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**Narrating the Sino-Tibetan conflict
a nation building and security dilemma approach**

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Narrating the Sino-Tibetan Conflict:

A Nation-building and Security Dilemma Approach

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ABSTRACT

Focusing on Tibet, this thesis argues that ethnic tensions in general, and ethnic conflicts taking place in China in particular, are caused by the ways in which national/ethnic identity are constructed and protected. Through the lens of identity politics, a theory of security dilemma is applied to explain the strained Sino-Tibetan relationship over the past decades and the historical context of Chinese nation-building is highlighted. This thesis distinguishes two categories of security dilemmas: ‘Low-uncertainty societal dilemma’, where an illusory incompatibility exists within mutual perceptions, referring to a scenario of conflict mitigation; and ‘high-uncertainty societal dilemma’, where one’s own security requires the other’s insecurity, leading to a scenario of conflict outbreak. This thesis discusses two individual variables — state-led modernisation and international intervention — and conceptualises their impacts on security scenarios. Since Tibet was annexed by the People’s Republic of China, it is argued that a sense of uncertainty repeatedly emerged and caused tension and violence as Beijing and ethnic Tibetans adopted multiple approaches to implement identity-reinforcing means, whereby Beijing practiced its nation-building project and the Tibetans acted and reacted with resistance. The ensuing conflicts were the outcome of contextual Sino-Tibetan interactions caused by a pervasive sense of uncertainty, in which both the Chinese authorities and Tibetans perceived behaviours from the opposite side as threats, and thereby employed securitisation, resulting in a greater insecurity for all. Mitigation and ways to escape the security dilemma are arguably workable though this would rely on sincere dialogue and trust-building as well as the creation of positive domestic and international conditions.

KEYWORDS: Uncertainty; Security Dilemma; Societal Dilemma; Nation-building; China; Tibet

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ABBREVIATIONS

CTA	Central Tibetan Administration
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
KMT	Kuomintang
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PCTAR	Preparatory Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
TGIE	Tibet Government in Exile
TAR	Tibet Autonomous Region
UN	United Nations

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Chapter One

Introduction

With a focus on Tibet, this thesis argues that ethnic tensions and conflicts taking place in China are caused by the ways in which national/ethnic identity are constructed and protected. Through this lens of identity politics, a theory of security dilemma is applied to explain the strained Sino-Tibetan relationship over the past decades and a historical context of Chinese nation-building is highlighted. This thesis categorises two types of security dilemma. ‘Low-uncertainty societal dilemma’, where an illusory incompatibility exists within mutual perceptions, refers to a scenario of conflict mitigation; and ‘high-uncertainty societal dilemma’, where one’s own security requires the other’s insecurity, refers to a scenario of conflict outbreak. This thesis also discusses two variables: state-led modernisation and international intervention, and conceptualises their impacts on these scenarios. This thesis argues that while Beijing and Tibetans repeatedly adopted multiple approaches to implement identity and broader security-protection, in which Beijing practiced its nation-building project and Tibetans acted and reacted to protect their society, insecurities remained. It contends that the ensuing conflicts were the outcome of contextual Sino-Tibetan interactions overshadowed by a pervasive sense of uncertainty, in which both the Chinese authorities and Tibetans perceived behaviours from the other side as threats, and thereby employed securitisation, with the consequence of a greater insecurity for all.

Research Puzzle and Main Argument

Since 1949, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) proclaims itself as a united

multi-ethnic state, featuring the pluralistic integration of the Chinese nation.¹ On international occasions, the ruling authority is also keen to highlight its internal constitution, which includes diverse cultures.² While the 55 non-Han state-recognised ethnic minorities only account for 8.35 percent of China's total population,³ China is attempting to dilute its Han-centric national image.

For Beijing, this behaviour is justified by a deliberate managing of minority groups in geo-political terms. As has been pointed out, these 8.35 percent minorities reside in 64.3 percent of the country's total land area, mostly in the territorial periphery of China, which are bordered by 14 countries. This implies that governance of ethnopolitics would not only directly relate to the state's national and international stability, considering some minorities' transnational characteristics, but would also impact the PRC's relations with its neighbours.

Compared to ethnic conflicts cases in other former socialist states e.g., the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and certain African states, inter-ethnic relations in China are comparatively moderate. This does not mean, however, that China is free from ethnic tensions and conflicts. On the contrary, ethnicity is posited as a source of a potential and powerful threat to the state's sovereignty, political unity, and territorial integrity, especially in the post-Cold War era. Managing and preventing social grievances in the minority areas, as well as constructing a cohesive Chinese national identity for these

¹ Fei Xiaotong, "Zhonghua Minzu De Duoyuan Yiti Geju," *Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)* 4 (1989): 1-19.

² Annie-Marie Brady, "'We Are All Part of the Same Family': China's Ethnic Propaganda," *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 41, no. 4 (2012):159-181; Elena Barabantseva, "Who are 'Overseas Chinese Ethnic Minorities'?" China's Search for Transnational Ethnic Unity," *Modern China* 38, no.1 (2012): 78-109.

³ Zhongguo Minzu Tongji Nianjian Bianji Weiyuanhui 2013, *Zhongguo Minzu Tongji Nianjian 2013* (China Statistics Press, 2014), 692.

ethnic minorities, has therefore been prioritised as one of the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP)'s main tasks on its nation-building agenda.

In order to stabilise these minority areas, the CCP has adopted comprehensive strategies and tactics. Initially, the CCP upholds its recognition of multiculturalism and empowers ethnic minorities with autonomous rights. The state practices a system of Regional Ethnic Autonomy, outlining a legal framework for preferential treatment.⁴ Over the past decades, the authorities have established five autonomous regions⁵ and more than 1000 autonomous prefectures and counties in areas that were poorly governed, from China's perspective, in the dynastic and republican periods. Since the Reform and Opening Up, a growing China has put vast fiscal supplements and investments to promote modernisation and urbanisation in the minority regions. In addition, power-sharing, aligned to the United Front (tong zhan 统战),⁶ a concept and a flexible strategy that the CCP uses to deal with non-communists and dissidents including minority groups, is employed. Acknowledging their significant role and influences, the CCP utilises the United Front strategy to co-opt and regulate these traditional social and religious figures. Moreover, the CCP actively recruits minorities as members and cadres. Figures show that the number of minority cadres has grown from 10,000 to 2,900,000 from 1950 to 2005.⁷ Through them, Beijing wishes to transmit and impose the Party's policies more effectively on individuals.

⁴ Zhongyang Minzu Ganbu Xueyuan. *Zhongguo Gongchandang De Minzu Lilun Yu Minzu Zhengce* (Minzu Press, 2013), 130-142.

⁵ Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region was established in 1947, two years prior to the establishment of PRC. Then, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region was established in 1955. Both Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region were established in 1958. Finally, Tibet Autonomous Region was established in 1965.

⁶ Gesang Peijie, ed., *Minzu, Zongjiao, Tongyi Zhanxian Lilun Yu Zhengce* (Xizang Renmin Press, 2008), 308-309.

⁷ Tuanzhongyang Minzu Diqu Gongzuo Lingdao Xiaozu, Zhongyang Minzu Daxue Zhongguo Minzu Lilun Yu Minzu Zhengce Yanjiuyuan and Zhongyang Tuanxiao Gongqingtuan Gongzuo Lilun Yanjiusuo. *Minzu Diqu Tuan Ganbu Duben* (Beijing: China Youth Publishing Group, 2013), 45-46.

Despite these attempts, which have been innovated over time, the policies have not produced the desired result everywhere they were implemented. Rather, certain ethnic groups have been active in resisting Chinese ambitions, of which Tibetans are a prominent example.

Tibetan resistance is not the only case in China of a community standing against the central government's ambitions, but it does represent a significant one in the sense that it demonstrates the most politically active and lasting movement, and one that provokes the most widespread international debates and concerns. Since the PRC officially annexed Tibet in 1951, Tibetans have resorted to a variety of approaches to oppose Beijing. Their movement is described as a never-ending circle,⁸ this decade witnessed the violent 14 March Incident in 2008 and the continued self-immolation by monks, nuns and the young since 2009. Tibetan riots have been analysed repeatedly, and the fast social vicissitude in China over the past decades has complicated the discussion. The dispute over Tibet and Tibetans is broadly termed as 'the Tibetan issue', though Chinese officials deny its existence.

In public, both sides claim their willingness to resolve the problem in a peaceful way, but their positions are recognisably divided. Speaking in a firm tone, Beijing insists on the recognition of its sovereignty over Tibet as a precondition to talks and it has launched multiple policies and campaigns aimed at easing local discontent. From the other side, the Tibetan leader, the Dalai Lama, states his acceptance of China's sovereignty while argues for 'genuine autonomy' as a potential resolution to the

⁸ Ronald D. Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising* (London: Hurst & Company, 1994); Tsering Topgyal. *China and Tibet: The Perils of Insecurity* (London: Hurst & Company, 2016).

Tibetan issue. He states the necessity of preserving Tibetan culture and society, and calls for an adaptation putting all Tibetans under a common administration in the relevant realms. In line with the Dalai Lama, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the previous Tibetan Government in Exile, also supports the ‘middle-way’ approach. In the 1980s and the 2000s, both sides formulated rounds of talks to negotiate their divisions. However, the status quo stalemate remains unresolved.

This thesis investigates the Sino-Tibetan conflict in depth, seeking to explore its cause and development in terms of intractability. It seeks to answer a central question:

How have Sino-Tibetan relations become increasingly tense and confrontational?

Furthermore, a set of sub-questions is proposed to guide the analyses:

1. What has caused this conflict to develop in the way that it has? In terms of Sino-Tibetan negotiations, what caused the Sino-Tibetan dialogues to achieve so little progress? Why is compromise hard to reach from both sides?
2. Has there been a behavioural pattern in their interactions since 1949?
3. Under what conditions can the conflict be mitigated and even resolved?
4. What are the implications in the case of Tibet for ethnic conflict studies?

To answer these questions, this thesis will employ security dilemma theory. In addition, this thesis also draws upon a combination of archival analysis, field survey and anonymous interviews with key actors, some of whom were engaged in the negotiations and conflicts. This is an original work in that security dilemma theory is being applied to examine the Sino-Tibetan relationship. This thesis will be presented in a chronological way.

Applying Security Dilemma Theory to the Sino-Tibetan Conflict

Security dilemma theory is situated within the discipline of international relations (IR). It refers to the concept that while neither of the two actors wishes to harm the other, they adopt defensive behaviour due to a sense of insecurity that ultimately results in conflict. By applying this theory in a conflict study, this thesis frames the nature of the Sino-Tibetan conflict as an effect of a sense of uncertainty, that has structurally emerged and was intensified by both sides through their actions towards each other. A dilemmatic, dynamic, and action-reaction spiral, has shaped and reshaped their interactions over the past decades. To be clear, this thesis contends that the enduring Sino-Tibetan conflict is the outcome of contextual Sino-Tibetan interactions within which both the Chinese authorities and Tibetans perceive intentions and behaviour from each other as threats, and thereby employ securitisation means, resulting in escalated tension and conflict.

This thesis argues that local grievances and ethno-nationalist sentiments in Tibet have their core as identity contestations that have resulted from or are related to the state's aims, strategies, impacts on local conditions, Tibetan reactions, and the resulting spiral. To clarify, this research considers the Chinese government and ethnic Tibetans in terms of the ways in which they defend their self-defined 'societal identities', a concept developed by Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver as well as the Copenhagen School of IR.⁹

⁹ Barry Buzan, *People, State and Fear* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991); Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998); Ole Wæver, et al, eds., *Identity, Migration, and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (London: Pinter, 1993).

It is without doubt that there are multiple players, who may have diverse perspectives within the Chinese government and the Tibetan community, between the elites and the masses, across local and central levels. However, for analytical purposes, this thesis reduces the involved actors on each side into one unitary actor for simplicity and coherency. This is not to say that each side acted as one whole, but for the purpose of this research, their actions are viewed to have been done for either the CCP or the Tibetans as a whole. In fact, in the following chapters, this thesis analyses internal interactions within each side. In addition, the roles of the Dalai Lama and the CTA are politically discernible. Given their influential and unifying role over the Tibetans and given their active agency on international occasions claiming to speak on behalf of Tibetans, this thesis pays attention to them, treating them as Beijing's counterpart in the empirical analyses.¹⁰

Low-uncertainty Societal Dilemmas and High-uncertainty Societal Dilemmas

This thesis categorises two types of security dilemmas: low-uncertainty societal dilemma and high-uncertainty societal dilemma. A low-uncertainty societal dilemma refers to a situation where an illusory incompatibility exists within mutual perceptions, and its outcome is mitigation and co-existence. A high-uncertainty societal dilemma refers to a situation where one's own security requires the other's insecurity, and its outcome is conflict with violent features. My typology is built upon an array of literature of the ethnic security dilemma and in particular the work of Paul Roe.¹¹

¹⁰ Åshild Kolås, "Tibetan Nationalism: The Politics of Religion," *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no.1 (1996): 51-66.; Thomas Kauffman, *The Agendas of Tibetan Refugees: Survival Strategies of a Government-in-Exile in a World of Transnational Organizations* (Berghahn Book, 2015); Tsering Topgyal, "The Insecurity Dilemma and the Sino-Tibetan Conflict" (PhD Diss., The London School of Economics and Political Science, 2011); Reuben Wong, Towards a Common European Policy on China? Economic, Diplomatic and Human Rights Trends since 1985," *Current Politics and Economics of Asia* 17, no. 1 (2008): 155-181.

¹¹ Paul Roe, "Actors' Responsibility in 'Tight', 'Regular' or 'Loose' Security Dilemmas," *Security Dialogue* 32, no. 1 (2001): 103-116; "Which Security Dilemma? Mitigating Ethnic Conflict: The Case of

This thesis argues that the Sino-Tibetan relationship in different periods has faced one or other of these scenarios. Further, these scenarios are affected by two variables: state-led modernisation and international intervention. They are described briefly below.

State-led Modernisation and International Intervention

This thesis makes an innovative contribution to security dilemma theory by considering two independent variables, state-led modernisation and international intervention, to account for the origin of uncertainty and conflictual dynamics.

State-led modernisation refers to the transformation of society through urbanisation, political centralism and profound economic and cultural changes by the state, in line with modernisation theory.¹² Drawing upon current studies that address modernisation's negative dynamics with regard to ethnic conflict,¹³ this thesis examines the effect of radicalisation. It contends that as the state radically carries out modernisation within a short time, societal uncertainty and insecurity are fuelled among minority groups, so that conflict is likely to occur. From this perspective, this thesis argues that the Chinese state is confronting an internal security dilemma in Tibet that is largely of its own making. The Chinese central government claims that it is striving for a united multi-ethnic state, but in practice it is attempting to homogenise its citizens, over-emphasising the unity of the Chinese nation. Also, the government is wary of any booms in regional and ethnic identity. The established Regional Ethnic

Croatia," *Security Studies* 13, no. 4 (2004): 280-313; *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma* (London: Routledge, 2005).

¹² Karl Deutsch, "The Growth of Nations: Some Recurrent Patterns of Political and Social Integration," *World Politics* 5, no.2 (1953): 168-195.

¹³ Saul Newman, "Does Modernization Breed Ethnic Political Conflict?" *World Politics* 43, no. 3 (1991): 451-478; Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (University of California Press, 2000).

Autonomy system is restricted under the CCP's rule and within the framework of state integrity,¹⁴ meaning that rights of territorial autonomy are limited. It is assumed throughout this thesis that the CCP equates a single national identity to a strong and cohesive state.

The Chinese ruling authority aims to shape a new national identity that is superior to all ethnic groups' traditional identities. An unnegotiable position officially addressed in the Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference of 1949,¹⁵ no longer offered secession as a right for ethnic minorities to disengage from modern China. Instead, the CCP has strengthened the integration and communication between the Han- and non-Han- dominated regions through extensive infrastructure programmes. Since Reform and Opening Up, vast fiscal supplements and investments have been allocated to facilitate this process. However, these infrastructure projects and fiscal investments have been seen to diminish local ethnic traits, threatening the cultural survival of minority groups.

International intervention is another variable which arguably affects the Sino-Tibetan security dilemmas. Drawing upon the existing literature on ethnic conflict,¹⁶ this thesis analyses the influence of an external patron of the state or of the domestic minority group on the state-ethnic group relationship. Significantly, it can play a role

¹⁴ Binggao Jin, *Minzu Lilun Tonglun* (Beijing: Central University for Nationalities Publishing House, 2015), 483.

¹⁵ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuan Bian 1949-2005* (CCCPC Party Literature Press, 2005). 3.

¹⁶ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Erin Jenne, "A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog that did not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (2004): 729-754; Enze Han, *Contestation and Adaptation: the Politics of National Identity in China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Harris Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation-building: Making Co-nationals, Refugees, and Minorities* (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

in enhancing the sense of uncertainty and triggering the security dilemma when one actor perceives the rival as obtaining external support. As such, when the West expresses concerns about the Tibetan issue, the Chinese government tends to doubt its intentions, doubling down on its stance and remaining rigid on its policies in Tibet. The outcome, however, often leads to a larger degree of local backlash.

Despite the conflictual impasse, this thesis argues that a window for breaking the vicious cycle of security confrontation does exist. It can be built through redefinition and thereby re-conceptualisation of common identities and sense of security. Nevertheless, the obstacle — the sense of insecurity — is essential. In short, a detailed conceptual framework will be discussed in Chapter Two and more empirical studies will be presented in the following chapters.

While this section has outlined the research questions and main arguments, the next section defines the key terms and is followed by a literature review of the Sino-Tibetan conflict. Subsequently, it is explained how this thesis will contribute to the existing literature, both theoretically and empirically. This is followed by an elaboration of the methods and sources used and concludes with a chapter overview.

Key Terms

Ethnic Group/Ethnicity and Nation

Definitions of ethnic group/ethnicity and nation are diverse among scholars within the studies of nations and nationalism, given that both terms are considered compositions of elements involving shared history, common language and even religion. Some

scholars argue the two terms are equivalent to each other,¹⁷ while others believe the categories are intrinsically distinct.¹⁸ The divisions are related to scholars' positions on ethnic group/ethnicity and/or nation as the representation of primordial existence (Primordialism), the product of modern society (Modernism), and the construction and transformation from the pre-modern ethnies (Ethnosymbolism).¹⁹ In relation to these concepts, discussion about identity and nationalism has become yet more complex.

Even though these concepts are abstract, ethnic group/ethnicity is generally used to emphasise certain cultural connotations,²⁰ whereas the term nation is often synonymously used to link the state and the population in a country, with emphasis on the political aspect.²¹ The use is dependent on contextual factors, but in general, ethnic group often has a narrower definition compared to nation.²²

In Mandarin, both terms are interchangeably translated as Minzu, which in its practice in the PRC is used not only for the majority Han and ethnic minorities (shaoshu minzu 少数民族) but also for the Chinese nation (Zhonghua minzu 中华民族) as a whole. This terminological ambiguity has created a great confusion in English over how to accurately apply these concepts to the Chinese case. The aim of this thesis is not to provide a new definition of nationalism but to follow the general usage previously mentioned. By doing so, this thesis uses the term nation when describing the Chinese

¹⁷ Clifford Geertz, "Primordial and Civic Ties," in *Nationalism: Critical Concepts in Political Science*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (London: Routledge, 2012), 29-34; Walker Connor, "Nation-building or Nation-destroying?" *World Politics* 24, no. 3 (1972): 319-355

¹⁸ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso Books, 2006)

¹⁹ Ashutosh Varshney, "Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict," in *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, ed. Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes (OUP Oxford, 2007), 280-291.

²⁰ Colin Mackerras, *China's Ethnic Minorities and Globalisation* (London: Routledge, 2003), 2-4.

²¹ Alain Dieckhoff and Christophe Jaffrelot, "Introduction," in *Revisiting Nationalism: Theories and Process*, eds. Alain Dieckhoff and Christophe Jaffrelot (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 2-3.

²² James Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (Palgrave, 1998), 2-5.

nation or the whole population of China, following the context of the CCP's aspirations to construct a single national identity. This thesis applies the term ethnic group/ethnicity when referring to the individual state-recognised fifty-six ethnic members that constitute the whole Chinese nation.

Nation-building and PRC's Practice in Tibet

In the current nation-state system, nation-building has been a theoretically and practically significant theme. Prior literature on ethnic conflicts ascertains that most conflicts have been related to the practice of nation-building. Generally, scholars use this term to refer to a procedural development involving various public institutions and political systems in a state as well as related to the working of governance.²³ Its core idea is to aim at uniting and integrating the citizenry with shared values and a loyalty to the central government.²⁴ Rejai and Enloe suggest it as an umbrella concept by noting two main dimensions covered in the nation-building process. One is the 'state of mind', which refers to ideas toward the nation; the other is termed as the 'nationalist movement', which suggests social and political processes fulfilling this set of ideas.²⁵ For Deutsch, nation-building is a development of social mobilisation and social communication in the state-wide space, which completes national construction.²⁶ Moreover, Brubaker highlights the state's reification of political practice. He asserts that the state, through a top-down process, codifies its citizenry

²³ Karl Deutsch, "Introduction," in *Nation Building in Comparative Contexts*, eds. Karl Deutsch, and William Foltz (London: Routledge, 2010), 3; Cynthia Watson, *Nation-building: A Reference Handbook* (California: Santa Barbara, 2004), 9; Kate Jenkins and William Plowden, *Governance and Nationbuilding: The Failure of International Intervention* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2008), 1-9

²⁴ Watson, *Nation-building*, 6; Andreas Wimmer, "Nation-building: A Long-term Perspective and Global Analysis," *European Sociological Review* 31, no. 1 (2014): 2.

²⁵ Mostafa Rejai and Cynthia H. Enloe, "Nation-states and State-nations," *International Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (1969): 142

²⁶ Deutsch, "The Growth of Nations," 169-170; "Social Mobilization and Political Development," *American Political Science Review* 55, no. 3 (1961): 493-514.

into categories, determined by birth and descent, serving not only statistical accounting but also granting them obligatory ascribed status within the state-wide range.²⁷ For this purpose, a nation can be built via ‘an institutionalised form, a practical category, and a contingent event’.²⁸

By highlighting certain dimensions, some scholars divide the concept of nation-building into ‘state-building’ and ‘nation-building’. The former often refers to the ‘hard aspects’ by focusing on the degree of development of public institutions and its relevant apparatus as well as infrastructure. The latter often refers to the ‘soft aspect’ by focusing on the production and re-production of a collective identity within a state population. The existing literature suggests that both ‘state-building’ and ‘nation-building’ projects are able to be completed by domestic and international actors. Under various conditions, these actors would need to overcome obstacles such as ethnic or religious differences that may collide due to differing sources of loyalty.²⁹

On the other side, a large group of scholars insists on the adoption of a hybrid concept, justifying that by doing this, it can capture a comprehensive picture of nation-building across institutions and ideas. To that end, Nicolas Lemay-Hebert makes a clear statement, “It is impossible to conceive of state-building as a process separate from nation-building.”³⁰ There is concrete evidence to support such a standpoint. It is noted

²⁷ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 18.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 16.

²⁹ Charles Call, “Ending Wars, Building State, Building States,” in *Building States to Build Peace*, eds. Charles Call and Vanessa Wyeth (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008), 5; Nicolas Lemay-Hébert, “State-building without Nation-building? Legitimacy, State Failure and the Limits of the Institutional Approach,” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 3, no. 1 (2009): 23-25; Redie Bereketeab, “Introduction: Challenges of State Building, State Reconstruction and National Identity Reconfiguration,” in *State Building and National Identity Reconstruction in the Horn of Africa*, ed. Redie Bereketeab (Springer International Publishing, 2017), 6-11; Francis Fukuyama, *State Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st century* (Cornell University Press, 2004).

³⁰ Lemay-Hebert, “Statebuilding without Nation-building?,” 21.

that many scholars, policy makers and media reports utilise these terms interchangeably in their daily practice, particularly in the US.³¹ In this regard, a hybrid way of understanding seems to be more useful.

For these aforementioned theoretical and practical reasons, this thesis adopts a wider notion of nation-building. That is to say, in its analyses, this thesis uses this term to refer to the Chinese comprehensive statecraft of integrating Tibet into the PRC and to the Chinese pursuit of building Tibetan loyalty to the Chinese nation.

The CCP's goal of building a unitary and consolidated Chinese nation composed of several ethnic groups raises the question as to which approach may be the most appropriate to achieve this. A key issue is how to reconcile a civic national identity based on inclusive PRC citizenship with exclusive ethnic identities based on a variety of common characteristics such as culture, religion, language etc. Differing from the Soviet Union, the PRC did not adopt federalism but instead chose a system of Regional Ethnic Autonomy under the unitary state. Since 1949, a rhetorical notion of National Unity and Ethnic Consolidation has been asserted and has guided China's policies. In this context, Beijing's approach to nation-building is perceived by some minority groups as a threat to their ethnic identity. In some respects, the growth of a coercive capacity of the state, while proving the process of nation-building, triggered a deeper sense of insecurity amongst minority groups such as that experienced in Tibet. Moreover, the situation became more complicated given the existence of the Dalai Lama and his utmost spiritual and political influence on Tibetans. The CTA is looked

³¹ Call, "Ending Wars, Building State, Building States"; James Dobbins, "America's Role in Nation-building: From Germany to Iraq," *Survival* 45, no.4 (2003): 87-110; Fukuyama, *State Building*, 99-104; Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: the United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York: Viking, 2008).

upon by some Tibetans as a legitimate alternative government to Beijing with regard to political well-being and Tibetan historical memory.³² As a special case, the CTA, to some extent, functions by constructing Tibetan ‘ethno-national identity’ on its own. This will add more complex aspects to consider when analysing China’s nation-building in Tibet.

Tibet

The debate over the geographical concept of Tibet has a long history, between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama’s government, as well as scholars including Tibetologists. This is a vital consideration, as the differences in the range and scope of Tibet not only engage sensitive political debates, but also impact our academic examination of China’s policy toward ‘Tibet’.

Beijing firmly insists that the term Tibet only refers to the area it calls the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). Its geographic range almost equals the area that was under the rule of the Dalai Lama’s government before 1949. Beijing argues that during the Qing dynasty and the Republican period, the Tibetan-inhabited area outside of the rule of Lhasa had been incorporated into different administrative units, as parts of today’s Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, where the government has currently established autonomous prefectures and counties. As such, there is no reason for Tibet to lay claim to all Tibetan areas.

On the other side, Dharamsala and many Tibetans disagree with this view. Claiming a geographically continuous feature of ethnicity, they suggest that the concept of Tibet

³² Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*, 128-129; Fiona McConnell, “De facto, Displaced, Tacit: The Sovereign Articulations of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile,” *Political Geography* 28, no. 6 (2009): 346.

should include these aforementioned areas as a whole. They assert that traditionally the Tibetan areas in Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces are altogether termed as Eastern Tibet (which can be divided into Kham and Amdo), versus Central Tibet or Utsang, justifying a position that Tibet should be unified so as to include the Tibetan-inhabited parts of the aforementioned Chinese provinces.

Whereas both sides do not share a coherent definition, scholars must adopt a certain standpoint for analytical purposes. For a difference between the TAR and all Tibetan-inhabited regions see Map 1-1.



Map 1-1 China (Administration and Ethnolinguistic Groups)

Source: The University of Texas at Austin

This thesis draws upon Goldstein's classification between 'geographic Tibet' and 'political Tibet'.³³ By doing so, Tibet in this thesis is confined to the TAR unless specifically stated otherwise. Thus, China's Tibet policy refers to the policy mainly towards the TAR. In terms of the word "Tibetans", this thesis adopts a broader usage that includes those inside and outside the TAR and those who are in diaspora.

Using the terms in this way provides two analytical advantages. Firstly, it corresponds with China's commitments in real politics and policy objectives. Secondly, it helps readers accurately understand the historical context within which the perceptions of threat have been formed regarding the Sino-Tibetan relationship at different times.

Literature Review

Existing studies on the Sino-Tibetan conflict draw largely upon disciplines such as history, anthropology, and Tibetology. These authors have focused on topics related to a general or particular period of history,³⁴ personal autobiography of political and religious figures,³⁵ China's policy revolution and Chinese human rights issues,³⁶ as

³³ Melvyn Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon: China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), xi-xiii.

³⁴ Melvyn Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); *The Snow Lion and the Dragon; A History of Modern Tibet: The Calm before the Storm, 1951-1955* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); *A History of Modern Tibet: The Storm Clouds Descend: 1955-1957* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Alex Raymond, "The Origins of the 17-Point Agreement of 23 May 1951 between the Chinese Central Government and the Tibetan 'Local Government,'" *The China Quarterly* May (2019): 1-11; Warren Smith, *China's Tibet?: Autonomy or Assimilation* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008); Tom Grunfeld, *The Making of Modern Tibet* (London: Routledge, 1996); Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet Since 1947* (Columbia University Press, 1999).

³⁵ Melvyn Goldstein and Sherap Dawei, *A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Political Life and Times of Bapa Phuntso Wangye* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Gyalo Thondup and Anne F. Thurston, *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong: The Untold Story of My Struggle for Tibet* (London: Rider, 2015).

³⁶ Andrew Fischer, *State Growth and Social Exclusion in Tibet: Challenges of Recent Economic Growth* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2005); Ben Hillman, "Ethnic Tourism and Ethnic Politics in Tibetan China," *Harvard Asia Pacific Review* 10, no. 1 (2009): 3-6; Dawa Norbu, *China's Tibet Policy* (London: Routledge, 2001).

well as specific incidents of unrest.³⁷ In general, this great body of literature has advanced our understanding through their multiple approaches and concerns, and they are provided as valuable secondary literature for this thesis. In particular, Goldstein's three volumes of *A History of Modern Tibet* and *The Snow Lion and the Dragon: China, Tibet and the Dalai Lama* and Shakya's *The Dragon in the Land of Snows* have become classic reference books, owing to their richness of transnational and multi-lingual materials. However, some gaps in the existing studies have been identified.

Firstly, the Chinese language sources are relatively under-utilised, especially in non-Chinese literature. This outcome can be explained due to the ongoing political sensitivity of the Tibetan issue in China and the authoritarian characteristics of the Communist regime, making access to relevant materials difficult. The archives covering post-1949 Tibet are hard to access for both the public and academics. In addition, foreign scholars are prevented from receiving the necessary visas to conduct fieldwork in the TAR. Local Chinese scholars may face less restrictions; however, censorship poses a severe challenge. Perhaps more ironically, these difficulties have biased the academic literature to primarily focus on the Tibetan perspective of the conflict and thus neglect the Chinese perspective. In this sense, this thesis aims to provide more Chinese aspects to the conflict by including collected Chinese sources.

Secondly, with few notable exceptions, the existing literature often produced news-comment-like analysis or chronological records. Conflict theory is seldom

³⁷ Ben Hillman, "Money Can't Buy Tibetans' Love," *Far Eastern Economic Review* 171, no. 3 (2008): 8-12; Robert Barnett, eds. *Resistance and Reform in Tibet* (London: Hurst & Company, 1994); Robert Barnett, "The Tibet Protests of Spring 2008: Conflict between the Nation and the State," *China Perspectives* (March 2009): 6-23; Schwartz, *Circle of Protest*.

applied to the Tibetan issue and they do not reflect on conflict theory in the case of Tibet. The existing literature has accumulated informative discussions through collected data, but it often lacks an explanatory mechanism or framework. While these works bring together a great deal of material, an explanation about the causes behind actions, and the factors affecting the Sino-Tibetan conflict are rarely provided. In other words, the existing literature is inadequate in providing a clear framework for the researchers following behind them. As such, studies of the Tibetan issue are limited in the social sciences and the case of Tibet is under-examined in comparative studies with ethnic conflicts cases in other regions. This thesis aims to fill this gap.

Despite these gaps, previous approaches and theories in Political Science and IR have brought insightful explanations, models and frameworks that this thesis will draw from. Suisheng Zhao,³⁸ Enze Han,³⁹ and Tsering Topgyal⁴⁰ are regarded as significant authors who have contributed their own theories to explain the Sino-Tibetan conflict. In the work of Zhao and Han, Tibet is taken as one component within their broader examination of all Chinese cases and they provide different explanations at domestic and international levels respectively. Conversely, Topgyal's research focuses on Tibet. Their research is outlined below.

Zhao traces the interplay among state nationalism, liberalism and ethnonationalism from the late Qing to the early 2000s, and makes a genealogical-like argument about the formulation of the modern Chinese nation-state. In his view, the core of the

³⁸ Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-state by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism* (Stanford University Press, 2004).

³⁹ Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*.

⁴⁰ Tsering Topgyal, "The Insecurity Dilemma and the Sino-Tibetan Conflict"; "Identity Insecurity and the Tibetan Resistance against China," *Pacific Affairs* 86, no. 3 (2013): 515-538; *China and Tibet: The Perils of Insecurity* (London: Hurst & Company, 2016)

Tibetan issue is the CCP's cultural suppression of ethnic Tibetans as a result of its statist position. The ruling authorities are arguably aiming to prevent any emergence or development of a strong ethnic identity among minorities, which is believed to impede the Chinese nation-building project. Zhao draws a clear line in his account of how Chinese nationalist ideology has directly influenced the way the central government has treated the Chinese periphery; he analyses the Sino-Tibetan conflict through a lens of central-local relationship.⁴¹ However, his interpretation over-simplifies the Tibetan issue as he does not provide any reason behind the CCP's perception of Tibetan identity as a threat, nor does he provide further analysis about the eruptions of Tibetan disturbances and rebellions at different times. Regional and international factors are dismissed in his discussion.

From another side, Han's work can supplement Zhao's failure to address the international dimension. His main argument is about the international influence on domestic ethnic identity contestation. In his view, the existence of external aid provision or a link to an outside authority or government that is perceived to be stronger than the home state by the domestic ethnic minority can formulate an alternative identity for the ethnic minority in question. Han argues that, given the existence of Dharamsala and the provision of external assistance by the American government, a political identity contestation has occurred for Tibetans. Tibetans in China believe that there is an alternative option for them other than being 'Chinese'.⁴² Han's explanation captures the significance of international dynamics and stands out in its functioning impact on domestic politics. Within his framework, the agency of Tibet, has been emphasised to some extent by being able to balance its relationship

⁴¹ Zhao, *A Nation-state by Construction*, 187-208.

⁴² Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*, 7-16; 127-145.

between an external actor and the home state. Nevertheless, in his analysis, the role of the Chinese state is limited to that of a passive actor with the international factor considered to be the most decisive aspect. As such, his explanation omits the role of intra-state-ethnic politics. Also, it deserves to be noted that to a certain extent, the existing literature mainly takes Tibet as an object that is influenced by China's foreign relations, geopolitics and politics among great powers.⁴³ As a consequence, Tibet's agency is insufficiently examined. Han also notes this point in his study.⁴⁴

Differing from Zhao and Han who represent arguments focusing on the domestic and international aspects, Topgyal analyses the Tibetan conflict through the framework of insecurity dilemma theory.⁴⁵ As an explanatory model, the theory was initially developed to consider 'Third World' countries and it shares many ideas with the theory of security dilemma which is employed in this thesis. Topgyal has produced a group of articles and a book in recent years and systematically developed his explanatory framework to apply it to individual Tibetan conflicts and events. His studies not only set up valuable foundations both at the theoretical and methodological levels for this thesis, but also serve as part of the literature to which this thesis aims to respond.

Topgyal's works create significant value in many respects. Firstly, he brings the concept of insecurity dilemma and thereby security dilemma to the Sino-Tibetan

⁴³ Simon Chang, "A 'Realist' Hypocrisy? Scripting Sovereignty in Sino-Tibetan Relations and the Changing Posture of Britain and the United States," *Asian Ethnicity* 12, no.3 (2011): 323-335; Dawa Norbu, "Tibet in Sino-Indian Relations: The Centrality of Marginality," *Asian Survey* 37, no. 11 (1997): 1078-1095; Barry Sautman, "The Tibet Issue in Post-summit Sino-American Relations," *Pacific Affairs* 72, no. 1 (1999): 7-21.; Guangqiu Xu, "The United States and the Tibet Issue," *Asian Survey* 37, no. 11 (1997): 1062-1077.

⁴⁴ Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*, 145.

⁴⁵ Topgyal, "Identity Insecurity and the Tibetan Resistance against China"; *China and Tibet*.

conflict. Topgyal argues that security, rather than nationalism, serves as a fundamental factor when explaining the PRC's repeated repressions of Tibetans and the Tibetan resistance. Though he admits that security and nationalism are intertwined, he presumes China to be an insecure and weak state and argues that China has implemented this nation-building project (which he refers to as state-building) in order to reverse such insecurity. This, he states, was provoked by Tibetan resentments caused by perceived threats from the Chinese state to their ethnic identity. Given that China has not been successful in this part of its nation-building project, Topgyal believes that an action-counter cycle of conflicts will take place within Sino-Tibetan interactions.⁴⁶

In addition, Topgyal argues that Tibetan diaspora adds a further dimension of insecurity within both domestic and international politics. He states that transnational ethnic groups can still be an adversary to the state within a situation of insecurity. His argument is inspired by the literature of anti-terrorism, where traditionally, insecurity theory is applied to discuss the state-ethnic relationship without discussing in detail the features of the minority group. In this regard, Topgyal makes a theoretical contribution by expanding the space of international influence on the insecurity dilemma. Nevertheless, many shortcomings can be identified in his work.⁴⁷

Firstly, Topgyal's work is challenged in terms of the analysis of conflict development. While he demonstrates the logic of insecurity dilemma, he does not elaborate on which factor in particular results in the dilemma, or explain in which way it does that. By outlining the CCP's Tibet- and Tibetan policies and the subsequent Tibetan

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

reactions in a chronological sequence, he describes the situation within the framework of ‘insecurity dilemma’ but fails to discuss the causes further.⁴⁸

Secondly, while discussing the international dynamics of the situation within his thesis, Topgyal insufficiently exemplifies the triadic relationship between the state, the domestic ethnic groups and external international actors. The possible impact of external intervention, in his analysis, seems to only enhance the state’s determination to suppress the Tibetan minority without providing analysis. This has left potential gaps both at the theoretical level and empirical level that require further discussion.⁴⁹

Thirdly, Topgyal adopts an ethno-symbolist standpoint over societal, and/or ethnic/national identity, and uses this standpoint to explain why the Sino-Tibetan conflicts include violent encounters.⁵⁰ The ethno-symbolist position was developed by scholars including Smith and Armstrong,⁵¹ and is regarded as the adoption of a middle-way between the dichotomous primordialism and modernism/constructivism division in the study of nations and nationalism. In other words, ethno-symbolists recognise the modernity-related characteristics of nations and their constructivist aspects, but also place great emphasis on the nations’ continuity from their pre-modern ethnies. However, by taking this standpoint, Topgyal deviates from the original assumption of insecurity dilemma theory, which adopts a constructivist position.

As Barry Buzan and Ole Waever state, within insecurity dilemma theory, identities are viewed as socially constructed, but once constructed, they can be regarded as

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Topgyal, “Identity Insecurity and the Tibetan Resistance against China,” 533.

⁵¹ John Armstrong, *Nations Before Nationalism* (University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Anthony Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism* (London: Routledge, 2003).

temporarily fixed (for a certain period until they are reconstructed again).⁵² Based on this, the Copenhagen School takes identity as an operational object of analysis. Following the ethno-symbolist position and logic, Topgyal focuses more on the fixed dimensions of identity and less on the fluid aspects. This results in a failure to identify signs of an alleviation of conflict within Sino-Tibetan interactions, which consequently denies the possibility of a positive resolution. Overall, he over-emphasises conflictual aspects and neglects the characteristics that concern peace. By further examining certain historical events, this thesis argues that a way to escape conflict did exist and still exists.

The final question is about Topgyal's application of insecurity dilemma theory without its mother theory 'security dilemma', which shows a wider range of applications for ethnic conflict cases. This thesis argues that Topgyal's employment of insecurity dilemma theory, that asserts China is a weak state, deserves reconsideration.

Initially, China does not belong to the group of 'Third World' states that insecurity dilemma theory aims to examine. In addition, following Mohammed Ayoob, Topgyal measures 'weakness of state' in terms of socio-political cohesion. However, this thesis agrees with the viewpoint of Job and Sørensen, who argue that, in addition to social cohesion, a 'weak' state should also be measured by its economy, the efficiency of state institutions, and popular legitimacy.⁵³ Following this definition, China may not be considered a 'weak state' given obvious features. While still being categorised as a developing state, China's growth regarding its politico-economic power and state

⁵² Buzan and Wæver, "Slippery? Contradictory? Sociologically Untenable? The Copenhagen School Replies," 242-244.

⁵³ Brian Job, ed., *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Pub, 1992), 17-18; Georg Sørensen, "After the Security Dilemma: The Challenges of Insecurity in Weak States and the Dilemma of Liberal Values," *Security Dialogue* 38, no. 3 (2007), 363-364.

capacity has been widely recognised.⁵⁴

This thesis does not intend to engage in the debate whether or not China is a weak state. Rather, it only suggests that Topgyal's application of insecurity dilemma theory is inadequate. To mitigate some of the deficiencies of the insecurity dilemma theory, this thesis argues that employing the security dilemma theory is more useful, as it allows a wider range of application without being limited to the 'weak states'.⁵⁵

Overall, previous literature has provided valuable foundations from multiple aspects and some scholars are forging powerful explanatory concepts. Multiple theories and factors have been introduced, but one that can balance both theory and empirical utility is still relatively lacking. To improve the current state of studies, this thesis analyses the Sino-Tibetan conflict using security dilemma theory, but it will also make further innovations. In chapter two, this thesis will categorise two mechanisms of security dilemma as (1) low-uncertainty societal dilemma and (2) high-uncertainty dilemma based on Paul Roe's security dilemma typologies.⁵⁶ In addition, I will further discuss state-led modernisation and international intervention as independent variables to security dilemma scenarios.

