily, have posed problems. However, after 2006 when the Qinghai-Tibet railway was opened, the Chinese state has invested in developing infrastructure which has made access to Tibetan areas easier (Xizang Zizhiqu ziran zi yuan ting 2019). Mining, along with tourism, is becoming a major factor in local GDP. For example, Lhasa, which has a substantial number of minerals and operational mines, has seen an increased share of mining in its GDP. As per 2020 data available, mining sector accounts for 7.56% of GDP of Lhasa city (zhengfu 2018).

The number of mining rights issued in Lhasa city alone have increased manifold in the last few years with more on the offing. According to the statistics, there are 35 copper mines, 23 lead mines, 12 iron mines, 6 polymetallic mines, 4 gold mines, 2 zinc mines, 2 geothermal mines, 1 molybdenum mine, 1 corundum, Mineral water 1 already operation in Lhasa. It is estimated that 30 more mines are under construction or at the stage of study and exploration, which accounts for 1/3rd of total mines already operational. Therefore, the number of mines as well as the total area under mining will go up manifold in the coming years, reflecting the intensity with which mineral resources are becoming one of the pillars of the Chinese state’s approach to the region.

Major Mining Projects in Tibet

Mine	Company	Location	Output	Status
Zhunuo Copper Mine	Zijin Mining	Ngamring County, Shigaste	2.2 million tonnes of contained copper:	Under Construction, announced in August 2023
Lakkor Tso Lithium Mining Project	Zijin Mining (70% holding)	Gerze County, Ngari,	Lithium carbonate equivalent: 2.14 million tonnes: estimation	Under construction
Xietongmen Copper-Gold Project	Continental Minerals Corporation (Vancouver based) and Great China Mining Inc.	Xietongmen, Shigaste	Copper and Gold	Operational

The Yulong Mine	Western Mining Group	Jomda, Qamdo Region		Operational
Jiama Mine	China Gold International Resources			Operational
De'erni Copper Mine		G o l o g Prefecture, Q i n g h a i Province		Study and proceed to closure
Tashi Gang Mines	Huayu Mining Co., Ltd.	Longzi county, Lhokha	Lead and zinc	operational
Zabuye Lake	Zabuye (Shenzhen) Lithium Trading Co., Ltd.	Garzê, Shagaste	Lithium	Operational since 2004-05

Source: compiled by the Author.

Mining: Environmental, Political, and Economic Aspects

The environmental damage of mining in Tibet is underestimated or understood at the surface level. On the one hand, the Chinese state has started promoting the narratives of green development in mining sector, a misnomer in many ways, by focusing on ecological restoration. However, given the restoration cannot replace natural ecology as well as the inherent shortcoming in the implementation of policies, it is natural that ecological damage of expanding mining sector would be immense. On the other hand, the state has planned to expand the mining sector, which according to some estimates will expand manifold.

Apart from regulatory loopholes and inadequate administrative and political attention paid to environmental regulation of big mines, small scale mining in sand and stone is an understudied and underestimated area in mining which has huge implications for environment. Sand and stone mining along with associated industries namely, cement and Klinger industries have become crucial for large scale and small infrastructure development. Given that these materials are required in huge quantities, are expensive to import from other provinces due to transportation cost and time taken, and that these industries were not well developed due to sensitive ecological terrain in Tibetan areas, they are having adverse impacts which need to be understood properly.

In fact, a survey of news reports in Chinese media suggest that illegal sand and stone mining is a serious problem especially in Nagqu, Lhokha, and Nyingchi cities and provincial and central level inspection teams have raised concerns

and authorities have issued several regulations and rule to govern sand and stone mining (Xinhua 2022). However, given the lax implementation of rules as well as state-regulated mining of sand and stone at a huge scale, its environmental impact is immense especially in border regions where bringing sand and stone in construction from other provinces is far more expensive.

Tibet vast untapped mineral resources, especially rare earth metals, are crucial for China's focus on attaining self-reliance in key mineral and metal resources as part of national economic strategy in recent years. As China's economic and military rise stokes strategic, military, and economic competition with US and its allies, China under the leadership of Xi Jinping has put self-reliance in key sectors as one of the priorities or even pre-condition for China to achieve national rejuvenation. Therefore, it is likely that mining will become more intense as well as critical to China's national economic strategy in coming years.

It is worth mentioning that Tibet is rich in copper resources. Six of the top ten copper mines in the PRC are in Tibet, and the top four are all in Tibet. At the same time, Tibet's copper resources have huge potential and are expected to reach more than one-third of the country's total.

Few Chinese companies are already mining lithium, gold, and other metals, which are considered critical in China's strategic competition with US and the technology war being pursued. In addition, the emerging sectors, namely electric vehicles, which use lithium batteries, have become emerging sectors with some of the biggest Chinese companies expanding out to grab market. In fact, Tibet is becoming critical in Lithium supply chain in recent years (wukuang zhengchuan 2021). In that process, China's quest for lithium has led its companies to explore foreign mines in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. However, the Chinese state has also pushed its companies to explore the metal in Tibet. For example, the BYD, the major electric vehicle company, has explored lithium in the Zabuye Lake area in Shigaste city of Tibet Autonomous Region since 2010 through mining companies (Zhao 2022, SMM 2022).

Finally, mining as such cannot be disentangled from state-building efforts in border regions. Although it's driven primarily by the quest for natural resources, corporate profits and economic logic, its impact is far greater than simply economic ones and involves impact on state-society relations in the border regions. Borderlands are populated by ethnic groups and hence, mining, first and foremost, leads to changes in state-society relations in the border areas as well as local population's rights over natural resources including access to grazing rights, mobility, and other economic benefits. Chinese companies

are mostly from state-owned sector as well as promote and help extend the state's political and nation-building agenda apart from extracting resources for corporate profits.

In addition, mining also brings in a range of actors namely, mining companies, workers, companies working in associated industries like construction and transport, workers, technicians, etc. which along with state's administrative and security agencies impinge upon how local population is marginalized in their access to resources. Therefore, mining in Tibet, especially in prefectures close to border areas also function as a instrument of state-building, which if understood in connection with other policies namely, sedenterization of nomadic groups, bringing nomadic groups within state's institutional fold namely through herders' cooperatives in its quest for commercialization and control and ideological fold through propaganda and formal state institutions namely educational institutions, then it becomes clear the significance of mining within the larger efforts of state-building. This state building efforts more often than not privilege the state's interests rather than those of local population.

There are also long-term implications of mining in terms of population transfer from outside Tibetan areas and military strategy, especially in border counties. Mining of Gold, Lead, Zinc, and other minerals has started in Longzi county in Lhokha prefecture opposite Arunachal Pradesh. The reports points towards military and strategic significance of mining in this sector as mining helps sustain greater number of Han population, security forces, and provide corporate benefits in the border county. In fact, Lhokha and Nyingchi, along with parts of Lhasa and eastern Shigaste cities have been sites of relocation of herders from Nagqu in Northwestern TAR for the last few years. Several thousand herders have been relocated in an effort to populate these border counties, to sedentarize nomadic people in cities for better control, and develop a sustainable economy in Tibetan areas as the Chinese state has had to dole out large sums of subsidy to sustain its securitized policy in the region.

Tibetan Resistance to Mining Sector: Patterns and Tactics

The space for Tibetans inside the Tibet has become narrower since the 2008 protests, as the Chinese state has tightened the internal security and repressed any sort of voice as against the Chinese state. However, that does not mean Tibetans do not raise voice against the state policies. While self-immolations were an extreme step to protest discrimination as well as to make their political voice heard, there are reports of scattered protests and articulations

of grievances on social media. So is the case with Tibetan protests against the environmental impact of mining.

Some of the projects have affected the local population severely due to pollution and people have voiced their concerns although the effectiveness of such methods remains questionable. There are numerous cases of long-standing grievances by Tibetan population against the companies involved, and they have used a variety of methods, ranging from petitioning the authorities to protests. For example, a long-standing problem near Kumbum Monastery in Qinghai has been that of pollution due to the Ganhetan Industrial District Park, which processes Lead and Zinc. Credible reports suggest that pollution is severe with serious health and other impacts on local community. However, the state authorities have not satisfactorily resolved the grievances (The Environmental Justice Atlas 2021).

Similarly, the long-standing protests against the pollution of the Lichu river and other health and environmental impacts in Dardeso in Sichuan is another example of persistence among local communities to protests even if the state authorities do not heed to their demands.

However, the resistance to the state policies as well as their impact is more subtle in the face of stringent policing and security measures. For example, scholars have noted that herders use a number of tactics to protest their relocation from pasturelands to cities and towns across Tibetan areas including Nagqu in TAR, the Sanjiangyuan area in Qinghai, Gansu, and Sichuan. However, these tactics do not always suit to protest environmental impacts of mining or taking away of land, access to grazing, mobility, and other rights to Tibetan population.

It remains an understudied area as to how and what people do to protest the dispossessing and disempowering impacts of mining activities in Tibet. However, commonly used techniques include petitioning to higher authorities, which may not be effective if the local security and police authorities are effective in controlling movement of the affected population, demonstrations, which have become difficult to organize in the aftermath of the 2008 protests and subsequent tightening of security measures, refusal to move if mining is their area which may at times result in slightly better compensation, and the use of social media to highlight their plight.

Labor Rights, Abuses, and Safety Issues

Apart from disempowering impact of mining sector in Tibet, mining has been

an accident-prone industry all over China as well as Tibet. In recent years as mining has increased, the number of accidents as well as casualties has also increased (Xu 2022). Similar trends are also noticeable from Tibet areas wherein several fatal mining accidents have been reported. In May 2023, a major mining accident took place in the Qulong Copper Mines in Lhasa city, killing at least half a dozen workers (Mining Technology 2023). In another fatal accident in 2013, 83 workers died at the Gyama Mine landslide accident, Maizhokunggar County, Lhasa, in one of the most fatal mining accidents in recent times.

Another serious issue is labor abuse and rights. Although Tibetan workers are recruited in lesser number in mining sector, particularly Gold and other kinds of big mines, there have been media reports about labor abuse in the sector. There are also allegations of forced labor in mining sector, highlighted by a number of rights groups and media reports citing local sources in Tibet although, as Gabriel Lafitte, a scholar on mining in Tibet has suggested, abuse of labor and involuntary labor as well as low standards of working conditions are not entirely new (Lafitte 2013).

However, even more pervasive, and extensive issue is that of the lack of safety issues, which is, in many ways, a characteristic feature of mining industry and China as well as elsewhere in the world. Although the official narratives hype about the rules and regulations about safety conditions, several media reports even from inside China as well as at times in official media reports, it is clear that safety regulations remain a major problem, which affects labor safety and rights to safe work conditions.

Conclusion

Mining is becoming a central pillar of China's emerging Tibet policy in the aftermath of the 2008 unrest and dissatisfaction among population. The data suggest that the amount of investment in mining sector as well as other sectors namely, transport, construction, and other associated sectors, which are crucial to mining sector have increased manifold since the early years of the 21st century. The opening up of the Qinghai-Tibet railway network was the milestone, which has been further expanded to include all major cities and mining areas in Tibet, including border counties along the border with India.

While primarily driven by economic logic, mining has socio-cultural, economic, and political impacts on the local population in terms of their access to natural resources, rights to mobility, urbanization, and much more. In addition,

mining in borderlands is significant for military strategy in terms of sustaining population as well as security forces, and hence, it is part of larger efforts of state-building. The Chinese state's focus on mining in ecologically sensitive borderland across its border, thus, place mining sector in this larger context.

Due to its adverse impact on environment and local livelihood, Tibetan population do resist such projects, but given the significant investments in security infrastructure in Tibet since the protests in 2008, the avenues to vent their anger and voice their concerns have further shrunk, leading to lesser number of demonstrations. However, people have adopted other subtle methods, which may not be effective but only methods available namely petitioning and use of social media among others.

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Securing Sovereignty: Understanding the Ramifications of State-Building and Militarization in Tibet

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Abstract

This paper examines the effects of state-building and militarization on Tibet, focusing on their various implications. Due to its strategic location, unique geopolitical significance, and contentious political history, the Chinese government has concentrated on state-building efforts and militarization in Tibet. This study seeks to analyze the impact of these processes on different facets of Tibetan society, culture, identity, and regional stability. Using a multidisciplinary approach, this research paper utilizes primary and secondary sources to analyze the relationship between state-building, militarization, and its effects in Tibet. This study examines the impact of state-building and militarization on Tibetan identity, cultural preservation, and religious practices, focusing on the socio-political consequences. The text examines the effects on regional stability, including Tibet's relations with neighbouring nations and the broader global community, specifically on the local economy, resource exploitation, and infrastructure development. The study also examines the human rights consequences, including population relocation, displacement, and limitations on civil liberties.

Keywords: State-building, Tibet, Chinese, Regional Stability, Cultural Preservation

Introduction

This research asserts that China, aware of its vulnerabilities as a state, has pursued state-building in Tibet through its religion, language, education, and economic policies. These efforts have implications for state, regime, and national security. Beijing has consistently denied the existence of a 'Tibet Issue' and has rejected various proposals for genuine Tibetan autonomy due to concerns that they may undermine their efforts to establish control over Tibet. The Chinese policies, migration, and cultural influences in Tibet have created a sense of insecurity over Tibetan identity. This insecurity can be seen in the

Dalai Lama's decision to abandon his previous goal of Tibetan independence and instead advocate for autonomy and unity among all Tibetans under one administration. Identity insecurity is a significant factor that motivates the diverse Tibetan resistance movements within Tibet and the Tibetan diaspora. Both Beijing and the Tibetans aim to enhance their security, increasing insecurity for both parties. This results in a cycle of state-building and policy hardening for China and a strengthening of identity and resistance for Tibetans. This study explores the actors, objectives, and strategies involved in the Sino-Tibetan conflict. It also analyses the feedback effect between this conflict and the regional and global political strategic and ideological competitions.

Understanding the consequences of state-building and militarization in Tibet is highly significant in the broader context of the region's historical and geopolitical importance. Tibet, located at the intersection of Asia, has historically served as a significant hub for interactions between different civilizations and empires. The region's distinct cultural, religious, and geographical characteristics have made it a symbol of spirituality and independence, attracting interest from nearby countries and global powers. The historical connection between Tibet and China, characterized by alternating periods of independence and assimilation, has significant implications for current debates surrounding sovereignty and self-determination. Examining state-building and militarization in Tibet sheds light on the challenges of preserving culture and seeking autonomy amidst historical legacies, political aspirations, and strategic interests. This analysis provides insights into Tibet's distinct development and its relevance to discussions on territorial integrity, minority rights, and the changing power dynamics in a rapidly evolving global context.