Expected Research Contributions

This thesis contributes to the literature on the Tibetan issue in three ways. Firstly, it

⁵⁴ John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. & Norton Company, 2014); David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security* 29, no. 3 (2005): 64-99.

⁵⁵ Mikhaik A. Alexseev, *Immigration Phobia and the Security Dilemma: Russia, Europe, and the United States* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁵⁶ Roe, "Actors' Responsibility in 'Tight', 'Regular' or 'Loose' Security Dilemmas"; *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*.

uses a new conceptual framework to examine the theme, providing an innovative standpoint. Secondly, it brings more first- and secondary Chinese language literature into discussion thereby aiming to provide a more balanced Chinese perspective. Thirdly, by referring to under-utilised Chinese archives, it contributes an analysis of this history in-depth from 1949 onwards. These three features allow this thesis to provide new insights.

This thesis contributes a new perspective which scrutinises the politics of the Tibetan issue through the lens of security dilemma theory. This thesis believes that the concept of security dilemma, as a meso-theory explanation that grasps the structural and agential dynamics within the Sino-Tibetan conflict, will be of great help for current and future studies. Tang pointed out that an important advantage of this theory is its inclusiveness and integrity.⁵⁷ As such, it enables a comprehensive understanding of the Chinese nation-building process in the minority region of Tibet and the protracted and evolving Sino-Tibetan conflict in the contemporary era within which the state's policy-implementations and Tibetan responses as well as external interventions can be analysed. Further, this thesis adds innovation to security dilemma theory by distinguishing types of low-uncertainty and high-uncertainty societal dilemma and by examining two variables to examine the Tibetan case. These concepts help identify the interactional scenarios. By examining the relationship between the Chinese state's practice of modernisation on Tibetans and the existence of international intervention, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of uncertainty formation and the dynamics within Sino-Tibetan interactions with regard to peace and conflict.

⁵⁷ Shiping Tang, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict: toward a Dynamic and Integrative Theory of Ethnic Conflict," *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 2 (2011): 511-536; "The Onset of Ethnic War: A General Theory," *Sociological Theory* 33, no. 3 (2015): 256-279.

Going further, this thesis supplements current studies, from which Chinese language first-hand and secondary materials are largely absent. The literature published in Hong Kong and Taiwan is also brought into the discussions. The political sensitivity of the Tibet issue within China creates restrictions for both international and Chinese investigators. Hillman is explicit in his edited volume that censorship and political treatment of most forms of Tibetan protests as separatist and hostile behaviour towards China have to a large degree silenced many Chinese scholars, and made it difficult to find interviewees willing to share their experiences. In addition, international researchers are often impeded, by administrative means, from acquiring access to the TAR.⁵⁸ Additionally, many official documents and reports (as well as small amount of secondary literature by Chinese scholars) are not accessible to researchers. Despite these restrictions, accessing these materials is necessary and arguably beneficial when discussing the Tibetan issue. This thesis has made some progress in that direction, with more details within the methodology and research materials section.

Finally, this thesis contributes to empirical studies by providing another way of historical interpretation. Past reviews of the post-1949 history often demonstrate that conflict was always inevitable between the Beijing regime and ethnic Tibetans. However, this thesis's finding opposes such a claim. Contrary to the argument that the nature of Sino-Tibetan conflict is primordial antagonism and is a zero-sum game, several cases examined within the empirical chapters demonstrate that the Sino-Tibetan relationship has also been featured as conflict mitigation and co-existence. In this way, this thesis highlights the resulting dynamics and conditions.

⁵⁸ Ben Hillman and Gray Tuttle, eds. *Ethnic Conflict and Protest in Tibet and Xinjiang: Unrest in China's West* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 8.

Primary Materials

While this thesis is a piece of political research, history plays a pivotal role and it uses a variety of primary historical materials collected in various archives. Examining declassified historical archives, including government documents, has enabled the capture of the evolution of the Tibetan issue and the relevant policy-making process. This thesis focuses on the post-1949 era, concentrating on the following primary sources: the official records of the PRC's Tibet policy; the Beijing-Tibet/Dharamsala interactions (e.g. records of planned meetings and negotiations); and informal/formal records of Beijing and Tibet/Dharamsala's individual interactions with key foreign governments, including Great Britain, the United States, India, and Taiwan. Sources for these documents, in both English and Chinese, are outlined fully below.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) documents, National Archives, United Kingdom. The United Kingdom was the main international power to have extensive relations with Tibet before 1949. While India, after independence, has increased its influence and the US provided significant assistance in Tibet during the Cold War and post-Cold War periods, the UK is still arguably influential and is often consulted by Western countries on the Tibetan issue. The accessible FCO documents, having been declassified up to 1990 regarding the Tibetan issue, contain valuable discussions and debates inside the British government. Events relating to the PRC's military and administrative commitments towards Tibet, local situations at different times and the Dalai Lama's overseas visits are recorded. The documents also provide information about the UK's interactions with other countries such as India, the US, and China with regard to the Tibetan issue.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan documents, Archives of Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan. The documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan have been declassified up to 1975 and contain numerous and valuable records made by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission, a unit that was responsible for Tibetan affairs. Given its historical background and constitutional framework, the Republic of China's (ROC) government based in Taiwan is another country that claims to have sovereignty over Tibet. As a result, Taiwan has been active in conducting intelligence about the PRC's Tibet policy and local situation in Tibet as well as the activities of Tibetan diaspora and significant figures, such as the Dalai Lama and Gyalo Thondup abroad.

Internal Reference, Universities Service Centre for Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong. The editorial journal *Internal Reference* is written by members of the Xinhua News Agency for policy-making purposes of the CCP. The journal is not openly available in China but the Universities Service Centre for Chinese Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong has some accessible collections between the years 1950 to 1964. As a primary source, this body of material, can provide significant insights as they reflect the Chinese state perspective. The content of each journal is primarily news and discussions from local and international societies. The documents provide a headline for each item including communist opinions and setting the tone for discussions of the topic. Examining these journals provides insight into the minds of the CCP leadership during this time.

With the help of these archives, this thesis has gained a greater understanding of important events surrounding the Sino-Tibetan conflict. Each of the accessed

documents has also been used to triangulate information provided by other sources, providing a more comprehensive picture. This thesis would translate document titles. Given that information for the more recent decades remains classified, data has been collected through other approaches and sources.

As mentioned, due to the current regulations, most archives regarding modern Tibet after 1949 are not available in the PRC. Alternatively, I utilise volumes and collections of official documents published by the China Tibetology Press⁵⁹ and the Chinese Communist Party History Press to gain more information about the Chinese perspective. These are the authoritative units that are responsible for editing relevant official documents in China. Also, publications by the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) of the Central Tibetan Administration in India are also used in this thesis.

Anonymous interviews were conducted with Chinese scholars and officials who were/or are engaged in the Tibetan affairs, mainly between September 2015 and January 2016 in Beijing and Lhasa. Specifically, Chinese Communist officials were approached via email and social media tool, such as WeChat. I also visited institutes including the China Tibetology Research Center, Renmin University of China, Minzu University of China and the University of Tibet. In addition, I contacted some former Tibetan officials of the Central Tibetan Administration during the research period. Given their personal experiences, the Chinese and Tibetan interviewees provided nuanced and supplementary aspects about the policy-making process and the Beijing-Dharamsala relationship.

⁵⁹ The China Tibetology Press was established in 1986 under the administration of the China Tibetology Research Center, which plays a role as a national think specialising Tibetan research and policy-suggestions.

Finally, this thesis presents a collection of major CCP leadership statements and records and autobiographies of the Tibetan figures that are referred to this dissertation. All the materials listed below, provide this thesis with important information relating to political events, inter- and intra-governmental discussions and policies reflecting the contextual situations back to then. These include:

Collections of governmental statements and governmental records. Certain important collections are used. They are Xizang Zongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian 西藏工作文献选编(*Collection of CCP Works in Tibet*);⁶⁰ Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Lishi Dashiji 1949-2005 中国共产党西藏历史大事记 1949-2005(*Chronology of the CCP in Tibet*);⁶¹ Xizang Wenti Dashiji 1959-1999 西藏问题大事记 1959-1999 (*Chronology of the Tibetan Issue*)⁶² Minzu Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian 民族工作文献选编 2003-2009 (*Collection of Ethnic Works*).⁶³

Collections of speeches or talks by CCP political leaders. The significant collections include *Mao Zedong Xizang Gongzuo Wenxuan* 毛泽东西藏工作文选(Selected Writing of Mao Zedong on Tibet);⁶⁴ *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan* 邓小平文选(Selected Writing of Deng Xiaoping);⁶⁵ *Jiang Zemin Wenxuan* 江泽民文选(Selected Writing of

⁶⁰ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiq Weiuyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*.

⁶¹ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiq Weiuyuanhui Dangshi Yanjiushi, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Lishi Dashiji* (Beijing: CCP Party, 2005).

⁶² Sichuan Sheng Shehui Fazhan Yanjiu Zhongxin Zangxue Yanjiusuo, *Xizang Wenti Dashiji 1959-1999* (Sichuan Sheng Shehui Fazhan Yanjiu Zhongxin Zangxue Yanjiusuo, 2000).

⁶³ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Guojia Minzu Shiwu Weiuyuanhui, *Minzu Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian 2003-2009* (CCCPC Party Literature Press, 2010).

⁶⁴ Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiq Weiuyuanhui, *Mao Zedong Xizang Gongzuo Wenxuan* (China Tibetology Press, 2001).

⁶⁵ Xiaoping Deng, *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan Di Er Juan* (Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 1993); *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan Di San Juan* (Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 1993).

Jiang Zemin).⁶⁶

Autobiographies. These works include the Dalai Lama's *Freedom in Exile: the Autobiography of the Dalai Lama*;⁶⁷ the autobiography of Gyalo Thondup, the brother of the Dalai Lama: *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong: The Untold Story of My Struggle for Tibet*;⁶⁸ the autobiography of Phuntsok Wangyal, a founder of the Tibetan Communist Party: *A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Political Life and Times of Bapa Phüntso Wangye*.⁶⁹

Chapters Arrangement

Chapter	Title
Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Conceptual Framework: Security Dilemma Theory
Chapter 3	Societal Dilemmas: Coexistence and Conflict in Sino-Tibetan Relations, 1950s
Chapter 4	Socialist Transformation and Ethnic Conflict in Tibet, 1960s-1970s
Chapter 5	Revivification of Societal Dilemmas: Sino-Tibetan Dialogues, Tensions, and Perils, 1980s-1990s
Chapter 6	Integration of Tibet and Sino-Tibetan Societal Conflict, 2000-2012
Chapter 7	Conclusion

⁶⁶ Zemin Jiang, *Jiang Zemin Wenxuan* (Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2006).

⁶⁷ Dalai Lama, *Freedom in Exile: The Autobiography of the Dalai Lama* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991).

⁶⁸ Thurston and Thondup, *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*.

⁶⁹ Goldstein and Sherap, *A Tibetan Revolutionary*.

This thesis is composed of seven chapters, including this introduction. Chapter one outlines the content of this study, introducing the core questions, research background, review of gaps in current literature, and clarification of the primary sources.

Chapter two is devoted to clarifying security dilemma theory as the conceptual framework of this thesis. It commences with a discussion about core notions and then it discusses how this theory has been utilised to analyse ethnic conflicts. The concept of societal security and its integration in security dilemma theory is then discussed. Following this, Paul Roe's classification of 'tight societal dilemma', 'regular societal dilemma' and 'loose societal dilemma' are reviewed., Drawing upon them, this thesis introduces concepts of low-uncertainty societal dilemma and high-uncertainty societal dilemma, as well as the concept of a real security threat in order to explain conflict not caused by the security dilemma. It further discusses two independent variables — state-led modernisation and international intervention — to the developed societal dilemmas.

From chapter three to six, the evolution of the Tibetan issue since 1949 is discussed and subjected to empirical analysis. These chapters analyse the creation, implementation, and adaptation of China's Tibet policies in different periods; the Tibetan responses will be analysed as well. These individual chapters will also review the interactions and negotiations between Beijing and the regime of Tibet and then Dharamsala, focusing chronologically on the Dalai Lama and his government. Distinct security dilemma scenarios are applied to narrate the Sino-Tibetan interactions at various times.

Chapter three examines the first decade of territorial and administrative incorporation

of Tibet into the PRC, focusing on the period of ‘peaceful liberation’. It argues that the Sino-Tibetan relationship in this period manifests both scenarios of a low-uncertainty societal dilemma and a high-certainty societal dilemma. This chapter analyses the various means used by the CCP to justify and consolidate China’s sovereignty over Tibet, which had resisted Chinese central authority and pursued independence from China since 1912. It contends that by establishing a primary state apparatus in Tibet, the CCP was attempting to construct a Chinese national identity. However, the Party’s efforts were not successful, as seen by the fact that the mutual coexistence of both regimes did not move forward to an expected integration, but instead collapsed, leading to the Lhasa revolt in 1959. This chapter will discuss the dynamics to this transition in detail.

In chapter four, security dilemma theory will be applied to examine the PRC’s socialist crusades in Tibet between 1959 and 1979. This chapter scrutinises the CCP Party-state’s fierce penetration down to Tibetan society and continued mobilisation of Tibetans and argues that through these campaigns, Tibet, was transformed into a socialist system similar to other regions of China. The scenario of a high-uncertainty societal dilemma is first identified, then the real security threat during the Cultural Revolution, and finally the low-uncertainty societal dilemma during the Beijing-Dharamsala rapprochement from the mid-1970s. This chapter also finds that a positive international environment for Beijing would benefit its Tibet policies. Following the end of the Cultural Revolution and the launch of Reform and Opening Up, the Chinese government publicly contacted the exiled Tibetan government.

Chapter five contends that the Sino-Tibetan relationship experienced a U-turn at the end of the Cold War, ending up in a scenario of high-uncertainty societal dilemma.

This chapter examines China's series of institution-building and inducement policies for Tibetans, and modernisation projects to promote economic development instructed by the Tibet Work Forums launched in the early 1980s. It also examines the Tibetan delegations' visits to China and the negotiations between Beijing and Dharamsala, arguing that there was a positive atmosphere regarding resolution of the conflict. However, factors including the Tibetan backlash toward China's policies, a standoff within negotiations, and the internationalisation of the Tibetan issue impeded the Chinese state-Tibetan relationship. The outbreaks of Tibetan demonstrations in the late 1980s provoked tighter controls from Beijing. Turning to the 1990s, the dual strategy known as "Grasping with Both Hands," was adopted by Beijing, referring to the promotion of economic development and modernisation at the same time as tight control over Tibetan society.

In chapter six, this thesis argues that a high-uncertainty societal dilemma still dominates the post-2000 era of Sino-Tibetan relations. This chapter analyses the continuation and ongoing employment of Grasping with Both Hands, by which the Chinese government continued its way of forcing the economic integration of Tibet into the whole state while reinforcing political suppression at the same time, against the background of China's growth in its growing comprehensive capacity. As a result, the authorities achieved wider and deeper integration of Tibet into the politico-economic-social networks of the state. However, the process provoked a high sense of uncertainty amidst the local Tibetans. In addition, the constant external concerns over Tibet also raised Beijing's wariness and led it to insist on its policies. Eventually, the high degree of sense of uncertainty gave birth to Tibetan disturbances, such as the 14 March incident of 2008 and the self-immolations after 2009.

In the conclusion, this thesis reviews the previous chapters and findings. This chapter will return to and answer the core question: *How have Sino-Tibetan relations become increasingly tense and confrontational?* and other sub-questions. It presents the implications of the dynamic evolution of the Tibetan issue within the practice of the PRC's national construction since 1949. It also discusses proposed solutions to the Tibetan issue and the Sino-Tibetan security dilemma. It concludes by presenting challenges to this thesis and future research possibilities.

Chapter Two

Conceptual Framework: Security Dilemma Theory

Introduction

This chapter introduces the conceptual framework. In Chapter One, the central research question was outlined: *How have Sino-Tibetan relations become increasingly tense and confrontational?* In addition, it outlined a set of sub-questions pertaining to the intractability of the conflict and addressing the interactions between the Beijing regime and the Tibetan minority. Means to alleviate and look for appropriate solution to the present tension are also raised as a major concern. To answer them, this research proposes to employ security dilemma theory.

Scholars with a long-term interest in ethnic conflict have associated their studies to three major approaches. The first body of literature employs the rational-choice theory. This approach follows a methodological economic individualism argument, stating that conflicts are the outcomes based on rational calculations of maximum gain. This approach has been consistent in producing valuable literature.⁷⁰ However, it meets criticism that it is inadequate in explaining the emotional aspect of human actions.⁷¹ As such, this approach is limited to assess the power of identity on ethnic conflict such as the Tibet issue.

⁷⁰ James Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 379-414; Andrew Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "Sabotaging the Peace: The Politics of Extremist Violence," *International Organization* 56, no. 2 (2002): 263-296.; Barbara Walter, *Reputation and Civil War: Why Separatist Conflicts are So Violent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁷¹ Stuart Kaufman, "Symbolic Politics or Rational Choice? Testing Theories of Extreme Ethnic Violence," *International Security* 30, no. 4 (2006): 45-86; Chaim Kaufmann, "Rational Choice and Progress in the Study of Ethnic Conflict: A Review Essay," *Security Studies* 14, no.1 (2005): 181-185.

The second approach revolves around debates between primordialism and modernism, both of which tend to associate the causation of ethnic conflicts to human essence but differ in their suggested causal pathway.⁷² Briefly, primordialists emphasise the ‘given’ aspect of nation and ethnicity but they often fail to differentiate between them. They claim that a nation/ethnic group is a natural and organic community, bonded together with certain elements including shared bloodline, language, religion, history and customs. Primordialists claim that ethnic conflict is difficult to reconcile given the primitive and persistent features and emotional dynamics.⁷³ Conversely, modernists recognise the ‘modern’ essence of nation and point out the significance of social conditions and artificial (especially elite) manipulation.⁷⁴ In this sense, research from this perspective tend to underline socio-economic causes to the outbreak of conflict.

Flaws within these works are identified. It is clear that the primordialist argument is systematically inconsistent.⁷⁵ If pre-determined ethnic feature is the main cause to conflicts, it is difficult to account for peace and non-violence in some multi-ethnic states. For example, within China, Beijing has good relations with ethnic Mongols and

⁷² The intellectual group in primordialism includes Geertz, “Primordial and Civic Ties”; Connor, “Nation-building or Nation-destroying?”. The intellectual group in modernism includes Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Eric Hobsbawm. *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Some scholars identify ethno-symbolism as the third influential approach. See Umut Ozkirimli, *Contemporary Debates on Nationalism: A Critical Engagement* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*. Also see Daniel Bar-Tal, *Intractable Conflicts: Socio-psychological Foundations and Dynamics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York, Norton, 2000).

⁷³ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, 22-23; Geertz, “Primordial and Civic Ties,” 31.

⁷⁴ Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1–14; John Breuilly, “Dating the Nation,” in *When is the Nation?: Towards an Understanding of Theories of Nationalism*, ed. Atsuko Ichijo and Gordana Uzelac (London: Routledge, 2005), 15-39.

⁷⁵ John Coakley, “‘Primordialism’ in Nationalism Studies: Theory or Ideology?,” *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 2 (2018): 327-347.

ethnic Koreans, and yet its experiences with ethnic Tibetans is difficult. The modernist argument also has distinct limitations. If material differences are the only source for conflicts, the role of psychological elements is beyond the scope of the explanation. As can be seen in the independence movement in Quebec, Canada, the preservation of a French culture occupies a central role as an important element for self-identification.⁷⁶ Likewise within Tibet, modernists can argue that exacerbating socio-economic disparity is an explanation of Sino-Tibetan tension in the late 1980s, but it is unable to explain the roles of religion and culture in the conflicts throughout the post-1949 era.⁷⁷ Hence, the existing literature has not yet amounted to a balanced framework for us to capture the dynamics of intra-state ethnic conflict.

The third approach focuses on small or large-N comparative politics studies across time and scope, in which scholars investigate a range of potential causes such as culture, language, religion, social status and even geography and natural resources.⁷⁸ While generating rich insights with regard to particular variables across individual conflicts, there are limitations to this approach. Despite quantitative studies correlating one or more factors to the conflicts, causal mechanisms remain unclear. Moreover, the

⁷⁶ Michael Keating, *Nations against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland* (Springer, 1996), 65-69; 85-90.

⁷⁷ Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*; Topgyal, *China and Tibet*.

⁷⁸ Nils-Christian Bormann, Lars-Erik Cederman, and Manuel Vogt, "Language, Religion, and Ethnic Civil War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no.4 (2017): 744-771; Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Mi, "Why do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis," *World Politics* 62, no.1 (2010): 87-119.; Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563-595; Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, eds. *The Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict* (London: Routledge, 2016); Ted Robert Gurr, "Why Minorities Rebel: A Global Analysis of Communal Mobilization and Conflict since 1945," *International Political Science Review* 14, no. 2 (1993): 161-201; Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*; James Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no.1 (2003): 75-90; Dan Landis and Rosita. D. Albert. *Handbook of Ethnic Conflict* (Springer, 2012); Nicolas Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Civil Wars have the Same Causes? A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 3 (2001): 259-282; Kristine Eck, "From Armed Conflict to War: Ethnic Mobilization and Conflict Intensification," *International Studies Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (2009): 369-388; Andreas Wimmer, Lars-Erik Cederman, and Brian Min, "Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of A New Global Data Set," *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 2 (2009): 316-337; Wimmer, "Nation-building."

literature often overlooks the dynamics of agential interactions in specific historical contexts. The large body of qualitative studies that focus on this topic produces impressive conclusions over factors and theories, though these often suffer from fragmentation and context specificity, resulting in findings where the generalisability is questionable.⁷⁹

To fill these identified gaps, the theory of security dilemma is employed to explore the causal mechanism of intra-state ethnic conflict. This theory is particularly suited to this case for many reasons. First of all, it has been oriented to understand intra-state ethnic violence and even civil wars, in particular, cases brought about by the nation-building process. It focuses on a notion of **uncertainty** between parties, of whether one intends to harm the other, and on the dynamics and interaction between them. This theory allows a discussion about different sources of conflict without exclusion, rather than being engaged in an incompatible debate over human essence or rational-choice. In addition, this theory arguably fills the insufficiency of the small- and large-N approach, given that it can provide specific details against situated background. In this sense, this theory is appropriate to analyse the Tibetan issue in order to best capture the material and psychological dynamics that result in conflict.

This thesis discusses the security dilemma further by drawing upon an array of current literature. Firstly, this research distinguishes three categories: (1) Low-uncertainty Societal Dilemma, (2) High-uncertainty Societal Dilemma, and (3) Real Security Threat. Significantly, the real security threat is excluded from the concept of security dilemma. The low-uncertainty societal dilemma and the high-uncertainty societal dilemma connect to outcomes of conflict mitigation and conflict outbreak respectively.

⁷⁹ Tang, "The Onset of Ethnic War: A General Theory," 258-260.

Secondly, this research explores two variables as state-led modernisation and international intervention, assessing how they affect the security dilemmas. The dynamics of the security predicament and the intensification of conflict, as well as the means to break the deadlock are hereby presented.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the main notions of the security dilemma and introduces its application from inter-state to intra-state conflicts. Following this is a discussion of societal security that has occupied a significant position regarding the dynamics of the ethnic security dilemma. This section formulates the whole concept and is devoted to the ideas of Barry Buzan and scholars of the Copenhagen School of IR as well as Paul Roe. In the third section, the chapter discusses Roe's three models: tight, regular and loose formulations. Building upon these scholarly works, this chapter then reconceptualises new typologies and discusses two independent variables, laid slightly out in the previous paragraphs. The final section briefly demonstrates a conceptual operation of Sino-Tibetan relations since 1949.

Security Dilemma Theory and its Application to Ethnic Conflict

Classic Notions

The theory of the security dilemma was originally formulated to explore causes to inter-state conflicts.⁸⁰ Departing from the realist and neo-realist assumptions of IR theory that perceives international systems as that under the condition of an anarchical

⁸⁰ Herbert Butterfield, *History and Human Relations* (Collins, 1951); John Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (1950): 157-180; *Political Realism and Political Idealism, A Study in Theories and Realities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951); Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (1978): 167-214; Glenn Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (1984): 461-495.

nature, theorists narrate a predicament in which actions taken by one state actor, originally aiming to strengthen its own security, conversely results in less secure circumstances, even culminating in the outbreak of military confrontation with others.⁸¹ In a classic volume, Robert Art and Robert Jervis refer to it as “*An action-reaction spiral [that] can occur between two states or among several of them so that each is forced to spend even larger sums on arms and be more insecure than before.*”⁸² The key that renders this tragic consequence is the state actor’s uncertainty about its counterpart’s intentions.⁸³

Paul Roe makes this point explicit, as he states: “*Uncertainty produces fear... that the other wishes to harm them.*”⁸⁴ Very often that means that states must employ countermeasures such as accumulation of arms since there is no higher authority they can turn to.

Ken Booth and Nicholas J. Wheeler note that the security dilemma involves two major strategic predicaments.⁸⁵ Firstly, it concerns one’s interpretation of the others’ intentions and capabilities; and secondly, by association is the issue of response.⁸⁶ Indeed, uncertainty and indistinguishability between offence and defence can further exacerbate mutual distrust, triggering and worsening the tension. Robert Jervis suggests that unless the requirements for offence and defence can differ in kind or

⁸¹ Jervis, “Cooperation under the Security Dilemma,” 167-170; Shiping Tang, “The Security Dilemma: A Conceptual Analysis,” *Security Studies* 18, no. 3 (2009): 587-609.

⁸² Robert Art and Robert Jervis, “The Anarchic Environment,” in *International Politics: Anarchy, Force, Political Economy, and Decision Making*, eds. Robert Art and Robert Jervis (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1985), 3.

⁸³ Ken Booth and Nicholas J. Wheeler, “Uncertainty,” in *Security Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Paul D. Williams (London: Routledge, 2017), 137-138

⁸⁴ Paul Roe, “The Intrastate Security Dilemma: Ethnic Conflict as a ‘Tragedy’?” *Journal of Peace Research* 36, no. 2 (1999): 184.

⁸⁵ Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation, and Trust in World Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 4.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

amount, a state without expansionist intention whilst seeking a military posture for securitisation, resembles an aggressor.⁸⁷ Even though the first state does not intend to threaten the second, the latter may still perceive a threat. Consequently, a state's increase in security can have unintentional impacts on the level of security of others. Likewise, where states aim to increase their own securities, it inadvertently results in growing insecurity among other states. A spiral process continues until at least one side crosses the edge of tolerance, which ultimately leads to conflict. Following this logic of worst-case scenarios, a state may choose to launch a pre-emptive attack on another to protect itself from attack.⁸⁸

A substantial body of literature is invested in describing the features of the security dilemma. From Mearsheimer's viewpoint, the security dilemma is an inevitable situation for state actors owing to the anarchic nature of the international political system where anarchy forces states to compete with each other to gain supremacy.⁸⁹ Alan Collins also addresses his 'system-induced security dilemma' by ascribing the security dilemma to the anarchic nature of international politics that results in uncertainty and the subsequent spiral effect.⁹⁰ Barry Posen associates the relationship between uncertainty and indistinguishability, and between offence and defence, to three features of international politics: anarchy, self-help and fear. In this way, he draws on the strategic interactions among states with regard to the notion of the security dilemma. As he states:

⁸⁷ Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 64.

⁸⁸ Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma"; Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," 31-34.

⁸⁹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

⁹⁰ Alan Collins, "State-induced Security Dilemma: Maintaining the Tragedy," *Cooperation and Conflict* 39, no.1 (2004): 35.

*This is the security dilemma: what one does to enhance one's own security causes reactions that, in the end, can make one less secure. Cooperation among states to mute these competitions can be difficult because someone else's 'cheating' may leave one in a militarily weakened position. All fear betrayal.*⁹¹

Give the existence of uncertainty, the theory of security dilemma emphasises that states adopt defensive stances. In this way, a significant aspect of the theory is the lack of malign intentions. To clarify, when a state presents malign intentions towards another and the latter perceives this as a justifiable threat, the scenario then escalates to a real security threat, rather than a security dilemma. Randall Schweller sums this up clearly by arguing that the concept of threat in the security dilemma must be 'apparent, but not real'.⁹² If a state arms itself based on a purpose other than security, that is to say, it is justifiably perceived as an aggressor, then this is deemed as aggression and is an example of a security threat. As states act under the dilemmatic conditions that mean they cannot be certain about whether they are equipped with enough information, and given that, a state actor cannot be certain of the intent from the other, misperception of others' behaviour can easily occur.⁹³

To summarise the notions of the security dilemma, this thesis refers to Shiping Tang's eight point of BHJ that he presents based on a comprehensive examination of the

⁹¹ Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993): 28

⁹² Randall Schweller, "Neorealism's Status-quo Bias: What Security Dilemma?," *Security Studies* 5, no. 3 (1996): 117.

⁹³ David Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict," *International Security* 21, no. 2 (1996): 41-75.

classic literature, i.e. works of Herbert Butterfield, John Herz and Robert Jervis.⁹⁴ Firstly, the ultimate source of the security dilemma stems from the anarchic nature of international politics. Secondly, under such anarchy, state actors suffer from uncertainty concerning the intentions of others. Thirdly, the security dilemma can only exist when both state actors interact with each other without holding malign intentions. Fourthly, while aiming to overcome uncertainty and fear, states may resort to accumulating power or military capabilities as a means of defence, but which inevitably involve certain offensive capabilities. Fifthly, once activated, the dynamics of the security dilemma tend to self-reinforce and often triggers spiral situations. Sixthly, the nature of the security dilemma is inclined to result in self-defeating circumstances, resulting in more military power but less security. Seventhly, the vicious circle of interactions stemming from the security dilemma can result in tragic consequences. Finally, the severity of the security dilemma can be affected by both material and socio-psychological factors. In his view, the former can include geography and distribution of power, whilst the latter includes nationalism and worst-case assumptions.⁹⁵

According to Tang, the process from anarchy to the security dilemma and then to war, is not straightforward. Rather, it is an action-reaction spiral that contains dynamic inter-state interactions. He contends:

Anarchy generates uncertainty; uncertainty leads to fear; fear then leads to power competition; power competition activates the (dormant) security

⁹⁴ Butterfield, *History and Human Relations*; Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism, A Study in Theories and Realities*; Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*.

⁹⁵ Tang, "The Security Dilemma," 594-595; "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," 514.

*dilemma and the activated security dilemma leads to war through a spiral.*⁹⁶

To emphasise, he insists that a conceptual differentiation between the security dilemma and the spiral model is both useful and necessary. The latter arguably shows a wider range than the former. The security dilemma can transform into a spiral, but the latter is still applicable as it focuses on interactions between and among involved actors. As such, Tang reminds us that the security dilemma is conditional while the spiral is universal.⁹⁷ Moreover, from his listed process, this thesis underlines that uncertainty takes a central role, which drives the rest points.

Bringing Security Dilemma Theory to Intra-state Level

The theory of security dilemma has been continually developed in the discipline of IR and been further applied to explore domestic conflict. With the cessation of the Cold War and subsequent dissolution of the US-USSR bipolar global structure, intra-state ethnic antagonism became the most common type of conflict worldwide. This is a pivotal background for scholars. Many accounts of these conflicts have centred on the dynamics of inter-ethnic group relationship and interactions between the state and domestic ethnic minorities.⁹⁸ Those inspired by security dilemma theory began considering interactions between intra-state groups in the same manner as that between sovereign states. This thesis is also inspired by this academic development.

A question regarding the application of security dilemma theory to domestic issues

⁹⁶ Tang, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict: toward a Dynamic and Integrative Theory of Ethnic Conflict," 515.

⁹⁷ Tang, "The Security Dilemma: 603-604; "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," 517.

⁹⁸ Shiping Tang and Kai Wang, "Zuqun Chongtu Yanjiu: Licheng, Xianzhuang Yu Qushi." *Ouzhou Yanjiu* 1 (2018): 138-139.

might be raised here. A fundamental element of uncertainty of intentions among states that leads to the security dilemma stems from the lack of a supreme authority capable of enforcing order; in this way, some wonder how this application from the international level to the domestic level is justified. In their response, the pioneering theoretical advocates have defended their stance by concentrating on the implications of uncertainty but not the absence of authority.⁹⁹

By observing the domestic tensions and civil wars with ethnic features that erupted within the former Socialist states in the 1990s, scholars reflect on scenarios in which the central regime collapsed, and/or one particular ethnic group dominated a multi-ethnic state. Within either of these circumstances, the domestic groups would generate fear towards others. In this respect, the inter-group interactions within a state are comparable to inter-state interactions in the international environment in that the involved parties are compelled to pursue self-securitisation. This argument definitely corroborates Jack Snyder's 'perceptual security dilemma' which suggests that the security dilemma could occur when one actor mistakenly perceives the other's manner of defence as offence.¹⁰⁰ Through these conceptual clarifications and refinements, the application of security dilemma theory to domestic level issues is justified. The theory can be adapted to become one of the most integrative theoretical tools in ethnic conflict studies.¹⁰¹

Barry Posen was the pioneering scholar who applied security dilemma theory to

⁹⁹ Roe, "The Intrastate Security Dilemma: Ethnic Conflict as a 'Tragedy'?"

¹⁰⁰ Jack Snyder, "Perceptions of the Security Dilemma in 1914," in *Psychology and Deterrence*, eds. Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 155; 161-165.

¹⁰¹ Tang, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict."

explain intra-state ethnic conflicts.¹⁰² Having examined the ethnic wars occurring within the disintegrated former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia Federation, Posen contended that the power vacuum, created by the loss of central authority, abruptly triggered the onset of inter-group tensions and the emergence of de facto anarchy. In this context, the state lost control of its domestic groups, who now had to pursue their own interests and competed with others. Consequently, they took action to assure their own security but under such an anarchic structure, their actions could be perceived as an increase in offence by other groups, who may react by adopting similar actions to reinforce their own security. By using security dilemma theory, Posen also integrated dichotomist ethnic identities as well as other factors including historical hostilities, uneven military abilities and potential external intervention that complicate the sense of insecurity for the ethnic groups.¹⁰³ Posen contributed an important foundation in the area of ethnic conflict studies.

Given such literature, we see the main concepts of security dilemma theory, including anarchy, which refers to uncertainty, feature of self-help, defensive stance, and accumulation of power applied to intra-state ethnic conflict. Similar to the situation in international politics, when a group initially adopts a defensive and therefore benign intention for self-protection, the resulting anarchic nature of a collapsed state hinders the transmission of this intention to others. Lake and Rothchild expressed this explicitly. In their viewpoints, the fear for actors' own safety in isolation is the primary cause of inter-ethnic group conflict. When information fails to transmit to another and credible commitment falls into question, ethnic security dilemma can become even more severe. Elite manipulation of political memories and emotions as

¹⁰² Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict."

¹⁰³ Ibid.

well mass mobilisation can make the dilemma further irreducible.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, the tragedy of inter-state politics can also occur at domestic level.

Soon, scholars began paying attention to the state and non-state actors in their exploration of past and existing conflicts. The state-minority group relationship become a significant theme. Saideman observes that in many cases of intra-state ethnic conflict, conflicts between the state and ethnic groups, minorities in particular, manifest as the main form.¹⁰⁵ To understand the factors causing this, Saideman argues, the state is often characterised by the control of richer and stronger resources than its sub-national groups. In this regard, when the domestic ethnic groups compete with each other aiming to take control of the state which dominate the resources, “the state may [thus, seem to] be biased toward or against particular ethnicities.”¹⁰⁶ He says:

*This is the heart of the ethnic security dilemma within existing states. If the state cannot protect the interests of all ethnic groups, then each group will seek to control the state, decreasing the security of other groups and decreasing the ability of the state to provide security for any group.*¹⁰⁷

This perspective highlights the role of the state in the conflict. Indeed, many empirical studies have revealed that the state is often the key actor engaged in domestic ethnic

¹⁰⁴ Lake and Rothchild, “Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict,” 41-75.

¹⁰⁵ Stephen Saideman, “Is Pandora’s Box Half-empty or Half-full? The Limited Virulence of Secessionism and the Domestic Sources of Disintegration,” *IGCC Policy Paper* 18 (1995).

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 11.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*.

conflict.¹⁰⁸ Thus, scholars brought the state back into the main focus in their analysis. This provides a significant implication for studying the case of Tibet, in which the Chinese central government is one of the most important actors involved in the evolution of the Tibetan issue.

Among those dynamics engaging the state in the ethnic conflicts, nation-building and relevant commitments integrating domestic groups conforming to the national narrative are noticed.¹⁰⁹ Given the fact that the state can actively create a domestic environment for all ethnic groups and it can play a significant role in shaping the inter-ethnic relationship, an underlying point is that policy-making and institutional arrangements matters. The state's commitments can result in the national integration and security on the one hand, but might cause the national disintegration and erosion of security on the other.

Aligned to this line of thinking and inspired by the core concepts of security dilemma theory, scholars such as Brian Job, Mohammed Ayoob, John Glenn and Georg Sørensen conceived a novel idea termed as the 'insecurity dilemma'.¹¹⁰ Their argument derived from observations of 'Third World' states, in particular, those that they termed as 'weak states' often suffering from frequent and constant ethnic conflicts. In their view, when a state, usually administrated by the state's ethnic

¹⁰⁸ Tang and Wang, "Zuqun Chongtu Yanjiu: Licheng, Xianzhuang Yu Qushi." 138.

¹⁰⁹ Valery Tishkov, "What is Russia? Prospects for Nation-Building." *Security Dialogue* 26, no.1 (1995): 41-54; Kataryna Wolczuk, "History, Europe and the 'National Idea': The 'Official' Narrative of National Identity in Ukraine," *Nationalities Papers* 28, no. 4 (2000): 671-694; Stepan Alfred, Juan J. Linz, and Yogendra Yadav. *Crafting State-nations: India and Other Multinational Democracies* (JHU Press, 2011).

¹¹⁰ Job, *The Insecurity Dilemma*, 11-35; Mohammed Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995); John Glenn, "The Interregnum: the South's Insecurity Dilemma," *Nations and Nationalism* 3, no. 1 (1997): 45-63; Sørensen, "After the Security Dilemma: The Challenges of Insecurity in Weak States and the Dilemma of Liberal Values," 357-378.

majority or core group, attempts to integrate domestic diverse societal groups through nation-building to fulfil the needs of security, these minority or non-core groups will, in many cases, reject the states authority. This is because they are often required to discard at least part of their societal distinctiveness. As a result, the original goal of securitisation has failed and instead, societal antagonism is formed and may even be radicalised.¹¹¹

Brian Job illuminates the logic of why nation-building in these states encounter obstacles. He argues that not having a singular nor shared 'national idea' within these states play a vital role. That is to say, the state and the target groups share distinct 'core values,' which are central to identities and interests, as well as relevant visions for all state population. However, when the state embarks upon nation-building, its behaviour and standpoint are easily perceived as threats by the target groups. While all involved actors aim to defend their well-being, the rivalry, interactions and competition between them are conversely self-reinforced and an intra-state security dilemma is realised.¹¹²

This body of literature seems to reveal a new direction of security dilemma theory. Nevertheless, as discussed briefly in chapter one, the definition of 'weakness' has been subject to debate. Whilst it is generally agreed that a 'weak state' refers to elements such as lack of popular legitimacy and state institutions are ineffective in providing public services and security, many elements and conditions defining weakness are less clearly agreed upon.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Job, *The Insecurity Dilemma*, 14-19.

According to Job, weak states are states suffering from domestic ethnic conflicts and faced with threats that are very often internally driven.¹¹³ Glenn underlines the lack of coercive means to carry out ruling power and the lack of public infrastructures. Moreover, Sørensen categorises weak states as based on a generally defective economy and an incoherent society in consolidation.¹¹⁴ What is more, Ayoob's way of measurement involves a number of characteristics. In his view, apart from the lacks of internal cohesion in terms of economic, social, ethnic and regional aspects, and legitimacy of state boundary, institution and governing elites, the state's inabilities towards the transnational and international contestations and corporations also need to be taken into consideration.¹¹⁵ To put them together, some of these defined-points cover the overlapping aspects, while others are defined by siding completely different features.

As mentioned in chapter one, by drawing upon Ayoob's categorisation, Tsering Topgyal characterises China as a weak state given an emphasis on the socio-political incohesion.¹¹⁶ Topgyal has then produced a series of valuable studies about China in which Tibet and Tibetans are taken as the major focus.

This thesis, however, is cautious about their judgement; in particular, by considering the overall strengths of China's economic performance, its state capacity, and its achievement of institution-building. In some ethnic minority regions, China arguably maintains a harmonious relationship. Thus, applying this framework to China might deserve reconsideration. On the other hand, this thesis suggests that the logic and main

¹¹³ Ibid, 17-18.

¹¹⁴ Sørensen, "After the Security Dilemma: The Challenges of Insecurity in Weak States and the Dilemma of Liberal Values," 363-364.

¹¹⁵ Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament*, 15.

¹¹⁶ Ibid 16; Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 15-17.

concepts of security dilemma theory are more conducive to examining the Chinese case. Some scholars have used this theory analysing the case of Xinjiang.¹¹⁷ As such, this research contributes an application to Tibet.

The classical concepts of security dilemma theory and its applications in ethnic conflict have been widely discussed in this section. The theory, with its valuable insights, helps to illuminate the causes, developments and predicaments of intra-state conflicts in relation to the nation-building politics. These are the benefits for this thesis in adopting it to consider the Sino-Tibetan relationship. Following this section, this research discusses the concept of security. In particular, the aspects of societal security in which ethnic identity takes central stage will be discussed below, assessing how this concept has affected ethnic conflict studies. This is also in line with a significant academic move, as scholars began paying more attentions to the nuances of security since the end of Cold-War.¹¹⁸

Societal Security and the Security Dilemma

The notion of societal security was initialised by Barry Buzan in the early 1990s.¹¹⁹ Buzan regarded it as the sustainable development of traditional patterns of language, culture, religious national identities, and customs of states.¹²⁰ Having been juxtaposed

¹¹⁷ Michael Clarke, "China's Internal Security Dilemma and the 'Great Western Development': the Dynamics of Integration, Ethnic Nationalism and Terrorism in Xinjiang," *Asian Studies Review* 31.3 (2007): 323-342; "China's 'War on Terror' in Xinjiang: Human Security and the Causes of Violent Uighur Separatism." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 2 (2008): 271-301; Krickovic, Andrej. "Catalyzing Conflict: The Internal Dimension of the Security Dilemma." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 1, no. 2 (2016): 111-126.

¹¹⁸ Roe, "Societal Security," in *Contemporary Security Studies*, ed. Alan Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 203.

¹¹⁹ Barry Buzan, *People, State and Fear* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 19-20.

with military, political, economic and environmental aspects, society, in his idea, was treated as one that altogether constituted a state's national security. In other words, society is relative to and is not prioritised than other four aspects.¹²¹

Ole Wæver and subsequent scholars in the Copenhagen School reconceptualised Buzan's idea and broadened its usage. From Wæver's perspective, society is not only viewed as an aspect accounting for state security, but also 'a referent object of security in its own right'.¹²² Wæver argues that the core of society concerns identity.¹²³ It is about self-identification or we-group awareness. In this sense, societal security can be understood as identity security. As such, the heart of this concept is surrounded by the maintenance of we-group identity. Wæver defines it as:

*The defence of an identity against a perceived threat, or more precisely, the defence of a community against a perceived threat to its identity.*¹²⁴

Societal insecurity takes place within a community when its group members perceive their group to be meeting an identity crisis due to posed threats. Wæver further highlights the significance of identity to society with the analogy of the relationship between sovereignty and the state. He contends that as a state loses its sovereignty it will no longer exist as a state. Similarly, if a society loses its identity, it will not

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ole Wæver et al, eds. *Identity, Migration, and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (London: Pinter, 1993), 24-25.

¹²³ Wæver, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, 119-120.

¹²⁴ Ole Wæver, "The Changing Agenda of Societal Security," in *Globalization and Environmental Challenges*, eds. Hans Günter Brauch et al (Berlin: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2008), 581.

survive as a society.¹²⁵ Therefore, just as a state protects its sovereignty by strengthening its relevant capabilities, a society can resort to various approaches to protect its societal identity.

Wæver further considers the concept of society by distinguishing the concepts of civic- nation and ethnic- nation.¹²⁶ To be specific, civic nation is defined through citizenship. Wæver notes that in some cases a society's boundary equates to a nation-state if the people living in the state self-identify themselves as being unified; indeed, if these people are composed of groups from various ethnic backgrounds, they are a 'state-nation'. Secondly, Wæver suggests that many politically significant ethno-national entities can also be societies, who have self-identified their existence, but do not form their own sovereign states, and/or necessarily do not coincide with current state borders. In many cases, they have posed challenges to the home states' governance, or vice versa; these states are often the chief threat to society. Through the concepts of civic-nation and ethnic-nation, Wæver reminds us that in the distinct context, society and state can share distinct logic of security.¹²⁷

In developing a concept of society, Wæver and his peers broaden the horizon and analytical power of security studies. Significantly, they are inspired by their empirical observation on post-Cold War international politics and they seek to correct the flaws brought about by the traditional IR that limits its focuses to the state. The Copenhagen School aims to capture the conflictual dynamics where state and societies do not align, or cases where national minorities are in opposition to home states.

¹²⁵ Wæver, *Identity, Migration, and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 225; Buzan and Wæver, "Slippery? Contradictory? Sociologically Untenable? The Copenhagen School Replies," 242.

¹²⁶ Wæver, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, 120-121.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

The Copenhagen School's refinement of the concept of society influences its use in discussions regarding a state's nation-building politics. Wæver defines societal security as:

*The ability of a society to persist under changing conditions and possible or actual threats. More specifically, it is about the sustainability, within acceptable conditions, for evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture, association, and religious and national [ethnic] identity and custom...*¹²⁸

In this respect, for a state's nation-builders, reconciling civic national identities based on inclusive citizenship, and exclusive ethnic identities based on a variety of essentially common characteristics, can be an issue. Societal cohesion can influence state security, making society an important aspect of the latter. As Wæver says, the more secure these groups are in terms of identity, the less secure their home states may feel.¹²⁹ Scholars have noted that during the process of conceptual construction of a common national identity, distinguishing 'Self' and 'Other' is important. This process involves many dynamics of conflict since Other is always 'securitised' as a threat to Self. Other can be perceived in any 'outside' group, which can be constructed through identity and ethnicity, as well as other factors. In many cases, national construction emerges in the form of denigrating the Other. Further, as rhetoric combines with

¹²⁸ Wæver, *Identity, Migration, and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 23.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 25.

political-legal measures, the Other is likely to receive a real threat.¹³⁰ In this way, while nation-builders aim to create a stable Self, an enemy is inevitably created.

In international politics, states usually attempt to increase their security by enhancing their own arms; at intra-state level, states can impose a set of institutions and policies for integration for the same purpose. However, such behaviour may create doubts within their domestic groups, wondering whether the states are in fact attempting to repress or damage local cultures and identities. Nation-building, therefore, can be seen as essentially ambiguous. On the one hand, it can be considered as a means to protect itself but on the other hand, it can also be perceived as an instrument to harm others. To clarify, in the context of a multi-ethnic state, the relationship between the state itself and its diverse ethnic groups, as individual societies, is controversial and may potentially involve tense interactions.

While developing their concepts, the Copenhagen School met a variety of challenges. Criticisms from several scholars question their approach and stance over societal identity, claiming that Wæver et al imply an objectivist attitude. More specifically, they claim that the Copenhagen School ignores the socially constructed features of ethnicity/nationality, and instead, views them as a given fact.¹³¹ To some extent, the debate revolves around culturalism versus constructivism in relation to ethnicity/nationality. In their response, the Copenhagen School re-affirms that they do take a constructivist position. Buzan and Wæver insist they treat identity as a concept, but it is a concept that is socially constructed.¹³² They justify themselves by

¹³⁰ Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 63.

¹³¹ Roe, "The Intrastate Security Dilemma: Ethnic Conflict as a 'Tragedy'?", 193.

¹³² Buzan and Wæver, "Slippery? Contradictory? Sociologically Untenable? The Copenhagen School Replies," 242-244.

contending that “If one studies only the processes by which identities are formed, then identity never becomes a ‘thing’ at all: there is never a product as such”.¹³³ To be more explicit, they consider societal identity as a temporarily fixed ‘thing’ within which its group members adhere to and behave according to certain common characteristics, in order to self-identify as group members. In this way, if societal identity is with a ‘fluid essence’ and identity is asserted to be persistent and be able to self-evolve along with change of social condition, questions over what can be a threat to identity is significant.

For the Copenhagen School, threats are perceived to come from those who interfere with the reproduction of self-identification and from changes in natural process, relating to the survival of societies.¹³⁴ Utilising Buzan’s concept, Paul addresses that as society is inter-related with the five sectors which account for state security, military, politics, economy, and environment, threats can be directed from each of these respective sectors.¹³⁵

First, military threats can stem from two sources: external and internal.¹³⁶ The external aspects refer to a foreign state that attacks a society or indirectly, its home state and then the society, resulting in difficulties of societal re-generation for the community. Internal military threats refer to that from a society’s home state, often the central regime. Such incidents can take place where an ethnic group is in armed conflict with the state.¹³⁷ Having often been linked to negative aspects, it should be acknowledged that military activity towards a society does not necessarily cause a

¹³³ Ibid, 242-243.

¹³⁴ Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 48.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 49-50; “Societal Security,” 207-208.

¹³⁶ Ibid; “Societal Security,” 207.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

threat. In Roe's presented examples, the French society remained relatively stable under Nazi Germany's occupation during the Second World War.¹³⁸ Furthermore, in the case of international intervention, military activity can be used to help protect and reinforce a society when the society is suppressed within a state.¹³⁹ This will be discussed further below in the section on independent variables.

Political threats refer to suppression of certain ethno-national groups by political means e.g. systematic/institutional discrimination; usually this happens to ethnic minorities. Roe suggests that military and political threats are frequently strongly connected when they occur. As such, threats can range from exclusion of societal members to suppression of the communities' expression and re-production of culture.¹⁴⁰

Threats from the societal sector can cause a community to believe that its identity is in danger. Roe articulates this point by narrating a concept of 'cultural cleansing', or 'culturecide'. In his view, destruction of one group culture represents the demise of the group. He notes:

*Cultural cleansing poses an enormous threat to group cohesion. Cultural cleansing is perpetrated, not against populations as such, but manifestations of group culture: religious and educational establishments to note a prominent few.*¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ Ibid..

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 50; "Societal Security," 208.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 49.

Societal threats do not only exist between inter-group relationships. Rather, as Wæver points out, as a state can also be regarded as a society, societal threats can stem from within the state. As we will analyse, the Sino-Tibetan conflict fits within this category.

Moreover, in pondering societal composition and societal borders, Roe considers societal threats from three dimensions by referring to Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde. These include: migration, horizontal competition, and vertical competition.¹⁴² He contends that if the balance of community population in an area changes too quickly and its societal members cannot adapt, the community may grow insecure. Without doubt, the power of migration is evident. In terms of the Tibetan issue, many opponents of Beijing also claim that the government attempts to dilute the local population of Tibet by the influx of migrants from other regions. The notions of horizontal competition and vertical competition are also important. The former refers to communities 'forced to change due to the cultural impacts from another group', and the latter refers to communities 'having to widen or narrow their identities by facing integration or disintegration'. Indeed, when assessing nation-building, in association with national integration (e.g. modernisation), this may potentially result in insecurity for the target group.

Regarding economic threats, Roe associates this with the modern capitalist system, suggesting that threats can originate from transnational capital, including globalism.¹⁴³ In addition, the formation of economic threats can stem from domestic

¹⁴² Roe, "Societal Security," 207; Buzan et al, *Security*, 121.

¹⁴³ Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 50; "Societal Security," 208.

socio-economic conditions. In either case, cultural distinctiveness is undermined, and ‘consumer’ types can damage traditional identity.¹⁴⁴ Sharing a similar line of thinking, economic modernisation and development, which includes marketisation in many Chinese ethnic minority regions (e.g. Tibet and pan-Tibetan areas) has been discussed in the existing literature.¹⁴⁵

Finally, Roe suggests that threats can stem from changes in the environment.¹⁴⁶ Reasons for the changes can be diverse and complex. They can be related to climate change or economic development, from natural to artificial causes. The discipline of environment psychology has produced plenty of research about environmental change and human emotion and perception.¹⁴⁷ The core point here is that as land constitutes a significant aspect of identity, landscape changes can have huge impacts on the status of societal identity. As can be seen, environmental protection has also become an important element in defending Tibetan identity by the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibet Administration.

By integrating the Copenhagen School’s notion of societal security into the security dilemma, Roe conceives his understandings in ethnic conflict. He defines this as:

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ashild Kolas, *Tourism and Tibetan Culture in Transition: A Place Called Shangrila* (London: Routledge, 2007); Emily T. Yeh and Chris Coggins, *Mapping Shangrila: Contested Landscapes in the Sino-Tibetan Borderlands* (Seattle and London: The University of Washington Press, 2014) ; Adrian Zenz, ‘Tibetanness’ Under Threat?: Neo-integrationism, Minority Education and Career Strategies in Qinghai, P.R. China (Leiden: Global Oriental, 2014); Ben Hillman and Gray Tuttle, eds. *Ethnic Conflict and Protest in Tibet and Xinjiang: Unrest in China's West*.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Linda Steg and Judith I. M. De Groot, eds. *Environmental Psychology: An Introduction* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2019).

*The actions of one society, in trying to increase its societal security (strengthen its own society), causing a reaction in a second society, which, in the end, decreases the first society's own societal security (weakens its identity).*¹⁴⁸

Clearly, the logic of inter-state interaction is now re-conceptualised into that of inter-societal interaction. To further apply this concept to ethnic conflict, Roe highlights a scenario as follows: 'One society (ethnic group) seeking only to defend its identity within the state, may be perceived by another (ethnic group/state) as harbouring secessionist goals'.¹⁴⁹ Within a nation-building process, when the home state implements its nationalising project towards its domestic target ethnic minorities, and if the latter perceive the state's actions as threats to their societal identities, the sense of insecurity will also be enhanced and 'security dilemma' will be activated between them.¹⁵⁰

From the previous discussions of nation-building studies, we have understood that nation-building commitments would head to a certain degree of, and inevitably homogenisation within, the state border. However, a debate might then form within multi-ethnic states and in particular, where domestic ethnic groups are concerned about the survival of their ethnic distinctiveness and question the direction and components of the national society that is being defined by the state. Viewing this analogy from the perspective of security dilemma theory, when the state actor aims to strengthen the defined societal culture, the domestic ethnic group is likely to react by pursuing activities that strengthen its own. When the state recognises this reaction, the

¹⁴⁸ Roe, "The Intrastate Security Dilemma," 194.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid: 199.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 193.

state may then re-strengthen the nation-building programme aimed at national cohesion, which in turn can provoke another round of reactions from the domestic ethnic group. As such, their interactions turn into a cycle or spiral of escalating tension. If both sides cannot negotiate an amicable consensus, an ethnic conflict may result.

It deserves noting that military means are not always adopted as the main approach to improve societal security. Wæver discusses how cultural means, or cultural nationalism (as interpreted by Roe) are also used.¹⁵¹ Cultural nationalism emphasises various commonalities of a group, such as language, culture, and religion and devalues factors that may downplay its integrity and solidarity. Cultural nationalists may even claim autonomous rights from the home state in association with cultural reproduction. Such mechanism is echoed in the literature of psychology. Research demonstrates that when a group's integrity is threatened, the calls for positive and distinct group identity becomes salient. A bias favouring ingroup and derogating outgroup relatively increases.¹⁵²

Moreover, Roe argues that 'ethnic or political nationalism' can also emerge as a defensive response to the state by the target groups.¹⁵³ The means through which this happens can be self-rule in the region where the societal groups dominates. Once this becomes the case, the situation can be more complicated and intensified.

Finally, all steps within these interactions are significant. If either side, the state or the

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 194-195; Paul Roe, "Misperception and Ethnic Conflict: Transylvania's Societal Security Dilemma," *Review of International Studies* 28, no. 1 (2002): 66.

¹⁵² John F. Dovidio and Samuel L. Gaertner, "Intergroup Bias," in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Vol. 1-2, eds. Susan T. Fiske, Daniel T. Gilbert, and Gardner Lindzey (John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 1100.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 194.

societal groups, rejects to view the opposite as equal, rivalry can be escalated.¹⁵⁴ Even worse, if violence has been employed by one side to fight against the other, peace will be very difficult to achieve and violent memories could hinder mutual trust thereby separating the entire nation for many years.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, not all nation-building projects imposed by the state must necessarily harass the identity of ethnic groups. Instead, as Roe reminds us, it depends upon the individual social context and requires further examination.¹⁵⁶

Paul Roe's Transformable Categories of Societal Security Dilemmas

Having pondered the possibilities of unlocking the security dilemma, Paul Roe conceived of three societal security dilemma models. This section introduces his main arguments of the models and paves the way for building the conceptual framework for this thesis. This section will also discuss Roe's theoretical achievements and identified flaws. While his conceptual contribution is addressed, as this thesis will point out, Roe seems to blur the scope of security dilemma and security threat, which makes his analytical models imprecise. To fill this gap, this research refreshes his ideas and in particular, discards the notion of loose societal dilemma. In the next section, this chapter will propose a new framework.

Inspired by the Copenhagen School's social constructivist stance, Roe formulates a view that societal security dilemma emerges, not only due to the political structure featured as an anarchy-like domain, but also due to the involved actors' choice to

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 195-200.

¹⁵⁵ Stuart Kaufman, "Spiraling to Ethnic War: Elites, Masses, and Moscow in Moldova's Civil War," *International Security* 21, no. 2 (1996): 108-138.

¹⁵⁶ Roe, "The Intrastate Security Dilemma: Ethnic Conflict as a 'Tragedy'," 196.

interact in a way that their actions construct an anarchic political structure. In this respect, the root of the dilemma is related to the actors' perceptions and actions within interactions with others. As a result, Roe distinguishes what is termed by this thesis as 'transformable' categories of societal security dilemmas, within which actors can change and even leave the dilemmas they engage in. These categories are reconceptualised from his works, termed as: tight, regular and loose (detailed further below).¹⁵⁷

In a tight societal dilemma, misinterpretation of others' intention plays a key role. In Roe's definition, the tight societal dilemma occurs when there is an illusory incompatibility between the two groups regarding their individual societal security requirements. Both sides are security-seekers in nature, but mutual misperceptions over bilateral relationships compel them to act as if they harbour revisionist desires towards each other. Activated and exacerbated by the action-reaction spirals, tension is unleashed, and in some instances, violence and war break out.

In the regular societal dilemma, the argument centres on the incompatible security requirement; unlike the tight societal dilemma, misperception does not constitute the main element. Within this scenario, both involved actors are still security-seekers in nature, but the logic directing the actors' behaviour is in accordance with 'real incompatibility'. In this respect, actions for self-maintenance and security-enhancement, including strengthening aspects of societal identity by the first group, result in the necessary insecurity of the second. The presence of the first group overrides the autonomy and coherence of the second group. The relationship between

¹⁵⁷ Roe, "Actors' Responsibility in 'Tight', 'Regular' or 'Loose' Security Dilemmas," 106-110; "Which Security Dilemma? Mitigating Ethnic Conflict: The Case of Croatia," 284-289.

them is manifest as a zero-sum game.

The third type of societal dilemma is the loose formulation. Paul Roe argues that its nature contrasts with the other two approaches. Whereas the involved actors are the security-seekers in the first two scenarios, the actors are mainly the power-seekers. In this way, the central argument is that the actors involved behave according to the offence-defence balance, rather than a calculation of self-security. Offensive action is adopted when a greater advantage is expected. Similarly, defensive action is taken when the actor expects to acquire benefits. Within these scenarios, aggression is ignited or deterred based on anticipated returns. Moreover, the lack of malign intention, a significant element in other types of dilemmas, no longer exists in this formulation. Given the offence-defence logic, Roe contends that the loose societal dilemma allows for the existence of hostile intention.

From the outset, Roe operationalise these three types as a way to analyse the dynamics of ethnic conflict dynamics in the former Yugoslav and other East European examples. The implications brought about by differentiation are thought-provoking. These typologies draw analytical attention to the dimensions of involved actors' perceptions about themselves, others, and political structures that feature the conditions of uncertainty and fear. To clarify, Paul Roe suggests that:

This categoriz[s]ation essentially derives from a refocusing of the security dilemma away from the fundamental compatibility of 'goals' to the fundamental compatibility of 'security requirements' instead. That is, I shift the emphasis of enquiry from the general, whether security is being sought, to

*the more specific, the means through which security is being sought.*¹⁵⁸

Clearly, his purpose is not only to conceive frameworks to describe different aspects of ethnic violence, but prescriptively he also attempts to explore potential solutions to confrontations. Roe focuses on the fundamental role of intention in determining interactions in different situations. Following this logic, the difference between benign and malign intention can be used to group the ‘tight and regular societal dilemmas’ together, and the ‘loose societal dilemma’. Then, whether or not security needs are reconciled for the actors involved, can be used to categorise between tight and regular societal dilemma.¹⁵⁹ This way of narrowing down the interpretation adds extra credit to the original argument of the security dilemma.

Arguably, two main contributions have been achieved by Paul Roe’s work. Firstly, the distinction between tight, regular and loose styles offer more deliberate and comprehensive tools for analysts to discuss a great body of both inter- and intra-state ethnic violence and wars. Researchers are able to further explore causation and correlation in individual cases. Secondly, these models can help to specify attributes of responsibility of the involved actors. While Paul Roe claims that the security dilemma features as a tragedy, his narrow interpretation highlights the agential dynamics. In this sense, researchers are able to conceptualise the involved actors in terms of distinct security requirements when configuring a variety of cases, differentiating whether the cases belong to either the resolvable or the irreconcilable categories. It is the latter types of conflict that need devotion in order to transform them into resolvable

¹⁵⁸ Roe, “Actors’ Responsibility in ‘Tight’, ‘Regular’ or ‘Loose’ Security Dilemmas,” 104.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 106-110.

conflicts by reformulating the actors' security requirements. His models thereby provide thoughts in considering conflicts as well as possible resolutions.

To provide a broader picture, Roe is working out dynamics to escape the predicament of the security dilemmas. His argument highlights the agency of actors; their perception is strongly connected to what they practice. This way of thinking echoes Booth and Wheeler's three redefined types of ideational schemes in terms of 'logics of insecurity'.¹⁶⁰ They are transcender logic, mitigator logic, and fatalist logic. In their perspectives, these three logics consist of different understandings of security, namely Kantian, Lockean, and Hobbesian logics, which constitute the means of interaction between the actors. These logics, and therefore their respective corresponding conceptions of security, also posit alternative methods to deal with insecurity. Essentially, they contend that the IR environment is what the involved actors created.¹⁶¹ They are in line with the Wendtian standpoint.¹⁶²

The merits of Roe's models have been presented here, and they are helpful in understanding further prospects of the security dilemma. However, certain challenges to his frameworks are identified and are addressed below.

Firstly, the terminology of Roe's three models easily confuses researchers. For many, the explanations given to the tight, regular, and loose security formulations seem hard to grasp and the major content of each one is difficult to determine. Roe did give definitions about each item, but the principle orienting the categories to the

¹⁶⁰ Booth and Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma*, 10-18; "Uncertainty," 143-147.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: the Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391-425.

corresponding content is vague. That is, Roe fails to explain his logic naming the models. It is fair to say that conceptualisation of terminology is subjective and is a privilege belonging to the author, but a point of clarity should also be taken into account.

The second identified drawback of Roe's models is essential. He recognises the importance of intention, though he does not provide a concrete approach to uncovering said intentions in different situations. Consequently, it is unclear how to differentiate between an offensive stance and a defensive stance. Similarly, a potential flaw also occurs in the differentiation between the tight and the regular societal dilemma, as Roe does not deliver an accurate indicator. To both, Roe claims that the issue is with the illusory incompatibility of security versus reality.¹⁶³ According to Shiping Tang's review, Roe is never clear about whether he adopts a subjective or an objective attitude.¹⁶⁴ In operational terms, Roe's models would face technical questions when attempting to categorise specific cases. This undoubtedly reduces the theoretical credibility.

Furthermore, from the perspective of a theoretical foundation, Roe's models are also questionable. Not all his security formulations have been aligned to the core notions of the classic security dilemma. To be more explicit, he may have blurred the concept between the security dilemma and others such as security problem. Consequently, his deviation of conceptual uniformity seriously dilutes the value of the security dilemma.

In the first section, we reviewed several key elements of the security dilemma. Among

¹⁶³ Roe, "Actors' Responsibility in 'Tight', 'Regular' or 'Loose' Security Dilemmas," 106-109.

¹⁶⁴ Tang, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," 524-525.

them, several aspects are outlined, including the anarchic nature of the IR environment, the lack of malign intention, and the accumulation of power. In this respect, the notion of the tight societal dilemma is arguably successful in terms of these features. Roe has also importantly advanced an understanding that the dilemma can be dissolved when illusory incompatibility of the security requirement has been acknowledged by the actors.

By allowing the occasional outbreak of violence within the tight societal dilemma, Roe leaves a puzzle. That is, there is a confusion over distinguishing the tight and regular societal dilemmas in theory. Although he suggests that these two types can be measured by whether there are compatible security requirements or not, the same outcome of the types, in fact, discredits the meaning and usefulness of this division. This thesis will therefore preserve Roe's main argument that the tight societal dilemma can move towards coexistence, but exclude his allowance for the occasional outbreak of violence, in order to keep theoretical coherence and avoid the issues outlined above.

With regard to the regular societal dilemma, Roe's argument also brings about criticism. He claims that the relationship between intention and action may not be coherent: an actor may hold a benign intention, but can adopt a seemingly malign action at the same time. He uses this to argue that the regular societal dilemma still conforms to the concept of security dilemma.¹⁶⁵ By identifying a notion of required insecurity, Roe claims that within the regular societal dilemma, an actor can behave aggressively, but theoretically speaking, without intending to harm others.¹⁶⁶ A question could be

¹⁶⁵ Roe, "Actors' Responsibility in 'Tight', 'Regular' or 'Loose' Security Dilemmas," 109.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

raised here, that is, how to measure the exact original intention of actors? Roe does not provide an explanation. Given this omission, Roe is challenged by the question of whether his argument deviates from the core notions of security dilemma theory. Shiping Tang criticises Roe, asserting that he must either misrecognise an outcome of an activated security dilemma or he has essentially miscategorised a false security dilemma. In other words, Roe only either catches part of the aspects of the security dilemma or he incorrectly categorises cases of threat.¹⁶⁷

To support his argument, Roe cites the concepts of Charles Glaser and Robert Jervis. In the former, Glaser contends that a state, while not being expansionist, is still capable of adopting an aggressive stance if such action is the solution to counter its own insecurity.¹⁶⁸ In this way, Roe claims that the actors are still security-seekers in nature. They are very cautious about conflicts, and the consequential conflicts are still regarded as ‘unintentional’. According to Jervis, relationships between Germany-France and Germany-Russia prior to the First World War, exemplifies these cases.¹⁶⁹ In either situation, any one of the actors must take an aggressive stance towards others, although these states claimed themselves as the status quo states. In this sense, a scenario of regular societal dilemmas and the principle of the security dilemma are congruent.

This thesis suggests that Roe’s argument is valid. In this thesis’s operation, the author will use the collected first-hand materials to help distinguish which interaction belongs to compatible, and incompatible security requirements.

¹⁶⁷ Tang, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict: toward a Dynamic and Integrative Theory of Ethnic Conflict,” 526.

¹⁶⁸ Charles Glaser, “Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-help,” *International Security* 19, no. 3 (1994): 55.

¹⁶⁹ Roe, “Actors’ Responsibility in ‘Tight’, ‘Regular’ or ‘Loose’ Security Dilemmas,” 109.

Finally, the loose societal dilemma manifests as the most problematic. This category does not satisfy the main foundations of the security dilemma at all. Actors within this formulation have malign intentions interacting with others and are defined as power-seekers who only calculate interests in action, rather than the self-security-protectors in any aspects. In this way, the element of offensive unintentionality has been omitted since the actors can be aggressive in thinking and their actions can justifiably make them aggressors.¹⁷⁰ To this point, a line between the security dilemma and the security threat is completely blurred. The significant point of uncertainty – towards others' intention and thereby the actor's own, does not matter. Following the logic of loose societal dilemma, it would be impossible to regard any outbreak of conflict as an 'unintended consequence'. Nor can it be termed as a 'tragedy' of mis-communication. Instead, conflicts are predictable in this type of scenario, given the principle that actors have tended to attack to gain advantage. This implication demonstrates a clear contradiction to the security dilemma.

While Roe tries to refine his argument to claim that the loose societal dilemma is applicable as a formulation of societal security dilemma, he admits that this indicts full criticism.¹⁷¹ Most points used to enhance this typology, face the same challenges, as they all confront the basic ideas of security dilemma.¹⁷² Viewing these severe theoretical flaws, this research suggests that a separation of the loose societal dilemma from the camp of security dilemma is justifiable.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 109-110.

¹⁷¹ Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 73.

¹⁷² Criticism from Tang, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict: toward a Dynamic and Integrative Theory of Ethnic Conflict," 522-525.

Thus far, this section has reviewed Paul Roe's three models of societal dilemmas and their advantages and flaws. Roe's academic purpose involves a balance between explanation and resolution of the ethnic conflict. He is ambitious to create models being applicable to all manners of cases and categorises them by their characteristics. Nevertheless, this goal surpassed the major objective of security dilemma theory. In fact, the theory confined itself to a certain domain in the first place. As John Herz, the founding father of the security dilemma notes, this theory is aimed at revealing how a security dilemma situation could result in war, but the security dilemma shall not be the only cause of all human conflicts; conflicts could also erupt from malign expansionists.¹⁷³

Explaining State-Ethnic Minority Relations: A New Framework

In the previous discussions, this thesis addressed strengths and usefulness of security dilemma theory as an analytical framework. It also identified certain gaps in the current literature. While scholars have paid great attention to the concept and conceptualisation of the theory itself, discussions about specific factors affecting the dilemma are comparatively less. As a meso-level theory, many studies often present it as an explanatory concept, but relevant and in-depth analysis in terms of what or how variables function and affect the mechanism is relatively new. Kaufman integrates leadership factor and mass emotion to the security dilemma.¹⁷⁴ Tang contributes another innovative effort by raising factors including emotion, interest, capability, and opportunity. However, he mainly outlines the logic about how these elements can result in the security dilemma without giving further analysis. All these elements

¹⁷³ Quote from Esther Visser and Isabelle Duyvesteyn, "The Irrelevance of the Security Dilemma for Civil Wars," *Civil Wars* 16, no.1 (2014): 66.

¹⁷⁴ Kaufman, "Spiraling to Ethnic War: Elites, Masses, and Moscow in Moldova's Civil War."

contain more sub-elements, such as fear, honour, and anger, which can be distinguished under the category of emotion.¹⁷⁵ Improvement of these gaps is arguably valuable and necessary. To this point, this section presents an original work about security dilemma theory by integrating two independent variables and drawing upon the existing literature.

First of all, this research revisits the concept of uncertainty, highlighting its central role in the framework-foundation. Then, it re-distinguishes three categories as low-uncertainty societal dilemma, high-uncertainty societal dilemma, and real security threat. Aligned with the classic security dilemma concept, the real security threat is separated from the camp of security dilemma. Then, variables of state-led modernisation and international intervention to the exemplified societal dilemmas are respectively discussed. Degrees of peace and conflict in the state-ethnic minority relationship are ranked.

Uncertainty

Arguably, uncertainty constitutes an essential starting point for the analytical concepts in this research. Given the comprehensive review of the security dilemma, it is identified that uncertainty occupies the most significant notion that triggers the whole mechanism of the dilemma, leading to other features, including self-help and defense and broader spiral interaction between or among actors. In the security dilemma, uncertainty is strongly related to insecurity and fear. This thesis views uncertainty to be an internal view towards the future in relation to the survival of self and being engaged in violent confrontation with others. It is regarded as a feeling and an anticipatory stance that shapes one's action and response to others.

¹⁷⁵ Tang, "The Onset of Ethnic War: A General Theory," 266-271.

Having pointed out that the existence of uncertainty can stem from an ‘unresolvable’ predicament about knowing others’ mind, Robert Butterfield makes an explicit statement:

*...you know that you yourself mean him no harm, and that you want nothing from him save guarantees for your own safety; and it is never possible for you to realise or remember properly that since he cannot see the inside of your mind, he can never have the same assurance of your intentions that you have...*¹⁷⁶

While initially his discussion about uncertainty in the security dilemma was related to interstate conflict in the international anarchic environment, this concept has also been used to examine the relationship between state and non-state actors at an intra-state level and in ethnic conflict.¹⁷⁷

With regard to survival, uncertainty can link sources that can potentially become threats (i.e. physical extinction, decomposition of material elements, etc.) to those that can help self-define ourselves as a community, with a specific group identity, be it national or ethnic.¹⁷⁸ In nation-building politics, if a group has formed a distinct identity as a social figuration, and if the process integrating the group into the

¹⁷⁶ Butterfield, *History and Human Relations*, 21

¹⁷⁷ Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation, and Trust in World Politics*, 5.

¹⁷⁸ Kuhn, “Securing Uncertainty,” 372-374.

nationalising state would result in the loss of this identity, either real or imagined, the state's nation-building endeavour poses a potential risk for the group. On the other hand, if the group owns an agency strong enough to demand and resist or even appeal to an external actor to intervene in the state's endeavour, the group can be a challenger to the integrity of the nationalising state. Based on this conception, this thesis will further discuss the categorised societal dilemmas and the resulting variables in the next sections.

In their comprehensive analysis, Ken Booth and Nicholas J. Wheeler identifies two features of the security dilemma, and uncertainty plays a central role in both aspects.¹⁷⁹ Accordingly, the interpretation of others' intentions and the response to others are the main issues within the security dilemma. They contend that due to the feature of uncertainty, those responsible in making decisions regarding significant matters face a difficult choice, which is telling others whether to be defensive or offensive. Subsequently, the decision-maker, even after figuring out the purposes, would have to determine his own response. Then, the actor faces a new round of choices between delivering offensive or defensive signals. Afterwards, the opposing actor faces a similar pattern of decision-making in deciding their reaction. From the view of Booth and Wheeler, uncertainty can not only cause these predicaments, but also possibly cause mutual hostility through a spiral interaction of going through misplaced suspicion or misplaced trust.¹⁸⁰

Owing to the logic of self-protection under sense of uncertainty, people are encouraged to prepare for the worst in order to tackle a potential threat. An emphasis

¹⁷⁹ Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation, and Trust in World Politics*, 1; 4-5.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 4-5.

on expecting the worst case-scenario, as a consequence, often detracts attention from logical conflict resolution and a true solution. Approaching an issue from this mindset easily distracts the actors involved from viewing a probable positive outcome and results in taking a harder position in their policies and practices. Moreover, it easily transforms a routine activity into an object implicating fear, anxiety and negative impression. All these would damage trust-building and may generate misperception.

To some extent, studies of asymmetric conflict echoes this perspective. The literature argues that actors situated in a asymmetric power relations, not inevitably but often, have differences regarding attention to the risk perception and interactive behaviour. Influenced by the size of resources and conditions, the importance of the stronger actor for the weaker and the importance of the weaker for the stronger can also be asymmetric. For one thing, the weaker actor tends to be more sensitive and exaggerate typical unilateral action adopted by the stronger actor as a threat. For another, the stronger tends to perceive the weaker actor's active action in looking for respect as a challenge. Differences in perspectives result in differences in perception and behaviour. Considering such a way of interpretation and interaction, misperception is common and can lead to conflict.¹⁸¹

This perspective provides implications for this research. The development of the Sino-Tibetan negotiation may partially be line with such a scenario. Womack argues that power asymmetry between Beijing and Dharamsala has caused both sides to share distinct understandings and perceptions towards each other. For the Tibetans, the

¹⁸¹ Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 343-355; Karin Aggestam, "Mediating Asymmetrical Conflict," *Mediterranean Politics* 7, no. 1 (2002): 69-72; Brantly Womack, "Asymmetry and Systemic Misperception: China, Vietnam and Cambodia during the 1970s," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 26, no. 2 (2003): 92-108; *China among Unequals: Asymmetric Foreign Relationships in Asia* (World Scientific, 2010), 82-84.

Chinese commitments in Tibet are regarded as a significant societal threat; while for the CCP, the active demands for cultural autonomy and internationalisation tactics from the Dalai Lama and the TGIE only imply separatism. It is because of this disparity of interpretations that drives the break down in bilateral negotiations.¹⁸²

To deal with this issue, putting uncertainty under control through prediction and ways to behave accordingly is essential to human functioning.¹⁸³ The actors engaged in the interaction strive to distinguish the motivation, intention, and capacity of their rival. Theoretically speaking, all actors in the structure of the security dilemma adopt a defensive stance.¹⁸⁴ However, for those who are in the interaction, they may gain a contrarian perspective.¹⁸⁵ Even though one actor does not intend to threaten the other, the rivalry may still perceive a sense of threat. In this case, one actor's increasing reassurance for its own security can have an unintentional impact on how the other views their security.

Moreover, even if one actor can know another's intention, the actor can not always be assured that the others would not change their minds due to various reasons at different times. In other words, the problem of uncertainty still exists. Jennifer Mitzen presents a concept of ontological security to analyse state actors' behaviour.¹⁸⁶ Narrating this logic, Mitzen explains why some states seem irrational in their decisions to continue engaging with conflicts, because this way of routinisation can

¹⁸² Brantly Womack, "Resolving Asymmetric Stalemate: the Case of the Tibet Question," *Journal of Contemporary China* 16, no. 52 (2007): 443-460.

¹⁸³ Vincent Yzerbyt and Stephanie Demoulin, "Intergroup Relations," *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Vol. 1-2, 1027-1028.

¹⁸⁴ Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 66; Tang, "The Security Dilemma"; "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic."

¹⁸⁵ Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 64.

¹⁸⁶ Jennifer Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma," *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 3 (2006): 341-370.

serve them with a function acquiring a higher certainty, compelling them to take other actions. However, such argument again demonstrates that uncertainty constitutes a significant element in decision-making. Having said so, as a separate question, this thesis does not argue that researchers should not value the real intention of the involved actors, which is also a topic that has become a long-term debate between the positivists and the post-positivists.¹⁸⁷ This research suggests that to a large extent, archives, interviews and field surveys are helpful to begin to understand intentions. What this research aims to underline here, is uncertainty can be a significant challenge for the involved actors interacting with others, which explains why scholars often connect the security dilemma to tragedy.

Due to an uncertainty about others, the involved actors can only choose to securitise themselves; however, a larger degree of this sense of uncertainty would emerge thereafter. IR Theory academics have thus debated how to overcome this uncertainty.¹⁸⁸ In the real world, many formal or informal institutions have been established or normalised to facilitate communication and reduce uncertainty.

There is a larger body of literature reminding us that ideologies and emotions can influence an actor's perception of another's behavioral action, in which uncertainty plays a significant and complex role in the reaction being shaped or in shaping.¹⁸⁹ In

¹⁸⁷ Alexander Wendt, "On Constitution and Causation in International Relations," *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 5 (1998): 101-118.

¹⁸⁸ Evan Braden Montgomery, "Breaking Out of the Security Dilemma: Realism, Reassurance, and the Problem of Uncertainty," *International Security* 31, no. 2 (2006): 151-185.

¹⁸⁹ Iorian P. Kühn, "Securing Uncertainty: Sub-state Security Dilemma and the Risk of Intervention," *International Relations* 25, no. 3 (2011): 363-380; Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín and Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Ideology in Civil war: Instrumental Adoption and Beyond," *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 2 (2014): 213-226; Daphna Canetti, "Emotional Distress, Conflict Ideology, and Radicalization," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50, no. 4 (2017): 940-943; Jonathan Leader Maynard, "Ideology and armed conflict," *Journal of Peace Research* (2019): 1-15.

terms of case studies, Posen contributes a classic research. He uses the concept of uncertainty and security dilemma to examine the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union with a focus on Russian-Ukrainian relations.¹⁹⁰ Dunn argues that a pervasive sense of uncertainty caused an autochthony discourse in his examined African cases.¹⁹¹ Elsewhere, Bertrand narrates the ethnic conflicts occurring in Indonesia by analysing anxiety as a widespread emotion in the changing society.¹⁹² By focusing on the concept of 'fear to the future', which derives from the sense of uncertainty, McDoom and Pearlman in their respective studies analyse the outbreak of civil war in Rwanda in 1994 and Syria in 2011. Significantly, they both note that causation between fear and violence may not be one way; rather, they can affect each other in tandem.¹⁹³

This research recognises such arguments and notices this point. An actor's tolerance and view on the other can vary¹⁹⁴ and the way that uncertainty functions should remain relatively constant. It is for this reason that this research highlights the historical context and dynamic interaction among actors.

Low-uncertainty Societal Dilemma

The low-uncertainty societal dilemma draws upon notions of Roe's tight societal dilemma and focuses on a key feature of reconcilable implications. In this scenario,

¹⁹⁰ Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," 27-47.

¹⁹¹ Kevin C. Dunn, "'Sons of the Soil' and Contemporary State Making: Autochthony, Uncertainty and Political Violence in Africa," *Third World Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (2009): 113-127.

¹⁹² Jacques Bertrand, "Ethnic Conflicts in Indonesia: National Models, Critical Junctures, and the Timing of Violence," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 8, no. 3 (2008): 425-449.

¹⁹³ Omar Shahabudin McDoom, "The Psychology of Threat in Intergroup Conflict: Emotions, Rationality, and Opportunity in the Rwandan Genocide," *International Security* 37, no. 2 (2012): 119-155; Wendy Pearlman, "Narratives of Fear in Syria," *Perspectives on Politics* 14, no. 1 (2016): 21-37.

¹⁹⁴ William B Gudykunst and Tsukasa Nishida. "Anxiety, Uncertainty, and Perceived Effectiveness of Communication across Relationships and Cultures." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 25, no. 1 (2001): 55-71.

the involved actors are security-seekers in nature and they interact with others with defensive gestures. Tension may still exist due to misinterpretation of illusory incompatibility of security needs of the interacting actors. In this scenario, two societies are able to coexist. As long as there is justifiable information transparency and confidence between both societal groups, the dilemma is escapable.