The historical relationship between Tibet and China involves political, cultural, and religious dynamics. Tibet, known for its unique cultural and religious identity, has historically maintained a degree of autonomy while recognizing a symbolic association with Chinese empires. The Qing Dynasty had limited control over Tibet, as Tibetan spiritual leaders held significant sway over local governance. Tensions emerged due to the decline of China's central authority, resulting in British incursions during the 19th century. The Simla Accord of 1913-1914, which acknowledged Tibet's autonomy, was not accepted by China, initiating a subsequent struggle for sovereignty. After the Chinese Communist Party gained power in 1949, Tibet's autonomy diminished as the People's Liberation Army entered the region in 1950. This ultimately led to the signing of the Seventeen Point Agreement in 1951, which effectively placed Tibet under Chinese control. The 1959 Tibetan Uprising was triggered

by this event, resulting in the Dalai Lama's exile and Tibet's incorporation into the People's Republic of China. The historical context of Tibet-China relations is characterized by a complex interplay of power dynamics and Tibet's continuous pursuit of independence while striving to protect its unique cultural and religious traditions.

Since 1949, incorporating Tibetan regions into the People's Republic of China (PRC) has led to a conflict between the Tibetans and the Chinese. Both sides have employed violence and subtle persuasion tactics to gain dominance and have also engaged in dialogue to seek peaceful resolutions for their differences. Despite six decades of violent conflicts and peaceful attempts, the two parties have not progressed towards resolving their differences despite constituencies advocating for a negotiated settlement on both sides of the Sino-Tibetan divide in the post-Mao era (Goldstein 1997).

Key Concepts of the paper

State: Barry Buzan developed a framework to comprehend state fragility and its national and international security implications. His argument suggests that the state can be understood as a triadic entity comprising three elements: an idea or identity, institutions, and a physical base of territory and population.⁸¹ The condition of a state and its security implications are determined by the varying degrees of three components (Nye 1993).

State-Building: Various approaches exist for studying state weakness and state-building, including institutionalist, realist power-based, post-colonial, taxonomist, and ideational perspectives. Fukuyama identified "four critical elements of states: organizational planning and administration, political system structure, the basis of legitimation, and cultural and structural factors. State building refers to the establishment of new governmental institutions and the enhancement of existing ones". Fukuyama's main focus lies in the economic development aspect of state building and the potential for external actors to create and export state institutions. However, he overlooks the influence and desires of domestic non-state actors. Fukuyama fails to acknowledge that weak states often face conflicts related to nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, and ideology, which hinder the development or functioning of state institutions (Fukuyama 2006).

Whereas Ayoob's definition of state-building encompasses enhancing capacities related to warfare, policing, and taxation. War-making involves expanding and

consolidating territory and population, establishing order in disputed regions, maintaining domestic order through policing, and extracting resources through taxation to support these endeavors (Ayoob 1995).

Identity: The difference in the field of International Relations reflects the ongoing discussion in scholarly works regarding national identity and nationalism. This debate involves two main perspectives: the “primordialists” and the “perennialists.” Primordialists view national identity as inherently ingrained in a culture, with a historical continuity and an ethnic foundation. Karl Deutsch attributed “the formation of nations to the intensity and complementarity of social communication, which is facilitated by modern processes like industrialism and the market economy. These processes exert pressure on individuals to align themselves with a national group” (Deutsch 1994).

Tibet’s Political History

Tibet’s political history is characterized by an intricate combination of independence, foreign interventions, and changing alliances. Throughout its history, Tibet has functioned as an independent and autonomous entity, characterized by its distinct culture and governance system that Tibetan Buddhism profoundly influences. Tibet’s geopolitical vulnerability rendered it susceptible to external influences. During the 13th century, Tibet experienced Mongol invasions, resulting in a subsequent symbiotic association with the Mongol Yuan and later the Ming dynasty. Tibet declared complete independence in the early 20th century, a decision acknowledged by certain countries but contested by China due to its claim of Tibet as part of its historical territory. The conflict established the basis for Tibet’s eventual integration into the People’s Republic of China after a military invasion in 1950. This event remains a significant milestone that continues to influence the political situation in the region. The Dalai Lama’s exile in India in 1959 symbolizes Tibet’s ongoing struggle for political autonomy amidst changing global power dynamics (Anand 2009).

During the 20th century, Tibet faced numerous challenges due to its geopolitical situation. It had to manage its desire for independence, deal with foreign intervention, and cope with the difficult circumstances of exile. In the early 20th century, there was a strong emphasis on asserting Tibetan sovereignty, which reached its pinnacle with the significant declaration of independence in 1913. The proclamation received recognition from certain nations, solidifying Tibet’s international status as a distinct political entity. However, this newly

acquired status was soon subjected to scrutiny. China's invasion of Tibet in 1950 was a significant turning point. The subsequent armed conflict resulted in the annexation of Tibet by the People's Republic of China, altering the geopolitical landscape of the area. The cataclysmic event caused the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual and political leader, and many Tibetans to be forced into exile. The Tibetan diaspora sought refuge in India, demonstrating resilience, advocating for their homeland, and preserving their distinct cultural heritage. This chapter of Tibet's history is a poignant testament to the persistent pursuit of self-determination despite significant obstacles.

Tibet in the 20th Century: Independence, Invasion, and Exile

The 20th century was a turbulent time for Tibet, characterized by a multifaceted interaction of desires for independence, foreign incursions, and compelled displacement. At the beginning of the 20th century, Tibet was a region that enjoyed nominal independence and was governed by a theocratic system led by the 13th Dalai Lama. Tibet's autonomy was challenged in 1950 when the People's Republic of China, led by Mao Zedong, asserted territorial claims over the region. China occupied Tibet through military campaigns and officially incorporated it into the Chinese state by signing the Seventeen Point Agreement in 1951.

The invasion initiated a problematic phase for Tibetans, marked by a progressive decline in their cultural, religious, and political liberties. The Tibetan resistance against Chinese rule resulted in a failed uprising in 1959, causing the 14th Dalai Lama and numerous Tibetans to seek refuge in India. The exile community settled in Dharamshala, where the Tibetan Government-in-Exile aimed to preserve Tibetan culture, advance human rights, and advocate for the reinstatement of Tibet's independence (Huntington 2004).

Tibet has been a contentious issue in international politics from the latter half of the 20th century to the early 21st century. Tibetan independence and autonomy proponents persisted in gaining international acknowledgment and assistance. At the same time, China maintained its position that Tibet is an inseparable part of its sovereign territory. The situation in Tibet remains a topic of debate, with ongoing human rights concerns and the need for dialogue between the Chinese government and Tibetan representatives being essential aspects of the discourse surrounding this historically significant region.

State-Building Efforts

Tibetan Diaspora: Advocacy and Preservation: The Tibetan Diaspora exemplifies the resilience and determination of a community in the face of adversity. After the Chinese occupation of Tibet in the late 1950s, many Tibetans fled their homeland, undertaking a dangerous journey searching for refuge in neighbouring countries and beyond. The dispersion of Tibetans referred to as the Tibetan Diaspora, resulted in prosperous communities in India, Nepal, Bhutan, and other global regions. Despite displacement, Tibetans have persistently advocated for their cultural, religious, and political rights, establishing a global movement committed to safeguarding their distinct heritage. The Central Tibetan Administration and the Tibetan Youth Congress have mobilized support for the Tibetan cause, advocating for global recognition and the reinstatement of Tibet's self-governance. Tibetan cultural centers, schools, and monasteries are crucial in preserving tradition by serving as essential hubs for language, arts, and spiritual practices. The Tibetan Diaspora's commitment to advocacy and preservation safeguards their cultural heritage. It inspires oppressed communities globally, highlighting the effectiveness of collective action in pursuing justice and cultural continuity.

Diasporas are not passive or helpless individuals who solely receive benefits or suffer as victims. These actors are considered independent entities within the security field. They engage in active campaigns as ethnic lobbies and advocates for a foreign policy that promotes multiculturalism in the host country. Additionally, they strive to promote democratization within authoritarian regimes in their home countries (Heraclides 1991).

Geographically defining Tibet is of paramount significance. Tibet holds varying significance for different individuals, mainly the Tibetan and Chinese. The geographical definition of Tibet is a subject of disagreement among both the Chinese government and the Tibetan government-in-exile, as well as among scholars specializing in Tibetan studies. The geographical demarcation of Tibet is a significant obstacle in the Chinese-Tibetan dialogue. Beijing's perspective on Tibet is limited to the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). In contrast, Dharamsala and most Tibetans assert that Tibet encompasses a larger area, including the Tibetan inhabited regions of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan provinces.

“The Tibetans claim that following the collapse of the Tibetan empire, Tibetan territories were subjected to different levels and durations of control by the Mongols, Gorkhas of Nepal, Manchus, and British India. However, they argue

that the relationships between Tibetan rulers and the Mongols and Manchus were purely personal and did not involve any form of union or integration between the Tibetan and Chinese states” (Yu 1988).

China’s Tibet Policy

China’s policy towards Tibet has attracted significant attention and discussion on the global stage. China has implemented a policy to integrate Tibet into its more significant state since its annexation in 1950. The approach employs political, economic, and cultural measures to control and influence Tibet’s unique identity and autonomy. China’s policy in Tibet has primarily focused on suppressing dissent and opposition to its governance. This has entailed the implementation of stringent security protocols, censorship, and limitations on religious and cultural observances.

Moreover, the Chinese government has undertaken extensive development initiatives in Tibet. While these projects have facilitated economic advancement, they have also sparked apprehensions regarding their environmental consequences and the preservation of local culture. Critics contend that China’s policy in Tibet violates the rights and freedoms of the Tibetan people. In contrast, the Chinese government asserts that it promotes stability, economic progress, and regional social development. The issue remains sensitive and complex, with ongoing discussions between China and international actors aiming to reach a mutually acceptable resolution.

India’s Role and Policies

India’s involvement and policies in Tibet’s state-building endeavors have constituted a multifaceted and noteworthy dimension of their bilateral relationship. Tibet has had significant cultural, religious, and geopolitical significance for India throughout history. The relationship between India and China was strengthened when India officially acknowledged Tibet as an autonomous region of China under the Panchsheel Agreement of 1954. India’s stance transformed as political dynamics evolved. The 1959 Tibetan uprising and subsequent exile of the Dalai Lama to India were significant events. India has granted refuge to the Tibetan spiritual leader and a large number of refugees while also affirming its adherence to the “One China” policy. This action highlighted India’s endorsement of Tibetan autonomy and the preservation of its culture. India has maintained a policy of non-interference in Tibet’s internal matters, instead promoting a peaceful resolution through dialogue

between China and Tibet. India's pragmatic approach seeks to safeguard its strategic interests while also acknowledging the aspirations of the Tibetan people. India's assistance to Tibetan exiles has helped safeguard their distinct cultural heritage and enabled them to promote their cause globally. India's stance on Tibet remains an essential aspect of its foreign policy, particularly in light of changing geopolitical dynamics in the region.

Militarization and Security Implications

China's Military Presence: The international community has expressed concern and closely examined China's military presence in Tibet over an extended period. The presence in the region is a result of the intricate geopolitical dynamics associated with the Tibetan Plateau. This area is strategically significant because of its large size, proximity to neighbouring countries, and role as the origin of major rivers in Asia. China's military presence in Tibet, established by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the 1950s, has substantially impacted local, regional, and global geopolitics. China's militarization of Tibet serves multiple strategic objectives. Firstly, it serves as a buffer zone, offering strategic depth to protect China's heartland from potential threats from its western borders. Tibet's geographical proximity to India, a neighbouring power, is particularly significant due to China's historical territorial disputes with India. Moreover, Tibet's elevated topography and challenging terrain present distinctive obstacles for military endeavours, rendering it strategically significant in deterring potential foes.

China benefits from Tibet's strategic geographic location, which allows it to monitor and potentially exert influence over neighbouring countries effectively. China's strategic positioning in Tibet allows for effective monitoring of India, Nepal, Bhutan, and certain regions of Central Asia. China's military presence has significant implications for regional stability and bilateral relations as neighbouring countries adapt their defence postures and diplomatic strategies in response (Pan 1992).

China's military expansion in Tibet has sparked concerns about human rights, specifically regarding the welfare and cultural preservation of the Tibetan population. A significant military personnel contingent can result in heightened surveillance and control within local communities. The situation has consequences for the autonomy and cultural identity of the Tibetan people, further complicating the geopolitical challenges related to Tibet.

India's Strategic Concerns

India's strategic concerns in Tibet are rooted in its geopolitical location and historical connections with the region. Tibet's strategic location north of India holds great importance in India's security considerations. Tibet has historically functioned as a buffer state, serving as a natural barrier against potential invasions from the north. India has expressed concerns about China's increasing influence in the region following the annexation of Tibet in 1950. The ongoing border dispute between India and China, specifically in the Aksai Chin region, intensifies these concerns. Tibet is of great cultural and religious importance to India due to its role as the birthplace of Tibetan Buddhism, which has profoundly impacted Indian culture and philosophy. India expresses concern regarding the curtailment of Tibetan cultural and religious practices within the jurisdiction of Chinese governance.

Furthermore, China's strategic control over Tibet affords it a prominent position in the trans-Himalayan region, enabling the potential power projection into South Asia. India's strategic concerns in Tibet include security, cultural, and geopolitical aspects. These concerns highlight the intricate dynamics between India and China (Kaup 2000).

Socio-Cultural Ramifications

A combination of indigenous Tibetan traditions, Buddhism, and interactions with neighbouring cultures has shaped the socio-cultural landscape of Tibet. Tibet, located in the Himalayan plateau, has historically been geographically isolated, developing a unique cultural identity centered around spirituality and a strong bond with the natural surroundings. Tibetan Buddhism is a fundamental aspect of Tibetan society, deeply ingrained in daily life. Monasteries, including the renowned Potala Palace, function as religious hubs and cultural repositories. They offer spiritual guidance and education and safeguard valuable religious scriptures, art, and artifacts. Tibetan festivals and rituals are significant for promoting community unity. Festivals such as Losar (Tibetan New Year) and Saga Dawa commemorate essential occasions in the Buddhist calendar. The socio-cultural landscape of Tibet has undergone notable changes in recent years due to political and demographic factors. Tibetans' departure and Han Chinese's arrival have resulted in a complex interplay of identities. The interaction between tradition and modernity, spirituality and geopolitics, influences the complex socio-cultural fabric of Tibet, resulting in a culturally diverse region and ongoing socio-political difficulties.

Cultural Assimilation and Preservation

The issue of cultural assimilation and preservation in Tibet is multifaceted and controversial, as it involves the interplay of political, social, and cultural factors. Tibet, known for its unique Tibetan Buddhist heritage, has recently encountered cultural identity challenges. The Chinese government's policies to assimilate Tibet into the People's Republic of China have raised concerns about possibly eroding Tibetan traditions, language, and way of life. The policies implemented encompassed the arrival of Han Chinese migrants, limitations on religious practices, and the prioritization of Mandarin Chinese in educational institutions over Tibetan languages. Efforts have been made to promote Tibetan culture as an integral part of China's diverse cultural landscape, with a particular focus on tourism and international events.