Taking Roe's tight societal dilemma, this thesis contends that low-uncertainty societal dilemma appears when there is an illusory incompatibility between two or more groups with regard to their own societal security requirement. As Roe argues, the dilemmatic situation takes place when the involved actors' are uncertain of the intentions behind each other's action. In this sense, where one actor's security requirements in the tight societal dilemma do not, in reality, conflict with that of the other, and both actors employ only defensive means, the mutual distrust and fear can still result in misperception and tension.¹⁹⁵ However, given in its essence the security incompatibility is illusory, coexistence is feasible. The implication is that while the involved actors consider themselves in tension, harmony existed as a result of their interactions.

Bilgic argues that actors interpret the politics of the security dilemma in relation to how they would interact with others.¹⁹⁶ As a result, actors in the low-uncertainty societal dilemmas should refuse a dichotomist and realist/neorealist attitude and adopt constructivism to pursue harmony.

The obstacle to the mitigation of conflict rests on the stream of interactions shadowed

¹⁹⁵ Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 73.

¹⁹⁶ Ali Bilgic, "Towards a New Societal Security Dilemma: Comprehensive Analysis of Actor Responsibility in Intersocietal Conflicts," *Review of International Studies* 39.1 (2013): 185-208.

by misperception. Robert Jervis's argument of the 'spiral model' that is distinct from the 'deterrence model', can also be addressed to illuminate the low-uncertainty societal dilemma.¹⁹⁷ Both models similarly demonstrate an action-reaction cycle, but a key conceptual difference is whether there is malign intention. In the spiral model, actors enhance themselves for the purpose of self-protection, where the 'apparent threat' cannot be real. Conversely, in the deterrence model, actors' self-enhancement, through deterrence of others, can serve to be the 'real threat'. A real threat does not, however, exist when returning to the classic features of the security dilemma, meaning that only Jervis's spiral reaction model is in line with the classic notion of security dilemma.

To summarise, tight societal dilemma and the spiral model provide the following inputs towards the low-uncertainty societal dilemma. Firstly, tension is easily triggered within inter-group interactions, though the actors in practice have situated a place of mitigation. Secondly, a means for trust building are significant in preventing a swing to the high-uncertainty societal dilemma. This is of particular use for this thesis in the context of Tibet, as the Sino-Tibetan relationship is locked into the security dilemma and at certain times coexistence is recognisable.

High-uncertainty Societal Dilemma

The high-uncertainty societal dilemma is based upon the notions of Roe's regular societal dilemma and centralised on the concept of mutually exclusive security needs within actors' interactions. In this scenario, all sides involved are still security-seekers in nature and they all adopt a defensive stance. However, their security requirements are incompatible, and actions aimed at self-maintenance and security-enhancement

¹⁹⁷ Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma."

result in the insecurity of others. As a result, the presence of one actor necessitates the insecurity of the other's autonomy and coherence. The bilateral relationship is manifest as a zero-sum style.

Within the high-uncertainty societal dilemma circumstance, involved actors are sensitive to the opposites' intentions and behaviours. Referring to the five dimensions of societal security that threats can emerge from sectors of military, politics, society, economy and environment, when the first actor touches one of these areas, the other actor can react at a fast pace. In turn and in return, the action-reaction spiral intensifies tension.

Similar to the regular societal dilemma in which Roe argues that the formulation falls into a 'difficult to resolve short of war' scenario, the result of high-uncertainty societal dilemma scenario is often outbreak of violence and war. This type of societal dilemma matches the classic security dilemma. However, if appropriate strategies from internal or external sources could be utilised to help resettle and reformulate security requirements for all sides, conflict could be mitigated and turned into the low-uncertainty. This thesis thereby argues that dynamics through which conflict can be resolved exist.

Real Security Threat

The notion of the real security threat is irrelevant to any form of the security dilemmas. It is distinguished here as a contingent category. The definition of real security threat is quite straightforward. The real security threat is measured in the same terms as the previous discussion based on the offensive stance. In our theoretical operation, this type will be identified based on acclaimed words and the commitment of actors.

The concept of the real security threat builds upon the previous critique of Roe's loose societal dilemma. As identified, the argument of the loose security formulation is contradictory to the core assumptions of the security dilemma. Both its acceptances of power-seeking and existence of hostile intention, go against a theoretically defensive stance of security dilemma. Roe fully acknowledges questions over his model but argues that concerns over whether intentions are benign or malign are less important than whether or not security requirements are compatible or incompatible.¹⁹⁸ In addition, he aims to categorise types of ethnic conflict into those that can be resolved without violence and those that are difficult to resolve without violence. As such, Roe suggests few solutions to a loose societal dilemma. To justify his argument, Roe refers to different scholars. Firstly, in his reference to Charles Glaser's examination over greedy state actors and their actions, Roe argues that greedy states and the security dilemma can still co-exist. He claims that 'there is no pure greedy state in reality'.¹⁹⁹ Further, Angstrom and Duyvesteyn's declining-prize dilemma, where the power-seekers pursue action to gain benefits is raised, even though violence would erode the upcoming prize. Finally, Roe incorporates Kaufmann's discussions with regard to certain conflicts that are irresolvable if they lack military means.²⁰⁰ Despite all these arguments, it is argued that by bringing malign intention to security dilemma theory, Roe blurs the security dilemma and security threat. The category of real security threat is necessary to avoid this mistake.

Overall, the denial of the real security threat from the camp of security dilemma thereby making it an independent type, can be conceptually useful. Listing it with the

¹⁹⁸ Roe, "Which Security Dilemma? Mitigating Ethnic Conflict," 288

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 289-291.

low- and high-uncertainty societal dilemmas, this thesis can examine the Sino-Tibetan relationship in an inclusive manner.

Coexistence and Conflict in the Societal Dilemmas

The previous section introduced new typologies of societal dilemmas. In both the low-uncertainty and the high-uncertainty security formulations, involved actors are defined as security-seekers, with the main difference being the compatibility, or incompatibility of security requirements. (See Figure 2-1)

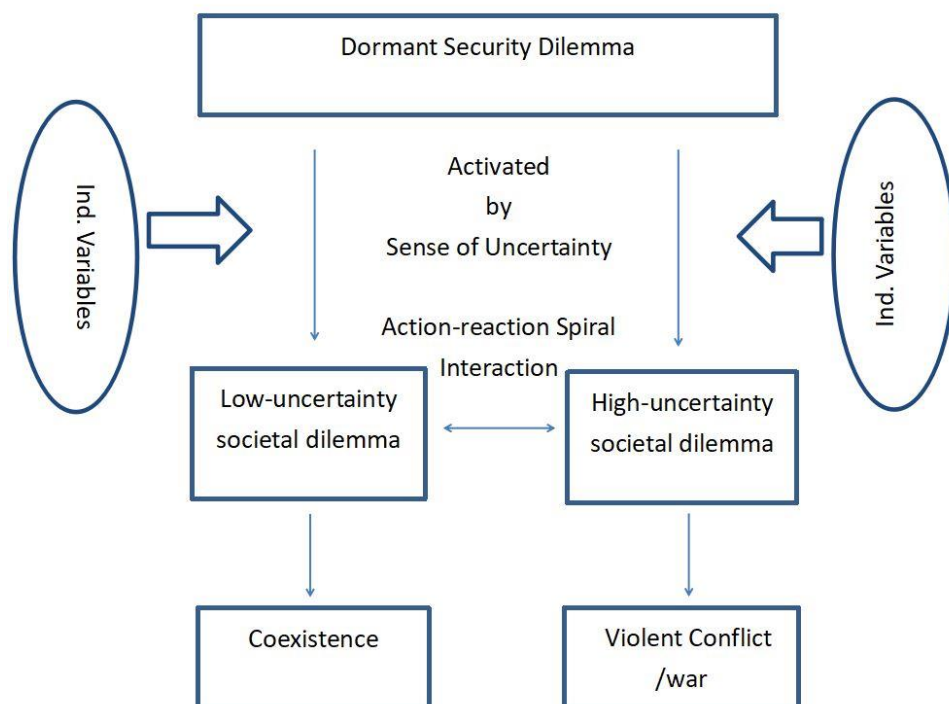


Figure 2-1 Societal Dilemmas and Outcomes

Low-uncertainty Societal Dilemma refers to where an illusory incompatibility exists within mutual perceptions. The logic is that while the security dilemma is activated,

by seeking interactions through common ground, both parties are able to coexist and transcend the confrontation. Neither groups' security requires the other's insecurity.

High-uncertainty Societal Dilemma refers to where one actor's security does require the other's insecurity. When the security dilemma is activated in this scenario, violence and war can easily break out between both actors because they are not able to make concessions towards each other.

These distinguished types not only advance the notions of the security dilemma to intra-state conflicts, but also present windows of opportunity for alleviating and transcending the security predicament. Being linkable and transformable, these models provide an integrative analytical framework to explore the dynamics of ethnic conflicts. As illustrated, a low-uncertainty societal dilemma suggests a result of coexistence and transcendence; whereas the high-uncertainty and real security threat formulations mainly result in violence.

Independent Variables

This section focuses on the relationship between the developed societal dilemmas addressed above and independent variables. By integrating these variables, it analyses the formation of sense of uncertainty in the state-ethnic minority relations. This section presents scholarly works that help to build the independent variables below.

State-led Modernisation: Radical or Modest

State-led modernisation is the first variable of the security dilemmas. The state-led element is included in order to stress the context of nation-building. The concept is built by drawing upon the literature of modernisation theory, which has elucidated the

positive and negative effects of modernisation to national integration and I argue that the degree of radicalisation within modernisation imposition plays a key role. From below, this section begins with a discussion of the relationship between modernisation and identity. Then, a sophisticated point that national identity and multiple sub-national identities can form within the same modernisation process is clarified. This section then suggests, as modernisation continues that results in a sense of insecurity by target groups, the phenomena of security dilemma can be activated; the degree of radicalisation would matter.

Firstly, modernisation refers to the increase of urbanisation, industrialisation, and transportation as well as other state administration and apparatus. This is believed to lead to psychological effects from these material bases above that lead to homogenisation of people within the scope. This notion has been hugely influenced by the works of Karl Deutsch. In his view, modernisation contains a strong power to construct and reconstruct identity. Its process operates in parallel to continuous social mobilisation. In association with this, modernisation reconfigures the social, economic and psychological ties of a society and reconnects the involved population into relatively new groupings of identity and self-identification.²⁰¹

Modernisation theory suggests that homogenisation features as a conspicuous outcome of modernisation. Weiner stresses a key mechanism of integration. From his perspective, state-led modernisation accompanies the process of bringing culturally and socially diverse groups into a single unit under governmental authority. It would be helpful to unite the whole group by a common thread and to reorganise them within

²⁰¹ Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," 493-494.

a certain territorial and political scope.²⁰² To this point, the mind of nation-building guides the integration and its specific implement down to various areas.²⁰³ Anthony Birch heralds the significance of national integration and admires its function in building a state's legitimacy. He believes that through the effort of building public institutions and political socialisation by the government, a shared sense of national loyalty can be forged.²⁰⁴

Taking a similar standpoint, Breuilly also contends that political modernisation plays a key role in generating communal consciousness. According to him, institution-building occupies the central space of political modernisation which reflects the intention of the ruler and frames the reactions of the ruled. Once the state has successfully legitimatised its existence in the minds of the people within the territory, Breuilly argues, the notion of a nation as a state is deemed to be congruent.²⁰⁵

In the following empirical cases, the force of state-led modernisation is argued to foster a sense of nationhood. For example, in her examination of public construction in early twentieth century Turkey, Kezer contends that the extension of public infrastructure helped to create a web of imagined community in people's minds through their daily life experience within state controlled spaces.²⁰⁶ Similarly, in the

²⁰² Myron Weiner, "Political Integration and Political Development," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 358, no.1 (1965): 54.

²⁰³ Tishkov, "What is Russia?"; Wolczuk, "History, Europe and the "National Idea"; Qin Yan, *Chongtu Yu Zhenghe: Minzu Zhengzhi Guanxi Moshi Yanjiu* (Beijing: Social Science Academic Press, 2011), 140-173

²⁰⁴ Birch, Anthony, *Nationalism and National Integration* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989): 36-51.

²⁰⁵ John Breuilly, "The state and Nationalism," in *Understanding Nationalism*, eds. Montserrat Guibernau and John Hutchinson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), 32-52.

²⁰⁶ Zeynep Kezer, "An Imaginable Community: the Material Culture of Nation-building in Early Republican Turkey," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27.3 (2009): 508-530.

case of modern China, Kipnis identified an increased standardisation in the whole of society, driven by three dynamics of consolidation: a national education system, the expansion of urbanisation, and advancement in communication. He argued that increased commonality produced a general sense of Chinese nationhood.²⁰⁷ From these examples, modernisation can therefore be argued to be a helpful and positive tool for national construction.

However, it has also been noted that identity may not be linearly forged in the direction that the nation-builders desire. Empirical evidence has shown that modernisation can lead to the formation of identity consciousness within the state boundary, but crucially, the state may not be able to dominate the content of 'we-group'. In other words, modernisation can possibly generate multiple and multilevel identities based on various conditions. In Gellner's concept, this is a result of an uneven spread of modernisation, which explains the existence of diverse nations/ethnicities in the modern world.²⁰⁸

As modernisation keeps being imposed, the target group other than the dominant nation-builder may complicate the politics of nation-building. In this way, the dynamics of modernisation can contribute to the onset of ethnic conflict.

Deutsch suggests that social mobilisation accompanied by modernisation can have unexpected effects. Through greater political and economic contacts amongst different societal groups, people identify either their similarities or differences. The conditions are various and situational. If societal mobilisation does not lead to the erosion of

²⁰⁷ Andrew Kipnis, "Constructing Commonality: Standardization and Modernization in Chinese Nation-building," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 71, no. 3 (2012): 731-755.

²⁰⁸ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.

internal differences and build a common identity, the alternative path could be that societal members' awareness concerning ethnic differences becomes salient. Further, this leads to “a new growth of nationalism among the newly mobilised populations”.²⁰⁹ Potentially, such a wave of nationalism can then in turn pose challenges to the whole society, in particular the national cohesion.

The target groups' perception towards the status quo and any change brought about with modernisation is important. According to the Copenhagen School and Roe, when changes are perceived as a natural process, societal identity can alter along with the process. In other words, societal groups can generate a perception of threat if changes are not perceived to occur at a natural pace.²¹⁰ Further referring to the previous 5 threats to societal security; military, politics, society, economy, and environment, the dynamics to the sense of insecurity is illuminating. Significantly, modernisation can be strongly related to these sources to threat. In this way, as state-led modernisation is radically imposed and causing radical changes, perceptions of a threat can grow correspondingly.

When facing state-led modernisation, the relationship between a target ethnic group's perception of its identity survival and the perception to the state's action is a dynamic interaction. The existing literature covers a vast number of empirical case studies and articulates that often the target groups fear the erosion of the status quo, not only in terms of material aspects, but also psychological features.²¹¹ These fears can lead to perceived threats to security, the kinds of which were discussed previously in this thesis when outlining Security Dilemma Theory. The groups can thus generate

²⁰⁹ Deutsch, “The Growth of Nations,” 179.

²¹⁰ Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 48.

²¹¹ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*.

discontent towards the state over revision of established statuses and resource redistribution.²¹²

Connor and Horowitz both address the issue of between-group competition triggered as a result of modernisation. Connor addresses the relationship between economic competition and increase of inter-group interaction within modernisation. He states that as modernisation leads to previously isolated groups being bound together, societies would be reorganised at the same time. Relevantly, intergroup competition becomes possible for the economic benefits of the groups.²¹³ Horowitz expands on this issue, highlighting the effects and intertwinement of economy and politics in this context of modernising transition. If one group perceives its economic condition to be worsening as a result of modernisation, they will demand improvement from the state. Horowitz suggests that the process of modernisation must also involve resource redistribution. In addition, Horowitz emphasises the concept of cultural persistence. According to him, if a group considers the state-imposed modernisation to be a threat to its culture, while the state is incapable of handling such suspicion, the group may refuse the state's policy and this may lead to bilateral tension.²¹⁴ Expressing a similar idea, Sambanis argues that when facing powerful modernisation that can dissolve traditional society, the target group always constructs a distinct political identity as a defensive mechanism and thereby opposes the state. In his observation, this is often the case in Third World states that are under pressure of nation-building towards its multiple ethnic minorities.²¹⁵

²¹² Gurr, "Why Minorities Rebel"; Newman, "Does Modernization Breed Ethnic Political Conflict?"

²¹³ Walker Connor, "Nation-building or Nation-destroying?," *World Politics* 24, no. 3 (1972): 319-355; "The Politics of Ethnonationalism," *Journal of International Affairs* 27, no.1 (1973): 1-21.

²¹⁴ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 95-139.

²¹⁵ Nicolas Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Civil Wars have the Same Causes? A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 3 (2001): 259-282.

To summarise, state-led modernisation's imposition on ethnic minority area poses dual implications of positivity and negativity to the societal security dilemmas. State's strategy – being radical or modest – is significant, and related to the perception of the targeted group. This research will assess the means used by the Chinese Party in intensive and extensive nation-state-building projects involving Tibet. At distinct times, Tibetans perceived them as threats and bilateral confrontation occurred and moved towards the security dilemmas.

International Intervention: Existence or Not

The fact that international factors have a profound impact on ethnic conflict has been emphasised in relevant studies.²¹⁶ Arguably, the presence or not of external assistance matters to the balance between the state and the target group, and thereafter their relationship. Drawing upon the current literature, this research formulates international intervention as the second variable to the sense of uncertainty and the security dilemmas.

Previous research has already explored the triadic interplay between the nationalising state, its constituent societal groups (usually the target ethnic groups) and external actors. This section will review past studies of external intervention in a state's nation-building project regarding the incentives and impacts. Literature relevant to the responses from the nationalising state and its domestic target groups will also be reviewed. In terms of the question of Tibet, which has been a highly internationalised

²¹⁶ Kühn, "Securing Uncertainty: Sub-state Security Dilemma and the Risk of Intervention," 363-380; Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*; Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation-building*; Erik Durneika, "Mechanisms of Ethnic Internationalization: The Uyghurs, Tibetans, and Mongols," *Asian Ethnicity* June (2019): 1-25.

political issue,²¹⁷ discussion within this section will be beneficial in revealing the role of international actors.

In this thesis, ‘international dynamics’ refer to the state and the ethnic groups’ international relations (ties). To clarify, this research analyses how international intervention, meaning external assistance in the forms ranging from diplomatic support to military intervention, affect the state’s actions and policies, and the target group’s action towards the state.

Brubaker provides a classic conceptual framework to understand the triadic nexus in the nation-building process.²¹⁸ He classifies nationalising states, national minorities, and external homelands as the three actors in the analytical model. These three elements do not signify fixed entities but have variably configured political stances. A nationalising state is regarded as a stance that aims to construct a state itself, to be a nation-state by promoting certain characteristics or political hegemony. A national minority is viewed as a group that claims, demands, or asserts certain collective cultural or political rights from the host state based on specific ethno-cultural conditions. An external homeland, which can also be another nationalising state, claims to have rights to protect and monitor the interests of the minority in another state through constructing certain tie connections. The interactions between these three stances are interdependent. When a nationalising state is perceived, either by its national minority or external homeland, to embark upon nationalization, or the state explicitly proclaims its intention, its domestic minority can adopt various reactions

²¹⁷ Regarding Tibet in the PRC’s Geopolitical Strategy in South Asia, see Norbu, “Tibet in Sino-Indian Relations.” Regarding Tibet in China’s foreign relations, see Sautman, “The Tibet Issue in Post-summit Sino-American Relations.”

²¹⁸ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*.

from full participation, to demanding autonomous rights, or full independence. In this process, external homelands can provide material or moral intervention by linking constructed relations.²¹⁹ An important implication of this research is that the external actor is not necessarily a neighbouring country. In addition, the external actor can always intervene in a state's nation-building by 'constructing' connections.

Walt's discussion of the formation and dissolution of international alliances when considering external involvement in state-ethnic interactions is relevant. In his view, an alliance is "a formal or informal commitment for security cooperation between two or more states".²²⁰ The main reason for the formation of an alliance is to combine the actors' capacity to advance their interests. An alliance can vary in terms of the ways it performs and the level of institutionalisation. It can change or persist due to rational or irrational factors, and can involve itself in domestic and international contexts, including the politics of the balance of power, ideology, domestic regime changes and elite choices.²²¹ Drawing on his discussion, this research argues that the formation of alliances amongst the triad of the nationalising state, the state's ethnic group and external relevant states, influence both the power of the state and the ethnic group. The motivations for an external actor to intervene in a state's nation-building is then further discussed below.

The incentive of the external actor towards a state's nation-building is an important theme in international security literature. Based on realist perspectives, if an external power lends its support to domestic ethnic minorities within a state, this is expected to lead to conflicts between the state and the ethnic groups. An expected motive of the

²¹⁹ Ibid, 55-76.

²²⁰ Stephan Walt, "Why Alliances Endure or Collapse," *Survival* 39, no. 1 (1997): 157.

²²¹ Ibid: 158-170.

external power is suggested to be the destabilising of the state. This is evident when an external power has disputes with its neighbours and it has ethnic ties within the state.²²² Wang's study of the two East Turkestan independent movements, by Uyghur ethnic nationalists, in China's Xinjiang province in the 1930s-40s, argues that they were assisted by Japan and the Soviet Union. In his investigation, while the ethnic Uyghur identity arguably formed in the late Qing dynasty of the early 20th century, the Uyghurs did not seek independence. Rather, from historical review, their ethno-nationalist movements occurred in the much latter ROC period due to the encouragement of these external powers.²²³ As such, the external effect is explicit. Similarly, the realistic perspective is also adopted in pondering the reason for the US's assistance to Tibetan guerrillas in the Cold World era to fight the CCP.

Mylonas argues that inter-state relationships affect a state's nation-building policies. He provides a theory regarding the policies pursued by a host state towards domestic ethnic groups, as the triadic nation-building politics within a country. According to his interpretation, the external power as the third actor, always supports the ethnic minority which potentially has geopolitical advantages in a state. Through this support, the external power can weaken the state's power. In response, the host state would adopt one of three strategies of assimilation, accommodation, and exclusion towards the ethnic group, depending upon how it evaluates its domestic and international status.²²⁴ His research suggests that, depending on how the nationalising state perceives threat, it would adopt a harder position towards the target group that is

²²² Alexis Heraclides, "Secessionist Minorities and External Involvement," *International Organization* 44, no. 3 (1990): 377; Douglas Woodwell, "Unwelcome Neighbors: Shared Ethnicity and International Conflict during the Cold War," *International Studies Quarterly* 48.1 (2004): 197.

²²³ Ke Wang, *Dong Tujuesitan Duli Yundong 1930s-1940s* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2013).

²²⁴ Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation-building*, 5-49.

receiving support from state's enemy.²²⁵

However, authors of a substantial body of literature have expressed that they are discontent with the concept that international actors are always keen to support ethnic groups against a state. They do not accept the simplified assumption that ethnic minorities always intend to oppose the state's nation-building project. Indeed, several cases show that international intervention can be conducive to nation-building. According to Talentino, external assistance can play a positive role in preventing further ethnic conflict. The key element is stabilisation of society through mediation. As a result, a multi-ethnic state can create a harmonious environment for consolidating the national identity of its citizens.²²⁶ Echoing this line, Heraclides also justifies the advantage of external intervention. He notes that when the state government and the ethnic group have equivalent military power, ethnic conflict can become a lengthy civil war and possibly spread to neighbouring countries thereby forming regional issues. In this circumstance, he argues that external intervention can help mediate intra-state conflicts.²²⁷ Dobbins examines the US' role in foreign countries' nation-building, arguing that the external actor played a positive role in nation-building within other countries. In his research, the US' alliances with Japan and Germany essentially helped nation-building in both states after the Second World War.²²⁸ He articulates that the intention of the external actor and the will and capacity of the state should, in unison, be taken into consideration.²²⁹ By widely reviewing the

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Andrew Talentino, "Perceptions of Peacebuilding: The Dynamic of Imposer and Imposed Upon," *International Studies Perspectives* 8, no. 2 (2007): 152-171.

²²⁷ Andrea Talentino, "Intervention as Nation-building: Illusion or Possibility?" *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 1 (2002): 27-43; Alexis Heraclides, "Secessionist Minorities and External Involvement," *International Organization* 44, no. 3 (1990): 378.

²²⁸ Dobbins, "America's Role in Nation-building," 87-110.

²²⁹ Ibid.

international assistance to nation-building projects in 20 post-conflict countries, Dobbins and Miller's research further confirms such positive effects.²³⁰

Although the positive dimension of external intervention is recognised, it is also empirically shown that external actors must consider the localised context when providing nation-building assistance. By analysing the US' failed efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq, Darden and Mylonas consider that nation-building should be operated through two phases: nation-building and state-building. They argue that building the loyalty of the local population towards their central government should precede transferring coercive and organisational capacities.²³¹ One implication is that building a functioning state institution is imperative in order to develop a cohesive civil identity which can build and thrive on a shared sense of community.²³² In Call's research, he argues that the occasion and timing for external intervention may have differing effects on state-ethnic interactions.²³³ As can be seen, the local context cannot be neglected in examining external intervention in nation-building politics, as it is possible that such intervention can intensify local conflicts.

Moving now to examine interactions between a state's ethnic group and external actors on the state's nation-building agenda, the existing literature provides different perspectives. Examining the alliance between the domestic ethnic group and the external actor, Jenne argues that an ethnic group's degree of radicalisation is strongly related to attitudes of its potential external patron. When perceiving that it is receiving

²³⁰ James Dobbins, and Laurel Miller, "Overcoming Obstacles to Peace," *Survival* 55, no.1 (2013): 103-120.

²³¹ Keith Darden and Harris Mylonas, "The Promethean Dilemma: Third-party State-building in Occupied Territories," *Ethnopolitics* 11, no.1 (2012): 85-93.

²³² Andrew Talentino, "The Two Faces of Nation-building: Developing Function and Identity," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17, no.3 (2004): 557-575.

²³³ Call, *Building States to Build Peace*, 60-74.

significant external support, the ethnic minority group is likely to make more radical political demands, whether or not the host state demonstrates high respect towards minority rights.²³⁴ The investigation by Thyne illustrates a similar result. He argues that as the external actor promises to assist the domestic group, the domestic group tends to enhance its demands upon the state as bargaining power between the nationalising state and the domestic group changes. On the other hand, if the external actor adopts a neutral standpoint or supports the state's policy towards the targeted group, the target group is less likely to challenge the state.

In addition to discussing the aspect from the external actor's perspective, Han focuses specifically on the preferential choices of ethnic groups. In his research, he argues that political identity contestation does not only involve the original identity of the ethnic group, but also engages in other aspects, such as whether an alternative identity option for the ethnic group exists. Through examining five ethnic minorities, which have transnational ethnic ties in the People's Republic of China, Han notes that national identity contestation does not occur in all ethnic minorities. Rather, it arguably occurs in Tibet and Xinjiang where the ethnic groups perceive to have alternative options other than the state's agenda. While the Tibetan and the Uyghur examples show a higher tendency of violence against the PRC's nation-building, such dichotomous conflicts on political identity do not occur in the cases of the Korean, the Mongols and the Dai.²³⁵ Therefore, an implication from his study is that conditions about the existing ethnic identity of the group, whether there exists an external patron or not, and the degree of external support, can influence the state-ethnic interactions.

²³⁴ Jenne, "A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog that did not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia."

²³⁵ Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*.

By comprehensively analysing inter-state relations and the ethnic group's perceptions towards the external patron's strength, Mylonas and Han further expanded upon various potential policies that a multi-ethnic state pursues towards its ethnic groups in a nation-building process. They argue that, if an ethnic group does not receive external help, the state tends to assimilate it. If a stronger enemy of the state aids an ethnic group, the host state tends to exclude this group. However, if the help is from a weaker enemy, the host state tends to impose integration upon this ethnicity. In addition, if an ethnic group enjoys help from either the stronger or the weaker ally of the host state, a standpoint of accommodation is usually adopted.²³⁶ Although this research neglects the agency of minorities in a nation-building process, it provides a model and predicted actions from the perspective of the state. As can be seen, the state will harden its attitude towards ethnic minorities in relation to the perceived degree of challenge.

This section discussed the potential positive and negative influences from external actors on a state's nation-building politics, explaining the most likely triggering factors of ethnic conflict. As discussed, external intervention often plays an influential role. The state may adopt a tough standpoint on the minority group when it perceives threats; the group can also stand to challenge the state authority when receiving external support. By conjoining these concepts to our discussions on the theory of the security dilemma, it facilitates a deeper understanding of the positive or negative dynamics in a state's effort to integrate the target group. This is further elaborated upon in the following section.

²³⁶ Enze Han and Harris Mylonas, "Interstate Relations, Perceptions, and Power Balance: Explaining China's Policies toward Ethnic Groups, 1949–1965," *Security Studies* 23, no. 1 (2014): 148-181.

Theory Predictions

This thesis now presents four configurations that result in outcomes of conflict and coexistence pertaining to societal dilemmas in Figure 2-2 and Figure 2-3 (see next page). Firstly, the scenarios of low-uncertainty societal dilemma and high-uncertainty societal dilemma appear reliant on the interaction between the variable of the degree of radicalisation of state modernisation implementation and the variable of whether there exists any external support to the minority group.

		State-led Modernisation (to Minority Group)	
		Radical	Modest
International Intervention (Assistance to Minority Group)	Yes	1 Conflict, intense (Y, R) <i>High-uncertainty Societal Dilemma</i>	3 Conflict (Y, M) <i>Societal Dilemma leaning to the Low- formulation</i>
	No	2 Conflict, intermediate (N, R) <i>Societal Dilemma leaning to the High- formulation</i>	4 Coexistence (N, M) <i>Low-uncertainty Societal Dilemma</i>

Figure 2-2 Four Outcomes for State-Ethnic Minority Interaction

Configuration 1: The outcome of conflict is likely if the ethnic minority group receives external support and simultaneously faces a radical modernisation campaign launched by the state.

Configuration 2: This outcome of conflict is likely if the ethnic minority group receives no external support but the minority group faces a radical modernisation campaign launched by the state. This outcome manifests higher degree of violence than the configuration 3.

Configuration 3: This outcome of conflict is likely if the ethnic minority group receives external support and the minority group faces a modest modernisation campaign launched by the state. This outcome manifests lower degree of violence than the configuration 2

Configuration 4: This outcome of coexistence is likely if the ethnic minority group receives no external support and the minority group faces a modest modernisation campaign launched by the state.

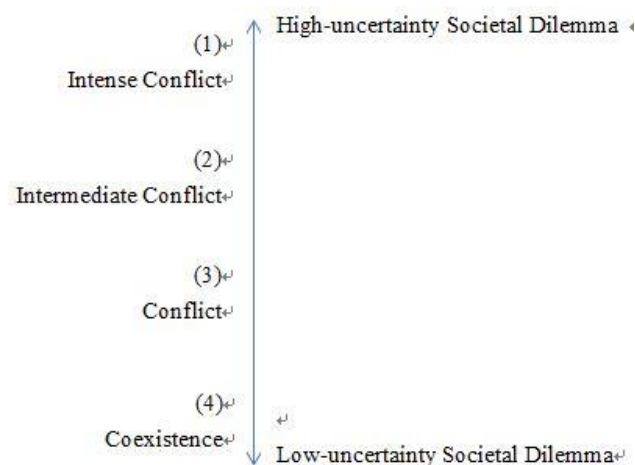


Figure 2-3 Variation of the Dependent Variables

Uncertainty and Societal Dilemmas in Tibet: A Brief Illustration (1949-2012)

This section demonstrates the application of the developed framework to the case of Tibet. It charts when the Sino-Tibetan relationship featured in scenarios of low-uncertainty societal dilemma, high-uncertainty societal dilemma and real security threat. For one thing, the Chinese commitment to the nation-building project through state-led modernisation towards Tibet relies on the ways of practice that have caused Tibetan resistance. On the other side, various degrees of international intervention in Tibetan affairs also affects the ups and downs in Sino-Tibetan relations.

The 1950s:

Low-uncertainty Societal Dilemma and High-uncertainty Societal Dilemma

With the completion of the Seventeen-point Agreement in 1951, the PRC legitimatised its sovereign position over Tibet, which previously maintained its *de facto* autonomy and sought for a larger degree of international recognition, since 1912. Given the framework of the Seventeen-point Agreement, the Lhasa regime headed by the Dalai Lama could maintain, and was able to be exempt from, socialist transformation crusades. Beijing's main goal at the time was to incorporate Tibet through building local cooperation with the Tibetan traditional elites. As such, inter-societal harmony was prioritised above other tasks. As Mao said:

We have to maintain a good relationship with the minorities and consolidate our ethnic unity. Together we endeavour to build a great socialist

For the government of the Dalai Lama, they were willing to make compromises as their ambition to preserve tradition could be fulfilled. On many occasions the Dalai Lama recalled that at this time, the Sino-Tibetan relationship was positive.²³⁸

Since the mid-1950s, when Beijing launched its socialist movements nationwide, its promise was questioned by Tibetans in Tibet. The policy was termed as a 'democratic reform' and was imposed in Tibetan-speaking regions in Qinghai, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Gansu provinces. Although it was not implemented in Tibet, Tibetans felt great uncertainty and fear which resulted in severe resistance and the outbreak of violence. The coexistence between Beijing and Lhasa within that context disintegrated. It is argued that the Chinese Communist Party did not violate its promise of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, but the communist revolutionary leverage was perceived as a threat to Tibetan society and threw the bilateral relationship off balance.²³⁹ Meanwhile, external intervention mainly from the US, complicated local conflicts.²⁴⁰ Consequently, widespread unrest erupted in March 1959 and the Dalai Lama fled to India and denounced the Agreement of 1951. Subsequently, the Tibetan Government in Exile (TGIE) was set up in Dharamsala and the CCP began its direct rule in Tibet.

In the following decades, the Sino-Tibetan relationship became more contentious. To

²³⁷ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian* 163-164.

²³⁸ Lama, *Freedom in Exile*.

²³⁹ Norbu, *China's Tibet Policy*, 220-223.

²⁴⁰ John Knaus, *Orphans of the Cold War: America and the Tibetan Struggle for Survival* (New York: Public Affairs, 2000).

some extent, Tibetan discontents resulted from a combination of outcomes between fear and antagonism towards the state-led socialist transformation of Tibetan society and socio-political repressions. International support also backed the Tibetan determination.

The 1960s:

High-uncertainty Societal Dilemma and Real Security Threat

In the 1960s, the Sino-Tibetan relationship manifested continued tension and violence, and with its power, Beijing could repress the Tibetan society. The Chinese authority initiated waves of socialist movements nationwide. Though the TGIE appealed the issue of Tibet to the United Nations three times in 1959, 1962 and 1965, and the Tibetan factor affected China's relationships with neighbouring India and the Soviet Union, China's sovereignty over Tibet remained unchallenged. In addition, despite the PRC government's cooperation with significant traditional figures, for example the 10th Panchen Lama, criticism of the harsh socialist policies was banned. The CCP established the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965, further drawing Tibet into the PRC state. During the period of the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), the Chinese government reshaped Tibetan society and further integrated it into the PRC entity.²⁴¹

The 1970s:

Low-uncertainty Societal Dilemma

From the mid-1970s, with improvements to China's international and domestic environment, interactions between Beijing and Dharamsala showed progress. When the Dalai Lama planned his first visit to the West in 1973, two years after the PRC joined the UN, Beijing seemed to be open to such advancements. This was followed

²⁴¹ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 237-286; 287-313.

by increasingly positive public reactions. Subsequently, the Dalai Lama publicly withdrew his goal of Tibet's independence and instead pursued its autonomy. At the same time, Deng Xiaoping took office and expressed a willingness to improve relations with exiled Tibetans, by inviting and meeting with Gyalo Thondup, the brother of the Dalai Lama. Throughout the 1980s, four 'fact-finding' representative teams from the TGIE were sent to visit the Tibetan areas of the PRC and several bilateral dialogues were held. In addition, new policies created by the Chinese government claimed to improve the local situation. This period witnessed positive interactions between Beijing and Dharamsala²⁴² and significantly, a period of optimism was conceivable.

The 1980s:

Low-uncertainty Societal Dilemma and High-uncertainty Societal Dilemma

Tensions reappeared and turned into intensive demonstrations in Tibet in the late 1980s. This resulted from Beijing's adaptation of previous political attitudes concerning a fast pace of Tibetan 'cultural revival'. In addition, the Dalai Lama's call for autonomy (in the form of the Five Point Peace Plan and the Strasbourg Proposal) which had acquired strong support from the West, raised a sense of uncertainty and insecurity within the Chinese government towards Tibet. The security dilemma mechanism was subsequently triggered and tensions escalated during the action-reaction spiral. Self-protection methods employed by both sides brought about higher levels of chaos. Beijing's tightening control in Tibet created local resistance and intensive protests between 1987 and 1989. After the repercussions of the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989 and the Dalai Lama's receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in the same year, bilateral interactions dwindled.

²⁴² Ibid, 371-383.

The 1990s-2012:

High-uncertainty Societal Dilemma

From the beginning of the 1990s, the scenario of the security threat dominated Sino-Tibetan interactions. This is illustrated by several factors. Beijing imposed comprehensive means to penetrate Tibetan society and focused upon religion. The Chinese government systematically defamed the Dalai Lama and forbade his image in China. Additionally, the Patriotic Education Campaign specifically targeted monasteries in order to decrease the influence of the Dalai Lama. A debate on the recognition of the 11th Panchen Lama was held and the flight of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje to India revealed that local attitudes were strengthening.²⁴³

Jiang Zemin explicitly suggested in the Third Tibet Work Forum: “The stability of Tibet is engaged in the stability of the country, Tibet’s development is engaged in the state’s development, and Tibet’s security is engaged in the nation’s security”.²⁴⁴ As such, ensuring the central government’s absolute advantage over Tibet, through any means, was a priority. In the late 1990s, Beijing proposed the ‘Western Development’ plan. Given its implementation, environmental changes were radical at a fast pace while large migrant populations entered Tibet. All these scenes drove new dynamics of ethnic tension in Tibet.

The era of the 2000s saw a dichotomous bilateral relationship against a background of the rise of China. While Beijing and Dharamsala had irregular rounds of meetings and

²⁴³ Pitman Potter, “Belief in Control: Regulation of Religion in China,” *The China Quarterly* 174 (2003): 174, 324-328.

²⁴⁴ Xiaoming Zhu, *Xizang Qianyan Wenti Yanjiu* (Beijing: China Tibetology Press, 2014), 41-42.

negotiations between 2002 and 2010, they did not make any breakthroughs. Rather, disturbances and unrest persisted in the whole Tibetan region. The most violent demonstration occurred in 2008, known as the '14 March Incident,' which deeply affected Beijing-Dharamsala negotiations.²⁴⁵ The international condemnation of Beijing's crackdown on demonstrations provoked its insistence on a tough stance. The TGIE in the name of the Dalai Lama proposed the 'Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People to Beijing', reclaiming again that the TGIE only pursued substantial autonomy under the PRC's national framework. However, the CCP government continued to reject this proposal.

It is argued that the intensive and extensive Tibetan demonstrations partly stemmed from their backlash towards the government's modernisation projects with heavy emphasis on materialism on a large scale. Accordingly, these practices enforced great transformation of life-styles and customs that fueled a high degree of societal identity insecurity for local residents.²⁴⁶

More significant causes of the tension in the Sino-Tibetan relationship relate to Beijing's strengthening of political and social repressions. It can be widely seen that political propaganda appeared in forms of posters and billboards on most public occasions. The contents were not only about the central government's ambitions towards economic progress, but also the promotion of patriotism, social stability, ethnic unity, and national territorial integrity, and a determination to eradicate opposition to the Party. These repeated signs, are believed to have alienated local

²⁴⁵ Warren Smith, "China's New Offensive on Tibet," *Radio Free Asia*, March 18, 2009.

²⁴⁶ Andrew Fischer, "'Population Invasion' versus Urban Exclusion in the Tibetan Areas of Western China," *Population and Development Review* 34, no. 4 (2008): 631-662.

people, making them feel targeted as outsiders.²⁴⁷ The extreme official regulation on religion also generated substantial local threats, and is associated with the self-immolation of monks from 2009 to the present.²⁴⁸ The central authority proclaimed that it was promoting a policy of ‘mutual adaptation of religion and socialism’, but most people perceived that behind these policies were the state’s intrusion and inhibition of Tibetan Buddhism, given that the latter constituted significant elements of ethnic minority’s self-identification and cultural representation. National flags of PRC were erected in most monasteries and temples of importance, and the meaning behind the symbol and the implication regarding the state was obvious. Due to these formal and informal regulations, as well as widespread rhetoric, the official policies did not cultivate loyalty from the local people. Conversely, they were considered a distortion of traditional values.

In summary, over the past decades, the Chinese authority’s nation-building has been perceived by Tibetans as a potential threat. In some contexts, they were identified as security dilemmas whereas in others they were real security threats. This research specifically distinguishes between these scenarios.

Conclusion

This chapter has noted notions of security dilemma theory as a main concept for considering the Tibetan issue in association with the Chinese nation-building commitments in detail. The essence of this theory signifies that two or more actors,

²⁴⁷ T Antonio Terrone, “Propaganda in the Public Square: Communicating State Directives on Religion and Ethnicity to Uyghurs and Tibetans in Western China,” In *Ethnic Conflict and Protest in Tibet and Xinjiang*, 40-59.