Nevertheless, concerns have been raised regarding the authenticity and possible commercialization of the Tibetan cultural approach. Efforts have been made globally to increase awareness and support initiatives to preserve Tibet's cultural heritage. These efforts emphasize the significance of respecting and safeguarding the distinct identity of the Tibetan people. The issue of cultural assimilation and preservation in Tibet is complex and has significant implications for the region's socio-political dynamics.

Social and Economic Transformations

Tibet has experienced significant and diverse social and economic changes in recent decades. Tibet has a historical background as an agrarian society with a predominantly pastoral economy, relying on nomadic herding and agriculture as the primary sources of livelihood. The socio-economic landscape of Tibet underwent significant changes following its annexation by the People's Republic of China in the 1950s. The Chinese government implemented policies to modernize and integrate Tibet into the broader Chinese economy. These factors encompassed infrastructure development, urbanization, and the establishment of industries such as mining and tourism. These endeavors have resulted in urban expansion and enhanced education and healthcare services availability, leading to improved living conditions for many Tibetans.

Nevertheless, the abovementioned changes have prompted apprehensions regarding the preservation of culture, sustainability of the environment, and socio-economic disparities between urban and rural regions. The ongoing debate and controversy surrounding political autonomy and human rights in Tibet contribute to the complexity of the region's socio-economic narrative.

As Tibet transforms, it faces the challenge of balancing modernization with preserving its distinct cultural and environmental heritage. This is a crucial challenge for both policymakers and the global community.

Recommendations for Sustainable Development and Stability

The Recommendations for Sustainable Development and Stability in Tibet propose measures to promote economic, social, and environmental well-being in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) while safeguarding its distinct cultural heritage and maintaining political stability. These recommendations, formulated through collaboration among local stakeholders, international organizations, and experts, provide a roadmap for achieving balanced and harmonious regional development.

The recommendations prioritize inclusive and participatory governance in Tibet. This involves empowering local communities, recognizing and respecting their traditional knowledge, and active participation in decision-making processes. It additionally advocates for enhanced transparency and accountability in managing resources and providing public services.

Economic diversification is crucial for promoting sustainable development in Tibet. This approach prioritizes innovation, support for small and medium-sized enterprises, and the promotion of sustainable agriculture and tourism. Furthermore, enhancing connectivity with adjacent regions via enhanced infrastructure and trade connections has the potential to unlock novel economic prospects. Protecting Tibet's delicate ecosystem is of utmost importance. The recommendations support the adoption of eco-friendly practices, preservation of biodiversity, and promotion of renewable energy. Furthermore, the paper emphasizes implementing strategies to reduce the adverse effects of climate change and effectively manage water resources.

Cultural preservation is a vital aspect of the recommendations, acknowledging the significant cultural heritage of Tibet. This entails protecting linguistic diversity, advancing education, and assisting cultural institutions. Additionally, the recommendations emphasize the significance of fostering dialogue and promoting mutual understanding among diverse communities within Tibet.

By following these suggestions, Tibet can achieve sustainable development while preserving its cultural heritage, promoting the well-being of its residents, and ensuring long-term stability in the area. The endeavour represents the shared aspirations of the local population and the global community for a prosperous and harmonious Tibet.

Conclusion

The complex relationship between state-building and militarization in Tibet reveals a narrative that involves geopolitical complexities, cultural preservation, and human rights concerns. Upon analyzing the historical context, it is apparent that Tibet's quest for independence is intricately intertwined with complex dynamics of global diplomacy, regional agendas, and ideological conflicts. The Chinese government's efforts to consolidate territorial claims in Tibet are evident through extensive infrastructural development and military presence, which have had a lasting impact on the region's landscape.

However, it is crucial to recognize the significant human aspect involved in these strategic maneuvers. The Tibetan people have faced ongoing challenges in asserting their voices, preserving their cultural heritage, and exercising their right to self-determination. The erosion of cultural autonomy and suppression of dissenting narratives demonstrate the complex power dynamics at work. Considering these realities, the global community should advocate for a fair and equitable resolution.

A comprehensive approach is necessary for future progress. Comprehending Tibet's historical, cultural, and geopolitical importance is crucial for achieving a sustainable and inclusive resolution. Effective diplomacy requires the fundamental principles of dialogue, empathy, and collaboration. To achieve this goal, international actors, civil society, and Tibetan representatives must engage in productive dialogue, facilitating a future where Tibetans can freely exercise their rights and determine their path.

In conclusion, achieving sovereignty in Tibet requires a careful examination of geopolitical factors and its population's fundamental rights. A collaborative endeavour is needed to create an environment that supports the development of the unique cultural identity of Tibetans and ensures that their desires for self-determination are acknowledged and safeguarded internationally. Only through collective efforts can we aspire to achieve a future in which Tibet symbolizes cultural diversity, autonomy, and resilience.

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The Development of Buddhism in the Mon Region

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Abstract

This article is going to outline a brief historical development of Buddhism in the Mon Region comprising Tawang and West Kameng districts in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, India. It is mainly based on Tibetan sources as well as the oral narratives of the area. The origin of the religion can be traced back to Tibet as well as Bhutan since the early period. This paper will attempt to construct a narrative on the development of Buddhism in the land of mon by employing Tibetan sources and oral accounts.

A Brief Note on the Mon Region (Mon Yul)

The term monyul refers to the land of Mon. The root term mon is actually defined in different ways such as to an ethnic group of people or to a region. It is argued that Tibetan/Bhoti literature and local narrative sources are not specific about the meaning of the term. 'Mon' is acknowledged both as an eponym and as an autonym. The Tibetan scholar Chabpel Tsetan Phuntsok (1988:2) states that "Mon is an archaic Tibetan word for a low-lying region with narrow valley and dense forests."¹ In early ages, we can find the wide use of the word 'Lho Mon' in Tibetan literature which means 'Southern Mon', but it was not only used to current parts of Arunachal Pradesh, rather it included even Sikkim and Bhutan. However, the Mon region is currently formed into the two districts i.e., Tawang and West Kameng Districts of the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.

In some ancient scriptures, Tawang is called in different names such as Yul Mandral Gang (yulmandralgang),² Yul Kyimo Jong (yulskyidmoljong),³ or Monyul. The first name, Yul Mandral Gang can be found in the biography of Dakini Drowa Sangmo (in 'Tib., mkha' gro 'groba bzangmo'i rnam thar), while the other name, Yul Kyimo Jong is widely used in the pilgrim's guide books,

1. In 'Tib, sababdma' zhingrirong dog pa dang gdodma'inags tshalstugposkhebspa'isakhul la thogs pa'i bod kyibrdarnyingzhig yin.

2. YulMandralgang means that the place which is on the mandala, as the shape or landscape of Tawang resemble to it.

3. Skyi dmo ljong denotes to the Valley of Happiness.

especially where the sites those are associated with Guru Padmasambhava in Tawang.

In the case of the term Tawang, two narratives can be found. The first goes back to the late 15th century when the great Terton Pema Lingpa (gterston dpad ma gling pa, 1474-1521) who visited Tawang on the request of his brother Ugyan Sangpo (O rgyan bzangpo). Terton Pema Lingpa came there and bestowed tantric empowerment called Yidam Tamdrin Wang (yi dam rtam grin dbang), initiation of the deity which is horse-neck and especially to his brother and native people of the region. By the name of empowerment which was first bestowed in such a place, hence the site was too called as Tawang (rta dbang), which means the empowered by a horse.

The other narrative is associated with the 17th century where the present Gaden Namgyal Latse (Dga' ldan rnam rgyal lha rtse) Monastery or known simply as Tawang monastery where it is situated. The story is that a monk Lodroe Gyatso (Blo gros rgya mtsho, d. 1681),⁴after completing his education in Tibet, at the wish of Fifth Dalai Lama Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso (Nga gdbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, 1617-1681), he came back to his hometown Monyul to construct a monastery in Gelug (Dge lugs) tradition.

While searching for a site, he decided to meditate at the hill called 'Brag ma dung chung⁵ about three miles from Tawang town. When he came out from meditation, he did not find his horse. He felt strange that his horse never strayed away from him. In search for his horse, he followed the marks left by the horse and came to a place called Tanamandral gang,⁶ where he got his horse and, on that place, he constructed monastery with the help of laypeople. Niranjana Sarkar (1981) states that "he (Blog ros rgya mtsho) at once perceived the divine help had come and that was the site for his monastery. In recognition of the part played by his horse, who had led him to it, he called it Tawang (rta, horse; dbang, chosen) or the place chosen by horse." The name Tawang is known till date.

4. Blogrosrgyamts'o is the founder of well-known Tawang monastery in 17th century and he is popularly known as Merak Lama LodoeGyatso.

5. Bramadungchung is located north of Tawang, where a Tibetan Buddhist nunnery believed to be built after Tawang Monastery by a sister of MerakLama LodoeGyatso is considered.

6. TanaMandralgangis thought be a name of the palace of the king Kala Wangpo (dka' la dbangpo) of Yulmandralgang or monyul.Present Tawang monastery is considered to be constructed on the same site.

Advent of Buddhism in the Mon Region

It is believed that the pre-Buddhist religion of the region is ancient Bon; however, almost all the non-Buddhist practices of any kind of beliefs also tend to be known as Bon nowadays (Tenpa 2013). Generally, it is believed and considered that the planting the seed of Buddhism in the region occurred in the late 7th century during the reign of the Tibetan emperor Songtsen Gampo (Srong btsan sgampo, CA 649), who built a number of temples to suppress the demons and established Buddhism throughout his empire. Among those temples, three temples were said to be built in the Eastern Himalaya, and these are Kyichu Lhakhang (Skyid chu lhakhang) in Paro and Jampa Lhakhang (byams pa lhakhang) in Bumthang (are both in Bhutan) and Sinmo Lhakhang (srin mo lha khang) in Lekpo, which is situated in Lekpo Tsozhi in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), across the border side from Pangchen Dingdruk valley in the north-west of the Tawang district.⁷ As described earlier as the word 'Mon' is used to describe not only the present day Tawang and West Kameng districts, it consists part of Tsona region, which is under TAR besides Sikkim and Bhutan.

At the same period, there is a story about King Kala Wangpo and his queen Khandroma Drowa Sangmo (mkha' 'gro ma 'Grobabzangmo) in Monyul and their kingdom was known to be Yultana Mandral Gang. According to the text,⁸ it states that while she was three months old in her mother's womb, she uttered six syllables mantra in praise of Avalokiteshvara, "Om Mani Padme Hum", all sentient beings be free from suffering, be blessed with happiness."⁹ The mother Dramze Zema (Bram zemdza ma) felt worried and said to her husband Dramze Lodeo ('Bram zeblogros). Her husband replied to his wife not to panic, this is a famous mantra of Buddhism, which is very popular and uttered across the whole Tibetan plateau. He advised her that attention to be paid on eating clean food, cloth and keep meditating. He also predicted that "if a baby is born as a boy, he will be the emanation of the lord of compassion Avaloketeshvara, and if instead born as a female, she will be an emanation of wisdom dakini."¹⁰

7. See Tenpa&Tempa (2013: 5-6).

8. In Tib.mkha''gro ma 'grobabzangmo'irnamthar, (the biography of dakiniDrowaSangmo). This is only the text of early period which shows the deeds of King Kala Wangpo and dakiniDrowaSangmo. There are still some pilgrim sites related to dakiniDrowaSangmo in the different parts of the Mon region.

9. In Tib.Om manipadme hum: grobasems can thams cad ngangro'isdugbsngal dang bralnas/ bdeba dang ldan par gyur cig.

10. In Tib, Bu ruskyesna thugs rjechen poi sprul pa yin, bumoskyesna ye shesmka' 'gro'isprul pa yin.

It is believed that she was the first person who planted the seed of Buddha dharma through the six-syllable mantras of Avaloketeshvara in the region. Her taking of birth in the region was considered to show the right path to the king and its people. The exact date and period of the king and his queen were not clear, although in the biography it mentioned only that “after 1500 years of the mahaparinirvana of the Buddha.”¹¹ According to this figure, we could say that the time of the king and queen should be around the 11th century.

There is not clear information or evidence on Guru Padmasambhava’s visit to Monyul before Tibet or after that. The existence of a number of pilgrim sites suggested that rays of Buddha dharma touched the soil of Monyul. Some aged people through their memoirs state that Guru Padmasambhava visited Monyul two times; the first time was on his way to Tibet, he stayed for a long time in Monyul and visited many places to subjugate demons and other obstacles. The other was also narrated to subjugate and suppress the demons or evils that ran away and escaped Monyul while he was subjugating those in Tibet. Some these sites are Sha’ug Takgo, Mon Gomdrakphug, Domsang Rong, Taktsang Rong, Zigtsang Rong, and Khandroi Phukpa. Although these sites are only related to the present Mon region, there are many other sites in other parts of the Himalayan regions. The recorded sites can be found mentioned in some of his biography text called Pema Kathang (Padma bka’ thang).

Most of these sites are still intact, albeit some sites are affected due to the construction of motor roads. Yet these sites did not develop into a monastic centre, though his figure is regarded as the Second Buddha in Tibetan Buddhism. The development of monastic centres and temples seems to have become around from the 13th century. Through the biographies of Buddhist masters provide comparable information in this regard.

It is regarded that the Kyine Gompa (Skyid gnas dgon pa) at Jang village, which is 40 kilometers away from Tawang town, is considered as first monastery in the region. It is regarded as being established by the 3rd Karmapa Ranjung Dorjee (Rang ’byung rdo rje, 1284-1339) in the 14th century. It is uncertain whether the 3rd Karmapa visited the region because neither in his autobiography nor in the biography mentioned it. Tenpa (2013:7) states that it is likely that the monastery was established by one of the Karmapa’s disciples because Tenzin Norbu (2002: 204) recorded that a presence of a lineage called Domsangpa (dom tshang pa), as a direct disciple of the Karmapa.¹² And there are sources

11. In Tib, Thub pa mya ngan las ’das nas lo ni phyed dang stong ’das.

12. The present lineage holders of Domsangpa are at upper and lower OeneGonchung of

which mentioned that the 1st Karmapa Duesum Khenpa (Dus gsum mkhyen pa, 1110-1193) “in the past times had meditated at Dom tshang in Mon and the king of Mon GrwaThung served him as his patron,”¹³ and “resided at Sha’ugTakgo,”¹⁴ the Domsangpa lineages being a disciple of either the 1st or 3rd Karmapa needed further observation.

Another historical person, he played a role in the spread of Buddhism in the region was a great yogi, Drubchen Thangtong Gyalpo (sgrub chen Thangs tong rgyal po, 1385- 1464), who is commonly known as Lama Chaksam Wangpo (bla ma lcags zam dbang po).¹⁵ He was famous for building a number of iron bridges across the Tibetan plateau and Himalayan regions. He visited Tawang and built an iron bridge in 1434 over Tawang Chu River, which is located between Mokto and Kitpi areas. Although, there were no such monastic institutes founded by him in the region, Gyalsey Tulku (2009: 95) notes that a disciple of his, Lama Rigsum Gonpo (bla ma Rigs gsum mgon po) founded the monastery called Tsangbu Monastery (Gtsang pod gon pa), while also residing at Khromteng retreat site.

Around the same period, in a unique development of propagation of Tibetan Buddhism in the region, a margin Tibetan Buddhist sect called Bodong can be observed. It was through a great master Bodong Chokley Namgyal (Bo dong Phyogs las rnam rgyal, 1376- 1451). After his visit to Tawang, it is believed that the Thongmon Gonpa (Mthong smon dgonpa) of Trimu village was founded by him (Gyalsey Tulku 2009: 334). Even Tashi Choeling (Bkra shis chos gling) Monastery, which is commonly known as Lumla Gonpa is also acknowledged to be established by him and his students. They were known as Bodong Yabse Sum (Bo dong yab sras gsum), which literally means the teacher Bodong Chokley Namgyal and his three spiritual disciples, Jora Rinpoche, Mitrul Rinpoche, and Drogon Rinpoche (Tenpa 2013: 9).

Ne SarJungpaTseGonpa, which is situated near HroJangdag valley. His Eminence the 13th TsonaGontse Rinpoche was born in this Domsangpa lineage family. He belongs to the Gelug sect of Tibetan Buddhism. His main monastery is located in Tsonadzong, Tibet, hence the reincarnated lineage is known also as Tsona Rinpoche. Many of the successors were born in Monyul. After the occupation of Tibet by China, the 13th one had founded a new monastery at Mon-Bomdila in WestKameng.

13. In Tib, snyonrjedusmknyenmondmtshang du sgrub pa mdzadduskyisbyinbdagmongyirgyalpogrwathung (Mkhasp’idga’ ston (2006 [1565]: 548-9)

14. In Tib, sha’ug stag sgorbyonnasbzhuks (GoeShunuphel’sDeb thersngonpo (1996 [1476]: 476).

15. The name Lama Chaksam Wangpo is found to be used only in the region due to his iron bridges construction, whereas he was commonly known as Thangtong Gyalpo.

Among the sects, the development of the newest school, Gelug and its followers had been lasting imprint in the region. It is said that it was propagated in the region by a hardly recorded monk called Tsangton Rolpe Dorjee (Gtsan gston Rolpa'I rdo rje), who was considered a disciple of the 1st Dalai Lama Gendun Drub (Dge 'dun grub, 1391- 1474). He came to Tawang on the advice given by Drubchen Thangton Gyalpo, who told him that your disciples are in Monyul, you have to go there to help the sentient beings through the teachings of Buddha. He then visited the region and was said to be resided at first at a cave-retreat site called Brakkar ('Brag dkar). As he had seen that many people were showing keen interest in Buddhism, for the sake of people in the area, he thought to build a monastery. While on a search for a location, he took divine help and built the Aryakdung Gonpa (Aryag gdung dgonpa) at Lhou valley, which is considered to be the first Gelug monastery in the region.

The legacy of the Gelug school is continued by Lobsang Tenpe Donme (Blo bzang bstan pa'I sgron me, 1475- 1542?), a disciple of the 2nd Dalai Lama Gedun Gyatso (Dge 'dun rgyamtsho, 1475- 1542), who was the son of Jowo Dargey of Bekhar castle in Tawang (Tenpa 2013). There is a narrative that when Drubchen Thangton Gyalpo arrived in the Tawang region, upon the request of Jowo Dargey, he prophesied that Jowo Dargey would have seven sons and the third son will become the famous master. This third son as a Gsum pa- Tenpe Donme, as prophesied came true and became a monk. He went to Central Tibet for further studies at Sera and Tashi Lhunpo Monasteries, and even his full monastic vows is considered to be received from the 2nd Dalai Lama. This third son's contribution to the development of Buddhism in the region is undeniable, where he founded a number of monasteries and temples in the regions. Such are Lhangateng Gonpa (Sla nga steng dgon pa) at Lhangateng, Aryakdung Gonpa (Aryag gdung dgon pa)¹⁶ at Lhou, and a retreat site at Sanglamphel in Tawang, Taklung Gonpa (Stag lung dgon pa) at Taklung and Namshu Gonpa (Nam shud mgon pa) at Namshu. The last monasteries are located in the West Kameng district. Even monasteries in Eastern Bhutan like Tashi Choeling Gonpa (Bkra shis chos gling dgon pa) at Sakteng and Gaden Tseling Gonpa (Dga' ldan rtse gling dgon pa) at Merak in the district of Trashigang.

His legacies were carried on by his nephews called Tenpe Ozer (Bstanpe'i

16. Aryakdung Gonpa said to be founded either Lobsang Tenpe Donme or Tsangton Rolpe Dorjee, though *Dga' ba'idpalster* text records that Tsangton Rolpe Dorjee was the founder of this monastery. It may be Lobsang Tenpe Donme was first care-taker of the monastery because Tsangton Rolpe Dorjee was said to be the teacher who gave novice vows to Lobsang Tenpe Donme.

'odzer) and Tenpe Gyaltzen (Bstan pa'I rgyal mtshan). Although they were recorded only in the text Gawe Pelter (Dga' ba'I dpal ster), their contributions in the region cannot be ignored, which are even today a source of local oral traditions. His immediate nephew, Paudungpa Lobsang Tenpe Ozer became his chief disciple, and went to Central Tibet for study and is said to have received monastic vows also from the 3rd Dalai Lama. He was to become a chief patron of already existing Geluk monasteries in the region. He was followed by his nephew, Lobsang Tenpe Gyaltzen, and he too later became the chief patron of Geluk School in the region. He was the Lama who organized the system of third son in each family should enter into monkhood from the region. Thereafter came the famous Merak Lama Lodoe Gyatso (d.1682), who was considered a nephew of Lobsang Tenpe Gyaltzen. He too became a monk and received full monastic vows from the 5th Dalai Lama (1616-1681). He was the monk who built Gaden Namgyal Lhatse (Dga' ldan rnam rgyal lha rtse) commonly known as Tawang Monastery with the help of Dingpon Namkha Druk (Lding dpon Nam mkha' 'brug), the commissioner of Tsona Dzong to fulfill the wishes of the 5th Dalai Lama.

In the mid of 18th century, there is a monastery called Sarong Gonpa near Zigtsang Rong pilgrimage site was built by first Sarong Rinpoche. There is no such evidence to pinpoint the dates of the establishment of this monastery but it's believed that during the Tibet-Bhutan war in 1714, when the 1st Sarong Rinpoche, Phuntsok Drakpa (Phun tsog sgrags pa) of Sharro Village, a monk of Tawang Monastery who participated in the war with the armies of Lajang Khan. Due to having regrets of leading the army, he decided to remain the strict retreat in the forest for the rest of his life. The present Sarong Gonpa, Tashi Samten Choeding Gonpa (bkra shis bsam lding dgon pa) was built by 3rd Sarong Rinpoche Tenpa Rinchen (bstan pa rin chen) in 1813 and the present 5th Sarong Rinpoche reside over there.

With regard to the development of the Nyingmapa (rnying ma pa) sect, it was primarily due to Tertön Pema Lingpa (gter ston Pad ma gling pa, 1450-1521) and his brother Ogyan Sangpo visit to the region. Pema Lingpa is said to be visited the region three times. His primarily reason to visit to Tawang was to consecrate the monasteries of Urgyanling (O rgyangling) and Tsogyeling (Mtshorgyangling). These monasteries were built by his brother Ogyan Sangpo, who probably came along with him on the first or second visit to Tawang. Ogyan Sangpo received a number of sacred initiations from his brother Pema Lingpa.

In one of these initiations, Bankarwa Kunden Sangey Yeshe (Bang dkar ba kun 'dun Sangs rgyas ye shes) also received the Yi dam rtamgrindbang, and became one of first local disciple of Pema Lingpa. He became to be known as the 1stKhyinyame Rinpoche or Thegtse Rinpoche.¹⁷ His successive lineages built many monasteries in the region; however, some of them were in poor states, namely Gangkardung Gonpa, Nametakmeng Gonpa, and Thegtse Gonpa. The last Thegtse Gonpa is renovated, and it became the leading centre for Nyingmapa sect in the region.

Three Special Figures of the Mon Region

Besides the monks mentioned above who had immensely contributed to the development of spirituality, there were three monks who were famously known as “the three holy men of Mon” (Mon gyi skyes bu gsum). They were Lama Sonam Gyaltzen (bla ma Bsod nams rgyal mtshan), Dolhe Rinpoche and Lhagyalo Rinpoche. In the local spiritual narratives, Lama Sonam Gyaltzen is considered to have attained enlightenment in his one life span. It is said that, he was born in Thonglek village of Tawang, and was a very active youth in farming. It is said that he was constantly teased by his village women in his youth age while helping other farmers. Although he was asked by many women as their husbands, he replied that he is going to be a monk to practice dharma. They further said that if you will able to practice dharma, then we will make rivers running upwards. He answered that you people prepare for challenges; I am leaving now to learn dharma. He then leaves from farming and walk towards Tibet even he didn't go to home. While he was resting near a place called the cliff of three sides, he met two people who were also going to Tibet for religious study. His two companions were later come to known as Dolhe Rinpoche from Pangchen valley and Lhagyalo Rinpoche from Thembang valley.

According to Gyalsey Tulku (2009: 311), they studied and stayed together in Tibet, and their primary teacher was either the 4th Panchen Lama Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltzen (Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan), 1570-1662) or the 3rd Dalai Lama Sonam Gyatso (Bsod nams rgya mtsho, 1542- 1588). After completing their studies, their teacher told them to come again tomorrow and will check for an omen with their tonight's dreams. Although the dreams of the

17. Khyinyame Rinpoche (khyinyalgnasrinpoche) belongs to Nyingma sect of Tibetan Buddhism. His main monastic centre is KhyinyameSangnakChoekorling (khyinyalgnasgsangngagschos 'khorling), and the present Khyinyame Rinpoche is the 14th reincarnation.

two, Dolhe and Lhagyalo Rinpoches were auspicious, Lama Sonam Gyaltzen's dream was full of violence, i.e., bloodshed. Lama Sonam Gyaltzen hence felt hesitant to consult his dream to the teacher. Anyway, they all consulted their dreams and their teacher examined their dreams and predicted the sites for all three disciples in the Mon region. The teacher even said that the dream of Lama Sonam Gyaltzen is very auspicious as he will attain enlightenment in this very life. They all went back to Monyul and resided according to their omens.

Dolhe Rinpoche founded a retreat site in Lumla in Tawang, which later developed into a monastery called DolheGonpa, and it became the seat of successive reincarnation of the DolheRinpoches. Lhagyalo Rinpoche founded the retreat side in Rongnang Toemae Tso valleys (i.e., Kalaktang and Rupa circle areas of West-Kameng District) and his retreat also gradually becomes a monastery known as Lhagyala Gonpa. The successive Lhagyalo Rinpoches reside at the site. Lama Sonam Gyaltzen founded a retreat place at Khromteng Pilgrim site in Tawang, and he is said to be disappeared in the sky, showing his attainment of enlightenment. At his retreat site, a monastery founded, which later on came to be known as Khromteng Monastery, and it is said to have been built in the 16th century. At the same site, there are lots of pilgrim sites related to Lama Sonam Gyaltzen, and his disciple Na Jamphel (Na 'Jam dpal), such as their respective thrones, meditational caves, footprints. Even a sign of nectar-water of white and red color, which is said to be befallen at the time when Lama Sonam Gyaltzen revealed the entrance gate of the pilgrimage site.

The Present State of Monasteries in the Mon Region

Along with the massive development of Tibetan Buddhism in the region, most of the monastic study centres rapidly developed in the last century. As I mentioned earlier, local scholars went to Tibet to master the doctrines of Buddha in past centuries, but currently, few monasteries serve as Buddhist study centres. For instance, Tawang Monastery, a prime Buddhist learning centre that primarily follows Gelugpa tradition, was founded on the wish of 5th Dalai Lama in the 1680s with the help of native people and Tibet. During the conflict between Tibet and Bhutan most likely in 1714, with the help of Mongol king Lajang Khan, Bhutanese aggression was eliminated, and in further propagating and maintaining the supremacy of the Gelug sect, the military force sent from Tibet destroyed other sects i.e., Nyingma and Kagyu's monasteries all over the region. And it seems like Tawang Monastery became the main seat of both spiritual and political power which brought under its control other remaining monasteries in the region—subsequently forming twelve monasteries

in Tawang and two in West Kameng district. Tawang monastery still plays the most important role in spiritual and religious activities and acts as the main learning centre of Tantric Buddhism with over five hundred monks.

Jamyang Choekorling (jam dbyangs chos 'khor gling) monastery which is believed to be built in the area where the SangyelingGonpa¹⁸ was built. Presently, Jamyang Choekorling Monastery has more than 150 monks and is under the care of Sera Jey (sera byes) monastery in Karnataka, India. Sangngak Choekorling (gsang sngags chos 'khor gling) monastery, also known as Khinmey (khyinyanmes) monastery is founded by reincarnate successor of kunden Sangye Yeshi, 14th Theksey Rinpoche (theg rtse rinpoche) of Nyingma sect and more than 150 monks are under its religious training in Tawang. There is also a Kagyu monastery called Zangdok Palri Gonpa (zangs mdog dpal ri dgon pa) or Mon Palpung Jangchub Choekorling (mon dpal dpun gbyang chub chos skorgling) located on the hills of Jang village in Tawang. Around 200 monks resides in the monastery. In West Kameng district, Gaden Rabgyeling (dga' ldan rab rgyas gling) Monastery in Bomdila is the largest one. It has more than 400 monks with complete facilities in both traditional and modern education. This Gelug monastery is founded by the 12th Tsona Rinpoche in the 1960s when his main seat or monastery was in Tsona (Tibet) which was demolished during the Chinese invasion in Tibet. Formerly ChillipamGonpa or Zangdok Palri Gonpa in Chillipam village was founded by KunsangDetchen Rinpoche of Nyingma sect in the 1980s. It is said that he came to this place after being forced to migrate from Tibet in 1972 and settled down to an old Buddhist temple in Rupa. Around 100 monks reside in Chillipam monastery where they follow Nyingma tradition in their religious study.