²⁴⁸ Tsering Shakya, “Self-Immolation: the Changing Language of Protest in Tibet,” *Revue D’études Tibétaines* 25 (2012): 19-39.

while desperately seeking prevention from conflict, end up with precisely this outcome. This chapter also reviewed the concept of societal security and the societal security dilemma models developed by Paul Roe and other scholars. Building upon them, this research reconceptualises the low-uncertainty societal dilemma, the high-uncertainty societal dilemma and the real security threat, a category which is separated from the situation of the security dilemma. Factors of state-led modernisation and international intervention as the independent variables are also integrated into the framework. This original work is valuable for several reasons:

- (1) It provides concise concepts to identify ethnic conflict.
- (2) It provides an analytical framework examining relationship between state-led modernisation and intervention and the security dilemmas; degree of conflict is arguably predictable.
- (3) It presents conceptual pathways to analyse outcomes of coexistence and conflict outbreak.

With the help of collected primary and secondary sources, this research will contextualise and analyse Sino-Tibetan interactions at different times and categorise the scenarios. Those with both actors showing benign stances and falling into compatible security requirements will be categorised as a low-uncertainty societal dilemma. Those with both actors showing benign stances but falling into zero-sum-like security scenario, will be categorised as a high-uncertainty societal dilemma. The following chapters begin our empirical studies with the next chapter examining the first decade of Sino-Tibetan relations in the 1950s.

Chapter Three

Societal Dilemmas:

Coexistence and Conflict in Sino-Tibetan Relations, 1950s

Introduction

This chapter examines a historical period from the PRC's annexation of Tibet to the outburst of the Lhasa Rebellion, which is also termed as the Tibetan National Uprising.²⁴⁹ Scholars have previously investigated this period from the angle of either the Cold War or broader international politics.²⁵⁰ Drawing on such a foundation, this chapter utilises an explanatory approach from security dilemma theory and cover domestic and international levels. It also brings more Chinese language sources to the current studies. This chapter also discusses the role of Taiwan, which is seldom analysed in previous literature. This chapter suggests that since the CCP began its modern Chinese nation-building with Tibet as a target, Sino-Tibetan relations has been locked into a cycle of security dilemma.

Through this review, this chapter identifies the low-uncertainty societal dilemma and high-uncertainty societal dilemma in order to feature the Sino-Tibetan relationship. This chapter argues that the dynamics of this transition were related to Beijing's imposition of a 'democratic reform', manifested as a radical modernisation²⁵¹ in

²⁴⁹ John Powers, *History as Propaganda: Tibetan Exiles versus the People's Republic of China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 121.

²⁵⁰ Jian Chen. *Mao's China and the Cold War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 54-101; Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*, 130-138; Xiaoyuan Liu, *Bianjiang Zhongguo: Ershi Shiji Zhoubian Ji Minzu Guanxi Shishu* (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2016), 214-279.

²⁵¹ Jun Yu, "Jianguo Chuqi Tudi Gaige Yu Zhongguo Xiandaihua De Fazhan." *Dangshi Yanjiu Yu Jiaoxue* 168 (2002): 34-37.

Tibetan areas and external intervention in the Tibetan issue.

Firstly, in the aftermath of the conclusion of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, Sino-Tibetan relations experienced years of positive interaction. This was related to the Chinese practice of preserving Tibetan society and Tibetan compromise over its own sovereignty. Since the mid-1950s, however, when the series of socialist campaigns were launched across Chinese physical and ethnic borders, the 'democratic reform' part of this crusade reached Tibetan regions outside Tibet and local resistance incurred. Soon, the violent plot evolved into a deep concern in Tibet, in spite of the place being untouched. With waves of refugees from the neighbouring areas flooding into Tibet, tension between Beijing and the government of the Dalai Lama escalated. Increasingly, conflicts erupted in the reformed areas again and again, intensifying nagging suspicion and pain whenever efforts were made to placate anxiety.

Secondly, the presence of international intervention in Tibet complicated Sino-Tibetan relations. This chapter points to the absence of external assistance which was followed by Sino-Tibetan conflict mitigation, whereas the appearance of external actors caused the opposite result. In the examination, when New Delhi, Washington and Taipei were perceived by Beijing to play a role behind the Tibetan fights, the CCP was uncertain about Chinese security and then doubled its campaigns and repression. Linking this factor to the aforementioned increased Tibetan concern, Beijing-Tibet tension was further heightened.

Finally, threat perceptions between Beijing and Tibet escalated. On an unexpected agenda, riots broke out in Lhasa and then on the whole territorial scale of Tibet in March 1959 causing large scale anti-Beijing demonstrations and the collapse of

Sino-Tibetan coexistence.

The chapter follows a chronological sequence and is divided into six sections. It starts with a discussion about PRC's annexation of Tibet, narrating the CCP's motivation and intention in line with the Chinese nation-building project. It also discusses China's strategy at the domestic and international levels and presents Tibet's lack of external help during that span of time. In the next section, the chapter examines Sino-Tibetan interaction after the signing of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, after which a positive relationship along with occasional uncertainty was discernible in the early-1950s. The chapter identifies it as a low-uncertainty societal dilemma. Next, the chapter analyses the emergence, starting from the mid-1950s, of tensions arising from the CCP's socialist campaigns toward modernisation. As it will be demonstrated, the storm in Eastern Tibet affected the growing Tibetan sense of uncertainty in Tibet. Moreover, Beijing's uncertainty over support e.g. from New Delhi, Taipei, and Washington via CIA is put into discussion. The onset of the high-uncertainty societal dilemma is recognisable. Then, the process erupting from the 10th of March and the Dalai Lama's escape to India in 1959 is reviewed. In conclusion, this chapter draws on the implication of the fracture of Sino-Tibet relations.

‘Peaceful Liberation’: Historical Origin of Societal Dilemma in Tibet

In October 1949, the CCP was no longer a marginal political party nor a mere competing power with the Kuomintang (KMT) regime of the Republic of China, but became the Chinese new political centre, the ruling authority of the newborn People's Republic of China. This circumstance thereby reshaped the CCP's mind to pursue China's unification and territorial integrity. While it had a political ideology distinct

from the previous regimes, the CCP inherited their historical legacy to conduct a consensual historical agenda.²⁵² Aligned to this thinking, the CCP regarded the autonomous Tibet as a land that must be taken back under control.

For the CCP, its action contained implications of nationalism and security. As Liu points out, apart from constituting an ongoing process of a people's revolutionary war overthrowing the KMT regime and the foreign imperialists, the liberation of Tibet at this time brought two implications. First, it was part of the transformation of the Chinese empire geo-body into a modern nation-state. Second, it was engaged in the emerging Cold War politics.²⁵³ Given these factors, the CCP Chairman, Mao Zedong, aimed at resolving the sovereign dispute of Tibet as a priority.

Before the foundation of the PRC, in September 1949 the CCP released a statement in the People's Daily, asserting that "Tibet is part of the Chinese territory, and the People's Liberation Army must liberate it."²⁵⁴ This statement was regarded as the CCP's deliberate response to the Tibetan government (Kashag), which had expelled all officials from the Republic of China in July.²⁵⁵ From Beijing's perspective, Tibet's behaviour signaled an intention of cutting all legal ties with China by turning its de facto independence into a de jure one. Beijing's internal document at this time reported that Tibet was enhancing contacts with 'the imperialists'.²⁵⁶ While the ethnic

²⁵² Xiaoyuan Liu, "A Misty Cold War in the Himalayas: China's Historical Temperament in International Relations," In *Challenges to Chinese Foreign Policy: Diplomacy, Globalization, and the Next World Power*, eds. Yufan Hao, George Wei and Lowell Dittmer (University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 296-301.

²⁵³ Xiaoyuan Liu, "Entering the Cold War and Other "Wars": The Tibetan Experience," *The Chinese Historical Review* 19, no. 1 (2012): 54.

²⁵⁴ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 1-2.

²⁵⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 019.42/0001, *Xizang Zhengfu Leling Zhongyang Zhu Lasa Renyuan Lijing* (The Tibetan Government Expels the Central Governmental Officials Stationed in Lhasa) (1949), 11.

²⁵⁶ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 2.

Tibetan areas, except for Tibet, had been occupied by the PLA, and the 10th Panchen Lama, the second ranked Tibetan Buddhist leader, inferior to the Dalai Lama in the Geluk Sect, expressed his full support of the PRC, Beijing was still cautious to the Kashag's step.²⁵⁷ To show its defensive essence, Beijing mainly resorted to political means, though in the meantime military means was also taken for deterrence. Guaranteeing to retain the status quo of the societal systems of Tibet, the CCP demanded negotiations on several occasions.²⁵⁸ Along with this purpose, multiple efforts throughout domestic and international levels were made.

First of all, at the domestic level, the CCP carried out a 'carrot and stick' strategy urging negotiation. For one thing, monks and Tibetan communists were assigned to persuade the Kashag to accept Beijing's conditions. For another, the PLA troops were deployed surrounding Tibet.

The CCP suggested that its commitment was in line with the Common Program of The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which was issued as temporary Constitution on the 21st of September 1949. The Program addressed that all ethnic groups within the PRC, regardless of their individual size of population, were regarded as being equal, and all ethnic groups must be united to fight against Great Han-nationalism and Narrow local-nationalism, which, in its essence, meant ethno-nationalism. The Program also framed the legal basis for setting up ethnic autonomous regions though it denied the secession rights for ethnic groups. The Common Program not only served as the supreme guideline for policy-making but also subsequently retained its key points in the Constitution of 1954.

²⁵⁷ Yuehong Song, *Dangdai Zhongguo De Xizang Zhengce Yu Zhili* (Beijing: Renmin Press, 2011), 8.

²⁵⁸ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 14; Song, *Dangdai Zhongguo De Xizang Zhengce Yu Zhili*, 17.

Secondly, at the international level, the CCP adopted various means deterring Tibet from obtaining foreign aid. On the 20th of January 1950 the Foreign Ministry Spokesperson of the PRC publicly warned that the issue of Tibet is China's domestic affair, and any state providing help to Lhasa will be labeled as an enemy of China.²⁵⁹ An intimidating signal was demonstrated explicitly in this way.

At this time, Mao sought to include his action towards Tibet in the border cooperation with the Soviet Union. During the discussion over the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, the Alliance and Mutual Assistance in January 1950, Mao submitted his proposal to Stalin.²⁶⁰ Given the context of the Cold War, Moscow was convinced that the CCP's occupation of Tibet would bring an advantage to the whole socialist camp and surpass its capitalist rivalry. The consideration drove the USSR to side with the PRC.²⁶¹

Beijing's new alliance with Moscow achieved its expected outcome. Major powers turned to silence and behaved cautiously in showing support for Tibet.²⁶² Facing the Tibetan request for assistance, both the US and Britain claimed to take the Indian position as their standpoint.²⁶³ The Indian government expressed its sincere sympathy, though only provided Tibet with very limited weapons as support.²⁶⁴ When the

²⁵⁹ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiq Wei'yuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 10.

²⁶⁰ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 30.

²⁶¹ Yan Hu, "Xizang Wenti Zhong De Sulian Yinsu," *Journal of Tibet University* 21, no. 3 (2006): 20-22.

²⁶² Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon*, 42-44.

²⁶³ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, DO 35/3094, "From Washington to Foreign Office," December 22, 1949, *Tibet: Effect of Communist Seizure of Power in China* (1949-1950); Xiuzhang Lu, *Meiguo Dui Hua Zhanlue Yu Xizang Wenti* (Beijing: China Tibetology, 2009), 141-149.

²⁶⁴ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/84451, "From UK High Commissioner in India to Foreign Office," January 5, 1950, *Assistance for Tibet to help Combat the Chinese Communist Threat* (1950).

Tibetan delegations requested the Indian Prime Minister Nehru for more assistance, Nehru remained in his stance. Further, he claimed that the Indian government would recognise Tibet as part of China.²⁶⁵

The UK government not only discouraged Lhasa's attempt of sending missions to London, but also on another occasion told the Indian delegation that the UK would not support Tibet's application for entering the United Nations.²⁶⁶ London's action was a result of its concerns on the possible backlash from the Soviet Union and 'China' (at the time it was represented by the KMT regime based in Taiwan), which we will touch later on; its ongoing construction of diplomatic relationship with Beijing may also be a factor.

Given the lack of substantial external support, Lhasa had to turn to Beijing, contacting the PRC ambassador Yuan Zhongxian in New Delhi, for an initial negotiation.²⁶⁷ However, the negotiation cannot be called successful. The Tibetan representatives, by taking a standpoint that the Sino-Tibetan relationship was of a priest-patron nature, refused to accept the conditions of the PRC. Apart from willing to compromise over China's sovereignty over Tibet, Tibetans opposed the Chinese arrangement of stationing the PLA in Tibet. In addition, they debated with Yuan over whether Tibet was an independent country.²⁶⁸ Without reaching a consensus, on the 6th of October 1950 Beijing decided to increase pressure on Tibet by adopting military action. Then the PLA marched its troops and occupied Chamdo on the 24th of October.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁵ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951*, 672-5

²⁶⁶ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/84454, "From UK High Commissioner in India to Foreign Office," January 12, 1950, *Tibetan Appeal to the United Nations about the Chinese Invasion* (1950).

²⁶⁷ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951*, 672-5.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, 46.

²⁶⁹ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi* (Beijing: Chinese Communist Party History, 2012),

The PLA's strike not only shocked Tibetans, but also the international community. While the PLA invaded Chamdo, Mao also ordered the North East Frontier Force as the Chinese Volunteer Army, to fight against the US-led UN troops alongside North Korea in the Korean Peninsula. Mao's military actions both in China's eastern and western regions drew international attention. Given that many countries were avoiding any involvement in severe conflicts in Asia, the Kashag fell into a difficult situation. As a consequence, China's participation in the Korean War significantly impeded Tibet's acquisition of any further international aid; which will be seen in the discussion of Tibet's appeals to the UN below.

The UN discussed the Tibetan appeals twice in 1950, but both of them turned out to be failures for the Tibetan side. The causes were multiple, but they can be summarised as a mixture of three aspects. The first one was related to the Korean War and the broader Cold War environment, which although led to the UN's help in South Korea, prevented major powers from intervening in Tibetan affairs. Secondly, the PRC's dealing with the individual administrations, India in particular, accounted for this result. Thirdly, Taipei's insistence of China's sovereignty over Tibet may have played a role.

The first Tibetan appeal took place in November 1950, but it was denied immediately as Tibet was not a member of the United Nations; the UN only accepts issues raised by member states of the Security Council or any member states within the UN.²⁷⁰ Therefore, with the help of El Salvador, Tibet almost gained access to the committee

113-128.

²⁷⁰ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/84454. "From New York to Foreign Office," 13 November 1950.

agenda.²⁷¹ Eventually, however, the appeal was deferred to the General Assembly.²⁷²

The major powers' stances over Tibet on this occasion mattered. Initially, it went without saying that the Soviet Union did not and would not support Tibet given the formation of the Moscow-Beijing alliance, though the latter was not a member in the UN at that time. In addition, while Taipei, whom the Chinese representative belonged to at the time, condemned the CCP's aggression, it did not provide substantial assistance to Tibet. In fact, Taipei also deterred this appeal. The reason was that both the KMT and the CCP shared the same standpoint asserting that 'Tibet is part of China.'²⁷³ For Taipei, since Tibet was under China's sovereignty, it should not be treated differently from any other province of China occupied by the CCP. In order to balance humanitarian support for Tibet and insist on Chinese sovereign integrity, the case of Tibet was ultimately narrated by the Chiang Kai-shek regime as evidence of a manifesting "Soviet Union's Communist ambition in China."²⁷⁴ Such a stance was also maintained by Taipei during the second Tibetan UN appeal in December 1950. Therefore, the Soviet Union's support for the CCP and the KMT regime's insistence on China's sovereignty over Tibet led to the adjournment of Tibet's appeal in the UN.

Other significant powers including Britain, the USA, and India did not show their

²⁷¹ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/ 84455, "General Assembly, A/1534," November 18, 1950, *Tibetan Appeal to the United Nations about the Chinese Invasion* (1950).

²⁷² Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/93002, "General Assembly Official Records," November 24, 1950, *Attitude towards Tibet and the Chinese Invasion: HMG, Indian and USA Views on the Issue and the Tibetan Appeal to the UN* (1951).

²⁷³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 019.4/0035, "Dian Zhi Wo Dui Xizang Zhi Jiben Lichang (Our Standpoint over Tibet)," November 15, 1950, *Feijun Fan Zang Hou Wofang Zai Lianheguo Zhi Yinying'an* (195011-195402), 24-25.

²⁷⁴ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/93002, "United Nations General Assembly Fifth Session Official Records," November 24, 1951; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 019.4/0035, 43-44.

support to the Tibetan appeal due to their own respective national concerns.²⁷⁵ First, the long-term standpoint of the UK government was that it would accept China's sovereignty over Tibet on the condition that China recognised Tibet's autonomy. If the Chinese government damaged the autonomy of Tibet, the UK government would consider supporting Tibet's independence. At this time, faced with the CCP's military action, the British Foreign Office suggested that London support Tibet. The Office stated that the PRC had violated the autonomy of Tibet and the Office also suggested that the latter had sufficient quality as a 'state' in accordance to the meaning of the "United Nations Charter" by clarifying Tibet's past interactions with other states in history.²⁷⁶ However, when knowing about the assertion from the CCP that it would occupy Hong Kong, if the UK aided Tibet, the British government decided to reconsider its standpoint concerning its interests in Asia.²⁷⁷ Eventually, Britain announced that it would follow the government of India on this issue.²⁷⁸ Consequently, when the Nehru government expressed its non-willingness to support Tibet, the UK government did not adopt the suggestion from the British Foreign Office.

Elsewhere, the main reason for Washington's decision was related to its diplomatic alliance with the Chiang Kai-shek government and the Cold-War confrontation. The huge costs if the US decided to assist Tibet were taken into account as well.²⁷⁹ First of

²⁷⁵ Gyalo Thondup and Thurston, 2015: 103-104; Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/84455, "Telegram from UKDEL, New York to Foreign Office," November 25, 1950.

²⁷⁶ Ibid, "Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office to UK High Commissioner in India," November 10, 1950. According to the document, the UK government wanted to discuss this issue with the representative of China (that was, Taipei) at this time, but Taipei refused.

²⁷⁷ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/ 84457, "From Lt-Colonel A.M. Fiela, the War Office to S. J. L. Olver Esq., MBE, Foreign Office," November 2, 1950, *Tibet-China Relations: Chinese Invasion of Tibet*, (1950).

²⁷⁸ Ibid, "South Asian Dept. to Foreign Office," November 7, 1950.

²⁷⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 019.4/0035, 80-82; 138-149; Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*, 133

all, Washington could hardly provide support to the Dalai Lama in public because it had to consider Taipei's standpoint. In fact, Washington did think of helping Tibet's independence from China, but such behaviour provoked discontent from Taipei; for the latter, the plan could be a violation of its own China policy. Secondly, the US took the possible reactions from the Soviet Union into account. At that time, the US was engaged in the Korean War and was battling with the PRC army. The American government did not want to escalate to a higher degree of conflict with the communist camp over the Tibetan issue. Thirdly, although Tibet had a clear geopolitical value for defending the communist camps, the cost was too high from the viewpoint of Washington. Therefore, the US did not support the Tibetan appeals but instead, declared a statement of anti-communism. Adopting a similar stance as the UK, the American government referred to India's attitude on this issue. When Washington understood the perspectives from London and New Delhi, who decided not to support Tibet, the US made its decision not to intervene.²⁸⁰

Even though during the process, the US government gradually increased further contact with the Dalai Lama and his government. The Americans became interested in the role of Tibet by considering its strategic importance in the anti-Communism movement. Subsequently, the US government decided to unofficially support Tibet.²⁸¹ This decision forged its future policies towards the Dalai Lama, and also led to the activities of the CIA in Tibet from the mid-1950s.

Connecting the dots, India played a decisive role in the UN discussion process.

²⁸⁰ G. S. Bajpai, the secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs of India, suggested to the US government that if the Dalai Lama decided to flee to India, the Indian government would not give him political asylum but individual asylum; The UK government also discouraged the US government's further involvement in the Tibetan issue. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 114-137.

²⁸¹ Lu, *Meiguo Dui Hua Zhanlue Yu Xizang Wenti*, 46-47.

Despite the fact that the Indian government had regular and close contacts with the Kashag and had expressed its concerns about the CCP's military actions several times, the Nehru administration decided not to provide Lhasa with support and thus caused the Tibetan appeals to fail. Nehru's hesitations to side with Tibet were, partly, related to his personal ideology. For one thing, Nehru felt sympathy for socialist China and he believed that China would not adopt military action. In addition, his anti-imperialist stance rendered his aversion to external intervention from western states. From his perspective, India and China had suffered from imperialism for centuries, and both sides should share an anti-imperialist ideology towards each other. When the PRC was founded, Nehru's government not only recognized the PRC but also built official diplomatic relations from April 1950. Moreover, Nehru believed that India could play an important role in world affairs, especially as India was involved in mediations in the Korean War. Nehru did not want the problem of Tibet to create more severe conflicts.²⁸² These factors strongly influenced India's decision.

Also, Beijing's strategy discouraging New Delhi to adopt the proactive policy was successful. Regarding Tibet, India inherited the main policy of the British Raj, which recognised Tibet's autonomy under China's sovereignty.²⁸³ On several occasions, India expressed to Beijing that it had no territorial or political ambitions towards Tibet and all it was concerned about was the maintenance of its existing rights in Tibet.²⁸⁴ In its response, Beijing implied that Indian interests would not be changed if India

²⁸² Liu, "Entering the Cold War and Other "Wars"," 49; Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/84455, "From UK High Commissioner in India to South Asian Department," November 30, 1950.

²⁸³ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/84463. "From UK High Commissioner in India to Foreign Office," January 7, 1950, *India's Attitude towards Chinese Sovereignty over Tibet* (1950).

²⁸⁴ Ibid, "From Acting UK High Commissioner in India to Commonwealth Relations Office," September 1, 1950.

supported China. Furthermore, India's support for the PRC would reinforce the development of Sino-Indian relations. In this way, Beijing convinced New Delhi that supporting Beijing would benefit India's national interests. In a letter dated 16th of November, the PRC government noted that

*As long as our sides adhere strictly to the principle of mutual respect for territory, sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit, we are convinced that the friendship between China and India should be developed in a normal way, and that the problems regarding to Sino-Indian diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with respect to Tibet may be solved properly and to our mutual benefit through normal diplomatic channels.*²⁸⁵

This letter implied that India could maintain the privileges it inherited from the colonial period in Tibet if it supported the PRC. From the Indian perspective, the controversy over the India-Tibet/China border issue concerning the McMahon Line could also be resolved. Moreover, India expected that, by its support, the PRC would admit India's position on Sikkim, which has been occupied by India since 1949.

Consequently, the Indian government made a statement in the UN, saying that India would not support Tibet, since currently there was no better solution, and Korea was a more important issue. Given this statement, the British delegation in the UN subsequently proposed that the Tibet Question should be deferred. This proposal

²⁸⁵ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 283; Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 75.

obtained wide support.²⁸⁶ Through a unanimous vote, the UN General Assembly decided upon the deferment of Tibet's first appeal.

Lhasa's second appeal to the United Nations was discussed in December 1950 and also raised by El Salvador.²⁸⁷ At this time, the Kashag again sought support from Britain, the United States and other countries. Several Buddhist countries, including Thailand and Myanmar, stated that they could help, but had to consider the attitudes of major powers. Due to the fact that the key actor, India, still did not support Tibet, the British government and the US maintained their previous standpoints. Although the US government at the later stage decided to further intervene in the Tibetan issue, its offering was unofficial and limited at this particular time.²⁸⁸ In the end, the appeal failed.

Faced with the CCP's demands and its domestic and international commitments, the Tibetan government's reaction was based mainly on resorting to international intervention but obtained only little support. As a result, Lhasa was compelled to negotiation and to hand its sovereignty out in exchange for the preservation of the status quo over various aspects without a defined timeline or agenda, signed in the Seventeen-Point Agreement. China's annexation of Tibet was thus fulfilled.

²⁸⁶ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951*, 720-736.

²⁸⁷ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, DO 35/ 3096, "United Nations General Assembly A/1565," November 30, 1950, *Tibet: Effect of Communist Seizure of Power in China (1950-1951)*; "A/1658," December 11, 1950.

²⁸⁸ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FO 371/84455, "Telegram from UK High Commissioner in India to Foreign Office," December 18, 1950; Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951*, 746-757.

The 17-Point Agreement and Sino-Tibetan Insecurity Mitigation

This section further analyses Sino-Tibetan interaction in the early 1950s. While Tibet handed its sovereignty to China, the Sino-Tibetan relationship then manifested mildly and easily for years, contrary to the appearance of tension and conflict later on. This section argues that the CCP's modest stance was significant.

Along with its international intervention blockade in Tibet, the CCP continued demanding negotiations. In addition, the PLA showed their extreme respect for the captured Tibetan soldiers and Tibetan religion and customs. They also made strong propaganda about the 'good Han people', differing from the 'old Han people', meaning the KMT regime.²⁸⁹ The Common Program was also repeatedly explained and delivered to Tibetans, emphasising that the existing Tibetan societal system would be maintained; an ideal communist blueprint was depicted to Tibetans.²⁹⁰

Tibetans had to reconsider their whole condition. For one thing, they did not acquire any substantial international assistance, whereas the CCP made a promise. In addition, knowing that the second appeal to the UN failed, the Dalai Lama decided to accept the condition that Tibet was part of China. Consequently, from Yadong he sent a five-person representative team led by Ngawang Jigme to Beijing in March 1951.

The bilateral delegations held rounds of negotiations from April to May; on the 23rd of May 1951 both sides finally signed the Seventeen-Point Agreement in addition to two separate agreements (entitled *Fu Jian* 附件). According to these separate

²⁸⁹ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 85.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

agreements, the Kashag was instructed to limit the size of its Tibetan force. In addition, the Dalai Lama could choose his residence in the first year of implementing the agreement. In fact, an implication of this point was that if the Dalai Lama decided to leave Tibet, the Agreement would still be put into practice.²⁹¹ In summary, the conclusion of the Seventeen-Point Agreement affirmed Tibet's sovereign status associating China with Tibetan acquiescence.

The completion of the Seventeen-Point Agreement featured an important reconciliation between the Chinese and Tibetan societal security needs. For one thing, China's concern was assuaged. According to the Agreement, Tibet's external affairs would be handled by Beijing and Beijing could set up a Military and Administrative Committee (which was not realised but a Tibet Work Committee was alternatively established afterwards) in Lhasa. The PLA could be stationed in Tibet. All these points satisfied the CCP's major pursuit for territorial unification and sovereignty over Tibet. In addition, the Seventeen-Point Agreement also provided for important implications for the PRC's Tibetan policy because it set up the legal principle and framework for carrying out socialist transition in Tibet in the future but with no definite date.²⁹² To ensure its validity, the Agreement left a flexible space; if the Dalai Lama refused to agree to the terms of the Agreement and escaped to another place, the Chinese government could self-interpret that the Dalai Lama was choosing his residence.²⁹³ Such discussion may only serve as a thought-test, but it manifested that the Seventeen-Point Agreement fitted Chinese key interests.

²⁹¹ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 42-45.

²⁹² Norbu, *China's Tibet Policy*, 179-209.

²⁹³ Xiaobin Wang, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce* (Beijing: Renmin Press, 2013), 53-54.

On the other hand, Tibetan concerns were addressed because the status quo, including culture, socio-political systems, monastery systems, and the ‘status, functions and powers’ of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama would be preserved. The Agreement noted that socialist reforms would only be embarked upon after the agreement of the Tibetan government and leadership. In this way, while Tibet’s original symbolic incorporation of China was not realised, the major element of autonomy seemed to be fulfilled.

The final step for Mao Zedong was to persuade the Dalai Lama to accept the Agreement to further reinforce its legitimacy. Mao was concerned whether the Dalai Lama would refuse to the terms of the Agreement, by hearing that the US had contacted the Dalai Lama and suggested that he does so.²⁹⁴ To prevent this occurrence, Mao designated General Zhang Jingwu to meet with the Dalai Lama, who had moved part of the administration to Yadong after the Chamdo battle. When Zhang arrived to this frontier city close to India, he repeatedly clarified the questions and points of the Agreement which were points of controversy and gave his word on behalf of the CCP to the Dalai Lama to alleviate uncertainty. By considering all the conditions, the Dalai Lama then accepted the Agreement and returned to Lhasa. This result again reflected Beijing’s victory in unifying the Chinese state and affirmed a new era in Sino-Tibetan relations.

For years, the Sino-Tibetan relationship coexisted after 1951 and this relied on several aspects. In addition to the constant absence of international intervention, China’s restrained attitude towards conducting ‘democratic reform’ and broader socialist

²⁹⁴ Xinhua, “Meilianshe Yaochuan Dalai Tu Beipan Guanyu Heping Jiefang Xizang De Xieding (The US Associated Press Makes News over the Dalai Lama’s Consideration of Denouncing the 17-Point Agreement),” *Internal Reference* (July 20, 1951): 121.

transformation should be accounted as well. The making and practice of the CCP's Tibet policy at this time was aligned to an official principle termed as 'Promotion with Cautious Step (shen zhong wen jin 慎重稳进)'. This principle was adjusted with another term 'Promotion with Slow Step (shen zhong huan jin 慎重缓进)' which was initially proposed to tackle affairs related to Inner Mongolia in 1947 and then it was applied into other ethnic minority regions. The main concepts of the Promotion with Cautious Step were the gradualism and unification of ethnic minorities. In particular, the CCP highly valued cooperation with these traditional figures and ethnic elites named them as the 'ethnic upper strata'.²⁹⁵ To a larger extent, this line of principle was still consistent with Mao Zedong's idea of peaceful liberation.

The gradualism strategy here refers to integrating Tibet into the PRC's national framework without setting a timeline.²⁹⁶ Mao fully understood that building the relationship with Tibetans while winning their trust was a priority. Commenting on the situation, CCP members and cadres faced in Tibet in the early 1950s, he said:

*Currently we do not have the material basis for completely implementing the content of [17-Point] Agreement, nor do we have the basis of mass, and nor do we have the basis of upper-class. [Under these conditions] Carrying out [socialist] reforms can only receive more disadvantages than benefits.*²⁹⁷

²⁹⁵ Song, *Dangdai Zhongguo De Xizang Zhengce Yu Zhili*, 26-38.

²⁹⁶ Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon*, 53-4.

²⁹⁷ Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Mao Zedong Xizang Gongzuo Wenxuan*, 63.

Mao believed that the social conditions of traditional Tibetan society at that time were not appropriate to introduce socialist campaigns. Given that there were distinct differences between Tibet and other Chinese provinces, Mao emphasised more local stability. From this aspect, imposing socialist reforms could be put into a later agenda. In fact, such an approach was not only adopted in Tibet but could also be seen in other ethnic minority regions.

In this way, what the CCP needed to do was to perform a friendly and active attitude in advancing the bilateral relationship with the Dalai Lama and his government and strengthening their cooperation. The CCP understood the significance of religion and traditional customs for Tibetans across the whole society (for both ordinary people as well as the nobility), and thereby showed a full compromise in these realms. However, this does not mean that Beijing abandoned its promotion of socialism. Rather, by increasing its interactions with local Tibetans in a low-profile, the central authority aimed at attracting more people to accept the official ideology. Plenty of organisations including Youth Association and Women's Association as well as Chinese Buddhist Association were established in Tibet under this background for developing local networks.

Beijing and Tibet rapidly improved their connections in the first few years on the basis of the Seventeen-Point Agreement. For Beijing, the Agreement offered a legal tie for the central government to enter Tibet; for Lhasa the Agreement provided access to Chinese resources for initialising primary modernisation, e.g. traffic constructions, economic productions, upgrading those constructions which had already been promoted by many Tibetan elites in the period of the 13th Dalai Lama who created Tibet's de facto independence in the first-half twentieth century. Thereby, a great

number of important infrastructures were outlined, including the Qinghai-Tibet railway which was constructed in the 2000s.

Generally speaking, the Sino-Tibetan relationship at this time was peaceful and the Tibetan government kept a relatively high degree of autonomy. Administratively, its relationship with Beijing featured as the local-central relationship; in practice, both sides at this time run independently but had to negotiate in many aspects.

During this period, occasional debates occurred not only between the Kashag and the Chinese Communists in Lhasa, but also inside themselves. First, in the Tibetan camp, some officials still opposed the conclusion of Seventeen-Point Agreement. While the Agreement guaranteed the preservation of traditional Tibetan currency, military and national flag, some Tibetan officials strived to obtain a higher degree of autonomous right and they were quite concerned about the existence of the PLA. Once they realised that the Dalai Lama himself was willing to remain in a positive relationship with Beijing and even willing to promote reforms in Tibet, they feared over the status of the traditional Tibetan system in the future. The People's Council, an organisation founded for welcoming the Dalai Lama's return from Yadong in 1950 and led by two Kashag members Lukhangwa and Lobsang, began to launch demonstrations. In the end, the Dalai Lama had to remove these officials from his government to prevent further tensions.²⁹⁸ In addition, political competition and attitude towards promotion of socialist reforms took place between the Northwest and Southwest Bureaus among the stationed Chinese communists. As the result, the central government instructed that all local affairs should be under Beijing's command and insisted that local reforms should go through the consent of the Tibetan government. This case again

²⁹⁸ Thondup and Thurston, *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*, 132-8.

reflected Beijing's caution. These events as a whole did not result in any further political crisis in Lhasa.

In 1954, following a group of Tibetan Inland-visit teams who expressed their pleasant experiences,²⁹⁹ the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama visited Beijing. They attended the first session of the National People's Congress that would pass the PRC Constitution of 1954 and would elect the national leaders. Subsequently, the Dalai Lama was elected as a deputy chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and the Panchen Lama was elected as its member; both served in high ranks in the PRC government but in reality, they were equipped with limited power.³⁰⁰

The two Tibetan figures were treated with high levels of respect on every occasion. It was said that the CCP arranged vintage stuff that the previous Dalai and Panchen Lamas might have used in the Qing period for them.³⁰¹ Clearly, the central authority tried to 'represent' a harmonious scene between the ancient emperor and the religious figures. Moreover, the two figures met with the CCP senior leadership individually or together, including Mao, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and Li Weihan.³⁰² During this time, Mao repeatedly reassured that the central government must consult Tibetan opinions before making policies in Tibet.³⁰³ In his autobiography, the Dalai Lama recalled that

²⁹⁹ Xinhua, "Xizang Zhijing Tuan Zai Qinghai Canguan Shi Suo Kandao De Yixie Zongjiao Wenti (Some Questions about Religion Found by the Tibetan Tour When they Visit Qinghai)," *Internal Reference* (February 17, 1953): 219-224; "Xizang Zhijing Tuan Fanzang Hou De Huodong He Gejieceng De Fanying (The Activities of the Tibetan Tour When They Returned to Tibet and Reactions from Different Groups)," *International Reference* (August 1, 1953): 5-6.

³⁰⁰ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 496; Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 123.

³⁰¹ Anonymous interview, January 8, 2016, Beijing.

³⁰² Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 490.

³⁰³ Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Mao Zedong Xizang Gongzuo Wenxuan*, 111.

he received a lot of positive images and understandings about China during this journey. He even developed a strong interest in Marxism and believed that its idea could be combined with Buddhism.³⁰⁴

In summary, in the first several years after the signing of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, the Chinese and Tibetans, by attaining their core demands, were able to co-exist. Interactions between Beijing and Tibet were moving forward positively and at the same time, the PRC formed good relationships with its neighbouring countries.

However, certain negative factors remained and gradually eroded Beijing-Tibet relations. First of all, the basis of mutual trust was still fragile under the current of coexistence. Tensions between both sides occurred occasionally, especially in regards to the stationed PLA . In addition, some Chinese internal reports mentioned that local Tibetans doubted the real purpose when the CCP invited the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama to Beijing; there was gossip about the CCP trying to kidnap religious figures.³⁰⁵ Uncertainty and fear were clear. Secondly, whereas socialist reforms were not carried out in the region of Tibet, in line with the promise of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, the reforms in fact had been implemented in the rest of the PRC, including those Tibetan areas in other provinces. Within the current context of positive relationship, the bilateral sides reached the “Decision to Establish Preparatory Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region (PCTAR).” Defined as an authoritative body for consultation and planning during the transitional period before the establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region, Shakyas suggested that it marked

³⁰⁴ Lama, *Freedom in Exile*, 90-107.

³⁰⁵ Xinhua, “Xizang Gejieceng Renmin Dui Dalai Banchan Lai Jing De Fanying (Reactions from Individual Groups towards the Visit of Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama to Beijing),” *Internal Reference* (July 29, 1954): 473-474.

Tibet's 'separateness and special situation' different from other regions of ethnic minorities.³⁰⁶ However, as will be presented, the implementation in these areas soon provoked a heavy sense of uncertainty and provoked rifts in the nascent Sino-Tibetan positive development. When the Tibetans in Tibet heard about the violence and suffering occurring there, they began to worry about their future.

Growing Uncertainty by 'Democratic Reform'

Destroying trust can always be easier than building it. Whereas Beijing and Lhasa were gradually moving closer, several events fueled uncertainty and suspicion between them and rapidly overturned the nascent stability.

The collapse of the coexistence between the CCP and the Tibetan regime was caused by complex factors on both domestic and international levels. Putting them together, the first aspect regarded the CCP launch of democratic reform in the Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan, meaning Eastern Tibet. Treated as part of the Chinese provinces, rather than 'Tibet' defined by the Seventeen-Point Agreement, these vast areas were imposed the democratic reform starting from 1954.³⁰⁷

The substance of democratic reform was about radical change in property and land redistribution targeting local landlords and traditional elites as well as monasteries and temples, with certain exceptions. It was subject to the CCP's comprehensive plan about modernisation. Along with this, farmers' and herdsmen's livestock and their weapons were likely confiscated under the name of socialism. Also, thousands of

³⁰⁶ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 124.

³⁰⁷ Jianglin Li, *Dang Tieniao Zai Tiankong Feixiang: 1956-1962 Qingzang Gaoyuan Shang De Mimi Zhazheng* (Taipei: Linking Publishing, 2015), 45.

hundreds of people were classified into different class groups and many classified landowners faced public humiliations and persecutions by the ‘education of class’ and ‘class struggle’. These practices immediately broke the CCP’s relationship with the minority and brought about great grievances in these areas.³⁰⁸

Jianglin Li traced the dynamics that led to the emergence of groups of Tibetan guerrillas standing up against the CCP at this time.³⁰⁹ According to her investigation, the confiscation of land and property in the name of wealth redistribution, the taking away of weapons for protecting national security, and the radical intervention in traditional life and customs of tribes and villages, severely damaged Tibetan society in these regions. The launch of a class struggle movement destroyed their lives and resulted in large numbers of deaths. Moreover, the communist struggle against monks and the damaging of temples and monasteries labelled as superstition, further affected Tibetan fear and antagonism. As Buddhism occupies a core role in traditional Tibetan society, many Tibetans could not accept the CCP’s commitments at all. In this way, their anger and their decision to defend their home were fuelled. Li’s research echoes what Norbu points out, the eagerness to protect their traditional society from socialist campaigns constituted the main origin of Tibetan revolts across different areas.³¹⁰

The incurred opposition and resistance from local Tibetans did not ease the CCP’s concessions. Rather, the PLA forces reacted with further intensive besiegement. Consequently, a cycle of opposition-repression formed and violence spread into the whole reformed Tibetan areas.

³⁰⁸ Li, *Dang Tieniao Zai Tiankong Feixiang*, 60-109.

³⁰⁹ Ibid; *Tibet in Agony* (Harvard University Press, 2016); *1959 Lhasa: Dalai Lama Ruhe Chuzou* (Taipei: Linking Publishing, 2017).

³¹⁰ Norbu, *China’s Tibet Policy*, 210-27.

Hearing about the loss, suffering, and fights against the reform, people in Tibet, including the Dalai Lama himself, were shocked. As a result, doubt and negative perception of democratic reform, which was conceived to be implemented in the future in Tibet, was also formed.

In the meantime, a dispute between the CCP and the Dalai Lama's government over the scope of 'Tibet' was raised. From the perspective of the Dalai Lama and many Tibetans, Tibet should not only be defined as the area under the administration of Lhasa, but should have also include the entire land where Tibetans reside. In this case, when Tibetans escaped from the reformed areas and petitioned the Dalai Lama for putting their home under his rule to prevent the democratic reform, the Dalai Lama regarded this requirement as justifiable.

However, from Beijing's view such an idea was unacceptable. For one thing, the communists stood on an administrative standpoint and did not accept an ethno-graphic view. The senior leadership insisted on a historical narrative; that since the Qing dynasty, these Tibetan areas with the exception of central Tibet, had been incorporated into Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan at different points in time. In this way, they were not regarded as part of Tibet.

Indeed, the Chinese authority's insistence over historical cause contains its sense of uncertainty. Underlying its words, the CCP was concerned about the sincere intention of the Tibetan government. From the perspective of Beijing, if such a vast land was allowed to be applied by the Seventeen-Point Agreement, there would be more territory immune to the CCP's policy and this would help create a greater Tibet. For

Beijing, the implication would be loss of control. On one occasion, Chou Enlai expressed this uncertainty clearly. He stated, ‘A unification of all Tibetan areas would pose an implication of Tibet’s independence and that is unacceptable’.³¹¹

Given that both sides could not negotiate a shared notion about the scope of Tibet, the Dalai Lama and his government as well as many people reduced their confidence in Chinese promises.