In addition, there are few nunneries such as Brama Dungchungani Gonpa (brag snag dong chung) which was founded by Kachen Yeshe Gelek (dka' chen ye shesdge legs) in the year 1826. GyangkongAniGonpa is believed to be built by the sister of Lama LodoeGyatso, founder of Tawang Monastery. Singsur Ani Gonpa (sing sur ane dgon pa) is another nunnery which doesn't have any recorded evidence of its founder, but the 12th Tsona Rinpoche had built a new shrine in the year of 1960. All these nunneries follow the Gelugpa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism and are located in the Tawang district. All the nunneries have almost the same number of nuns which is around 30 to 40. Unfortunately, there are many other small temples can be found in pilgrimage sites and villages and their founder and year of formation is still unclear.

18. Sangyelinggonpa (sngasrgyasglingdgonpa) was founded by lamaUgyanSangpo (Urgyanbzangpo), a brother of tertonpemingpa.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the above outlines showed the historical origin and development of different Buddhist traditions of monastic institutions, particularly Nyingma, Kagyu, and Gelug. However, we observed that several rituals in the local practices can be related to ancient Bon. But there was no archaeology evidence was found related to the centres of Bon and Sakya (saskya) traditions in the region. It also observed that there was a strong bondage with Tibet in terms of political, cultural, and most important is in spiritual.

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Gelukpa Scholarship on Dharmakīrti's Rebirth Concept

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Abstract

Rebirth is the process of taking a new birth, where the soul or consciousness stream migrates to another new body after the death of the previous body. Hinduism, Jainism, and others, who accept the soul theory, consider the transmigration of the soul from one life to another life in the rebirth process, whereas non-soul theory follower such as Buddhists, believes the continuity of consciousness (mind) stream from previous to next life. In these Indic religions, karma plays a pivotal role in taking future births. Among these religions, Buddhism, a sole carrier of non-soul philosophy, accept that ordinary beings take birth by the cause of affliction and karma and the process of taking birth through affliction and karma is done through twelve links of dependent origination.

Keywords: Buddhism, Gelukpa, Philosophy, Karma, Rebirth, Dharmakīrti

Introduction

The rebirth concept or the existence of previous lives is shown in early Buddhist texts through the stories of one taking birth in animal or human form. For instance, the stories of Buddha's different births before attaining his enlightenment are shown in Jātakamālā tales. But a broad analytical study on rebirth through refuting non-Buddhist views was done in the Buddhist logical texts specially the logical text of seventh-century Buddhist scholar Dharmakīrti in *Pramāṇavārttikā*. The text consists of four chapters *Svarthānumāna* (Inference for Oneself), *Pramāṇasiddhi* (Establishing *Pramāṇa*), *Pratyakṣa* (Perception) and *Parārthānumāna* (Inference for Others).¹ In this text, the *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter

1. This chapter sequence is according to the commentaries written by most of the prominent Tibetan scholars except kagyū scholar, the seventh Karmapa, Chödrak Gyatso. He had written *Pramāṇa siddhi* chapter first and inference for self-chapter second in his *Pramāṇavārttikā*'s commentarial book *Tshad ma legs-par bśadp-pathams-cad kyi chuboyoungs-su 'du-ba rigs-pa'igzhung lugs kyirgya-mtshozhesbya-ba* (Ocean of Literature on Logic).

is a commentary of first two benedictory verse of Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya:

Tshad-mar gyur-pa 'gro-la phan bzhe-pa,

Ston-pa bde-gśegsskyob-la phyag-'tshalnas,

Saluting him, who is the personification of the means of cognition, who seeks the benefit of (all) living beings, who is the teacher, the sugata, the protector.²

The benedictory verses show the Buddha has become *pramāṇa* (authority of the Buddha) through his epithets Jagaddhitaisitā, teacher, Sugata, and protector. The term Jagaddhitaisitā is translated in Tibetan as 'Gro-la phan bzhe-pa (benefits of living beings). It is one of the main conditions for attaining Buddhahood. Dharmakīrti did not make an elaborate discussion on Jagaddhitaisitā but focused more on discussing two points; a possibility to accustom compassion for many lives and the possibility of an infinite increase of mental properties like compassion. In the first point, he shows the existence of past and future lives through logical methods and refutes those who do not accept past and future live.

Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttikā* gained huge popularity in Tibet and is studied as a main text on logic in Tibetan monasteries. Tibetan scholars from all four sects made their own commentary on this root text. The Gelugpa scholars wrote commentary and shared their own thoughts and logic by composing commentaries on *Pramāṇavārttikā*. Gyaltsab Dharma Rinchen (rGyal-tshab Dar-ma Rin-chen), Khedrub Gelek Pelzang (mKhas-grub Dge-legs Dpal-bzang), Panchen Sonam Dragpa (Pan-chen bSod-nams Grags-pa, the key holder of Drepung Loseling and Shartse monasteries' literature) and Kunkhen Jamyang Shepa (Kun-mkhyen 'Jam-dbyangs Bzhad-pa, the key holder of Drepung Gomang monastery's literature).³ These are some prominent Gelugpa scholars to write commentary on *Pramāṇavārttikā*. Though their commentaries are

2. Masaaki Hattori, Digna, On Perception. (United State: Harvard University Press 1968, 23).

3. Gyaltsab wrote Tshad-ma rnam-'grelgyitshigle'urbyas-pa' rnam-bsad thar-lam phyin-ci malog-par gsal-bar byed-pa (Pramāṇavārttikā's First and Second Chapters). The text is also known as Thar-lam Sel-jey. The second chapter of this book is translated by Jackson, 1993. Khedrub wrote Tshad-ma rnam-'grelgyirgya-cherbshad-pa rigs-pa'irgya-mtsho. It is also known as Tik-chen Rig-pai Gyatso, the Ocean of Reasoning. Panchen wrote Gyas Pa'i Bstan-bcos Tshad-ma rNam-'Grel Gyi Dka'-'grel Dgongs-pa Rab-gsal Zhes Bya-ba Bzhugs-so. It is also known as Ka-drel Gong-pa Rab-sel. Kunkhen wrote Tshad-ma rNam-'grel Gyi Mtha'-dpyod Thar-lam Rab-gsal Tshad-ma'i 'Od-brgya 'Bar-ba Las Le'u Dang-po Gsum-gyi Mtha'-dpyod Blo-gsal Mgul-rGyans Kal-bzang 'Jug-ngogs Bzhugs So.

similar in many sections but it varies when they are sharing their own views and thoughts. In this paper, the present researcher will discuss the views of these four scholars on some key topics present under title “the existence of infinite number of past lives.” The paper is parsed under eight topics, which are introduction, Gelugpa scholars on compassion, variation in their division of topic and subtopics of rebirth section, analogy differences among Gelugpa scholars in stating opponent view, four different proofs in proving the existence of many previous lives, the two proofs of Gelugpa school in establishing previous and next lives, Gelugpa scholars’ view on the last mind of Arhat and the conclusion. The researcher will show the differences made by the four Gelugpa scholars, while commentating on certain topics and try to analyse whether these differences contradict each other’s thoughts.

Gelugpa Scholars on Compassion

The first two benedictory lines of Dignāga’s *Pramāṇasamuccaya* give homage to the Buddha through his perfection in causes (*hetu*) and effect (*phala*). The perfection in cause is the perfection in intention and the perfection in practice, where the intention is a desire to the benefit of all living beings (*jagaddhitaisita*) through compassion, which is an initial cause or a seed for attaining Buddhahood. Due to that reason, Chandrakīrti, the seventh-century Indian Buddhist scholar praised compassion instead of Buddha and Bodhisattva in his *Madhyamakāvātāra* (*Umala Jugpa, dbu-ma la ‘jug-pa*).⁴ However, Dharmakīrti did not say much on compassion in his *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter and wrote verse 35:5

sGrub-byed Thugs-rjeGoms-las de

Accustomation with compassion is the establisher⁶

This reveals that compassion should precede first for establishing Buddha, an authoritative person because first it is necessary to generate a desire to free all sentient beings from their sufferings (compassionate mind) for attaining

4. Mercy alone is seen as the seed, Of a Conqueror’s rich harvest, As water for development, and as Fruition in a state of long enjoyment. Therefore at the start I praise compassion.- Guy Newland, *Compassion: a Tibetan analysis*. (London: Wisdom Publication 1984, 18).

5. The verses’ numbers written in this paper are according to Gyaltsab’s *TharlamSel-byed* published by Gelugpa student’s welfare committee, Sarnath (2008).

6. Roger R.Jackson, *Is Enlightenment possible? - Dharmakīrti and rGyaltshabrje on Knowledge, Rebirth, No-Self and Liberation*. (New York: Snow Lion Publications,1993), Page: 221.

Buddhahood. This shows compassion is the first cause for attaining Buddha which goes similar with Chandrakīrti's writing:

Hearers and Middling Realizers,

Are born from the Kings of Subduers.

Buddhas are born from Bodhisattvas.

The mind of compassion, non-dual awareness,

And the altruistic mind of Enlightenment

Are the causes of the Children of Conquerors.”⁷

Chandrakīrti realises the importance of compassion not only as the first cause but also in the middle and the end of attaining Buddhahood that he praises Compassion in his benedictory verse of Madhyamakāvātāra instead of Buddha or Bodhisattva.⁸

Compassion besides being the first cause of attaining Buddhahood, Dharmakīrti did not discuss in detail in his chapter Pramāṇasiddhi, the text commentator Gyaltsab and Khedrub⁹ wrote on compassion before initiating their commentary on rebirth. These two scholars accept compassion should precede first to attain omniscient (Buddhahood) because, without a desire to free sentient beings from all suffering (the compassionate mind), one cannot strive for attaining Buddhahood, which is free from all suffering. Khedrub Je while commenting on Pramāṇasiddhi chapter, stated: “From the time when one generates a compassionate mind that desires to free all sentient beings from suffering, one will be stated as Bodhisattva.”¹⁰ He also stated that “Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha have the merciful joy of freeing sentient being from suffering, which is unbearable but having only this condition (having mercy) is not considered as the presence of the full meaning of Mahayana's compassion. Due to this, it is not considered as compassion.”¹¹ His writing explicitly shows

7. Newland, Compassion: a Tibetan analysis, Page: 74

8. Mercy alone is seen as the seed of a Conqueror's rich harvest, As water for development, and as Ripening in a state of long enjoyment; Therefore at the start I praise compassion. Newland, Compassion: a Tibetan analysis, page 18.

9. Panchen did not write on compassion in his commentary beside a commentary on a Pramāṇavārttikā verse “Accustomization with compassion is the establisher”.

10. Free translation. “Gang-zhig ‘Gro-baMtha’dagsDug-bsngalLas Brgal-bar ‘Dod-pa’isNying-rje Chen-po De-nyidrGud-la sKyes-pa De-nasByang-chub Sems-dpa’ Zhes-byaBa’isGrasBsnad-par Bya-ba Yin-gyi.” Khedrub, TikchenRigpai Gyatso (Varanasi: Gelugpa Students’ Welfare Committee, 2002), Page:434

11. Free translation. “‘On-kyang ‘Gro-basDug-bsngal Ba La Mi-bzod pa dang sDug-bsngal Dang Bral-ba la Dga’-baTsam-gyisNying-rje Ni Nyan-thos Dang Rang-sangsGyas Dag-la Yod-pa’iPhyir De-TsamGyisTheg-pa Chen-po ba’isNying-rjeMtshan-nyidYongs-

that Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha do have a desire to free sentient beings from suffering but do not have compassion which is only the quality of Mahayana Buddhist. Panchen stated, “Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha do have infinite mercy but they do not have compassionate mind as they do not have a strong altruistic determination (Lhag-bsam rNam-dag) of protecting all sentient beings from suffering.”¹² Panchen defines compassion as the loving mercy in the form (rNam-pa can) of desire to free all sentient beings from sufferings (Sems-can Thams-cad sDug-bsngal Dang Bral-bar ‘dod-pa’irNam-pa Can Gyi Brtse-ba De sNying-rje Chen-po’imtshad-nyid).¹³ This type of compassion lacks in Śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha. Kunkhen’s notion of compassion is slightly different from these two scholars as he accepts compassion exists in Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha but it’s different from Mahayana compassion.

According to him, Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha wish to free all sentient beings from suffering and have an aspiration of -- May all the sentient beings free from suffering but they lack a desire to take responsibility or willing to free all sentient beings from suffering. Gyalstab also share that there is an arising of compassion again and again in ĀryaŚrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha, which desire or wish to free all the samsaric beings from suffering but they lack the deterministic thought of I will free them from suffering that their compassion is lower than Mahayana’s compassion.¹⁴

Even though Gyaltsab and Kunkhen state the existence of compassion in Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha, their writings do not contradict with Panchen and Khedrub as they both accept the meaning of such kind of compassion (Kunkhen and Gyaltsab’s view on compassion) present in Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddhas in the form of mercy but they lack of deterministic thought of -- “ May I free all the sentient beings from suffering,” which according

surDzogs-pa Ma-yin pas sNying-rje Chen-po Zhes-ni Mi-bya’o.” - Khedrub, TikchenRigpai Gyatso, Page: 435.

12. Free translation. “Nyang-rang Gi rGud-la sNying-rje Chen-po Med-pa’iPhyir-te, De’irGyud la Lhag-bsamrNam-dag Med-pa’iPhyir Dang. ” - Panchen Sonam Drakpa, Dbu-ma’isPyidon Zab-don Gsal-ba’isGron-me Dang Dbu-ma la ‘Jug-pa’Ilan Zab-don Yang-gsalrGron-me Zhes-byabaBzhugs-so (Uma Chidon dang Uma Thachoe) (DrepungLoseling Library Society, 2015), Page: 255.

13. Panchen Sonam Drakpa, Uma Chidon dang Uma Thachoe. page 255. Free translation.

14. Free translation. “ Nyan-thos dang Rang-sangsgryas ‘Phags-pa rNams-la yang ‘Khor-ba’i Sems-can Thams-cad sDug-bsngal Dang Bral-nasNyam-pa’isNying-rje Chen-po Yang Dang Yang du ‘Byung-yang sDug-bsngal Dang Bral-ba de Bdag-gisBya-’o sNyam-pa’iKhurdu Blangs-pa De Med-pas Theg-pa Chen-po las Dman-pa’o. ”- GyaltsabDarmaRinchen, GyaltsabThamcheKhenpaDarmaRinchen Gyi Sung-bum Ga, Je YabseSungbum Volume 22 (Karnataka:Je YabseSungbum Project,2019) page: 167.

to Panchen and Khedrub is compassion. It is the term compassion (defined object, Mtshon-cha) that Panchen and Khedrub do not accept in Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha but accept the presence definition made by Kunkhen and Gyaltsab in Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha.