With the establishment of PCTAR since April 1956, a trial was released that Beijing was preparing to conduct democratic reforms in Tibet. In this context, this message further alienated Tibetan trust in the Chinese. There might have been a misunderstanding that the Tibetan leadership would agree to the implementation of socialist reforms in Tibet; Beijing might have assumed their agreement given the successful visit of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama during the National People’s Congress in 1954.³¹² The political competition among the CCP officials embedded in the context of Mao’s Hundred Flowers Campaign and Anti-rightist Campaign in launching the various socialist movements in other provinces may also account for the development.

Relating this plan to the situated political background, Shakya suggests that the inauguration of the PCTAR could have eroded the status, function, and power of the Tibetan government.³¹³ At that time, the Tibet Work Committee launched a series of propagandist statements on *Tibet Daily* and provided an agenda proposal to Beijing.³¹⁴

³¹¹ Liu, “Entering the Cold War and Other “Wars”,” 85.

³¹² Ibid, 74.

³¹³ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 131-132.

³¹⁴ Wang, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce*, 29-30.

In addition, the Committee recruited and mobilised more than 45,000 people for preparation work. All these implied that Beijing may put the trial into reality.

The sudden increase of cost and population added a huge burden to local society. As a result, officials in the Tibetan government expressed their concerns about the reforms. Representatives of the Great Three temples and a group of leading Tibetans also submitted their petition to the Kashag.³¹⁵ Being harassed by fear and foreseeing potential crisis in the future, the Dalai Lama started to worry.³¹⁶ Whereas both the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama were assigned into top positions of the PCTAR, they did not have enough power to counter Beijing if the central government decided to change Tibet's status quo.

The Dalai Lama sought advice and intervention from Nehru in New Delhi when he participated in the 2500th Anniversary of Buddha's Birthday in November 1956,. The Dalai Lama also made an inquiry if he could stay in India. Nehru discouraged his idea.

During his visit to India, the Dalai Lama showed a high degree of anxiety in his performance. He met with a group of Tibetan diaspora elites, including the former Kashag officials Lhukhangaw, Tsipon Shakya, Lobsang Gyentsen and the Dalai Lama's brother Gyalo Thondup. At that time, these émigrés had established the Committee for the Benefit of Tibet, which was devoted to the Tibetan Independence movement. Taking this opportunity, they tried to persuade the Dalai Lama to stay in India in order to repudiate the CCP in public. However, the Dalai Lama was hesitant

³¹⁵ Xiaoyuan Liu, "'Beijing Shijian': 1950 Niandai Zhonggong Dui Xizang Gaige De Dengdai Fangzhen," *Twenty-first Century Bimonthly*, no. 163 (October 2017): 75-76.

³¹⁶ Lama, *Freedom in Exile*, 121.

to make this decision.³¹⁷ He consulted the paramount Nechung Oracle, the State Oracle of Tibet for advice. At that time, the reply he received from the oracle was “return to Lhasa.”³¹⁸

Hearing about the Dalai Lama’s behaviour, Chou Enlai immediately flew to New Delhi from Beijing. He guaranteed the Dalai Lama that the central government neither changed its standpoint nor had any desire to violate its promises in the Seventeen-Point Agreement. Chou ascribed everything as a miscommunication and repeatedly suggested that the Central would not carry out democratic reforms in Tibet in the upcoming years. Taking all conditions into account, the Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa.

Realising the local situation in Tibet, before Chou’s departure to India, Mao Zedong reassured Tibetans by instructing an order to Party members in Tibet. This instruction was known as the ‘Instructions regarding Democratic Reform in Tibet (Guanyu Xizang Minzhu Gaige De Zhishi 关于西藏民主改革的指示)’ dated the 4th of September 1956, hence known as ‘4 September Instruction (Jiu Si Zhi Shi 九四指示)’.³¹⁹ To make it clear, the Instruction reaffirmed the local CCP cadres to prioritise the United Front work, pursuing to win the trust of the Tibetan upper strata. Mao reasserted that socialist reforms would be carried out only under the condition that the ethnic leadership expressed a genuine agreement to do so. Subsequently, Mao issued an official order known as the statement known as “Remaining the Status Quo for Six Years (Liu Nian Bu Gai 六年不改)”, explicitly noting that socialist reforms would

³¹⁷ Ibid, 130-134.

³¹⁸ Li, 2016a: 53.

³¹⁹ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 182-184.

not be implemented in Tibet in the upcoming six years. In the internal meetings, Mao and other senior leadership claimed that if the Tibetan elites still objected to the reforms six years later, the reforms could be further postponed.³²⁰

Goldstein commented that the compromise made by the CCP leadership was obvious. The purpose behind was to calm tensions. He said:

*Beijing was clearly making a major effort to restore a positive relationship with the Dalai Lama and his elite, by letting them continue to administer Tibet internally without the threat of reforms and a competing PCTAR hanging over their heads. Tibet was deemed too important strategically to risk precipitating a full-scale uprising merely to speed up the time when reforms would start.*³²¹

Following Mao's instruction, relevant policies were immediately committed. Firstly, more than 92% of Party cadres and members and most established units preparing for democratic reform were either stopped or removed. The stationed troops also withdrew 70% of its total numbers.³²² Also, the CCP allowed the reactivation of some closed institutions of the Tibetan government. However, several key questions were still left without further instructions, given that Mao's instruction was merely 'postponement' of the reforms rather than 'cancellation'. The instruction temporarily alleviated substantial concern for Tibet, but essentially, the Chinese compromise could

³²⁰ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 458-459.

³²¹ Ibid, 460.

³²² Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 109.

not help to completely eradicate the root of problems.

In the meantime, it was said that the CCP faced some questions internally. It was claimed that the postponement of reforms contradicted the original contents of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, which did not regulate the time-line and only suggested that the reforms should be conducted by the free will of Tibetans. Taking this in regard, Mao's concession could be more than an expression of attitude.³²³ It showed that the CCP was completely not in favour of dealing with the dispute with Tibet by force. Rather, it was taking any alternative approach to prevent conflict. In its statement on the 14th of May 1957, the CCP stated:

*What we call about democratic reform.....if being conducted without the sincere agreement from the upper leadership and the necessary support from the mass it will become enforcement, and we will be responsible for its implement. This is a contradiction to our principle that.....declared in Report about People's Republic of China Constitution Draft. It also disobeys the eleventh point of the 17-Point Agreement. If we do this, peacefully fulfilment of reform is impossible.....to fulfill reform through war and mobilisation of mass is the least way we are likely to adopt in the ethnic minority areas.*³²⁴

Given the reality that the democratic reforms were still ongoing in neighbouring regions and the government only 'postponed' but not 'withdrew', ethnic tension could

³²³ Liu, "Beijing Shijian," 82.

³²⁴ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 198.

resurge at any time. To make things clear, the Tibetan senses of uncertainty and insecurity remained, rather than faded away. For them, worry and fear for the reform, perceived as threats to their value and culture as well as other aspects of society, were beyond words. For the Chinese government, on the other hand, implementing socialist reforms in Tibet was in line with its broader national integration agenda so compromise also created pressure on the central government. Consequently, due to their individual considerations, it would be hard for both sides to reach a reconciliation.

The dual goal aimed at uniting the Tibetan leaders, especially the Dalai Lama, while promoting a socialist ideology in Tibet were to some extent internally contradicted. On the one hand, due to the needs of a United Front work, the CCP valued the opinions of traditional Tibetan leaders. As Mao elaborated, the CCP did not have strong enough conditions to connect with either the upper or the lower classes in Tibet and he believed that building cooperation and forging friendship with these elites was the most appropriate option.³²⁵ On the other hand, the implementation of communism and a socialist transformation were the main goals for the CCP, attracting and mobilising the masses to join and win the civil war with the KMT regime during wartime. When the PRC government began to carry out socialist reforms throughout China, except for in Tibet, many communist cadres and its followers could not understand the party's decision to compromise. From their perspective, Tibetan religion and traditional values were perceived as feudal products, which should be discarded. Meanwhile, faced by the local resistance in Amdo and Kham, Beijing was undecided whether it should continue its United Front Work with these traditional

³²⁵ Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Mao Zedong Xizang Gongzuo Wenxuan*, 93.

ethnic elites or turn to its mass line as in other regions in China.³²⁶

In this way, the adoption of a stance became very difficult for Beijing. Liu implied that at the end, the Chinese leadership sided with the socialist line, by explaining why suspension of democratic reforms in Tibetan areas outside Tibet was not realised.³²⁷

In addition, Goldstein suggests that the continuity of imposing democratic reforms showed Beijing's mind to set a model for Tibet. He says:

*Ganzi came from a different historical background, was not geopolitically significant, and had already started reforms, so Beijing decided it was not feasible to let Ganzi also be a beneficiary of this new [postponed] Tibet policy. While Mao and the Central Committee knew, of course, that events in Ganzi would have consequences for Tibet, they were convinced that this new policy of taking reforms off the table and allowing the old government and traditional socioeconomic system to continue for the foreseeable future would be a powerful enough force to overcome those consequences.*³²⁸

The Chinese expectation did not come true. Rather, knowing about the conflicts occurring in those Tibetan regions, Lhasa condemned Beijing over violation of the Seventeen-Point Agreement. Once again, both sides fell into furious debates. Tibetan anxiety and sense of uncertainty were boosted to distrust and fights. Finally, this led to the occurrence of the 10th of March Revolt 1959.

³²⁶ Anonymous Interview, January 13, 2016, Beijing.

³²⁷ Liu, "Beijing Shijian," 79-81

³²⁸ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 460-461.

This section analysed the effect of democratic reform on the formulation of sense of insecurity within the Sino-Tibetan relationship. Below, this chapter discusses how the presence of international intervention at this time intensified their interaction.

Increasing Transnational and External Intervention in Tibet: India, Taiwan, and the US

In the early 1950s, the PRC central government employed a sophisticated strategy to hinder Tibet from acquiring external aid to achieve its 'liberation' commitment. Beijing kept this standpoint while enhancing its diplomatic relationship with neighbouring countries, with India as the main focus. However, seeing New Delhi's accommodation of exiled Tibetan dissidents, Beijing doubted the Indian intention behind Tibet. Also, Beijing noticed the existence of Taipei's and Washington's willingness to be active in aiding Tibetan guerrilla forces in the mid-1950s onward. All these external actors further raised the CCP's perception of threat. This section briefly presents China's achievements over Tibet in association to its foreign relationship. It then analyses how these external interventions e.g. India, Taiwan and the US to Tibet pressured China.

To stabilise its position in Tibet, Beijing made multiple efforts to keep positive Sino-Indian relations. This stance was in line with India's interest. In its response, India demonstrated a friendly attitude to China, and prioritised the subject of Tibet.³²⁹ At the time, manners considered to help strengthen the bilateral friendship were

³²⁹ Madhumita Das. "Continuity and Change in India's Early Tibet Policy: 1947 to 1960," *South Asia Chronicle* 8/2018 (2019): 171-175.

welcomed from both sides. On the 29th of April 1954, Beijing and New Delhi signed the Panchsheel Treaty,³³⁰ which was also known as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Significantly, these five points contained: “mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty,” “mutual non-aggression,” “mutual non-interference each other’s internal affairs,” “equality and cooperation for mutual benefits” and “peaceful coexistence.” Given that “Tibet region of China” was addressed in the content of the Treaty, an implication was that New Delhi officially recognised China’s sovereignty over Tibet, instead of the ‘sovereignty ‘ that was hold by the British Raj.

In 1955, China was invited by India to participate in the first Asian and African Conference, the Bandung Conference in Indonesia. At the conference, the Chinese Prime Minister Chou Enlai called for the spirit of “recognition of the similarity and tolerance of the diversity” consistent with the Panchsheel.³³¹ Nehru, echoed Chou, and also promoted the spirit of the Panchsheel Treaty along with his proposed international ‘Non-Aligned Movement’. At this moment, the Sino-Indian bilateral relationship reached an acme. There was a saying that went: “Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai! (India and China are good brothers).”³³²

However, the developing Sino-Indian relationship was not without hiccups, in which Tibet still occupied a central place. In fact, China remained cautious about India’s words and practices towards Tibetans. Seeing more and more Tibetan anti-Beijing dissidents, including members of Committee for the Benefit of Tibet, moving to India,

³³⁰ United Nations, ed. *Treaty Series* 299 (1958), 57-81.

³³¹ Kuo-kang Shao, “Chou En-lai’s Diplomatic Approach to Non-aligned States in Asia: 1953–60,” *The China Quarterly* 78 (1979): 327-328.

³³² Sameer Patil, “India’s China Policy in the 1950s: Threat Perceptions and Balances,” *South Asian Survey* 14, no, 2 (2007): 286-287.

and developing a pro-Tibet independent movement, Beijing doubted New Delhi's intentions. The foundation of "Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai" turned out to be unstable.

From 1956 onwards, the Chinese suspicion of India became severe. In the aftermath of Beijing's launch of democratic reforms, the situation that traditional elites and religious figures from Eastern Tibet fleeing China to India increased. When the Indian government invited the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama to attend the Buddha Jayanti celebration, initially through the crown prince of Sikkim, the Chinese government was reluctant to permit this journey.³³³

Moreover, faced by Indian media and journalist reports that showed apparent sympathy and support for Tibetans, the Chinese government was angered.³³⁴ In July 1958 the Chinese government sent a note to the Indian government requesting its regulation of these 'anti-China' agents, organisations and activities.³³⁵ The note also implied Beijing's mild criticism. Considering New Delhi's response being nothing more than fudge, Chinese discontent was further enhanced.

From the perspective of New Delhi, support by Indian civil society for Tibet had nothing to do with it. The Indian government always reclaimed its consistency with its standpoint. That is, New Delhi sought to maintain a positive relationship with Beijing. Such a posture can be observed by Nehru's repeated discouragements of the Dalai Lama's proposed stay in India.

³³³ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 335-336.

³³⁴ Xinhua, "Yindusitan Qi Bao Zhizao Guanyu Xizang De Yaoyan (Hindustan Times Makes Gossip about Tibet)," *Internal Reference* (May 5, 1956): 45.

³³⁵ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 342-343.

Indeed, the Indian government had its own security concern. At that time, the Sino-Indian border was not yet demarcated. Although India was crafting a positive relationship with China, Nehru and the senior officials kept their eyes on the PLA since its entry into Tibet. In its association, the Indian allowance of Tibetan émigré could be considered a balance of humanitarian aid and national interest. Gyalo Thondup suggests that he was not allowed to organise anti-Beijing political activities publicly in India, but he could cooperate with the Indian intelligence department in collecting information from Tibet. That satisfied the bilateral interests.³³⁶

However, it seemed to Beijing that the existence of a large number of anti-China Tibetan organisations in India as well as New Delhi's inactiveness were an alternative form of supporting Tibet. With the outbreak of the Lhasa Rebellion and the Dalai Lama's journey to India, Beijing firmly believed that India played a role behind the Tibetan rebellion. Subsequently, India's commitments to Tibetans and the unresolved bilateral border dispute became a source to the Sino-Indian War of 1962.

In addition to India, Taiwan was another actor constituting a concern for Communist China. While the KMT regime, compared to India and other significant actors such as the US, might have been less powerful and could have only provided limited materials to Tibetans, its action might have generated asymmetric political implications from Beijing's view.

For one thing, Taipei's occupation of Chinese representatives in the UN was essential. At that time, Taipei's stance over Tibet, if adapted, might have an enormous effect on China's *de jure* sovereignty. Despite the fact that the KMT's commitments to Tibet

³³⁶ Thurston and Thondup, *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*, 148-51.

was following its constitutional framework, meaning that it insisted on the Tibetan issue belonging to Chinese domestic affairs,³³⁷ Beijing never omitted Taipei's position.

Secondly, as a former ruling authority, the KMT's power in China was uncertain for the CCP. Incorporating its assistance plan for Tibetans into the whole project of 'Recovery of Mainland (fangong dalu 反攻大陆)' and anti-communism, Taipei was very proactive in building connections to the Tibetan émigrés and guerrillas in Tibetan regions.³³⁸ The Taiwanese government was also keen on propagandising its efforts.³³⁹ According to the Taiwanese source, Taipei started its airdrop of weapons and materials into Tibetan regions from 1952.³⁴⁰ In the subsequent years Taipei continued airlifting support to Tibetan guerrillas groups, including Four Rivers Six Ranges, a guerrilla force mainly composed of Khampas, the Tibetans from the Kham area.³⁴¹ During the time, Taipei also looked for employing intensively joint military activity with the US, though it did not know that in reality, the US government conducted its own actions privately.

Beijing's acknowledgement of Taiwanese existence was explicit. For one thing, Taipei's operations were not successful every time, but they were occasionally captured by the CCP.³⁴² In addition, the Chinese leadership mentioned Taiwan on a variety of occasions. For example, in his letter to the Dalai Lama dated 18th of August 1956, Mao claimed that the KMT regime played a role in the Tibetan riots in

³³⁷ Hsiao-Ting Lin, *Taihai Lengzhan Jiemi Dangan* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2015), 204-231.

³³⁸ Ibid, 212-214

³³⁹ Ibid, 211-212; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 019.4/0002, *Xizang Kangbao* (Tibetan Anti-tyranny) (1959), 7-8.

³⁴⁰ Ibid, 212-213.

³⁴¹ Ibid, 213; 215; 218.

³⁴² Ibid, 212.

Sichuan.³⁴³ In a directive to the Tibet Work Committee, the CCP Central Committee asserted that they believed that Taiwanese agents were behind the rebellions in Sichuan, Qinghai and Gansu.³⁴⁴ In a Soviet Report about the Tibetan resistance in 1959, the Chinese source also suggested that Tibetans were communicating with Chiang Kai-shek's troops.³⁴⁵

The next powerful actor that raised Beijing's perception of threat was the US, which conducted its action mainly via the Central Intelligence Agency. As mentioned in the previous section, the US government, under the bi-power international structure of the Cold War, raised its interest in Tibet. From the beginning, the US government did not want to confront the CCP and the USSR because of Tibet. Also, it had to take the attitude of Taipei into consideration, which meant that the US government could not support Tibet by treating it as an independent country.³⁴⁶ These factors led to the US adoption of a low-profile stance.

In December 1955 President Eisenhower authored the CIA to employ means to undermine international communism. In 1956, aligned with this instruction, Secretary John Foster Dulles approved the plan assisting Tibetans.³⁴⁷ In the same year, the US government contacted Gyalo Thundrup and through him, the CIA started to recruit Tibetan commandos. The CIA provided them with training courses, initially in Saipan

³⁴³ Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhi Qu Weiyuanhui, *Mao Zedong Xizang Gongzuo Wenxuan*, 150.

³⁴⁴ Liu, "A Misty Cold War in the Himalayas," 306.

³⁴⁵ History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 49, d. 238, ll. 42-48 (R. 8929); translated from Russian by David Wolff. Published in CWIHP Working Paper No. 30, "Report by Yuri Androov, 'On the Situation in Tibet,'" March 31, 1959.

³⁴⁶ Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*, 133.

³⁴⁷ John Knaus, "Official Policies and Covert Programs: The US State Department, the CIA, and the Tibetan Resistance," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 5, no. 3 (2003): 68.

Island in the western Pacific, and then Colorado in the US.³⁴⁸ Starting from September 1957, the CIA returned the trained commandos to different places in Tibet. They were instructed with two main tasks. One was to enquire into the Dalai Lama's personal willingness to solicit US assistance; according to current literature, he never replied. The other task was to build direct connections with the local guerrillas.³⁴⁹

One of the most significant aided guerrilla groups was the Four Rivers Six Ranges, which also received assistance from Taiwan. As Mcgranahan points out, the founding of this group contained two implications: it not only served as a unification of disparate Tibetan guerrillas, but also served as institutionalisation of international resistance network.³⁵⁰ In the subsequent years, the US government airdropped military provisions, radios and medicine. In its inauguration in May 1957, the group, with the introduction of officials of Kashag, met with the Dalai Lama and paid their respects, requesting his help to include Amdo and Kham in the scope of 'Tibet' to stop democratic reforms.³⁵¹ Through access of Tibetan officials, members of Four Rivers Six Ranges entered Lhasa, and some served in the Kashag. With the dropping of aid by the CIA and the possible encouragement of Tibetan officials, the Four Rivers Six Ranges impeded the CCP's democratic reform commitments and conducted armed attacks on the PLA in the reformed regions.³⁵² The Chinese central government was enraged and demanded that the Kashag restrain the guerrilla forces.

The CCP regarded the US as a main rival since the Korean War. In the early 1950s,

³⁴⁸ Thurston and Thondup, *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*, 167-80.

³⁴⁹ Knaus, "Official Policies and Covert Programs: The US State Department, the CIA, and the Tibetan Resistance," 69.

³⁵⁰ Carole McGranahan, "Tibet's Cold War: The CIA and the Chushi Gangdrug Resistance, 1956-1974," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, no. 3 (2006): 110.

³⁵¹ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 339-52.

³⁵² Knaus, *Orphans of the Cold War*, 127-159.

Beijing kept its eyes on Washington and wondered at its ability to engage in the Tibetan issue.³⁵³ When sensing that the US did play a role in the Tibetan rebellions, Beijing had to re-estimate the whole situation. Because American involvement was clandestine and conducted mainly via air operation, it did not help Tibetans to counter their disadvantage in the fights against the Chinese army. However, the American presence put great pressure onto the Chinese.³⁵⁴ Shakya holds a similar viewpoint. He suggests that as Beijing perceived the American involvement in the Tibetan riots, the implication surpassed the riots themselves. It turned out to be “an international conspiracy to undermine the victory of the Communist Party in China. Moreover, it presented a direct threat to China’s security.”³⁵⁵ Revealing the CIA’s role in Tibet as early as in 1974, Allman notes that such threats created by the CIA-guerrilla insurgency were intolerable for Beijing. As a result, China became tougher towards the resistance.³⁵⁶

These state actors mentioned above formed complicated cooperation networks with the Tibetan émigrés and the guerrilla forces. The Indian goal was to balance its geopolitical security and its relationship with China. Taiwanese action was related with its anti-CCP plan. The American main objective was to harass and undermine communist China.³⁵⁷ Accurate information regarding cooperation among these actors is still unclear. However, it can be maintained that the Indian accommodation of Tibetan émigrés and the presence of Taiwan and the US have together intensified the Sino-Tibetan conflict during this time.

³⁵³ Liu, “A Misty Cold War in the Himalayas,” 303.

³⁵⁴ Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*, 134.

³⁵⁵ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 171

³⁵⁶ T. D. Allman, ‘Pawn to Check Peking: T. D. Allman on the CIA’s Role in Tibet,’ *The Guardian*. December 31, 1974.

³⁵⁷ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 171; Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 342-343.

The Spark of Conflict: The Lhasa Revolt in 1959

After 1958, Sino-Tibetan relations worsened. As Beijing continued its intense socialist transformation in Eastern Tibet, Tibetan resistance grew and in a short span of time, refugees crossed the border to Tibet. Local skirmishes occurred more frequently and spread into the frontier of Tibet. In addition, while external aid to Tibetans increased morale and resources, this enhanced Beijing's determination of suppression. As a result, the individual implementations formulated an action-reaction circle, and the circle generated a great sense of uncertainty and this sense infected most people in Tibet. For one side, the Tibetan government expanded its army claiming a need for security; for another, the stationed PLA strengthened their training and always kept full alarm.³⁵⁸ Rumour, distrust, and a violent atmosphere from different aspects intensified anxiety and fear.

Under these conditions, the masses as well as the leadership envisaged that warfare would happen in Tibet. After Ngabo, the senior Kashag official, returned to Lhasa from his company with the Dalai Lama to India and requested to join the Communist Party in secret. He suggested to Phuntsog Wangyal, the senior Tibetan cadre of the CCP, "The situation in Tibet is not certain so if a time should arise when the PLA has to withdraw from Tibet, you should take me and all my family members back to China."³⁵⁹ On another occasion, Mao expressed a similar warning, "In the present and the upcoming years we would face the challenge to struggle with our enemy to win the masses and we have to train our armed capability. Years later...we might have a

³⁵⁸ Li, *1959 Lhasa*, 197.

³⁵⁹ Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 432-433.

final battle.”³⁶⁰ Such a perception of calm before the storm pervaded.

At this turbulent time, Beijing instructed the Kashag to quell the Khampa turmoil. From the Chinese perspective, the rebels might trust and listen to the Kashag; also, it wanted to give the impression that the central government was still in cooperation with the Tibetan government.³⁶¹ Conversely, many Tibetan officials perceived this instruction as a Chinese ploy to repress Tibetans.³⁶² As a result, Tibetans presented an inactive attitude. Moreover, because many officials were sympathetic to the opponents, some were privately collaborating with them.³⁶³ Viewing Tibetan reactions, the Chinese government interpreted that the Kashag was in collusion with the rebels.³⁶⁴ Shakya asserts, “The Tibetans hoped that that Khampa revolt might persuade the Chinese to withdraw and allow Tibetans to reassert some authority. The Chinese, on the other hand, knew that any compromise would be seen as a sign of weakness.”³⁶⁵ Uncertainty and the phenomenon of security dilemma were fully featured.

In March 1959, an invitation from the Chinese leadership of the Tibet Work Committee and the Tibet Military Command to the Dalai Lama for a dance performance turned to be an unpredictable fuse to the full scale demonstration in Tibet.³⁶⁶ On the eve of the performance, a rumour drawing that the PLA was conspiring to abduct the Dalai Lama and detain him in Beijing suddenly circulated. On the 10th of March, the performance day, a large Tibetan crowd gathered outside of

³⁶⁰ Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhi Qu Weiyuanhui, *Mao Zedong Xizang Gongzuo Wenxuan*, 164.

³⁶¹ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 330.

³⁶² Ibid, 343.

³⁶³ Shakya, 1999: 181.

³⁶⁴ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 348.

³⁶⁵ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 181.

³⁶⁶ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 354.

Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama's summer palace, to prevent his attendance. Moreover, the crowd assaulted some Tibetan officials and Lamas that were seen to side with Beijing. The scuffle rapidly became a disturbance on the streets of Lhasa. Turning to this point, the crowd vented their emotions: the survival of Tibetans would rely on the absence of Chinese. The crowd was mobilised at this time. On an occasion, some people began yelling:

*The danger comes from the presence of the Communists. The Chinese and Tibetans cannot live together. The only lasting solution is if the Chinese are forced out of the country. As long as the Chinese remained in Tibet, the danger to the Dalai Lama would always be there.*³⁶⁷

To examine the behaviours, the Dalai Lama is not only regarded as a ruler but also considered a symbol of Tibetan society and identity.³⁶⁸

In the following several days, tension between Tibetans and the local PLA escalated. For one thing, the Tibetan crowds armed themselves. On many occasions people took over governmental buildings, calling for the independence of Tibet. Many Tibetan officials and elites then joined the groups. On the other side, witnessing that situation the PLA inside Lhasa were put on full alert. The CCP also assigned troops from other regions and deployed them outside Tibet.

³⁶⁷ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 195.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

The circumstance of anxiety and the floating sense of uncertainty can be exemplified by the Dalai Lama's behaviour on the eve of his escape. From the 10th of March onwards, the Dalai Lama consulted the Nechung Oracle at least three times. Given this frequency, the Dalai Lama's sense of uncertainty and helplessness reflected that he felt compelled to seek answers from the god. In his visit to India in 1956 he also consulted the Nechung Oracle once more. At this time, when he acquired the result of "Go, Go, Tonight" on the 17th of March, the Dalai Lama, with his family members and close followers immediately fled the palace.³⁶⁹

Consequently, the Dalai Lama's escape from Lhasa marked the collapse of Sino-Tibetan coexistence. The fights in Lhasa continued although the Dalai Lama had left; in fact, the conflict reached a higher level and turned into bloody warfare. The stationed PLA fired on the Potala Palace. The accurate number of victims during the riot is still unclear. In the meantime, the outbreak of the Lhasa Rebellion/National Uprising drew attention from the international community and soon brought about severe criticism on the CCP's oppression. A debate was then launched in the UN Assembly that we will discuss in next chapter.

At the first press conference after the Dalai Lama arrived in India at the end of March, he denounced the Seventeen-Point Agreement; he also declared the establishment of the Tibetan Government in Exile, which was officially moved and developed in Dharamsala, north India in 1960. On the other side, viewing this collapse of the two regimes' coexistence, the Chinese government denied the Dalai Lama's accusation. Alternatively, Beijing crushed all rebels in Tibet, announced the dismantlement of the Kashag, and replaced it with the Preparatory Committee of the Autonomous Region of

³⁶⁹ Li, *1959 Lhasa*, 203-204.

Tibet Autonomous.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the first decade of the territorial and administrative incorporation of Tibet into the PRC. In previous studies, the international factor was centralised and most scholars point that it is significant in terms of adding fuel to the Sino-Tibetan conflict.³⁷⁰ Building upon this body of literature, this chapter presents the domestic factors as well as the dynamic interactions between Beijing and Lhasa. Moreover, through security dilemma theory, this chapter provides a comprehensive outline about the evolution of the Sino-Tibetan conflict.

This chapter argues that Sino-Tibetan relations at this time initially showed the scenarios of low-uncertainty societal dilemma before evolving into high-uncertainty societal dilemma. As presented, the relationship featured a fair degree of coexistence with the involved bilateral sides contemplating mutual understanding in the first half of the decade. However, with Beijing's implementation of democratic reforms and the presence of external aid to Tibetans, senses of uncertainty emerged from both sides towards each other and these negative senses damaged the nascent positive relationship. In between, anxiety about security and the survival of ethnicity/nation emerged and strengthened. Finally, armed conflict broke out with the consequence of the Dalai Lama fleeing and the CCP's crackdown in Tibet in March 1959.

However, the coming of Beijing's direct rule did not bring about the elimination of conflict, but instead the Sino-Tibetan relationship was brought into a state of security

³⁷⁰ Mcgranahan, "Tibet's Cold War," 118.

dilemma engaged in a more complex environment. In the next chapter we will discuss the continuity of the Sino-Tibetan conflict.

Chapter Four

Socialist Transformation and Ethnic Conflict in Tibet, and Signs of Mitigation, 1960s-1970s

Introduction

In this chapter, this thesis examines Sino-Tibetan ethnic tension and conflict which took place in the years between 1959–1979, i.e. the two decades since the Dalai Lama left Tibet until Gyalo Thondup met Deng Xiaoping. Given the political sensitivity of the themes and lack of access to historical material, previous studies have put the focus on the international aspects of the conflict. Using Chinese sources of historical material and fresh literature, this chapter contributes to the literature by presenting the domestic scene. Also, building upon studies on the Cold War, this chapter analyses the international influence of the Cold War on the Sino-Tibetan relationship. Furthermore, security dilemma theory is applied to examine the Sino-Tibetan relationship. Taking a chronological narrative, this chapter suggests that the bilateral relationship in this period featured three security scenarios: high-uncertainty societal dilemma, real security threat, and low-uncertainty societal dilemma.

Firstly, this chapter argues that China's way of 'democratic reform' and its increasing international isolation regarding the Tibetan issue led to a high degree of societal security uncertainty about the Sino-Tibetan relationship. While the PRC authority aimed to stabilise the situation in Tibet, the reactions of Tibetans show that the efforts reached limited success. The eagerness to construct socialism and its overemphasis on

stability by the Chinese side contradicted Tibetan demands for preserving their traditional identity.

Secondly, this chapter analyses the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the Cultural Revolution. This chapter argues that this is not a case of security dilemma. Rather, the notion of a real security threat will be used here.

Thirdly, the scenario of low-uncertainty societal dilemma is identified in the Sino-Tibetan interactions of the 1970s. By analysing certain events, this chapter suggests that while both sides were still located in the security dilemma, their practices effectively calmed tensions and paved the way for further conversation.

This chapter is arranged as follows: It starts with China's intrusion in Tibet after the crackdown on the Tibetan revolt of 1959. This section focuses on China's imposition of socialist campaigns and anti-rebellion policy and the resulting Sino-Tibetan tension. The Panchen Lama's criticism manifesting Tibetan discontent and the CCP's reaction are discussed. This chapter then discusses the PRC's policies against the background of the Cultural Revolution. Given the Chinese malign behaviour towards Tibet, this chapter contends that the concept of security dilemma is inapplicable to analyse the case; the Sino-Tibetan relationship of certain years is identified as a real security threat. Next, the chapter turns to discuss the foreign policy dimension of China's Tibet policies in the 1960s. This section analyses significant events, including the Sino-Indian border conflicts, the Sino-Soviet rift as well as the UN resolutions regarding Tibet. In the next section, this chapter discusses the growing contacts between Beijing and the Tibetan Government in Exile in the 1970s to draw signals about the improvement in the bilateral relationship.

The Anti-rebellion Campaign and Socialist Transformation of Tibet

In chapter three, this thesis analysed that the Chinese imposition of ‘democratic reform’ and the Chinese way of socialist modernisation in Tibetan areas outside Tibet resulted in the perception of threat for Tibetans in Tibet. Concerned about their traditional way of life, customs, and religion that were facing radical challenges, many Tibetans in Tibet, along with armed resistant from other Tibetan regions, stood against the CCP. The situation turned out to be a large-scale conflict in March 1959. With the Dalai Lama’s escape to India, the PLA cracked down on the demonstrations in Lhasa; shortly after, the Chinese authorities announced the practice of democratic reform in Tibet.³⁷¹ Whereas Beijing had previously suggested the postponement of the reform in Tibet as a concession to the Dalai Lama and, more generally, to the Tibetan people, the CCP leadership changed its tactic.³⁷² The result, as shown in this section, was a pervasive atmosphere of uncertainty and confrontation.

Since March 1959, China’s main goal was to incorporate Tibet into the PRC state and transform it into a socialist society resembling other provinces and regions at a pace as fast as it could. On the 28th of March, Beijing issued an order dismissing the Kashag, the original Tibetan government, and instructed the Preparatory Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region to take over the administration. The Panchen Lama, another Tibetan spiritual leader and vice director of the PCTAR, was appointed as its deputy director.³⁷³ On the 8th of April 1959, the PCTAR endorsed the Order of 28th of March.³⁷⁴ In the same month, the second National People’s Congress of the PRC

³⁷¹ Jian Chen, “The Tibetan Rebellion of 1959 and China’s Changing Relations with India and the Soviet Union,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, no.3 (2006): 54.

³⁷² Smith, *China’s Tibet?*, 19-50.

³⁷³ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 124-130.

³⁷⁴ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiuyuanhui Dangshi Yanjiushi, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Lishi*

declared the outset of democratic reform.³⁷⁵

In its practice, the launched democratic reform was deliberately conceived as an array of campaigns in different areas of Tibet and targeted objects across traditional figures of authority and the masses. In addition, the anti-rebellion policy continued and mixed with the practice of democratic reform.³⁷⁶ Thereby, as the second meeting of the PCTAR in July 1959 instructed an array of policies, socialist transformation and suppression of Tibetan dissidents were seen throughout them.³⁷⁷

To be specific, the policies included: (1) ‘Three antis and two eliminations (san fan shuang jian 三反双減)’ campaign. It focused on the agricultural areas, where the government “opposed the rebels, the system of corvee labour, serfdom, and eliminated rents and interests;” (2) ‘Three antis and two benefits (san fan liang li 三反两利)’. This campaign was implemented in the nomadic areas, in which the government “opposed the rebels, the system of corvee labour, serfdom, and benefited the livestock workers and the livestock owners;” (3) ‘Three antis and three liquidations (san fan san suan 三反三算)’. It was carried out in monasteries and temples, where the government “opposed the rebels, the feudal privileges, the feudal deprivation, and exterminated political oppression, class oppression and economic deprivation.” In particular, monks and lamas were required to obey the leadership of the CCP and pledge to contribute to the state’s territorial integrity and ethnic unity; (4) ‘Four antis and two eliminations (si fan shuang jian 四反双減)’. The campaigns were implemented in towns and cities, in

Dashiji, 141-142.

³⁷⁵ Ibid, 145-146.

³⁷⁶ Xiaobin Wang, “Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce De Lishi Kaocha,” (PhD diss., Party School of the Central Committee of CPC, 2003), 41-44; 2009: 67-68.

³⁷⁷ Zhongguo Zangxue Yanjiu Zhongxin, ed, *50 Nian Zhenxiang: Xizang Minzhu Gaige Yu Dalai De Liuwang Shengya* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2009), 108-109.

which the government aimed to oppose “the rebels, feudalism, feudal deprivation, and feudal privileges,” and eliminate traditional taxes.³⁷⁸

Carrying out these comprehensive yet distinctive policies, the CCP disseminated its power into the local level and heightened its social control in Tibet. Significantly, by the redistribution of a great deal of land owned by landlords and the manorial aristocrats, the state cut existing ties among monasteries and villages. Alternatively, the CCP built a new vertical relationship between the state and Tibetans.³⁷⁹ Moreover, the Chinese government abolished old institutions adopted by the Kashag and replaced them with new versions; these included the adjustment of administrative districts and the Tibetan currency.³⁸⁰ Furthermore, the CCP fostered a large number of Tibetans cadres, who afterwards were assigned to the local governments and organisations.³⁸¹ In this way, local Tibetan society was structurally reconfigured within a few years since 1959.

The CCP presumed that these multiple means could help stabilise Tibet. However, several factors prevented the realisation of this plan. Firstly, the radical state-led modernisation activated ethnic tension. As discussed in chapter three, the rapid changes in the societal landscape outside Tibet resulted in uncertainty in Tibet. Now, similar changes occurred in Tibet. In addition, the negative effects of the anti-rebellion policy also added fuel to the sense of insecurity for Tibetans. The relationship between Tibetans and the Chinese government became worse.

³⁷⁸ Ibid, 117-139.

³⁷⁹ Grunfeld, *The Making of Modern Tibet*, 167-168.

³⁸⁰ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 444-445.

³⁸¹ Grunfeld, *The Making of Modern Tibet*, 171; Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 255.

Acknowledging the resulting negative effects, the Panchen Lama listed the main setbacks afflicted by the ‘democratic reform’ and the anti-rebellion campaign. He pinpointed that the reform had caused severe damage on Tibetan society and Buddhism. Significantly, many socialist campaigners had little understanding of Tibetan culture. It seemed that, from their perspective, most things derived from traditional Tibet should entirely give way to ‘modern’ phenomena. Thousands of monasteries were ruined and many monks and nuns were arrested because they questioned the campaign. Given that Buddhism was deeply embedded in Tibetan society and played a meaningful role in Tibetan culture and custom, many Tibetans felt strong sympathy and anger when faced with these radical policies.³⁸² The Panchen Lama criticised the disorder caused by the anti-rebellion campaign. As he pointed out, under the banner of ‘fighting the rebels’, the PLA troops arbitrarily arrested people who were suspected to have engaged in the revolt of March 1959. These indiscriminate purges generated a sense of unsettlement among Tibetans.³⁸³ Overall, the Chinese commitment triggered Tibetan discontentment and antagonism towards the government.

The Panchen Lama, one of the paramount figures for Tibetans, wanted to raise these setbacks at a meeting with major CCP leaders. In 1962, he submitted a comprehensive observation of not only Tibet, but also of the other Tibetan areas; in the meantime he also proposed suggestions to correct the policy flaws. The submitted proposal is known as the “70,000 Character Petition (Qi Wan Yan Shu 七万言书)” that the Panchen Lama presented at a meeting attended by major CCP leaders, including Zhou Enlai, Li Wei-han, Xi Zhongxun, Zhang Jingwu, Zhang Guohua, and other Tibetan

³⁸² Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 262-264; Smith, *China's Tibet?*, 85-92.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 75; 84.

officials including Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme.³⁸⁴ However, the Central government did not accept his advice. Rather, Mao severely criticised the Panchen Lama, blaming him as an obstacle to the Chinese socialist campaign.³⁸⁵

The reasons for this treatment were various and the existing literature believes that the increasing radicalisation of China's domestic environment was a significant factor. To mention it briefly, at the Lushan Conference of 1959, Chairman Mao decided to launch a new anti-right campaign as his response to those who planned a reexamination of the revolutionary program. Perceiving these ideas as a threat to his personal authority and as a plot to compromise with the capitalist line, Mao purged the then defense minister Peng Dehuai from his position by targeting him as the leader of an anti-Party clique and committed an internal purge of those who had connections to Peng. In 1962, Mao Zedong reaffirmed the significance of 'class struggle' at the Beidaihe Conference. On this occasion, Mao attacked other senior officials for their 'surrendering profile toward the class enemies'. Under such a background, Mao accused the Panchen Lama and his submission of the 70,000 Character Petition, as a conspicuous anti-Party figure and reactionary.³⁸⁶ In this view, the Panchen Lama's tragedy was related to the historical context in which it was situated.

Furthermore, a perception that the Panchen's proposal contained ethno-nationalism existed among the CCP. According to an internal document, at the meeting dated the 21st of August 1962, members of the Tibet Work Committee criticised the Panchen Lama as below:

³⁸⁴ Ibid, 74.

³⁸⁵ Ibid, 95-96.

³⁸⁶ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 273-275.

*The goals for his proposal: The first one is to vent his emotion. The second is to fight for power, win the heart of the masses, and increase his influence to seek more 'freedom' and 'autonomy' He is looking for power not only in Tibet. Moreover he aims to build a Tibetan country that incorporates all Tibetan areas.*³⁸⁷

As such, the Panchen's behaviour was interpreted as a posture threatening the state. In this way, his purge was related to the Chinese concern about the Tibetan nationalism.³⁸⁸

In addition, the intensified Sino-Indian border dispute and war, which broke out around the same time, further constituted a delicate situation for the Panchen Lama. As Tibet was the main cause to the border confrontation, the Panchen Lama, given his importance, became a sensitive subject. According to an internal report, the top leadership was concerned about his loyalty. In particular, when they found that the Panchen Lama still privately praised the status of the Dalai Lama, their doubt was further reinforced.³⁸⁹ The CCP's purge of the Panchen Lama was attributed to his 'counter-revolutionary essence', though an uncertainty about his intention deserves to be taken into account.³⁹⁰ The effect of the Sino-Indian border dispute will be discussed in the following section.