Variety in the Division of Topic and Subtopics of Rebirth Section

The four Gelugpa scholars' method of giving commentary to the Pramāṇavārttikā is through dividing the verses under topics and subtopic. The rebirth section of Pramāṇasiddhi chapter is also divided into topic and subtopics but the name of topics and subtopics differs between scholars. Among these four scholars, Panchen and Kunkhen share many similar topics and subtopics with Gyaltsab. Their writings are more like a short version or summary of Gyaltsab's commentarial text, specially Panchen, who shared most of his topics and subtopics similar to Gyaltsab. They wrote the topic and verses under it with a short summary in some sections as they focus more on the important arguments, which come under those topics and discuss them in detail. Khedrub gave six major subtopics under the topic, an extensive explanation of the title (the entrance to the actual content of the text). In those six sections, there are some sub-topics which he shares similarities with Gyaltsab. Though there is a presence of differences in the name of topics between Khedrub and Gyaltsab, the main meaning of those topics are similar.

Analogy Differences among Gelugpa Scholars in Stating Opponent View

Dharmakīrti in his Pramāṇasiddhi chapter had not explicitly stated Carvakais the main opponent for proving the existence of previous and past lives. The only prominent Indian school of thought to deny rebirth theory at that time is Carvaka and all the four Gelugpa commentators Gyalstab, Khedrub, Kunkhen and Panchen stated the sole opponent of rebirth theory is Carvaka, who does not accept previous and next lives. Carvaka objects that compassion cannot be practised repeatedly for many lives because there is no presence of many previous and next lives. And that the mind is supported by the body that when the body is destroyed, the mind is also destroyed.¹⁵ To prove this statement,

15. (The Lokayatas) say: "(Compassion) is not accomplished through accustomation, Because mind is based on the body"- Jackson, Is Enlightenment possible? - Dharmakīrti and rGyaltsab on Knowledge, Rebirth, No-Self and Liberation, Page:223

Pramāṇasiddhi commentators gave three relationships between mind and body, which are cause and effect, nature (svabhāvaḥ) and substance and quality relation with analogies. These analogies varied between the four Gelugpa scholars. Gyalstab gave the analogy of light (mind) and lamp (body) for cause and effect relation between mind and body, liquor (body) and its quality to intoxicate (mind) for substance and quality relation and lastly wall and mural for naturally based (svabhāvaḥ, Rang-bzhin) relationship. Kunkhen shares a similar analogy with Gyaltsab. Khedrub gave an analogy of intoxication as svabhāvaḥ of liquor and the wall and its mural for substance and quality relation of mind and body. Khedrub and Gyaltsab though gave similar analogies but to different relationships. Panchen shared a similar analogy with Khedrub in terms of cause and effect relation and svabhāvaḥ relation of mind and body but gave a different analogy to substance and quality relation, which are the cloth and its quality of white colour and jaggery and its quality of sweetness. Panchen's analogy shared similar to Devendrabuddhi (Lha-dban-blo).¹⁶The differences in analogies and the differences in the application of analogy in three relations arise among these commentators are perhaps due to the differences in their primary sources as many Indian scholars had already made commentary on Pramāṇavārtikā before its arrival in Tibet. Among these analogies, the analogy of liquor and its ability to intoxicate is present not only in the commentaries of the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter but also in non-Buddhist texts¹⁷, for instance, in Madhava Acharya's text SarvaDarsanaSamgraha:

In this school (Carvaka system) there are four elements, earth, water, fire and air; And from these four elements alone is intelligence produced, Just like the intoxication power from Kinwa, and c., mixed together.¹⁸

16. “ Don-gzhanNyid Yin-na Blo-niLus-kyi Yon-tan Yin-pa De-ltarnaLus-la Brten-pa Yin teDper-na Ras-kyiDkar-po Dang Bu-ram Gyi Mngar-baLta- bu'o Yang-naLus-kyi 'Bras-buNyid Yin-pa'iPhyirLus-la Brten-pa Yin-teDper-nasGron-ma La 'od Lta-bu'o.”- Dpalchos-kyigrags-pa and Lha-dbangblo (Dharmakīrti and Devendrabuddhi), rGyagzhunggnad-chebdam-bsgrigs pod-phrengTshad-ma 3. Tshad-ma nram- 'grelgyi 'grel-pa stod-cha (Commentary of Pramāṇavārtikā Part I) (Institute of Tibetan Classics, 2017) Page: 308.

17. In the book “What is Living and Dying” by Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, shown this analogy from the text of Sankara's Brahma-sutra commentary, Haribhardra's Ṣaḍ-darśana-samuccaya and more but due to not having primary source or its translation, I have not written their thoughts in this paper.

18. Madhava Acharya, Translated by E.B.Cowell and A.E. Gough, SarvaDarsanaSamgraha (Review of the Different Systems of Hindu Philosophy) (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications 1976,5).

Four Different Proofs in Proving the Existence of Many Previous Lives

There are different arguments advanced as proofs to establish the existence of many previous and future lives. Some are shown in the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter, while some does not. The four famous previous lives discussed in the Gelugpa school are reasoned as proving the existence of previous lives through preceding of homogeneous (Rigs-‘drasNgon-song), precede of substantial cause (Nye-lensNgon-song), precede of accustomation (Goms-pa sNgon-song) and precede of experience (Myong-basNgon-song). These are shown in the writing¹⁹ of twentieth-century Tibetan Buddhist scholar Ngawang Phunstok, who is famously known as Gen Lamrim. In his text, he gave the first three logical proofs from the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter and the last from Jātakamālā of Āryasūra.

1. Logical Proof of Proving the Existence of Previous Lives Through the Precede of Homogeneous Cause (Rigs-‘drasNgon-song)

In the Pramāṇavārttikā verse (35), it is stated:

Breathing, sense-faculties and mind are,
when (one) takes birth,
(not) independent of their homogenes;
(they) do not arise just from the body alone.²⁰

This verse shows a newly just-born ordinary being inhaling and exhaling (breathing activities), the clarity of sense faculties and particular inclinations, for instance, happiness and sadness of mind, are not independent from their previous homogeneous (Rigs-‘dra) because (newly born being) has breathing activities, etc. The inhalation and exhalation or clarity sense faculties are the result of their cause, which should be a homogeneous cause and should not arise from inappropriate cause or non-homogeneous cause such as elements, if it does, all the elements should be turned into sentient beings. In this section, all four Gelugpa scholars have mutually accepted the extreme consequence of arising sentient being from elements if the sentient beings are born only from elements. If the just-born being has sense faculties and so forth, it should have a cause, which is homogeneous with the present sense faculties and that

19. Gen Lamrimpa’s text name :TshesNga-phyi Dang Las rGyu-‘Bras Las Brtsams-pa’iGtam-kyiPhreng-basKal-bzangMgul-rGyanZhesBya-baBzhugs so.

20. Jackson, Is Enlightenment possible? - Dharmakīrti and rGyaltshabre on Knowledge, Rebirth, No-Self and Liberation, Page:226.

homogeneous cause is an absence at the time of birth and it should present simultaneously with effect, thus it should be there at previous lives. If sense faculties do not arise from elements but from the previous homogeneous cause, the question arises of whether the previous homogeneous cause should always be sense faculties. It would be inappropriate to say the previous homogeneous cause should always be sense faculties because, in Buddhism, there is acceptance of three realms (Tridhātuḥ, Khams-gsum), where a person is born according to their karma and afflictions. There are some people who are born from the formless realm (ārūpyadhātuḥ) to the desire realm (kāmadhātuḥ), for them, what will be the cause of their newly born sense faculties as there is an absent of sense faculties or any physical form in the formless realm. According to Panchen, the seed (Sa-bon) of sense faculties which is presence on the mind of formless realm's person is the direct cause of newly born desire realm (kāmadhātuḥ) person's sense faculties and that seed is an impermanent phenomenon, which is neither a form nor consciousness (viprayukta-saṃskāra).²¹ This shows that the homogeneous cause of future sense faculties can be a seed of sense faculties.

2. Proving of Rebirth Through the Precede of Substantial Cause (Nyer-lensNgon-song)

In the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter Verse 166:

It also can be proven because the non-mental

Is Not the substantial (cause) of the mental.²²

This verse is not discussed in the Rebirth section of the chapter but under the first noble truth, the truth of suffering, which comes in the last epithet, protector. Gyaltsab gave direct commentary to this verse by stating another reason (hetu) can also prove the beginningless of samsara because there is no reason that there is an absence of newly born sentient beings' previous lives (not the existence of his previous life). It is because the non-mental object cannot be taken as the substantial cause of the mind and the mind should be preceded by the mind. Khedrub gave a slightly different commentary by stating "Those which are not the entity of mind (rNam-shes Kyi rDzas) are not the

21. Free translation. The above sentence a summary of Panchen's statement in Ka-drel Gong-pa Rab-sel, Page 212; "Rang-lugs ni 'dod-pa nasshi-'pos ma thagzugs-med khams-suskyes-pa'i gang-zag girgyud-kyi yid-kyirnam-para shes-pa'isteng-gi rang-dang rgud-gcigtugyur-pa'igzugs-med nasshi'phos mathag-pa'i gang-zag gimig-dbangngos-su skyed-pa'isa-bon de de'idnogs-kyinyer-len yin la de-ltana'angzugs-med nagzugs yod-par mi-'gyurte denyiddan-min 'du-byed yin pa'iphyir."

22. Jackson, Is Enlightenment possible? - Dharmakīrti and rGyaltshabje on Knowledge, Rebirth, No-Self and Liberation, Page:368

substantial cause of the mind(future mind)”.²³ Thus, it should be either the mind or the mental entity (She-pai rDzas) as the substantial cause of the mind.

3. Proving Rebirth Through the Precede of Accustomation (Goms-pa sNgon-song)

In the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter Verse 147:

Attachment, etc., [arise from homogenous,] because we see that [they arise with the greater that intensity through accustomation...]²⁴

This line is also discussed under the topic truth of suffering, the First noble truth. This line shows that attachment, hatred and so forth are preceded by their previous homogeneous cause because one can see the rise of greater and greater intensity of them through their own accustomation (Goms-pa). Though the accustomation applies in this verse to afflictions such as attachment and hatred, there are others which are easier to notice, for instance, drinking of mother’s milk by newly born baby without anyone’s teaching and some infants are aggressive while some are calm even they are born from same parents is due to the more accustomation towards that mental faculty in their previous life.

4. Proving Rebirth Through the Precede of Experience (Myong-basNgon-song). In chapter twenty-nine of Jātakamāla, the Story of the Inhabitant of the Brahmāloka, the verse states,

Further there are now and then persons who, owing to their practice of Dhyāna and the vividness of their memory, remember their former existences. From this it must likewise be inferred, there exists a world after this. And myself, do I not give thee the evidence of a witness?²⁵

The verse states that by the repeated meditational practice on the cause, dhyāna, one will attain the effect of the clairvoyance of remembering past lives, this inferred the existence of other lives. It is through one’s experience of past lives through his clairvoyance that the person is able to infer the existence of many future and past lives.

23. Free translation. “rNam-sheskyirdza min-pa rnam-sheskyinyer-len du rung-ba min-pa’iphyir”- Khedrub ,Tik-chen Rig-pai Gyatso, the Ocean of Reasoning, (Varanasi: Gelugpa Students’ Welfare Committee, 2002), Page:584

24. Jackson, Is Enlightenment possible? - Dharmakīrti and rGyaltshabrje on Knowledge, Rebirth, No-Self and Liberation, Page:352

25. Āryaśūra. Translated by J.S. Speyer. Jātakamāla or Garland of Birth-Stories (Electronic Edition, 2010), Page: 372

Though Gen Lamrim has taken Jātakamālā verse in proving past and future lives, it is not written by any of the above four Gelugpa scholars on proving rebirth because the main theme of these four scholars is to give commentary on the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter of Dharmakīrti. Though the first three proofs are taken from the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter, only the first proof (proving through the precede of homogeneous cause) is written under the rebirth section of the chapter. The second and third proofs are present under the topic of “The Truth of Suffering” and it is not explicitly stated by Dharmakīrti that these two logical proofs are the proof of previous lives. Dharmakīrti wrote the second and third proof to prove the beginningless of samsara and refute the view of samsara has a beginning. In order to prove these two points, there is a need to prove the existence of more than one life and the present life comes from previous life and previous life from its previous life and so forth. For proving this two, one need to prove the existence of previous lives either through method of accustomation, which is shown by Dharmakīrti or any other. Thus, these second and third proofs prove the existence of previous lives beside proving the beginningless of samsara as it is said by Khedrub, “thus, here (reserve order of five epithets in proving non-belying nature of Buddha) to established the beginningless of samsara, the logical proof of establishing previous lives is primarily shown.”²⁶

The Two Proofs of Gelugpa School in Establishing Previous and Next Lives

The first proof from the above four proofs is summarised by Gelugpa scholars in two logical proofs, which are:

1. A newly just-born ordinary being’s mind is preceded by the mind (homogeneous substantial cause) because it is a mind. For instance, the present mind, is preceded by its homogeneous mind.

2. The mind of an ordinary being at the time of death is followed by the subsequent mind (next life) because it is an attached mind.

The first proof is advanced to prove the existence of past lives and the second to prove the existence of the next lives. Gelugpa scholars did not mention the term previous life or next life directly in their rebirth proofs. It may be because both of these proofs are present to the opponent (Carvaka) who

26. “Des-na ‘dirni ‘Khor-ba’ithog-ma med pa bsgrub-pa’iphyirskye-basnga-ma sgrub-pa’I rigs-pa gtso-borston la.”-Kherdrub, Tik-chen Rig-pai Gyatso, Page: 445

does not believe in the existence of previous or next lives that if one uses the direct term (previous or next life), the opponent will easily refute the thesis as he doesn't accept such term. Due to that reason, these scholars use the term accustomation, substantial cause, preceding mind or experience as the predicate (Sādhya-dharma, BsgrubBya'i-chos) in the proving rebirth.

Khedrub stated, "Thus, here (reserve system of five epithets in proving non-belying nature Buddha) to established the beginningless of samsara, the logical proof to establish previous lives is primarily shown, whereas in the forward system (of five epithets), the proof of establishing next lives is primarily said for establishing infinite increase (development) of paths (compassion and other Buddhist paths) through accustomation of it for many lives."²⁷ This shows that though the above two proofs are made to establish the existence of many past and future lives, the main focus of Dharmakīrti during the Rebirth topic is to establish a possibility to accustomate compassion for many lives and the infinite development of compassion through accustoming it for many lives. For proving these two, one need to proof the existence of next lives and to establish next lives, one need to establish the existence of the previous life by proving the precede of another mind as a cause of the first mind of the newly just born child.