³⁸⁷ "Dui Banchan Ji Qi Shangshu De Renshi (Rethinking about the Panchen Lama and his Appeal)" (August 21, 1962) in *Zangqu Tebie Shiliao Xilie 3: Xizang Gongwei Wenjian* (Special Documents about Tibet Series 3: Tibet Work Committee), ed. University Service Centre for China Studies (Hong Kong, University Service Centre for China Studies).

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Anonymous interview.

³⁹⁰ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 289.

The Panchen Lama's sufferings here should not only be considered a personal loss of power but also a vivid reflection of intensifying Chinese distrust of traditional Tibetan leadership. As a Tibetan spiritual figure and one of the PRC's state leaders, the Panchen Lama was not even invited to attend the 14th National Day celebration in 1963. On the occasion of the 7th PCTAR in the following year, he was publicly accused to have committed 'anti-people and anti-country crimes'. In December 1964, the third meeting of National People's Committee announced the removal of the Panchen from the leadership of the PCTAR. Meanwhile, the State Council also announced the withdrawal of the Dalai Lama from the PCTAR and the NPC.³⁹¹ All these resolutions reflected that these members of the 'patriotic upper class', especially the traditional elites containing religious and cultural aspects, were no longer relied upon as local collaborators or agents.³⁹² Rather, the Chinese authorities from then on turned to people with more secular features or to the CCP self-trained Tibetan cadres.³⁹³ This phenomenon reflected the CCP's trust of those assumed to share a similar ideology.

Having developed complicated networks through the party and various other organisations for years, Beijing could fully deliver its variety of policies throughout Tibet. When Mao launched the nationwide 'socialist education movement' at the end of 1962, the local government in Tibet correspondingly launched a campaign of the 'three big educations,' mixing propaganda of class consciousness, patriotism and socialism. The practice of mobilisation from the central to the local revealed that a

³⁹¹ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui Dangshi Yanjiushi, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Lishi Dashiji*, 220-221.

³⁹² Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 290-301.

³⁹³ Beena Burman, "Cadre Education in Tibet," *China Report* 13, no.1 (1977): 11-15; Ibid, 302-308.

vertical administrative system had been built. The PLA troops stationed in Tibet and other neighbouring provinces could also provide the Chinese government with an armed force strong enough to deal with any potential opponent. Under these conditions, the Central government announced the establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965.

The founding of the TAR did not mean that Tibetans had been granted autonomy; instead, this titular empowerment marked that the PRC further institutionalised its rule in Tibet.³⁹⁴ In addition, the founding itself provided a coherent statement for the PRC government to tackle a variety of questions relating to its ruling legitimacy and commitment to protect ethnic minorities. For one, Beijing could claim that the regime had complied with its own position on ethnic policies and that Tibetans enjoyed autonomous rights. Beijing also claimed that it had fulfilled its promise in the Seventeen-Point Agreement of 1951, in which Article 3 stated that “The Tibetan people have rights to exercise autonomy under the unified leadership of the Central People’s Government.” Since 1965, the existence of the TAR became supporting evidence for Beijing to refute any doubts about its promise to Tibetans. Beijing also took the establishment of the TAR to deny the demands from the TGIE in the bilateral negotiation, which can be seen in chapter five.

On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, the CCP reshaped the entire social landscape of Tibet. Given the radical imposition of these policies, however, the atmosphere of uncertainty increased. Shortly after, the upheaval of the Cultural Revolution oriented

³⁹⁴ China Report, “Tibet: Autonomy or Integration?: The ‘Tibetan Revolution’ Is at An Uncertain Stage. Peking Has Tightened Its Control but Its Position Is Not Invulnerable in Tibet,” *China Report* 2, no.2 (1966): 28-32; Steven Venturino et al., “Reading Negotiations in the Tibetan Diaspora,” in *Constructing Tibetan Culture: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. by Frank J. (World Heritage Press, 1997), 102.

the situation towards a further violent scenario, to which the concept of security dilemma was inapplicable.

The Cultural Revolution in Tibet and Real Security Threat

This section discusses the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the Cultural Revolution, understanding it as a continued and tense confrontation. Analysing China's adoption of an assimilation policy towards Tibetans, this section argues that the situation in this period, in particular in the late-1960s, is identified as a real security threat. A circumstance containing irreconcilable antagonism is illustrative of this.

As a dramatic tragedy in modern PRC history, the damage caused by the Cultural Revolution is inestimable. Tibet was unable to be exempted from this crusade. With its traditional legacy and religious characteristics, which were claimed to be feudal, Tibet became one of the most severely afflicted regions.

The origins of the Cultural Revolution is due to multiple factors.³⁹⁵ Domestically, the political struggles amid the Central leadership in Beijing became more violent. On the 16th of May 1966, Mao Zedong and his supporters issued the "516 Statement (516 Tongzhi 516 通知)," which not only reconfirmed the indisputable authority of Mao, but also encouraged people to carry on class struggle. Warning that reactionary forces were awaiting an opportunity to destroy the proletarian dictatorship, Mao insisted on the necessity of launching a higher degree of revolutionary campaign.³⁹⁶ Hearing that

³⁹⁵ Chalmers Johnson, "China: The Cultural Revolution in Structural Perspective," *Asian Survey* 8, no.1 (1968):1-2; Lowell Dittmer, "'Line Struggle' in Theory and Practice: The Origins of the Cultural Revolution Reconsidered," *The China Quarterly* 72 (1977): 675-712.

³⁹⁶ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan* (Beijing: China Tibetology Press, 2015), 369.

the Red Guards and the Cultural Revolution Committee was established in Beijing, students and regional CCP members formed local branches all over China. The new revolutionist wave soon spread nationwide. On the international side, the Sino-Soviet rift since the late 1950s led to a dispute over the ideological line between Beijing and Moscow, in which both sides insisted that their policies followed orthodox Marxism.³⁹⁷ Falling into a propagandist contestation, Mao accused the Soviet communists of being revisionist. As a consequence, the CCP continued the revolutionary struggle.³⁹⁸ Under such a background, therefore, the prospect of a further radical campaign was sensible.

From the beginning, the Cultural Revolution in Tibet was merely a reflection of Beijing's instructions, given the fact that the local officials did not engage in the power struggle among the CCP top leadership. However, the crusade itself quickly evolved into violence between three factions: Nyamdrel (together/alliance), Gyelog (overthrow/rebel), and the PLA stationed in Tibet. At the different times, Beijing also played a role.³⁹⁹

During the peak of the Cultural Revolution, in 1967-68, the local situation in Tibet showed as power battles amidst different factions, in which Han people always led the

³⁹⁷ Donald Zagoria, "Mao's Role in the Sino-Soviet Conflict," *Pacific Affairs* 47, no. 2 (1974): 139-153; Lorenz Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton University Press, 2008), 272-301.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ While most of the studies on the Cultural Revolution of Tibet tended to only focus on the Nyamdrel and the Gyelog, given its substantial role and influential power in a variety of events, this chapter stresses the importance of the PLA, which has been responsible for the local stability of Tibet for a long time. In most cases, they were not allowed to express attitude to any political camps. With the fights between the Nyamdrel and the Gyelog, however, the PLA became gradually involved and dominated the scene. Through collective negotiations and intervention from the central authority, a Revolutionary Committee of Tibet including all factions was finally established in Lhasa in September 1968. Zeng Yongya, the then regional leader of the PLA, was appointed as its Chairman. Grunfeld, *The Making of Modern Tibet*, 182-186; Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 369-378.

fight. For another, everything related to Tibet was always regarded as the old and backwardness, and thus easily rendering attacks from the mobilised masses.⁴⁰⁰

During this time, Tibetan society met with extreme means of suppression and assimilation to Chinese socialism. The principle of 'Promotion by Cautious Steps' revealed in the early 1950s to guide the policy for ethnic minorities was completely replaced with 'class struggle'. The slogan 'The ethnic question is essentially a class question', raised by Mao, became the supreme doctrine for ethnic policy. In this way, it implied that the government essentially withdrew its recognition of ethnicity as a category under this context. Alternatively, 'political attitude' and 'class background' became the main labels used to distinguish people.⁴⁰¹ Any language, religion or custom that could feature ethnic characteristics was forbidden. Also, the system of ethnic autonomous regions was suspended. The extreme and offensive tendency illuminates a broader picture.⁴⁰² In fact, Tibet was not a case in isolation. Rather, other ethnic minority regions, including Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Yunnan, were facing the same forces. Dreyer argues that the top leadership decided to resolve the long-term sensitive ethnicity questions through the eradication of the distinctiveness of ethnic groups.⁴⁰³

Considering this practice, the concept of 'cultural genocide' can be used to conceive of Tibetan sufferings.⁴⁰⁴ As such, anything that could manifest Tibetan characteristics

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, 379-380; Stanton Candlin, "Developments in Tibet after the Lhasa Uprising," *China Report* 8, no.4 (1972): 3-7.

⁴⁰¹ Binggao Jin, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Minzu Gongzuo Lilun Yu Shijian* (Beijing: Central University for Nationalities Publishing House, 2007), 495-499.

⁴⁰² June Dreyer, *China's Political System: Modernization and Tradition* (New York: Longman, 2010), 312-313

⁴⁰³ June Dreyer, "China's Minority Nationalities in the Cultural Revolution," *The China Quarterly* 35 (1968): 96-109.

⁴⁰⁴ Roe, "Societal Security," 208-209.

was highly inhibited. In addition, Chinese authorities constantly mobilised Tibetans to take part in various socialist campaigns. Names of roads, streets, as well as of significant occasions were adjusted to fit socialist values. For example, the mountain Chagpori was renamed as mountain Victory, in memory of the anti-rebellion campaign; Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama's palace, was turned into People's Park. Also, Tibetans were not excluded from the fierce struggles of the Red Guards. Many were engaged in the competing factions. After the establishment of the Revolutionary Committee, social order was restored but the mobilisation of people for socialist campaigns continued.⁴⁰⁵ All these operations from different aspects caused serious damage to Tibetan culture and tradition, especially to Buddhism.

In the previous section, this chapter noted that, when Beijing embarked on its socialist transformation in Tibet beginning in 1959, religion was targeted by some campaigners with irregular threats of disorder. By the time of the Cultural Revolution, circumstances became tougher, and Buddhism faced planned destruction. Mao proclaimed the campaign "against the four olds" (ideas, culture, customs, and habits), and as a consequence, everything associated with 'old Tibet' was often targeted. All camps of the Red Guards asserted to throw the old away in the name of modernisation and progress. A great deal of monasteries and temples were vandalised, including the three main monasteries of Sera, Drepung and Gaden.⁴⁰⁶ Even Jokhang temple was occupied by the Red Guards and the PLA and turned into a meeting place.⁴⁰⁷ Most religious ceremonies were suspended. For ordinary people, the worship of Buddha was even distorted into the worship of Mao.

⁴⁰⁵ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 379.

⁴⁰⁶ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 322.

⁴⁰⁷ Tsering Woeser, *Shajie* (Taipei: Dakuai Wenhua, 2016) 74-84.

In a report contained in the UK National Archives, quoting some journalists who visited Tibet in the late 1970s, Tibet was described as a colony of the PRC, and the local religious situation was described as such:

After being totally suppressed during the Cultural Revolution, religious practice is now again permitted, but under severe constraints. Of 2,469 monasteries and 110,000 monks in 1960, 10 monasteries and perhaps 1-2,000 monks remain. No men have entered religious training since 1960. Lamas interviewed by journalists explained that they practised their religion under the Party's guidance as units subordinate to the 'Office for the Preservation of Cultural Relics'...The remaining few temples opened 3 times a week during working hours, and as they were officially designated as museums, an entrance fee had to be paid by worshippers.⁴⁰⁸

In another report, officers from the UK Embassy in Beijing expressed their personal experiences in Lhasa:

In other monastery, a staggering complex of buildings which once housed 10,000 monks and now, the Chinese said, musters 200, we had an opportunity for questions. Mr. Health asked the senior monks (not a lama) whom he had regarded as the spiritual leader of his faith since the Dalai fled. The monk

⁴⁰⁸ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1695, "C. O. Hum to R. C. Fursland Esq," July 24, 1979, *Relations between China and Tibet* (1979).

replied “formally Chairman Mao Zedong and now Chairman Hua Guofeng.”⁴⁰⁹

While these reports were not written during the Cultural Revolution, they can help us to conceive of the relics of certain distorted religious practices.

In his statement on the anniversary of the national uprisings of 1967 and 1969, the Dalai Lama criticised the Cultural Revolution’s intentions and action to ‘wipe out traces of Tibetan culture’⁴¹⁰ and ‘the totality of Tibetan identity’.⁴¹¹ Tsering Woesser also decried the situation in Tibet as a ‘human genocide’ to express the degree of destruction.⁴¹² Through interviews with former Red Guards and monks, Wang Lixiong argued that many Tibetans during that period became thoroughly alienated from their traditional way of life rather than being mere passive participants.⁴¹³ Drawing on these observations, it is to be pointed out that, beyond the image of people acting in anarchy during the Cultural Revolution, Tibetans and Tibet were both experiencing a fundamental crisis of societal survival.

Facing the capricious revolutionist storm accompanied by factional strife and the militarisation of Tibet, some Tibetans in nomadic and rural areas stood up to fight and vented their anger by assaulting either local administrations or units where the PLA stayed. To a large extent, these were direct reflections of the aim of local Tibetans to address their sufferings. In 1969, such assaults happened in 52 out of 71 counties of

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, “N. J. Cox to R. C. Fursland Esq,” September 25, 1979.

⁴¹⁰ Dalai Lama, “Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the Eighth Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day,” *His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*, 10 March, 1967.

⁴¹¹ Dalai Lama, “Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the Tenth Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day,” *His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*, 10 March, 1969.

⁴¹² Woesser, *Shajie*, 7.

⁴¹³ Lixiong Wang, *Tian Zang: Xizang De Mingyun* (Taipei: Da Kuai, 2009), 316-330.

the TAR.⁴¹⁴ In Changdu City, Banbar County, it was reported that more than two thousand people attacked and temporally occupied the local government.⁴¹⁵ The Nyemo Revolt, a well-known incident, occurred at this time.⁴¹⁶ Led by Thrinley Choedron, a nun who claimed to restore Buddhism, the revolt spread to more than 18 counties and lasted for 8 months.⁴¹⁷ All these rebellions subsequently provoked brutal suppression and thousands of participants (and suspects) were either arrested or executed.⁴¹⁸ These rebellions and the subsequent suppression then incurred more rebellions and suppression. Tibetans chose to seek exile in the neighboring countries while some joined the guerrillas.⁴¹⁹

By examining the situation of this period, China's actions towards Tibet could be regarded as aggressive. The Sino-Tibetan relationship in the late-1960s was extremely difficult. Shakya contended that the apparent Tibetan discontent towards the CCP was real. He stated that "The constant attack on the Tibetan culture.....had eroded the Tibetans' confidence in their own value system. The Chinese Communist cadres had set about transforming every aspect of Tibetan behaviour but what they saw as social education was considered by the people an attack to their way of life."⁴²⁰ In his analysis, the Cultural Revolution brought about not only disorder, but also psychological and physical destruction of Tibetan society.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁴ Woesser, *Shajie*, 201.

⁴¹⁵ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Wei Yuanhui Dangshi Yanjiushi, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Lishi Dashiji*, 255.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid; Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 344-346

⁴¹⁷ Ibid, 345.

⁴¹⁸ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 377.

⁴¹⁹ Candlin, "Developments in Tibet after the Lhasa Uprising," 8-9.

⁴²⁰ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 346.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

China's Foreign Relations and the Tibetan Issue

Thus far, the above sections have discussed the high-uncertainty societal dilemma and the real security threat which manifesting themselves in the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the 1960s. The examination has mainly focused on domestic dimensions of the issue. Aiming to paint a comprehensive picture of the dynamics affecting the Sino-Tibetan relationship, the section below presents the Chinese external politics at that time. This section is going to show that, parallel to the time when China carried out its socialist crusades in Tibet, the escape of the Dalai Lama and of a large number of Tibetans resulted in a series of domino effects on China's relations with its neighboring countries, including India and the Soviet Union. Further, the Tibetan issue was appealed to in the UN several times by patrons of Tibet. These complex events related to Tibet, embedded in the Cold War structure, were perceived by Beijing as challenges to Chinese sovereignty, territorial integrity, security, and nation-building project in Tibet. Substantially, these factors accounted for Beijing's tough attitude until its improvement of international and domestic politics.

The Tibetan Factor in the Sino-Indian Border Dispute and the Sino-USSR Rift

The Sino-Indian war of 1962 is considered one of the most important and sensitive topics in modern Sino-Indian relations, and the Tibetan factor occupied a significant position.⁴²² In addition, when the relationship between China and India deteriorated, the China-USSR relationship also became worse during this time. Indeed, there were

⁴²² Rajiv Sikri, "The Tibet Factor in India-China Relations," *Journal of International Affairs* (2011): 55-71; R. S. Kalha, "Tibet as a Factor in Sino-Indian Relations Past and Present," *Journal of Defence Studies* 6, no.4 (2012): 7-26; Sharad Soni and Reena Marwah, "Tibet as a Factor Impacting China Studies in India," *Asian Ethnicity* 12, no. 3 (2011): 285-299; Tsering Topgyal, "Charting the Tibet Issue in the Sino-Indian Border Dispute," *China Report* 47, no. 2 (2011): 115-131

many factors resulting in the Sino-Soviet split, and Beijing's discontent with Moscow's standpoint on the Sino-Indian dispute, which related to Tibet, was one of them. As a consequence, India and the USSR became opponents of China in the Cold War context and their behaviour towards Tibet was a matter of concern for the Chinese.⁴²³

Following the Tibetan revolt of March 1959, Sino-Indian relations rapidly declined. In chapter three, this thesis presented that the Chinese government always doubted Indian intentions on Tibet and perceived its accommodation of Tibetan émigrés as assistance to the Tibetan resistance. Chinese uncertainty was not dispelled with the crackdown of the Tibetan revolt. Rather, Beijing regarded the arrival of the Dalai Lama and his followers in India as evidence that New Delhi did play a role. Further, Nehru's sympathetic tone for the Tibetan uprising and the provision of asylum to the Dalai Lama and a large number of other Tibetans⁴²⁴ provoked a tough response by Beijing. On the 6th of May 1959, an article entitled "Revolution of Tibet and Philosophy of Nehru" was published in the *People's Daily*. The article criticised New Delhi's 'expansionism' and 'Anglo-American imperialism' behind the scenes.⁴²⁵ Around the same time, occasional conflicts broke out along the boundary area, where only a Line of Actual Control (LAC) between the PRC and India existed instead of a demarcated line. From then on, the Tibetan issue and the Sino-Indian border dispute further entwisted and resulted in the war of 1962.

⁴²³ Chen, "The Tibetan Rebellion of 1959 and China's Changing Relations with India and the Soviet Union;" Zhihua Shen, "Nanyi Mihe De Liehen: Sulian Dui Zhong Yin Chongtu De Lichang Yu Zhong Su Fenqi Gongkaihua," *Journal of Tsinghua University* 6, no. 24 (2009): 5-27

⁴²⁴ Thomas Kauffmann, *The Agendas of Tibetan Refugees: Survival Strategies of a Government-in-Exile in a World of Transnational Organizations* (Berghahn Book, 2015), 16.

⁴²⁵ Jiefang Xizang Shi Bianweihui, *Jiefang Xizang Shi*, 380.

The border dispute between China and India can trace its origins to the Simla Conference held in 1914, when the British Raj signed the McMahon Line with the *de facto* representative of Tibet. At that time, the Chinese authority was the third participant at the conference and did not sign the treaty, denying its legitimacy.⁴²⁶ Decades later, the dispute was inherited from previous regimes by the independent Indian government and the PRC respectively. While the friendship between China and India in the early 1950s seemed to dilute the sensitivity, the border was still not demarcated. After the conclusion of the Panchsheel Agreement in 1954, the Indian Prime Minister Nehru instructed his government to establish a 'firm and definite' northern frontier with China, which was marked as 'undefined' before. Conversely, the PRC marked the line as *terra irredenta* after 1954. Though both sides noticed this tension, they did not urge their counterparts to the negotiation table.⁴²⁷

Out of consideration for its own geopolitical security, the Indian government is always concerned with the situation in the Himalaya region, in particular in Tibet. In addition, Indians traditionally regard the Himalaya Mountains as a spiritual and holy sphere.⁴²⁸ Based on these factors, the increasing presence of the PLA throughout Tibet after the Lhasa revolt immediately increased the Indian government's concerns and apprehensions. On the other side, the CCP was alarmed with Indian intentions and behaviours.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁶ Alastair Lamb, *The McMahon Line: A Study in the Relations between India, China and Tibet, 1904-1914* (Routledge & K. Paul, 1966), 564-565; K. P. Gupta, "Distortions in the History of Sino-Indian Frontiers," *Economic and Political Weekly* 15, no. 30 (1980): 1265.

⁴²⁷ Neville Maxwell, "Sino-Indian Border Dispute Reconsidered," *Economic and Political Weekly* 34, no. 15 (1999): 908-909; Kalha, "Tibet as a Factor in Sino-Indian Relations Past and Present," 15-17.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ John Garver, "China's Decision for War with India in 1962," in *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, eds. Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross, 86-116 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 93-96.

In the fall of 1959, military clashes erupted in the Longju region, the disputed eastern section of the border and in the region of Aksai Chin in the western part. While at first both Beijing and New Delhi upheld the Panchsheel principles towards each other, trying to calm confrontation, tensions between China and India further escalated as the leaders of both states vowed to defend their national interests. Propaganda in the two countries began to operate by denouncing each other as imperialists. Diplomatic contacts seemed to lose its function for bilateral communication.

In 1960, Chou Enlai visited New Delhi to negotiate a deal. He proposed that India could take the eastern part while the western sector belonged to China, which then failed.⁴³⁰ The situation evolved into a standoff, and the strong pressures from the domestic civil society deteriorated the rift. In 1961, the Indian Prime Minister Nehru declared the adoption of the 'Forward Policy', instructing Indian troops to move forward to the disputed front-line when facing questions in Parliament.⁴³¹ In its response, Beijing warned New Delhi to stop this policy.⁴³² Nehru refused to accept this request. Instead, he ordered more troops to move towards the frontier and set up garrisons in their own 'territory.' From the perspective of Nehru, his strategy aimed to force China to make more concessions in the negotiations.⁴³³ Nevertheless, he was unable to reach such an expectation. In the end, Beijing did not return to the negotiation table but launched an attack on the Indian garrison.⁴³⁴

In October 1962, the Chinese troops crossed the Himalaya Mountains and quickly

⁴³⁰ Taylor Fravel, *Strong Border, Secure Nation: Cooperation and Order in China's Territorial Disputes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 174.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

⁴³² Ibid, 184-187.

⁴³³ Ibid, 2008: 188-192.

⁴³⁴ Ibid, 188; 194.

defeated the stationed Indian forces and occupied the disputed regions. In November, the PLA completely defeated the Indian troops in the eastern and the western lines,. Claiming to show China's good will, Beijing finally did not further attack India but withdrew the PLA back to the previous LAC in December.⁴³⁵

While the armed conflict took place in a short span of time, its consequences were significant and generated negative impacts on Sino-Soviet relations. Shen Zhihua argues that Beijing's perception of Moscow siding with New Delhi was a key element.⁴³⁶

Having allied itself with China, the USSR was concerned with the Sino-Indian border question. However, Moscow's adoption of a neutral position in the Sino-Indian border question was perceived by Beijing as a substantial support for New Delhi.⁴³⁷ On the occasion of his attendance to the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the PRC in October 1959, the then Soviet leader Khrushchev emphasised that he did not support India, but he also expressed his disagreement with Beijing's commitment to adopt military means to deal with the dispute with India.⁴³⁸ Khrushchev pointed out that the Chinese behaviour would not only cause regional instability but would also push New Delhi towards the West. The Soviet leader criticised the CCP top leaders, asserting that it was unwise for China to haggle over such a tiny stretch of land with India.⁴³⁹ Moreover, Khrushchev criticised Beijing's

⁴³⁵ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Wei Yuanhui Dangshi Yanjiushi, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Lishi Dashi*, 206.

⁴³⁶ Shen, "Nanyi Mihe De Liehen: Sulian Dui Zhong Yin Chongtu De Lichang Yu Zhong Su Fenqi Gongkaihua," 5-27.

⁴³⁷ Ibid, 13-14.

⁴³⁸ Mingfu Yan, *Qinli Zhong Su Guanxi: Zhongyang Bangongting Fanyi Zu De Shinian, 1957-1966* (Beijing: China Remin University Press, 2015), 195-196.

⁴³⁹ Ibid, 197-198.

wrongdoings on issues relating to Tibet. He commented that Beijing committed a mistake by allowing the Dalai Lama to flee to India thereby escalating Sino-Indian tension. All these points infuriated the Chinese leadership. In their responses, the CCP Chairman Mao, Zhou Enlai, the marshal, the then foreign minister Chen Yi, and others reproached Khrushchev for having treated China unfairly. They also expressed that Khrushchev's stance on China's sovereignty regarding Tibet and the territories disputed with India was unacceptable.⁴⁴⁰ As Jian Chen describes, "at this point the meeting deteriorated into complete disorder as leaders from both sides attacked their alliance partners."⁴⁴¹

This episode did not happen coincidentally. Rather, it was a result of discontentment between Beijing and Moscow that had accumulated for years. Previously, both sides debated over the Soviet Union's proposal to form a joint submarine flotilla with China and to build a long-wave radio station on Chinese territory in 1958.⁴⁴² While the Soviet side repeatedly clarified to the Chinese leaders that the proposal was not made with the intention of controlling China, the latter remained cautious and did not accept such explanations.⁴⁴³ In addition, with regard to the Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1958, as the PLA suddenly shelled the islands of Kinmen without having informed Moscow in advance, the latter expressed its dissatisfaction with Beijing. Although Mao insisted that this was China's internal affair, the Soviet leader apparently did not accept it.⁴⁴⁴ Also, Beijing was angry about Moscow's cancellation of its provision for China with technical material for producing an atomic bomb.⁴⁴⁵ While this withdrawal of

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid, 199-204.

⁴⁴¹ Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 81.

⁴⁴² Chen, "The Tibetan Rebellion of 1959 and China's Changing Relations with India and the Soviet Union," 90-91.

⁴⁴³ Yan, *Qinli Zhong Su Guanxi*, 139-151.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid, 192-193.

⁴⁴⁵ Chen, "The Tibetan Rebellion of 1959 and China's Changing Relations with India and the Soviet

assistance belonged to Khrushchev's efforts to relieve the tension of the Cold War — he even visited the US to meet President Dwight Eisenhower, Mao regarded this as a compromise of Moscow with the 'imperialists'. Moreover, the previous public devaluations of the Great Leap Forward by Khrushchev at the 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and his request to Peng Dehuai, to alter the practice of the Great Leap Forward, all gave the CCP leadership the idea that the Soviet aimed to put pressure on China's policies.⁴⁴⁶ All these events took place before and during Khrushchev's visit to Beijing in October 1959, when the Sino-Soviet alliance fell apart.

In 1960 the Soviet Communist Party publicly criticised the CCP regarding its domestic policies on Tibet, and its 'nationalist' stance within the China-India border dispute.⁴⁴⁷ In its response, the CCP insisted on its correctness and published articles on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of Lenin's birthday. Seemingly, both parties maintained an image of unity, but in practice they had already split.⁴⁴⁸

Overall, the Sino-Indian conflict had several implications. Before, within and after the war, the Tibet factor mattered. For one thing, it demonstrated that the CCP had ruled out potential Indian intervention in its nation-building operation in Tibet. As Taylor argued, the Chinese leaders perceived the intensification of the territorial dispute as an effort by India to maintain influence within Tibet and challenge Chinese authority. India's provision of asylum for the Dalai Lama, from the perspective of the CCP, also posed a challenge to the CCP's ruling legitimacy in Tibet. India's whole territorial

Union," 92.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid, 79.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid, 96-97.

⁴⁴⁸ Shen, "Nanyi Mihe De Liehen," 27.

claims were also strongly related to China's sovereignty over Tibet.⁴⁴⁹

For another, the escalation of the border dispute complicated the triple relationship China-Tibet-India. The previous symbol of friendship between China and India in the early 1950s turned out to be a symbol of conflict. Given the occurrence of the border war, New Delhi provided a higher degree of aid to Tibetan refugees. After 1962, the Tibetan Government in Exile acquired essential support from the government in India in a number of fields, including finance, education and cultural protection.⁴⁵⁰ After 1962, the Indian government became comparatively active in facilitating Tibet in its voting behaviour in the UN which will be outlined further below.

In association with this, India changed its previous non-aligned diplomacy. Separately, it built stronger cooperation with both the US and the USSR.⁴⁵¹ The former was the traditional rival of communist China, while the latter had broken with China over their attitudes towards India (and Tibet) and over the socialist ideological line. The sparking of armed conflict over the island of Zhenbao in 1969 finally terminated their alliance. Therefore, in the 1960s, China was diplomatically isolated, which partly accounted for China's Tibet policy domestically.

The UN Resolutions on 'The Question of Tibet'

On the one side, the ongoing Sino-Indian border dispute endangered China's relationships with its neighbours; on the other the Dalai Lama and the exiled Tibetans seeking to bring the Tibetan issue to the UN devalued China's international image. Since his arrival in India in March 1959, the Dalai Lama looked for international

⁴⁴⁹ Fravel, *Strong Border, Secure Nation*, 182

⁴⁵⁰ Lama, *Freedom in Exile*, 191-192.

⁴⁵¹ Garver, "China's Decision for War with India in 1962," 124-125.

recognition of Tibet's independence by major countries including the US, UK, India etc. Having decided to support the Dalai Lama, however, the US was only willing to promote the issue with regard to Tibetan human rights. As argued by Goldstein, the US government consistently adopted two approaches in its Tibet policy in the Cold War. Strategically, the US administration cautiously and consistently supported Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. On the other hand, tactically, the US government's provision of aid to exiled Tibetans was claimed to be purely motivated by human rights violations. Not only was the US's political and economic support aligned with this line, but this way of operation also substantially restricted the framework of the Tibetan issue in the international politics arena. Finally, the Dalai Lama and the exiled government compromised as the issue of Tibet could finally be expressed. The TGIE showed a similar standpoint when they looked for promotion of the Tibetan issue by the British or Indian government.⁴⁵²

In 1959-1965, the United Nations General Assembly passed three resolutions over the Tibetan issue, which were respectively, the 'Resolution 1353 (XIV)' (1959), 'Resolution 1723 (XVI)' (1961), and 'Resolution 2079 (XX)' (1965). These resolutions were mainly based on three reports by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and highlighted the violation of human rights and freedom in Tibet, suggesting that 'Tibetans were oppressed to enjoy their traditional autonomy and even the right to self-determination'.⁴⁵³ However, none of them could challenge China's ruling sovereignty over Tibet. Moreover, while Taipei, which took China's seat at the UNO at that time, showed sympathy for Tibetan suffering, and the ROC representative

⁴⁵² Melvyn Goldstein, "The United States, Tibet, and the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, no. 3 (2006): 153-159.

⁴⁵³ DIIR, *International Resolutions and Recognitions on Tibet (1959-2004)* (Dharamsala: Central Tibetan Administration, 2005), 4-6.

supported the resolutions, Chiang limited the standpoint to the area of human rights. That is, Taipei would not support Tibet independence.

The first resolution was proposed by Ireland and Malaysia and passed on the 21st of October 1959. The resolution was based on the first report of the ICJ entitled “The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law” and the statement of the Dalai Lama. In its content, this resolution identified that Tibetans have a distinct culture and religion and enjoyed traditional autonomy but their fundamental human rights “have been forcibly denied.” The conclusion juxtaposed human rights violations in Tibet to the essential meaning of the UN Charter and the United Declaration of Human Rights, stressing their connections.⁴⁵⁴

The second resolution was sponsored by Ireland, Malaysia, Thailand, and El Salvador. It recalled the resolution 1353 (XIV) and showed a more radical stance than the first resolution. In terms of Tibetan human rights, the resolution stated that these include the right to self-determination.⁴⁵⁵ This seemed to be the only case that may be understood relating the Tibetan issue to the question of Chinese sovereignty. However, no more discussions about it have been conducted afterwards.

The third UN resolution on the question of Tibet was proposed by more countries, including Ireland, Malaysia, Thailand, El Salvador, Malta, Nicaragua, and Philippines, and this resolution was passed on the 18th of December 1965. Reconfirming the previous resolutions, the content of the third resolution reaffirmed the resolution 1353 (XIV) and the resolution 1723 (XVI). Yet the conclusion of it did not touch on the

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

sovereign status of Tibet.⁴⁵⁶

Why did these resolutions not discuss the legal status of Tibet and instead, mainly focused on fundamental human rights and freedoms? Lin suggests that the standpoint of Taipei which insisted on Chinese sovereignty might play a role.⁴⁵⁷ Given the political sensitivity of sovereignty, without specific conditions, most countries would not intervene on issues related to it. As the delegation of Thailand stated:

...The question of Tibet with which we are now confronted is essentially another issue of human rights concerning the Tibetan people, who have forcibly been denied even the most fundamental human rights and freedoms. In this particular connexion, those who oppose the role and competence of the United Nations in this question have contended that Tibet is an integral part of Communist China. In their view, it therefore follows that consideration of the case constitutes a violation of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter which reads: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state ..." 458

It is thus clear that if the UN focused on the issue of sovereignty, another debate about Tibet would appear; namely, whether or not Tibet is an independent country. Since

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Lin, *Taihai Lengzhan Jiemi Dangan*, 230.

⁴⁵⁸ International Campaign for Tibet, "Remarks by Thailand on the United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 2079 (XX)," *International Campaign for Tibet*.

1950, this question was discussed and then denied, this question would be hard to be raised again. Major involved powers including the US, UK, and India were also unwilling to re-discuss this question. By observing the vote of 'China,' we could also interpret that the resolutions were approved by Taipei, which essentially adopted the same stance as the PRC insisting that "Tibet is part of China." As a result, these UN resolutions mainly concentrated on the issues of human rights, but not on sovereignty. China's sovereignty over Tibet was still not challenged. When the PRC entered the United Nations and replaced Taipei in 1972, it became almost impossible to discuss such an issue.

India's Appeal to the UNCHR concerning Tibet, 1969-70

In the late 1960s, the TGIE continued to seek support from UN members and took any opportunity to raise their issue in the United Nations. However, out of consideration for relations with the PRC, most countries did not want to publicly refer to the Tibetan issue in terms of sovereignty. The government of India, for example, was said to "have great sympathy for the Tibetan cause," but to "consider that such an item would only create trouble for them with the Chinese."⁴⁵⁹ Its attitude, described in the words of the UK government, was "chary,"⁴⁶⁰ and was applicable to the mentality of other states. Understanding the international situation but also aiming to address the issue, the TGIE suggested that it would accept an appeal on the Tibetan issue in any form.⁴⁶¹ The raise of Tibet in association with human rights thus occurred in this context.

Moreover, given that the Cultural Revolution was launched in China at the same time,

⁴⁵⁹ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/32, "The Tibetan Item in the United Nations," *Political affairs (Internal): Tibetan Internal Political Affairs* (1968).

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid, "United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations to Far Eastern Department," January 22, 1968.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid, "The Office of Tibet to Lord Caradon," September 13, 1968.

some countries expressed their concerns regarding Tibet. As Thanat Khoman, the foreign minister of Thailand stated in his speech in the General Debate at the UN on the 10th of October 1968:

.....the systematic and brutal persecution conducted against the fundamental human rights and freedom of the Tibetan people by the Peking [Beijing] regime has continued unabated, perhaps with increased intensity. The launching of the cultural revolution wreaked even greater havoc in the distinctive cultural and religious life of the spiritual people of Tibet. Revered places of worship have practically all been destroyed or converted into headquarters for conducting suppression and oppression. Famine and starvation stalked the land and wiped out the native Tibetans at the same fast rate as forcible exile or murder by the Peking [Beijing] authorities.....we deeply deplore the tragic development in Tibet and strong hope that practices which lead to the deprivation of the fundamental human rights and freedom of the Tibetan people will cease.⁴⁶²

Furthermore, the deterioration of the Sino-Soviet relationship in the late 1960s influenced the attitude of some countries on the Tibetan issue. On the 3rd of April 1967, Tashkent Radio, a Soviet source, reported that Beijing violently oppressed a Tibetan insurgency, killing hundreds of Tibetans and destroying many monasteries. The report concluded that “the Tibetans would continue their struggle for survival and independence and their liberation struggle, like that of other nationalities, would never

⁴⁶² Ibid, “United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations to Far Eastern Department,” October 11, 1968.

be subdued.”⁴⁶³ Given that the USSR used to support the PRC in the previous three UN Resolutions, this report demonstrated that the Soviet Union may have shifted its position as a result of its rift with China. After the Sino-Russian split in 1969, other Soviet sources including “Radio Peace and Progress,” “Tashkent Radio,” and “Literary Gazette” aired more similar reports.⁴⁶⁴ As a result of the PRC’s changing relationship with other socialist states, the TGIE’s lobbying attempts in many countries received more positive responses.

In 1969, the representative of the Dalai Lama received support from the Indian government. According to the official documents of the UK Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Indian government seemed to be willing to adjust its attitude from recognition of China’s ‘sovereignty’ over Tibet, into a recognition of China’s ‘suzerainty’ over Tibet. It also proposed to raise the Tibetan issue in the session of the Human Rights Commission in the United Nations of 1970, and requested support from the UK government.⁴⁶⁵

Reviewing the Indian memorandum dated the 29th of August 1969, this chapter argues that India’s proposal was a result of negative Sino-Indian relations, the PRC’s international relations at that time, and India’s long-term concern about the situation of Tibet. The first reason, as India claimed in the memorandum, was China’s destruction of bilateral friendship between China and India, which was totally against the will of the Indian former Prime Minister Nehru, who originally aimed to build a close friendship with China since the founding of the PRC. Inasmuch as the

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁴ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, CO 21/1088, “J. E. Hoare to Mr Ehrman,” November 08, 1973, *Internal situation in Tibet* (1973).

⁴⁶⁵ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/434, *Tibetan Affairs* (1969).

government of India hosted the Dalai Lama and Tibetan diaspora, the Chinese government thought that India intervened in its internal affairs. The subsequent 1962 Sino-Indian war regarding the boundary between India and Tibet further worsened Sino-Indian relations. Thus, India viewed the PRC as a potential rival. The second reason was related to the first factor — China's huge assistance to India's rival, Pakistan. From the perspective of India, the PRC's alliance with its enemy affected India's security. Thus, India must keep an eye on the PRC. The third factor was increasing tension between the PRC and the USSR. This time, India strengthened its cooperation with the USSR after the outbreak of the Sino-Indian War of 1962. The deteriorating Sino-Soviet relationship provided a chance for India. In addition, India's long-term sympathy for Tibetans was an additional factor. Overall, the memorandum urged that India should bring the Tibetan issue up at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) and revise India's Tibet policy.⁴⁶⁶

The development of this appeal could be partly perceived as a triumph of the TGIE's lobbying in India. 1969 marked the tenth year of the Lhasa revolt, and that March, some Indian congressmen who supported Tibet decided to organize a "Parliamentary Group for Tibet" in commemoration.⁴⁶⁷ On the 8th of April, during a debate on whether India should further support Tibet or not, Dinesh Singh, the then Minister of External Affairs of India, claimed that "though it is not appropriate for India to promote the independence of Tibet from India's soil, India would support it either in the UN or elsewhere."⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁶ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/434, "India's memorandum," *Tibetan Affairs* (1969).

⁴⁶⁷ See statement, April 1, 1969.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid, "Mr Slatcher to Miss Warburton," May 12, 1969.

Following this debate, the Indian Parliamentary Group for Tibet was officially formed inside the parliament. On the 29th of August, the group sent the memorandum to Indira Gandhi, the then Indian Prime Minister, requesting that India adopt more proactive policies on the Tibetan issue, and that India bring the issue to the Human Rights Commission in the UN. With regard to India's Tibet policy, it meant that India should only acknowledge China's suzerainty over Tibet. This position was different from India's previous attitude, as it had officially recognized China's sovereignty over Tibet since 1954. In September, Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Dinesh Singh met with the Dalai Lama and discussed the submission of the Tibetan issue to the UN. In March 1970, the Indian representative filed the Tibetan issue to the UN Human Rights Commission and acquired the support of the USA and the Philippines.