Though Gyaltsab and other two scholars gave one proof in proving the next lives, Khunken gave two different proofs in establishing the next lives, which are the mind of a person at the time of death is followed by its substantial effect mind because it is unimpaired mind (Gnod-med kyiRigpa). For instance, the second moment of the present mind. The second proof is the conceptual mind of an ordinary being at the time death is followed by the subsequent mind because it is an attached mind. For instance, the second moment of the attached mind. According to Kunken the second proof is a common proof for both Sautrāntika and Vijñānavāda and the reason for stating such common proof by both of these two schools is to make it followed by Sautrāntika, Vaibhāṣikā and other schools and to comply with the concept of three final vehicles, which is stated in their philosophy.

Gelugpa Scholars on the Last Mind of Arhat

Among these two proofs, the second proof is to establish the thesis "Existing

27. Free Translation. "Des-na 'dirni 'Khor-ba'ithog-ma med pa bsgrub-pa'iphyirskye-basngama sgrub-pa'I rigs-pa gtso-borston la lugs-byunggiskabssu lam skye-ba du-mar goms-par byas-pa las mtha'-med du 'phel-ba'I 'gyur bas grub-pa'i don-du skye-baphyi-ma bsgrub-pa'i rigs-pa gtso-borgsungs-shing." – (Ibid 445).

of next life” and to prove this thesis, the term “attached mind” is used instead of mind in the middle term (hetu, rTagas). If they used the mind as hetu, it will become the mind of an ordinary being at the time of death is followed by the subsequent mind because it is a mind. This proof cannot establish the thesis due to pervasion (vyapti, Khyab-pa) error between the hetu (rTagas) and Sādhya-dharma (BsgrubBya’i-chos) as all the mind is not followed by the subsequent mind, for instance, the mind of Arhat at the time of death. The mind of Arhat at the time of his death is given by his opponent as an example in establishing their thesis, “there is no homogeneous continuity of an ordinary being’s mind after the death of being” in the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter.

Though all the four Gelugpa scholars accept the last mind of Arhat at the time of death while commenting on the chapter, their thought varies on whether the mind of Arhat at the time of death is followed by a subsequent mind or the existence of Arhat after the cease of the last mind of Arhat. Gyaltsab and Khedrub took the support from the writings of Indian scholars Dharmakīrti, Prajñākaragupta (Ses-rab ‘byunb-gnassbas-pa) and Ravigupta (Nyi-ma sbas-pa) to prove their acceptance on the last mind of Arhat. The writing of these Indian scholars is according to those Buddhist tenant holders, who accept three final vehicles instead of one final vehicle.²⁸ For instance, the tenant holder of Sautrāntikas, Vaibhāṣikās and Scripture follower Vijñānavāda. The Gelugpa scholars thoughts on the accepting the existence of Arhat after the end of the last mind of Arhat varied with each other. Khedrub while commenting on the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter, did not accept the subsequent flow of the last mind of Arhat to the next life because there is an absence of the cause craving (trṣṇā) to be reborn again and their attainment of nirvana, ceases all the conditioned phenomena.²⁹ Panchen also shared similar thoughts as Khedrub that Arhat cannot attain Buddhahood because there is the discontinuity of material entity (body and conditioned phenomena) like the ceasing of butter lamp after the attainment of nirvana without remainder.

The view of these two Gelugpa scholars is according to the tenant holders, who accept three final vehicles. Kunkhen gives a different view from them

28. Three final vehicles are śrāvakahood, pratyakabuddhahood and Buddhahood. The one final vehicles is possibility of attainment of Buddhahood by every sentient beings.

29. The above sentence is not the translation but a summary of Kherdrub statement in Tikchen Rig-pai Gyatso, page 506, “o-na rang-lugs la dgra-bcom pa ‘chi-kha’i sems-khaslen-nam mi-lenzhe-nakhas- lentedgra-bcom pa phung-po lhag-med du mya-ngan las ‘da’-bakhas-lenpa’i phyir-rode lta-na yang de-nyidkyis rig-pa phyi-ma mtshamssbyor-bar mi-’dod deskye-bagzhan-du nying-mtshamssbyor-ba’irgyusred-pa med-pa’i phyir dang ‘dus-byaskyi ‘jug-pa thams-cad nye-bar zhi-ba’imyang-’das mngon-du byas-pa’i phyir-ro.”

that according to him, there is a presence of Sautrāntikas and Vijñānavāda who accept the continuity of Arhat's mind after his death. For instance, those Sautrāntikas who accept Pramāṇavārttikā. It is explicitly stated in his commentary on the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter that "Here the discontinuity of material entities (aggregates) with the attainment of without remainder nirvana in Śrāvaka school is popular but there is the presence of uncontaminated five aggregates at that time though the samsaric aggregates are ceased."³⁰ His statement shows the acceptance of the continuity of Arhat's mind after his death, which implicitly shows the presence of no-remainder Arhat. He also wrote on the presence of non-remainder Arhat in Vijñānavāda School, who accepts three final vehicles in his text the commentary on Abhisamayālaṃkāra. His thought is different from Panchen regarding the existence of the continuity of Arhat after the death or continuity of the last mind of Arhat as Panchen does not accept the continuity of Arhat's last mind in the Śrāvaka school.

Conclusion

Pramāṇavārttikā is the root text for Tibetan monasteries and nunneries to study Buddhist logic that it is studied with the commentary made by their own scholars. The four Tibetan Gelugpa scholars made their own commentaries with reference to the early Indian commentator of Pramāṇavārttikā, which may lead to the rise of differences in their view while commenting. The differences which are noticed by the present researcher in their commentaries on the rebirth section of the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter are:

Firstly, the different views of four Gelugpa scholars on the existence of compassion in Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha. Gyaltsab and Kunkhena accepted the existence of compassion in Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha in their writing whereas Panchen does not. But there is not the presence of conflict between the writing of Panchen and Khedrub with other two scholars because they accept meaning of such compassion (Kunkhen and Gyaltsab's meaning made on compassion) present in Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddhas' mercy but they lack deterministic thought of "I will free all the sentient beings from suffering", which according to Panchen and Khedrub is the compassion.

30. Free translation. "dirnyan-thossde-ba la dgra-bcomlhag-med kyitshabem-rig rgyunchad-par 'dod-pa gragsche-yang de-dus 'khor ba'ibem-rig rgyunchad-kyang zag-med kyiphung-po lnga yod-par 'dod'-pa'iphyir."- Kunkhen, Tshad-ma rNam-'grel Gyi Mtha'-dpyod Tharlam Rab-gsal Tshad-ma'i 'Od-brgya 'Bar-ba Las Le'u Dang-po Gsum-gyi Mtha'-dpyod Blo-gsal Mgul-rGyans Kal-bzang 'Jug-ngogs Bzhugs So. Page: 528

Secondly, differences in naming the topics. Panchen and Kunkhen share many similarities with Gyaltsab in naming the topics and subtopics as it's more like a short version or summary of Gyaltsab's commentarial text. Especially, Panchen, who shared most of his topic and subtopics similar to Gyabltsab. Khedrub gave six major topics under the topic an extensive explanation of the title "The entrance to the actual content of the text". The main meaning of those topics is similar to Gyaltsab.

Thirdly, the four scholars gave an analogy to opponent's view of the non-existence of many previous and future lives. Gyaltsab and Kunkhen share a similar analogy, whereas Khedrub and Panchen differ from them.

Fourthly, Kunkhen gives two different proofs in showing the existence of future lives which is absent in the writings of the other three scholars. He gave two logical proofs, which are:

1. A mind of a person at the time of death is followed by its substantial effect mind because it is unimpaired mind (Gnod- med kyiRigpa). For instance, the second moment of the present mind.
2. The second proof is the conceptual mind of an ordinary being at the time death is followed by the subsequent mind because it is an attached mind. For instance, the second moment of attached mind.

The first logical proof is according to Vijñānavāda school and the second proof is common proof of both Sautrāntikas and Vijñānavāda. Fifthly, Panchen and Kunkhen differ on the existence of Arhat's future life or continuity of the final mind of Arhat in Sautrāntikas tradition. Kunkhen stated that there is a type of Sautrāntikas who accepts the continuity of Arhat's mind and the existence of Arhat's future life as a non-reminder Arhat, which differs from Panchen as Panchen does not accept the future life of Arhat and ceasing of Arhat's mind like ceasing of butter lamp in Sautrāntikas school.

Dharmakīrti wrote on rebirth to prove the possibility of accustomation of compassion through many lives, where he wrote about the existence of many past and future lives by refuting the opponent who does not accept past and future lives. The two main proofs, which are already stated before, are written to prove the existence of many past and future lives. Thehetu (rTags) of the two main proofs of establishing previous and next life are mind and attached mind. This shows that opponents of these two proofs do accept 'mind'. It is stated by all four Gelugpa scholars that the opponent is an ancient Indian

philosopher, Carvaka. It may be because the only important school that denied the rebirth in Dharmakīrti's time is Carvaka. But this school accepts the mind as they accept perception as the only means of knowledge. Does that mean Dharmakīrti's rebirth proofs are irrelevant in the present world? It would be inappropriate to say it is irrelevant because there is still the existence of people who consider the mind is not different from the material body (brain and neurons) and the existence of only this life.

There are many verses in Pramāṇasiddhi chapter that refutes these concept holders. For instance, Verse 47-48 of Pramāṇasiddhi chapter³¹ shows the conceptual mind or our thought process does not arise from the body with a sense organ because the conceptual mind cannot apprehend the object clearly as the eye cognition. Also, the conceptual mind cannot arise from the collection of all sense faculties because each sense faculty has different abilities to generate its own particular cognition and also with an absence of one sense faculty, there would not be able to arise conceptual mind if it came from the collection of all sense faculties. Another proof shown in verses 38 and 39³² of the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter is that though there is not any part of the earth and other elements that could not cause the birth of being as heat and moisture do, thus all the elements are the seed of causing living beings. All the elements can be caused of sentient beings like one element cause of a sentient being because they originated from the elements (an argument made to opponent's view). Gyalstab gave a very beautiful example in this section that there is an origination of different varieties of living beings in the filter and uncontaminated water. It is because of karmic cause, not due to elements. If it was arise due to elements, all the living beings born in this water should be the same in colour but it is not. There is further more presence Dharmakīrti verses which do influence those who do not accept the karma and rebirth theory.

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31. "Mental cognition does not [arise] from [the body] together with the sense-faculties, because [then the mind] would apprehend just as that [sense-] cognition [does]. It also is not the case that [mind arises] from all [the sense-faculties], because they have differing abilities for generation cognitions." - Jackson, Is Enlightenment possible? - Dharmakīrti and rGyaltshabje on Knowledge, Rebirth, No-Self and Liberation. page 239
32. "[It follows from the materialist thesis that] all [elements] have the nature of being seeds [of life]: where is there a part of earth that could not become at some time the source of heat or moisture [birth] etc? Nowhere. Therefore, just as one [element] transforms, so must they all transform, because if sense-faculties originate independently, there is no specification [of the sources of life]" - (Ibid. 226)

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The Snooping Dragon: How China Keeps its Pulse on Tibet

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Abstract

In October 2022, the week-long gathering of the 20th Party Congress and decisions taken in Beijing further highlighted the concentration of state power in the hands of Xi Jinping and his closest allies. Control over data has become more centralized than ever, and surveillance is ubiquitous in China. Xi Jinping has been pushing hard to upgrade the technology at the disposal of China's security forces. He believes that the CCP's domestic power will be enhanced if authoritarianism is prevalent and democracies are dysfunctional. He sees rolling back democracy overseas as part of his plan to enhance his government's totalitarian control.

This paper sheds new light on the intensity of Chinese surveillance mechanism, and attempt to contribute to understand how China plays prominent role in managing big data investment. It will also highlight how Tibetans are subjected to arbitrary arrests, detention, and torture for exercising their rights and freedom of expression in cyberspace. China is strengthening its Artificial Intelligence (AI) and big data capabilities to intrude on the privacy of its citizens and tighten its grip on power. Beijing spends billions of dollars annually on an "antidemocratic toolkit" of nongovernmental organizations, media outlets, diplomats, advisors, hackers, and bribes all designed to prop up autocrats and sow discord in democracies. Xi's rule has been governed by accelerated advance in artificial intelligence, repression of civil society and ideological control. His tenure in China has seen a combination of communication crackdown, ramped-up propaganda, and rapid expansion of surveillance efforts with the introduction of new laws and changes in CAC.

Keywords: Tibet, China, Surveillance, Censorship, Artificial Intelligence, Big data

Centralization of Data and Surveillance

The 21st Century has seen acceleration and digital transformation in various countries. Data analytics for business is no longer optional, but a strategic imperative. High quality data management and protection are fundamental for policy-making, efficient resource allocation, and effective undertaking

of public services. In October 2022, the week-long gathering of the 20th Party Congress (Richard C. Bush 2022) and decisions taken in Beijing further highlighted the concentration of state power in the hands of Xi Jinping and his closest allies. Control over Data has become more centralized than ever, and surveillance is ubiquitous in China.

There is a growing concern internationally and specifically in the United States over China using its state-controlled companies and universities in helping drive Beijing's rapid growth in the high tech and security sectors which are detrimental to US's overall national interest. Accusations of China's intellectual property (IP) theft and state-sponsored industrial espionage have constantly loomed large over US-China bilateral relationship.

China is strengthening its Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Aryan 2021) and big data capabilities to intrude on the privacy of its citizens and tighten its surveillance. The non-transparent and unchecked introduction and adoption of China's highly advanced technologies in foreign markets present severe intelligence and security threats, especially when integrated directly with a nation's security and big data apparatus. All these data points can be time-stamped and geo-tagged. Big Data investment is a strategic move by the CCP's to further test its surveillance model, apply it in variable contexts, and gather additional data and intelligence. CCP has gained direct access into partner-states information streams and procured advantageous and sensitive information on markets and business opportunities and important actors. These have armed them with the power to persuade and even coerce important domestic and foreign actors on local or international matters. CCP leaders have built a dystopian police state that keeps million under the constant gaze of security force armed with Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Data privacy is crucial to curb the dark side of data misuse. In January 2019 (Koshino 2019). Former Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe called for the G20 summit in Osaka to include worldwide global data governance as a key priority at the G20 discussions. The overall theme of the conference indicates the rise of the data economy has driven unprecedented growth and innovation in recent decades but also accentuating new policy challenge for global leader. Figuring out how to govern the complex data ecosystem, both enabling its potential and managing its risks, is becoming a top priority for global policymakers.

World's Highest Data Centre in Lhasa

Construction of the Lhasa data center began in 2017 (Xinhua 2017) began in 2017 to service investment and trade between Chinese companies and their counterparts in South Asia. Touted as the world's highest altitude data center, the project is scheduled for completion in the next two to three years with a grand investment almost 12 billion yuan or \$1.69 billion. It is estimated that the cloud facility is estimated to generate 10 billion yuan in revenue each year when it goes into full operation(Liao 2020).

In 2020, the first phase of construction was built at a cost of 2.8bn Yuan (\$400m) while the next two phases will cost 3bn Yuan (\$450m) and 6bn Yuan (\$900m) respectively. Once operational, the data center is expected to meet the data storage needs of China and neighboring countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. The project is a part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) aimed creating new trade routes and agreement with almost 70 maritime and terrestrial national from Southeast Asia to Europe(Swinhoe 2022).

The entire project covers an area of 645,000 sq m (7million sq ft) and when fully build, it will include several buildings covering a total of 400,000 sq m (4.3 million sq ft) housing 70,000 cabinets. The partially build data center (Alley 2020) went live in December 2022 with an initial capacity of 3000 racks and reportedly began providing cloud services for 491 system of various administrative department in the region.

A Local source from Lhasa speaking on the condition of anonymity noted: "The establishment of a data enter could lead to "more scrutiny and enhanced monitoring of Tibetans leading to further infringement of their freedom of expression and enforcing greater self-censorship". Such sentiments find validation in Beijing's drive to collect mass DNA samples from Tibetans without their consent.

Emile Dirks, a post-doctoral fellow at Citizen Lab (Dirks 2022) estimates that between June 2016 and July 2022, police may have collected between roughly 919,282 and 1,206,962 DNA samples from Tibetans, representing up to one third (32.9%) of what China calls Tibet Autonomous Region with a total population of 3.66 million. Currently China has some of the world's largest data sets to feed its AI System; its vast troves of data will have to be shifted through by algorithms that recognize patters well beyond those grasped by human insight (Andersen 2020).

Chinese President Xi Jinping rule has been governed by censorship, accelerated artificial intelligence, repression of civil society and ideological control. His tenure in China has seen a combination of communication crackdown, ramped-up propaganda, and rapid expansion of surveillance efforts with the introduction of continuous efforts to bring new laws and changes in CAC.

China's internet censorship system, colloquially known as the Great Firewall has suppressed freedom of expression and strictly monitored the information that could be accessed by its citizens. The Great Firewall (Griffiths 2019) was established in 1998, when the Ministry of Public Security launched the Golden Shield Project, a giant mechanism of censorship and surveillance aimed at restricting content, identifying, and locating individuals and providing immediate access to personal records.

The Great Firewall of China has created its own form of restricted internet. On the other hand, applications that were meant to spread the word of the government like Weibo, Baidu or WeChat, in which usernames have been linked to police database and heavily censored, were troubled by a proliferation of fabricated news articles, divisive partisan vitriol, fueling of disinformation, aggressive physical harassment and technical attacks on human rights defenders and citizen journalists. As it continues to amass more data and develop new ways to process it, the party dangles the promise of a perfectly engineered society.

In 2013, administration of the Great Firewall shifted to the Cyberspace Administration of China(Horsley 2022). Regulation over internet access has grown more comprehensive, specific, and extensive with the State Council giving the CAC overall responsibility for internet supervision. The authoritarian government has increasingly trampled on the rights of people in Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Inner Mongolia amongst others. Criticisms of its actions based on international law or human rights norms are increasingly rebuffed by the Chinese government on grounds of national sovereignty and "internal affairs". The CCP has responded with stepped-up repression over the past decade—jailing dissidents, mobilizing security forces, censoring information, and preempting popular unrest.

According to Freedom House's report titled Freedom in the World 2023, (Freedom House 2023) Tibet is the least-free country on earth, sharing the bottom spot with South Sudan and Syria. Tibet has a global freedom score of 1 out of a possible 100. This is the third straight year that Tibet has been at the bottom of the rankings, following 2022 (Tibet, savetibet.org

2022) and 2021 (Tibet, savetibet.org 2021). The world is blocked from knowing anything about Tibet, aside what is available on official propaganda.

The adverse ingenuity of this “digital authoritarianism” in Tibet is that most people will be seemingly free to go about their daily lives. In truth, however, the state will constantly monitor everything they see and track everything they do. But now people can be nudged and cajoled by invisible algorithms delivering personalized content to their phones. Inside Tibet, people are living in a vigorously designed, managed, and curate information bubble that the government made intense efforts to subjugate Tibet and its people. Restricting access also limits diversity of opinion and can lead to more polarized and radical nationalist views that could be potentially harmful to minorities and whose views are not represented in the censored view of the internet.

Installing VPN Would Likely Invite Investigation

In 2018, the Chinese government ordered the nation’s three telecommunications carriers including China Mobile, China Unicom, and China Telecom to completely pull the plug on the usage of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs).

The party-state does not restrict itself to limiting access to information on the cyberspace, it also actively relays its own messages about its assumed successes, the wickedness of everyone from the American “imperialists” to the Dalai “clique,” those “separatists” who endlessly “instigate Tibetan unrest.” Active messaging includes flooding online platforms with posts, supposedly from ordinary citizens, to sway the emotions of people, away from protest, towards acceptance of the official line. China leads the world in real time manipulation of the emotions of its citizens. Authorities have silenced numerous leading writers, rights lawyers and activists who served as the conscience of the nation.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) responded in recent years by targeting the VPN providers and either shutting them down or blocking their access. Data collected back in September, 2022 revealed that 31 percent (Marvin 2018) of internet users in China regularly use VPNs. However, despite China’s sophisticated internet censorship tools and policies, Chinese activists and bloggers have until now figured out ways to express themselves to the Chinese people and to the world. Tech savvy individuals have played a prominent role in bringing freedom of speech to China with the introduction of new and updated software to penetrate the great firewall of China.

Using the Tor privacy network is another potential approach to attempt to bypass the Great Firewall. Motivated Tibetans have long found it easy to acquire such software, which provides access to what is known as a virtual private network (VPNs). Through this kind of connection, a user in China can reach thousands of websites that are blacklisted by the government—including almost all Google services, many independent news sites, and most foreign social networks. That has changed sharply in recent years as crackdown on the internet and civil society has become more stringent and sophisticated. The government's messaging has grown more nationalistic and slower down cross border internet traffic.

Individuals in China by using VPNs can ensure that their access to the internet is safe and secure. Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) have been their mainstay in evading the wall, enabling anonymous and unrestricted access for activists and journalists to information and securely spreading information that would otherwise have been censored. It is still possible to use VPNs and other circumvention tools to scale the Great Firewall, but it is getting increasingly dangerous to do so. Some people went to jail for selling VPNs, and others were fined for merely using them.

Most VPNs providers also make it possible for them to remain anonymous online, so that even the ISP cannot track or monitor their online activity. Using dedicated connections and virtual tunneling, a VPN provides the user with privacy, security, and the freedom to browse the internet without fear. Under the authority of the newly appointed CCP secretary of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, Wang Zunzheng, this last vestige of internet freedom, this haven for activists and journalists resisting one of the most despotic regimes on earth is being intensely censored.

The Chinese authorities frequently advise Tibetans not to engage in any anti-social activities including contacting their family members and acquaintances outside Tibet. Families fracture as a result. Many Tibetans are detained under vague and fictitious charges such as 'leaking state secrets' and 'inciting separatism.' Tibetans are jailed and interrogated with no apparent evidence of any wrongdoing. Interrogation has led to forced confessions. Tibetans are subjected to arbitrary arrests, detention, and torture for exercising their rights and freedom of expression in cyberspace. Since the implementation of laws, it has resulted in more scrutiny and direct suppression of freedom of expression and rights to privacy. The law announced tougher punishment creating "public disorder by engaging in separatist acts. The law is a strategic move by CCP to

create more communication barriers between the Tibetans inside and outside.

A resident of Lhasa who wants to remain anonymous said: “All VPNs have slowed down and there is no possible way to operate VPNs as conveniently as usual. I observed a new satellite is set up and more related VPNs laws are implemented to prevent Tibetans from using VPNs.” Many parts of Tibet have recently been reported to have banned Tibetans from having any kind of contact with people outside the People’s Republic of China as a part of its Sinicization drive as well as so-called anti-separatist campaign.

The restriction on VPNs will also affect academics, researchers, and software developers. Journalists and foreign businesses which have been the mainstay of China’s growing economy. Academicians will lack adequate access to overseas colleagues and journals and methods to communicate with universities around the world, while software developers who rely on codes hosted on websites based outside China will be handicapped. For foreign as well as domestic companies, the bamboo curtain of Tibet has led to severe self-censorship, resulting in shortage of flow of information and to authenticate the news. VPNs are incredibly important to access unrestricted global services and access markets outside China.

Restricting VPN and censoring information is not the way forward for a country trying to seek global limelight and portray itself as a rising world leader. Rather, the latest restrictions will further isolate China from the rest of the world, limiting its ability to learn about the world and share its opinions. The Chinese government must realize that without free and open access, the internet can become a medium for government propaganda to hide information, and in some cases can fuel disinformation about any number of different topics.

Beijing’s Weapon of Mass Deception.

The Chinese pioneered the notorious use of surreptitious methods to distort online discussions and suppress dissent more than a decade ago, but the practice has since gone global. Such state-led interventions present a major threat to the notion of the internet as a liberating technology. The use of “fake news,” automated “bot” accounts, disinformation campaigns and other manipulative methods are more emphasized and prioritized by the Chinese regime.

Xi Jinping has been pushing hard to upgrade the technology at the disposal of China’s security forces (Lin 2022). He believes that the CCP’s domestic power will be enhanced if authoritarianism is prevalent and democracies are

dysfunctional—fellow despots will not punish China for rights abuses, and the Chinese people will not want to emulate the chaos of liberal systems. He thinks that preventing revolts against authoritarianism in other countries will lower the odds of such a revolt erupting in China. And he believes that silencing critics abroad will limit the challenges facing the CCP within China. He sees rolling back democracy overseas as part of his plan to enhance his government's totalitarian control.

Beijing spends billions of dollars annually on an “antidemocratic toolkit” of nongovernmental organizations, media outlets, diplomats, advisors, hackers, and bribes all designed to prop up autocrats and sow discord in democracies (Lin 2022).

With more than one billion internet users (State Council 2023), China certainly has the capability to orchestrate large-scale social media campaigns, and target what it sees as anti-China voices with a wealth of opposing opinions. The use of fake profile pictures in disinformation campaigns is becoming more common as users and platforms become more wary of suspicious accounts. Instead of relying on expensive and potentially rebellious armies to brutalize a resentful population, an autocrat will now have more insidious means of control. Millions of spies can be replaced with hundreds of millions of unblinking cameras. Facial-recognition technologies can rapidly sort through video feeds and identify troublemakers. Bots can deliver propaganda tailored to specific groups. Malware can be installed on computers through seemingly innocuous apps or links, and then government hackers can crash the computer networks of dissidents or gather information on their operations. That information, in turn, can be used to co-opt resistance movements by bribing their leaders or meeting their more innocuous demands. Alternatively, authorities can print out an AI-assembled list of alleged activists and threaten everyone on it.

The Centre for Information Resilience (CIR) revealed a network of social media accounts that distort international perceptions on significant issues, elevate China's reputation amongst its supporters, and discredit claims critical of the Chinese Government. The report further highlighted the coordinated influence operation on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. They use a mix of artificial and repurposed accounts to push pro-China narratives and distort perceptions on important issues. The narratives amplified by the accounts are like those promoted by Chinese Government officials and China state-linked media.”

The government-employed troll army, proficient in multiple languages and reportedly numbering from five hundred thousand to two million, works to post comments on the internet, praising the image and integrity of the CCP and attack its critics with the intention of fabricating facts as well as removing content deemed as unfavorable. They are specifically employed across multiple government propaganda departments, private co-operations, and news outlets and according to the *Washington Post* these government employees have been generating about 448 million comments annually since 2012 (Gary King 2017).

The use of fake profile pictures in disinformation campaigns in popular social media accounts. It is becoming more common as users and platforms become more wary of suspicious accounts. By analyzing the flow of comments, it is evident that the trolls typically avoid arguments or direct discussions, which is indicative of their lack of knowledge and information on the issues being discussed. Instead, they focus on posting CCP's deceptive narratives in multiple languages filled with propaganda or baseless allegations.

By studying the outflow usage of Tibetan language in controversial Facebook posts and comments, it could be assumed that the troll army also employs Tibetans from Tibet or Chinese netizens well versed in the Tibetan language. Many rely on automatic translation software to turn Chinese messages into Tibetan, meaning such messages are riddled with typos, or contain clumsy grammatical structures.

Beijing has exploited search engine results on a range of topics of geopolitical importance to disseminate state-backed media that amplify the Chinese Communist Party's propaganda. Search engines play a key role in Beijing's effort to shape external perceptions, which makes it crucial that platforms—along with authoritative outlets that syndicate state-backed content without clear labeling—do more to address their role in spreading these narratives. A consensus has emerged that fake news is false news spread in an organized and systematic way, with consistent efforts made to make them appear as true, and with a skilled use of new technologies and social networks that distinguished them from Cold-War-era disinformation.

“Wolf warrior diplomacy” has emerged, with officials using Twitter accounts to fly the flag for Communist Party rhetoric. China wants to portray itself as being more liberal and freer.

Pro-China propaganda networks flood YouTube with spam, political messages about Taiwan, US, etc. Ukraine Google's threat analysis group says a China-

linked influence network will spread tens of thousands of spams and political messages on its platforms in 2022 (Pan 2023).

Conclusion

Beijing's stupendous growth and deployment of intensive use of high-tech surveillance and new cyber law has further stifled the voices of the people, enhanced monitoring of Tibetans leading to further infringement of their freedom of expression and enforcing greater self-censorship. High-tech algorithms in Tibet and globally have come with little to no transparency or accountability. Chinese cyber security law dissuades people from freely expressing their thoughts online, thus it further stifles free expression and reduces them as a sitting duck, targeted by a hyper-vigilant algorithm-based preventive policing apparatus.

Surveillance information stream can be realistically used in two ways as targeted micro information to gain leverage on important targets and to gather and employ big data; the use of which is essentially endless. In this sense, there is little to neither transparency nor accountability and imposes a very high-security threat. China has knowingly put at risk the safety and security of dissidents and activist all over the world and strengthened rogue and undemocratic regimes with the export of weaponized big data investment, digital espionage, and surveillance mechanisms. If China aspires to become a trusted global partner in fair and transparent data management, they need to address growing domestic and international distrust over how its companies and government agencies gather use and share and instrumentalize data. Furthermore, profiling of Tibetans including mass DNA collection drive to create a biological database to intensify the monitoring and surveillance of Tibetans is a complete violation of their fundamental human rights. Such development indicates that China is now confident in its technological surveillance.

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