However, this resolution eventually did not challenge the PRC's exercise of sovereignty over Tibet, nor did it damage the PRC's governance. At this point, the violent conflicts of the Cultural Revolution in Tibet ceased and the Revolutionary Committee was established. This committee had several Tibetans appointed as senior officers. The PLA controlled the local situation, and the CCP continued the implementation of socialist reforms. Also, the agricultural and economic production in the TAR increased though the transformation also led to severe damages of Tibetan traditions. These factors contributed to the consolidation of the CCP's power in Tibet. Most importantly, due to the fact that the Indian government only raised the Tibetan issue in the form of a human rights issue, the appeal did not change the status quo regarding China's sovereignty. In addition, the fact that the PRC was not yet a member of the UN was also a key factor. The resolution could not regulate a nonmember. A UK official commented on this resolution that:

*...in practice nothing could be done about Tibet, even as a human rights case, perhaps not even when Communist China became a member of the UN. To raise it would therefore be an empty gesture.*⁴⁶⁹

Positive Signs in Sino-Tibetan Relations

Turning to the 1970s, the Sino-Tibetan relationship gradually showed some positive signs of change. Through selected events, this section argues that a scenario of low-uncertainty societal dilemma appeared. As can be seen, while the Cultural Revolution finally ended in 1976, a signal of mitigation could be initially grasped in the Chinese attitude towards the Dalai Lama's first visit to Western Europe. In this way, both sides interacted through various and possibly indirect accesses and occasions. This development should be aligned to the background of Beijing's acquisition of China's seat in the UN and of the TGIE's efforts to raise international concerns for the situation of Tibet. The renewed environment in which China was situated should account for the authorities' adoption of an accommodating stance over Tibet, which created a positive atmosphere. Both sides then called for direct contacts and friendship.

The Dalai Lama's First European Visit and Beijing's Attitude

Given the development of the Sino-Soviet split, Beijing alternatively turned to improve its relations with the West and received the latter's welcome for such a transition. In 1972, following a secret visit of the US Secretary of State Henry

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid, "Col. C. H. Toye to Miss Warburton," June 26, 1969,

Kissenger, President Nixon visited the PRC, paving the way for the normalisation of Sino-American relations in 1979. At this time, Beijing and Washington shared the same goal to defend themselves against the USSR.⁴⁷⁰ Subsequently, the PRC successfully entered the UN in 1971, replacing the seat of the Republic of China. Since then, building a formal relationship with Beijing became necessary for other major powers as well.

Beijing began to prepare its application to entering the UN since the establishment of the PRC. As a member of the socialist camp, the PRC initially relied on support from these countries. However, the representatives of Taipei and their allies successfully blocked the PRC's admission for two decades. With the evolution of the Cold War and Beijing's increase acquirement of recognition from newly independent developing countries, the PRC was able to take the seat in the United Nations and become a permanent member of the Security Council.⁴⁷¹ Having completed these achievements, the PRC expanded heavily on its international influence.

Seeing this development, the TGIE planned its response. The US's long term financial and armed aid for Tibetan guerilla groups based in Mustang, Nepal, via the CIA, was cut off in the context of the Sino-American rapprochement.⁴⁷² In order to raise higher concerns and introduce the Tibetan issue to more people in the West, Dharamsala and its international supporters in different countries conceived of the plan that the Dalai Lama should visit Western Europe. His first trip took place in 1973. Before this tour, the Dalai Lama had only undertaken religious visits to Japan and Thailand in 1967 and

⁴⁷⁰ Kuisong Yang. "The Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969: From Zhenbao Island to Sino-American Rapprochement," *Cold War History* 1, no. 1 (2000): 21-52.

⁴⁷¹ Han, *Contestation and Adaptation*, 137.

⁴⁷² Knaus, "Official Policies and Covert Programs," 78.

to Thailand in 1972.

The Dalai Lama's schedule in the UK was organised by the TGIE and the Tibet Society, a London-based NGO which had been concerned with the Tibetan issue for a long time. From the beginning, the main goal of this society was to persuade the UK government to raise the Tibetan issue in the UN after the PRC had acquired its position.⁴⁷³ In its response, however, the UK government claimed that it lacked the capability to affect China, even though it disagreed with the PRC's policy in Tibet. R. B. R Hevey, an officer of the Far Eastern Office, clearly expressed London's position when he wrote that 'supporting Tibet may be risky and could damage the UK's relations with the PRC.' As he stated:

*Our formal position is that we have in the past recognized Chinese suzerainty over Tibet only on the condition that Tibet retained its autonomy. The Chinese claim is that Tibet is an 'autonomous region' of the People's Republic of China. They regard criticism of their policies in Tibet as interference in their internal affairs. It is not in our interests to give Peking [Beijing] gratuitous offence in a matter which is of no direct concern to ourselves (except in a general humanitarian sense) at a time when our relations are improving in many fields...*⁴⁷⁴

Understanding the attitude of the UK government, the Tibet Society turned to

⁴⁷³ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/967, "Olaf to Barrington," December 10, 1971, *Situation in Tibet* (1972).

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid, "R. B. R Hervey to Mr Wilford," June 6, 1972.

requesting the Dalai Lama's visit to Great Britain. At first, the UK government was concerned that his visit may have a negative impact on its relations with China, but ultimately the government accepted this proposal. Noting the reasons for granting a visa to the Dalai Lama, the UK government contended that it was based on the Dalai Lama's statement claiming that this visit would only be for private and religious purposes.⁴⁷⁵ Afterwards, other European countries permitted the Dalai Lama to carry out his schedule on similar grounds.

In fact, the UK Foreign Office consulted the Chinese government during the process, aiming to understand what its reaction would be. Beijing's response was surprisingly relaxed. It "agree[ed] that we could not keep him out, although the Chinese will protest."⁴⁷⁶ Contrary to its previous stance, the Chinese government at this time seemed to soften its voice. Five years earlier, when the Dalai Lama visited Japan, Beijing had explicitly threatened the tour organiser, claiming that 'this is indeed a malign behaviour, a provocation to China,' and it warned that 'all resulting bad consequences should be at its own risk'. At that time, China mobilised several demonstrations in Japan and tried to hinder the tour. Beijing also accused the US and Indian governments of being the organisers of the tour behind the scenes.⁴⁷⁷ Thus, the Chinese response to the Dalai Lama's visit this time was dramatically different.

⁴⁷⁵ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1014, "Memorandum of H. H. The Dalai Lama," *Proposed visit of The Dalai Lama of Tibet to United Kingdom* (1972).

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid, "H. Davies to Mr Clark," November 29, 1972.

⁴⁷⁷ People's Daily, "Xiang Riben Dumai Xinwenshe Tichu Yanzhong Jinggao, Bixu Liji Tingzhi Fanhua Xingdong ([China] Warns Yomiuri to Stop Anti-China Activities), *People's Daily*, October 03, 1967; "Mei Ri Fandongpai Gaoqi Suwei Xizang Mibao Zhanlanhui Cedong Fanhua, Riben Geming Renmin Qianglie Kangyi Fanhua Zhanlanhui, Geming Renmin Zai Zhanlanhui Gaochang Maozhuxi Yuluge Jielou Fandongpai Fanhua Yinmou (US-Japanese Reactionary organise so called 'Tibetan Treasure Exhibition' Conspiring Anti-China Activities, Japanese Revolutionary People Against It and Sing Mao Song), *People's Daily*, October 7, 1967; "Dao Riben Gao Fanhua Panguo Huodong Zaodao Riben Geming Renmin Fennu Yu Zema Panfei Dalai Zai Riben Renmin Nuchisheng Zhong Gunhui Yindu (Protested by the Japanese Revolutionary People for Organising Anti-China Activities, The Betrayer Dalai Lama Flees Back to India), *People's Daily*, October 16, 1967.

The response of India, showing a low profile, only stated that “[India] had not heard of this idea, but unlikely to object if it were a private visit.” One in line with the other, it seemed that neither side were willing to jeopardise this tour.

More intriguing things followed. After a whole year’s preparation, the 14th Dalai Lama conducted his first visit to Western Europe from September to November 1973 and he stayed in London for a few days. During the tour, he met with local Tibetan communities and NGOs as well as with other religious groups, but he did not meet with political leaders in these countries (except for the Pope in the Vatican). This result was consistent to his previous memorandum, which had suggested that this visit was “purely on a private basis and non-political in nature.”⁴⁷⁸

The implications of this visit for Beijing-Dharamsala interactions are meaningful. Beijing’s behaviour in particular deserves further examination. During the period of his visit, some UK media (e.g. *The Economist*) began to report the possible return of the Dalai Lama to China, who had expressed his willingness to do so.⁴⁷⁹ It was even reported that Beijing had contacted the Dalai Lama through the Chinese Embassy in London and that Chinese officers stayed at the same hotel of the Dalai Lama during his stay.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁸ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1088, “The Dalai Lama to Sir Olaf Caroe,” July 25, 1972.

⁴⁷⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 99, “Fei Dui Xizang Gai Cai Huairou Shouduan (China Softens its Attitude to Tibet), October 7, 1973, *Xizang Zajuan (196812-197606)*, 165-166; “Dalai Lama Zai Lundun Biaoshi Yuan Fan Zizang (Dalai Lama Expresses Willingness to Return Tibet in London),” 171.

⁴⁸⁰ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1227, “Handed House of Lords Report,” November 6, 1973, *Internal situation in Tibet* (1974), a Chinese delegation stayed in the same hotel as the Dalai Lama.

Furthermore, there was another report quoting a journalist that a female relative of the Dalai Lama already visited China. This was seen as the first step for the return of the Dalai.⁴⁸¹ On the one hand, it matters whether these reports were correct or not, on the other, they signalled that there was a positive development in the interactions between Beijing and Dharamsala. It is still unclear whether the CCP's new contacts with the Dalai Lama really emerged when he visited London. However, around the same time there was a meeting between a Tibetan official, Kundeling Kalon, and an official from China's Xinhua News Agency in Hong Kong.⁴⁸² Afterwards, the Dalai Lama played a role in the dissolution of the Tibetan guerrillas in Nepal, which irregularly harassed the PLA stationed in border areas.⁴⁸³

At that time, there were reports demonstrating that the Chinese government seemed to loosen its control in Tibet.⁴⁸⁴ In 1972, some Tibetan monasteries began to be repaired, and some formerly denounced Tibetan leaders re-appeared and even resumed their positions in certain institutions. In addition, according to a Nepalese officer, in the early 1970s, the economic construction in Tibet was becoming more progressive than before.⁴⁸⁵ All these points above showed a thoroughly different picture from what the Soviet sources were depicting. At the time, the Soviet media tended to draw a brutal picture about Tibet.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸¹ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1014, "J. D. I. Boyd to Davies," December 01, 1972 ; Ministry of Foreign Affairs 99, "Yin Bao Chuanshuo Fei Yu Dalai Zheng Jinxing Tanpan (Indian Media Report that Dalai Lama is Negotiating with China)," October 14, 1973.

⁴⁸² Claude Arpi, *Dharamsala and Beijing: The Negotiations that Never Were* (Lancer Publishers LLC, 2009), 30-34.

⁴⁸³ Given the withdrawal of US aid, the Tibetan guerilla based in Nepal was requested by the Nepali government to disarm the troops. The Dalai Lama then sent a taped message to urge them to disband. McGranahan, "Tibet's Cold War," 124.

⁴⁸⁴ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1088, "J. D. I. Boyd to Davies," November 23, 1973.

⁴⁸⁵ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/967, "T. H. Preston to Davies," December 12, 1972,

⁴⁸⁶ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1088, "J. E. Hoare to Ehrman,"

China's Reformed Tibet Policy and the Tibetan Fact-finding Teams

With the death of Mao and the immediate collapse of the Gang of Four, the Cultural Revolution finally ended in 1976. The political atmosphere in China gradually became more open than the previous decade and the new round of Party leadership adopted more moderate standpoints regarding international and domestic policies. In relation to this, many incidents reflected the improvements of conditions in the TAR. On the eve of the 10th anniversary of the TAR's founding, the Beijing government claimed that the Party had completed impressive achievements on several items, especially in the economic area. According to the UK National Archives, which cites the original Chinese source, in the agricultural area, grain production and livestock in 1973 doubled from its output in 1959.⁴⁸⁷ The TAR also became self-sufficient in certain products such as timber, woolen fabrics and leathers. In addition, compared to the educational situation of 1965, the number of primary schools increased 70 percent in 1974.⁴⁸⁸ UK officials expressed their approval in these documents. However, the officers also expressed their concerns about the serious destruction of Tibetan Buddhist traditions.⁴⁸⁹ In Beijing, the denounced United Front Work Department reappeared and resumed its functions on ethnic minority affairs. Li Weihan, who was purged due to the Panchen Lama's submission of the "70,000 Character Petition" to the Party, was reappointed as the First Director of the Department. Ulanfu, a Mongolian senior CCP member who had been denounced during the Cultural Revolution, was also re-appointed as the Director of the Department. These new adopted policies and appointed officials by the CCP seemed to hint that more

November 08, 1973,

⁴⁸⁷ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1227, "China news summary, No. 541," 30 October 30, 1974.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid, "China news summary, No. 541," October 30, 1974.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid, "China news summary, No. 542," December 12, 1974.

progressive policies would be implemented in Tibet in the future.

During this period, more positive signs began to appear with regard to Beijing's attitude towards Dharamsala. In May 1977, Reuters reported that the CCP government publicly commented on the possibility of the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet. At a meeting with a Japanese delegation, Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, then the vice chairman of the Revolutionary Committee, announced that the Dalai Lama could return to Tibet if he stood with the people.⁴⁹⁰ Though this precondition sounded vague, it showed a breakthrough in the TGIE-Beijing interaction.

In the late 1970s, the CCP government implemented more moderate policies, some of which were related to Tibetans. In 1978, the most vital event was the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party. It was at this meeting that Deng Xiaoping became the effective leader of the country and started the Reform and Opening Up policy. At the same time, the Chinese government opened Tibet to foreign visitors and agreed to issue visas to Tibetan refugees through its Embassy in Delhi, India. These policies were important. Since 1959, the Chinese government had for a long time closed the border of Tibet and every foreign visitor needed to have travel permission in advance. And during their stay in Tibet, they would be under surveillance. The Chinese government permitted very few visitors. This relaxation symbolised a huge change in China's Tibet policy.⁴⁹¹ In return, when the Dalai Lama visited the Soviet Union and Mongolia in June 1979, he expressed a tender attitude towards a possible solution to the Tibetan issue.⁴⁹²

⁴⁹⁰ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 370.

⁴⁹¹ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1695, "R. C. Samuel to Cortazzi," October 18, 1979, *Relations between China and Tibet* (1979).

⁴⁹² Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 374-375.

This is not to say that the Chinese government left unlimited space for the TGIE. Rather, Beijing was still concerned about its intentions and behaviour. As such, Beijing tacitly tested the water through different events and prevented the TGIE from expanding its influence on the international stage if their activity contained political implications. For example, in 1977, before the official normalisation of the Sino-US relationship, the TGIE established a Tibet office in New York City. This event resulted in an immediate protest by Beijing to Washington. In response, the US government restated that this establishment of the office was not approved by the US [federal] government, and Washington did not recognise the political status of the TGIE. In the statement, Washington reaffirmed that “we respect the territorial integrity of China, and none of our policies or actions is based on the premise that Tibet is not part of China.”⁴⁹³ This chapter argues that, although Beijing adopted a moderate policy in certain areas, the CCP still stood its ground. While Beijing improved its relations with the TGIE, it limited the scope of the Tibetan issue to Chinese domestic affairs.

Throughout this time, the CCP strengthened its direct contacts with the government of the Dalai Lama. On the 1st of March 1979, Gyalo Thondup was invited by Li Juisin, the representative of Deng Xiaoping, to Beijing. In this visit, Gyalo Thondup met with Deng, who expressed that the CCP was going to conduct fundamental reforms. Deng stated that the Chinese government could discuss any issues regarding Tibet as long as Tibetans did not seek independence. Deng also suggested that the Dalai Lama could send a delegation to Tibet to investigate the current situation before he took the decision; Deng’s proposal was soon accepted by the TGIE.

⁴⁹³ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1556, “J. P. Millington to Orr,” March 02, 1977, *Status of Tibet* (1977).

In August, it was the first time that a team representing the Dalai Lama arrived at and officially visited the all Tibetan-speaking areas in China, creating official and direct contact between Beijing and Dharamsala. The Chinese government promised that they would improve the local situation in Tibet, invest in local industries, and assign more Tibetans to the Regional People's Government and Standing Committee of the Regional People's Congress, which had replaced the regional Revolutionary Committee established during the Cultural Revolution. It was one of the most important events in the evolution of the Tibetan issue, since it had been twenty years since a delegation of the Dalai Lama visited Tibet. The representative team was composed of Kalon Juchen Thupten, Phuntsog Tashi Takla, Lobsang Samten, Tashi Topgyal, Lobsang Tharga. It was said that this representative team received an enthusiastic welcome by local Tibetans wherever they went. Followed by this first achievement, there were three additional delegation teams who visited Tibet in the 1980s, which we will discuss in the next chapter. Generally, this period can be regarded as a warm period in the interactions between Beijing and Dharamsala.⁴⁹⁴

While the positive interactions between Beijing and the TGIE increased, the PRC government still only allowed a very limited international space for the Dalai Lama. At this time, both sides appeared to have a tacit understanding. In January 1979, China and the United States officially recognised each other, and both sides quickly formed a consensus of cooperation on a variety of issues. One of these was that the Tibetan issue would not hamper Sino-American relations. At same time, the TGIE also completed a proposed visit of the Dalai Lama to the United States. Similar to his visit

⁴⁹⁴ Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon*, 61-63; Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 374-379.

to Europe in 1973, the Dalai Lama's first visit to the USA was mainly for a "private" purpose, and this schedule was understood by Beijing.⁴⁹⁵ This may be the reason for Deng's description that the Dalai Lama's visit was "a small matter."⁴⁹⁶

To sum up, relations between Beijing and Dharamsala were moving in a positive direction in the 1970s. With China's increased domestic political reforms and its growing relations with the West, the PRC showed a more open attitude when tackling issues concerning Tibet and the TGIE.

Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter argues that two scenarios of security dilemma: low-uncertainty societal dilemma and high-uncertainty societal dilemma, and the exception: real security threat, distinctly manifested themselves in the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the 1950s-1970s.

From the beginning, this chapter examined the socialist transformation of Tibet after the escape of the Dalai Lama to India. As have shown, the PRC government strongly suppressed Tibet and doubted Tibetan resentment and intentions. Beijing did not make any compromise when the Panchen Lama, who was appointed as the leader of PCTAR, listed the disadvantages of socialist reforms and petitioned change by the Central government. Furthermore, the Panchen Lama was purged due his criticism.

The situation deteriorated during the period of the Cultural Revolution, when all of

⁴⁹⁵ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/1695, "R. C. Prusland to Harrison," August 20, 1979.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid, "C. O. Hum to R. C. Fursland," September 10, 1979,

China was in the grips of the Red Guards. The Tibetan language was forbidden on public occasions. Attacks on anything related to tradition were pervasive and the armed confrontations amongst all factions in Tibet only brought about a further severe dismantling of traditional Tibetan society. In this process, Tibet was further transformed into a socialist system and integrated into the PRC state. By the Chinese practice, Tibetan society and identity were under a survival crisis.

This chapter also examined China's foreign policies regarding Tibet and Beijing's interactions with the Tibetan Government in Exile. From the examination, it concludes that China's external rifts with India, the USSR, and the West resulted in the latter actors' help to the TGIE in various ways, which then accounted for Beijing's domestic tough suppression along with its domestic embroilment in forms of socialist campaigns. As shown, Tibet also played a role in Beijing's relationships with these neighbouring regimes and the rest.

In the fourth section, this chapter analysed that an improved international environment for Beijing had influential sequence on the Beijing-Dharamsala relationship. Signs of conflictual mitigation were illuminated through an examination of Sino-Tibetan interactions in the 1970s. This chapter analysed the Dalai Lama's visit to Europe in 1973 in the context of China's increased engagement in the international arena. By exploring this case, this chapter argues that the PRC allowed a larger international space for the TGIE though confining it to a non-political area. Beijing and Dharamsala might have begun to build a new relationship during the Dalai's European journey. With time, we see an occurrence of visits of the TGIE's representative teams to Tibet in 1979. This chapter argues that this incident was a result of increased interactions between Beijing and Dharamsala over several years. At this time, the CCP adopted a

series of moderate international and domestic policies that improved the likelihood of engagement. Considering the developments in the Tibetan issue over the following decades, it is impressive that Beijing and the TGIE formed a very positive interaction during the 1970s.

However, the CCP's socialist transformation of Tibet and the Cultural Revolution laid seeds of conflict for the future. In contrast to Tibetans in Tibet, Tibetan communities in exile have gradually settled down in India and in other host countries. The exiled Tibetan government and its cooperation with NGOs started to unite the Tibetan diaspora, keeping their social, spiritual and political ties with traditional society.⁴⁹⁷ This attempt of preserving Tibetan identity stood in accordance with the socio-political reforms imposed by the Dalai Lama, who also introduced the concept of democracy to the communities. As a result, exiled Tibetans had a different experience distinct from Tibetans living inside the PRC, who suffered from the CCP's constant mobilisation. While Dharamsala aimed to construct a unified Tibetan national identity in exile, the CCP made every effort to de-politicise the identity of Tibetans in Tibet and transform it to be part of the Chinese national identity.

As McConnell argued, the Tibetan émigrés had been “a population-in-waiting ready to return to Tibet,” “a population-in-training to govern in the homeland,” and “a population-as-cultural-repository.”⁴⁹⁸ When they were able to return to Tibet at this time, with Chinese allowing western foreigners and journalists to enter Tibet, they all noticed the sufferings of modern Tibet and raised strong resentment as well as lack of trust. While the CCP began improving the material conditions in Tibet since the late

⁴⁹⁷ Venturino, “Reading Negotiations in the Tibetan Diaspora,” 101-110.

⁴⁹⁸ Fiona McConnell, “De facto, Displaced, Tacit: The Sovereign Articulations of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile,” *Political Geography* 28, no. 6 (2009): 346.

1970s, these messages revealed by a growing number of foreign tourists and the returned Tibetan émigrés created lively debates about Chinese government policies. After the 1980s, the previous interactions between Beijing and Dharamsala were influenced by such debates, which to some extent hindered the bilateral relationship from moving forwards. This thesis will analyse the full process in the next chapter.

Overall, by reviewing these selected cases, this chapter finds that during the 1970s, China's relationship with the TGIE grew as it became more engaged in the international community. At this point in time, the CCP had a relatively relaxed Tibet policy and loosened its control in the TAR. Analysing these events, we see how bilateral interactions adjusted over time. After the visits of the Dalai Lama to the West and other countries, the international space for the Tibetan issue seemed to be wider. Nevertheless, it was also limited to personal and religious areas by the PRC's operation. In this context, the Sino-Tibetan relationship developed positively in the 1970s. The first delegation representing the Dalai Lama in China was a milestone in the interactions between Beijing and Dharamsala interactions. Compared to events that occurred since the mid-1980s it is clear that these interactions merit further exploration.

Chapter Five

Revivification of Societal Dilemmas:

Sino-Tibetan Dialogues, Tensions, and Perils, 1980s-1990s

Introduction

At the end of the last chapter, this thesis discussed low-uncertainty societal dilemma that manifested in the 1970s. This chapter will examine the subsequent evolution in the 1980s-1990s and focus on the post-Reform and Opening Up era when both the Chinese Communist Party and the Tibet Government in Exile enhanced contacts. It pays attention to the enacting Chinese policies and fact-finding teams from the TGIE as well as the organised Beijing-Dharamsala negotiations. Moreover, this chapter identifies the transition when low-uncertainty societal formulation gradually turned into high-uncertainty societal dilemma. Three aspects lead to the discussions.

Firstly, in the early 1980s, Beijing's modernisation in Tibet, together with a variety of policies that overthrew the previous far-left standpoint, brought about positive circumstances for Sino-Tibetan relations. Secondly, divisions over the status of Tibet within the rounds of Sino-Tibetan negotiations overshadowed progress and triggered mutual doubts. Thirdly, increased international attention on the issue of Tibet further escalated tensions between Beijing and Tibetans.

This chapter is structured as such: following the introduction, it examines selected Chinese policies regarding Tibet, including two Tibet Work Forums in the early 1980s. Then, the chapter traces the history and evolution of Sino-Tibetan contacts and raised

negotiations. It illustrates how tensions escalated in the bilateral interaction process due to the strain of raised demands from both sides. Next, the fourth and fifth sections narrate the domestic and international aspects underlying the onset of ethnic tension. Prior to the conclusion, the sixth section charts revived Sino-Tibetan confrontation and the third Tibet Work Forum. It argues that an adjusted standpoint and commitment dominated Chinese policy-making towards Tibet and the TGIE in the mid-1990s, which posed a threat to the latter from then on.

Launch of New Modernisation Projects and Tibet Work Forums

Deng's new Reforms

While new modernisation projects were launched in the early 1980s, they did not cause concerns over societal survival for Tibetans. Firstly, during that period, these policies were explicitly aimed at promoting ethnic culture. Secondly, the policies were instructed to fall in line with a principle that went by the slogan 'Recuperation and Multiplication' (xiuyang shengxi 休养生息); where implementation was conditioned to prior Tibetan agreement.⁴⁹⁹ Thirdly, historical context mattered. Considering the last period of the Cultural Revolution, the policies were perceived to be comparatively modest for Tibetans. Thus, objectively and subjectively, state-led modernisation did not constitute as a source to trigger a sense of uncertainty in Tibet.

Emerging from a decade of extensive political mobilisations during the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping, the new leadership in the post-Mao Chinese Communist Party, reflected upon the chaos brought by leftist politics. The resulting negativity over

⁴⁹⁹ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui Dang Shi Yanjiushi, *Zhizheng Zhongguo Xizang Juan* (Beijing: CCP Party History Press, 2011), 43- 45.

the destruction and distortion of Tibetan society was given a lot of attention. In this way, Deng adopted a moderate stance over Tibet and launched a series of policies aimed at befriending Tibetans in and outside China.⁵⁰⁰ In addition, he shifted the main focus to modernisation, in which economic development was set as the primary goal.⁵⁰¹ Through these innovated policies that covered both psychological and material aspects, Deng yearned to alleviate Tibetan grievances provoked by the Cultural Revolution. Apart from this approach, he aimed at uniting all Chinese citizens from diverse ethnic backgrounds to create a solid Chinese state.⁵⁰²

Initially, the Chinese government built a fresh and friendly political environment. It was during this period that a wave of ‘Bring Order to Chaos (bo luan fan zheng 拨乱反正)’ pervaded throughout the state.⁵⁰³ The Chinese authority initiated vast statements and policies, denying any continued practices applying to class struggle in Tibet. In this context, the Chinese government released an enormous number of former Tibetan officials and elites from incarceration, as well as influential figures who were dismissed from their positions. These individuals included the 10th Panchen Lama, who was purged in 1964. Following his release in 1978, the Panchen Lama was appointed a member of the standing committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Committee. Later that same year, the Chinese government released another group of former Tibetan officials who served in the Dalai Lama’s government before 1959 and were imprisoned during the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese government announced rehabilitation and compensation policies for those who had been mistakenly accused during the Cultural Revolution. By 1979, over 2,300 people

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Wei yuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 298.

⁵⁰³ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 400.

in Tibet received compensation.⁵⁰⁴

Around the same time, the Chinese government revived administrations, institutes, offices, and various organisations responsible for ethnic groups. The State Ethnic Affairs Commission thus resurged from suspension. As a significant event, the National Frontier Defense Work Conference was launched in 1979, noting the Party's standpoint that autonomy rights for ethnic minorities were guaranteed.⁵⁰⁵ In this way, Beijing reset its legal basis to produce relevant ethnic policy. The Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law was officially passed in 1984.

Moreover, by assuming its profit, Deng prioritised modernisation construction in which economic development occupied the central position. Deng was a believer in developmentalism. In his view, a state's international status was decisively shaped by its level of modernisation. In a speech to CCP cadres, Deng stressed that the achievement of modernisation for a state served as its 'resources' in hand, which could work as a "key foundation being able to tackle faced and potential international and domestic challenges."⁵⁰⁶ He stated that economic development could help the state to increase resources, accumulate power, and dominate international competition with major Chinese rivals. This affirmative stance upheld modernisation and dominated CCP's policies since the Reform and Opening Up era and those involved with Tibet.⁵⁰⁷ In 1950, Deng claimed that economic development could win the hearts of ethnic minorities and thereby unite all citizens. He stated: "*Ethnic minorities want to acquire benefits.....They would not intend to make trouble if their economic problems*

⁵⁰⁴ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 372-373.

⁵⁰⁵ State Ethnic Affairs Commission, "Quanguo Bianfang Gongzuo Huiyi," *Zhongguo Minzu*, no. 8 (2008): 8.

⁵⁰⁶ Deng, *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan Di Er Juan*, 240.

⁵⁰⁷ Song, *Dangdai Zhongguo De Xizang Zhengce Yu Zhili*, 269-272.

are resolved.”⁵⁰⁸ Deng presumed that economic development could serve as a panacea and only brought about positive outcome; indeed, he downplayed the potential existence of negative effects by developmentalism. In the 1980s-1990s, economic development was instructed to be a primary task. In association to this, the CCP produced distinct inducement policies for Tibetans and launched a variety of conferences. The most significant were the Tibet Work Forums, which began in 1980 and are still held today.

The First Tibet Work Forum

The First Tibet Work Forum was launched on 14-15 March 1980 and marked a new milestone in China’s Tibetan policy. Being reappointed to high-level positions, the majority of resurgent Tibetan officials and traditional figures attended this forum, where they were encouraged to propose suggestions to Tibetan affairs.

In its responses to these calls, the CCP Central highlighted ‘essential needs of Tibetan cadres and people’ for policy-making. The Central, again in public, denied the notion that ‘the ethnic issues are essentially class issues’ set by Chairman Mao, but replaced it with a recognition of ‘uniqueness and complexity to ethnicity issues’.⁵⁰⁹ The Chinese authority thereby empowered a higher degree of autonomy for the TAR, suggesting that it could impose and adjust policies that differed from other regions and which relied on self-defined local conditions. From a cultural aspect, the authority initialised a variety of inducement policies, including compensation and proposals to restore Tibetan language and Buddhism. For administration offices in the TAR, the Tibetan language was proclaimed as an official language in addition to Mandarin. The

⁵⁰⁸ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 27.

⁵⁰⁹ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 405.

instructions for fostering more Tibetan cadres, as well as the strengthening of united front work for exiled Tibetans, were also stressed.⁵¹⁰ These points illustrate the CCP's readiness to improve inter-ethnic relationship.

Corresponding to the instruction unveiled at the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, the attendants at the First Tibet Work Forum proclaimed the pursuit of economic development and outlined a series of policies. Amidst the various proposals, transportation was targeted. Given the consideration of Tibet's geographical isolation from other regions of China, the CCP prioritised improvement and construction of traffic infrastructure between Tibet and inland provinces. As can be gleaned from the document "Tibet Work Forum Notes," the government planned to invest in not only inter-provincial highways and roads, but also in the aviation industry.⁵¹¹ By doing so, Tibet was expected to effectively strengthen its connection to neighbouring areas. Understandably, a heightened traffic network could be of benefit for China's geopolitical strategic deployment, given that Tibet is situated in the frontier region.

Indeed, these economic-strengthening-driven policies were intertwined with a call for Tibetan loyalty. During his visit to the Tibet Autonomous Region on the 29th of May 1980, the CCP's General Secretary, Hu Yaobang, proclaimed the intent to build a 'united, prosperous and civilised new Tibet.'⁵¹² In his subsequent instructions, Hu announced that 'the Central government would exhaust every means to boost Tibet's development and increase local fiscal subsidy by 10% every year.' Similar to Deng,

⁵¹⁰ Ibid, 407-409.

⁵¹¹ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 307-308.

⁵¹² Ibid, 329.

Hu also emphasised the link between economic development and ethnic unification, believing that they can mutually enhance one another. He suggested that China's modernisation in Tibet could not be achieved without cooperation from the Tibetan minority.⁵¹³ Several years later, this statement, became the content for 'Two Inseparables', a slogan that argued that Tibetans were inseparable from Han and other ethnic minorities.⁵¹⁴

Second Tibet Work Forum

Three years later, the CCP Central Secretariat convoked the Second Tibet Work Forum from the 27th of February to the 28th of March 1984, with the aim of reviewing achievements accomplished since the First Tibet Work Forum. In reality, it served as an insistence and reconfirmation of Beijing's moderate stance over Tibet. Whereas the tone had been previously set, the Chinese document and scholarly literature reveal that some questioned the policy of the Central line.⁵¹⁵ It was because of this context that the Chinese authority once again justified its standpoint.

Firstly, the Chinese authority claimed that Tibet contains five aspects of distinctiveness compared to other Chinese regions, regarding geography, history of feudalism combined with theocracy, composition of population, influence of Tibetan Buddhism, and Tibet's international attraction, which have to be fully accounted for when conducting policies. In particular, the Party Central pointed out that Tibet was isolated and had been imposed direct-rule by the state since the late 1950s. There existed a societal gap between Tibet and other areas. In addition, Tibetans constitute the majority population in Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism features as the main religion in

⁵¹³ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 381-382.

⁵¹⁴ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 437.

⁵¹⁵ Wang, "Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce De Lishi Kaocha," 98.

Tibetan society and deeply influences their customs and life. In this way, ethnicity and religion are factors that must be kept in mind. In association to these, Tibet easily draws international attention, especially in terms of being regarded as China's rival.⁵¹⁶ Given this statement, it can be seen that the authority intended to defend the legitimacy of the preferred policy for Tibet.

Portraying a more tender gesture compared to the First Tibet Work Forum, the Party Central befriended exiled Tibetans and applied its domestic preferential policies to them. Those who had been overseas and worked for the Dalai Lama's government were now redefined as 'patriotic upper people'. In this way, the CCP not only pursued their return to China but also claimed to care for their families dwelling in China.⁵¹⁷ A major point narrating the Central government's treatment was that "loving the country is the only measure" or "it does not matter loving the country early or late."⁵¹⁸ The practice of redefinition was, without a doubt, Beijing's new United Front Work strategy for Tibetans.

In association with the cultural aspects, the Chinese authority continued its assistance and financial funding for the rejuvenation of Tibetan Buddhism and restored a number of monasteries, temples and religious rite practices. The Tibetan language also continued to be promoted and used in public institutions as an acknowledgement of Tibet as a bilingual society.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁶ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 361.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid, 365-366.

⁵¹⁸ Maoxia Wang, *Deng Xiaoping Yu Xizang Gongzuo: Cong Heping Jiefang Dao Gaige Kaifang* (Beijing: China Tibetology Press, 2011), 110-112.

⁵¹⁹ Wang, *Deng Xiaoping Yu Xizang Gongzuo*, 108-109.

In terms of economic development, Beijing imposed a higher degree of liberalisation than before. In the document entitled “[Second] Tibet Work Forum Notes,” the Chinese government addressed a point termed as ‘Two Opens (liang ge kai fang 两个开放),’ that referred to connecting Tibet, through trade, with its neighbouring states including India, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar, and domestically enhancing the network involving Tibet with its bordered provinces and regions, including Xinjiang, Qinghai, Sichuan, and Yunnan.⁵²⁰ In addition, the Central government further institutionalised its pairing-aid projects for Tibet. Back in 1979, the National Frontier Defense Work Conference pledged to enrich Tibet with the aid of the whole state.⁵²¹ Now, nine provinces and cities including Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Guangdong, Shandong, Zhejiang, Fujian, Sichuan, and Jiangsu were designated to support Tibet’s local construction plans with finance and specialist experts.⁵²² Through these plans, the Chinese government expected to accelerate immediate local modernisation construction and rapidly transform Tibet’s economic mode from closed and dependent into an open and independent system.⁵²³

Meanwhile, as previously mentioned, the majority of policies were bound to the task of improving the inter-ethnic relationship. In this context, the notion of ‘Two Inseparables’ was further proclaimed. As Zhu Xiaoming, attendant of the Second Tibet Work Forum stated,

[Regarding Tibet’s] economic liberation, at first Tibet has to be open to other

⁵²⁰ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 434-435.

⁵²¹ State Ethnic Affairs Commission, “Dui Kou Zhiyuan,” *Zhongguo Minzu*, no. 8 (2008): 27.

⁵²² Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 435-436.

⁵²³ Ibid.

*domestic provinces.....and bring the advanced technology and experiences of these brother ethnic groups and regions back into Tibet. Through the combination between their respective natural resources and capitals, all ethnicities of China will move towards prosperity together. With the development of socialist construction, every ethnic group has received and absorbed advantages from others. Indeed we are inseparable.....Both such 'two inseparables' and 'centrality of interests of Tibetan cadres and Tibetan people' share the same precondition and ultimate goal, and that is to strengthen national territorial integrity, ethnic unity, and build a socialist new Tibet.*⁵²⁴

The above statement demonstrates that for the purposes of ethnic unification, the Chinese government's commitment and gesture was geared towards Tibetans not only in China but also those exiled. At this time, the Chinese authority adapted and redefined the scoop and implication of its Tibet policies. As pointed out, such behaviour can also set a good model for Beijing's interactions with Hong Kong and Taiwan. Besides, economic development had been centralised as a significant task and utilised to gain Tibetan support. The next section discusses how Tibetans, the Dalai Lama and the TGIE reacted and their response and interaction with the Chinese authorities.

⁵²⁴ Xiaoming Zhu, "Shilun Hanzu Li Bu Kai Shaoshu Minzu, Shaoshu Minzu Ye Li Bu Kai Hanzu De Zhengque Guandian," in *Xizang Minzu Wenti Lunwen Xuan* (Tibetan People Press, 1985), 283.

Increasing Standoff in Beijing-Dharamsala Dialogues

This section analyses the contact and contradictions between Beijing and Dharamsala, since the Chinese authorities handed in a signal of intent. It charts the details in their interactive process and presents how tensions occurred. Bilateral divisions over the future status of Tibet, which raised mutual suspicions, played a key role.

As chapter four discussed, the Deng Xiaoping Administration initialised willingness to improve the situation over Tibet by initialising policies targeting Tibetans in and outside China, loosening control, and ensuring that the United Front Work sought the return of exiled communities.⁵²⁵ Claiming to put aside diverse political standpoints, Beijing now insisted on the recognition of Chinese sovereignty as a precondition and stressed mutual ties when facing these dissidents.

In his meeting with Gyalo Thondup, the elder brother of the Dalai Lama on the 12th of March 1979, Deng reportedly conveyed his welcome to the return of the Dalai Lama and exiled individuals. He expressed that the foremost bottom line for the CCP was China's sovereignty over Tibet. *"Except for the independence, everything is negotiable. Everything can be discussed,"* Deng said.⁵²⁶

The success of this meeting was perceived to be a breakthrough from both sides.⁵²⁷ From Beijing's perspective, positive contact with exiled Tibetans, the Dalai Lama in particular, would be helpful in legitimising its rule and uniting Tibetan society.⁵²⁸ In

⁵²⁵ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 374.

⁵²⁶ Thurston and Thondup, *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*, 258.

⁵²⁷ Norbu, *China's Tibet Policy*, 316.

⁵²⁸ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/2422, "W D W Dennis to N J Cox Esq on Return of Dalai Lama," August 8, 1983.

addition, positive interaction between Beijing and the Dharamsala could serve as a model to impress Taiwanese leaders and citizens, raising their interest in unification with China in the future.⁵²⁹ Beijing also aimed to present a message to people in Hong Kong in that their distinct system would be reconcilable with the Chinese communist system.⁵³⁰

Increasing interactions with Beijing was also sought from the side of Dharamsala. Followed by the meeting between Deng and Gyalo Thondup, the first ‘fact-finding’ delegation team from the TGIE sought to comprehend the situation in Tibet and Tibetan prefectures in neighboring provinces in 1979. It was reported that during this visit, the team enjoyed wide popularity among Tibetan crowds in Lhasa and Qinghai. Participants paid religious tribute with great passion or expressed their suffering; some even shouted Tibetan nationalist slogans.⁵³¹ Recalling their visit, Juchen Thubten Namgyal, the leader of the first delegation team, stated that the communist officials were surprised to see such ecstatic worship from local Tibetans, given that the CCP imposed its direct rule for about two decades. He stated,

*The day after the delegation reached Lhasa, it went to Jokhang. We went to the terrace and from there we saw that thousands of people had gathered [at] the Jokhang. They were very enthusiastic, so we went down and tried to meet the people...*⁵³²

⁵²⁹ Tseten Sharlho, “China’s Reforms in Tibet: Issues and Dilemmas,” *The Journal of Contemporary China* 1, no. 1 (1992): 37-38; Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/2056, “R F Wye to N J Cox Esq on Tibet,” July 7, 1982.

⁵³⁰ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/2423, “R F Wye to J Ashton Esq on Dalai Lama,” April 5, 1985.

⁵³¹ Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon*, 62.

⁵³² Quote from Arpi, *Dharamsala and Beijing*, 61.

Even though the experience faced by the delegation was beyond Beijing's expectations, the subsequent fact-finding visits continued from 1980 to 1985. The second delegation led by Tenzin Tethong and the third team headed by Jestun Pema, visited Tibet in May and in July 1980. Afterwards, the fourth delegation, headed by W. G. Kundeling, visited ethnic Tibetan areas in Qinghai and Gansu provinces in 1985. Similar to the first, these delegations received ecstatic welcomes wherever they appeared.

From the outset, the Chinese government regarded such phenomena either as way to vent discontent against the previous leftist line, or a sudden revival of religious fever. Rather than consider political implications, the CCP recognised this as the negative impact of the Cultural Revolution and they committed efforts to minimise the impact. As a result, the Party Central instructed policies to the local government in terms of befriending to traditional elites and figures, hence more freedom to Tibet were granted.⁵³³ For example, Document No. 19 of 1982, "About Our Country's Perspectives on Religion and the Basic Policies in Socialist Period" clearly demonstrated the Party's standpoint. At that time, the Chinese authority addressed its high tolerance towards religion. The document noted that if religion had no intention to challenge the state, its activities will be allowed.⁵³⁴ Afterwards, the CCP expressed concerns with Tibetan demands, uncertain over their real intention.

In 1981, Hu Yaobang met with Gyalo Thondup. On this occasion, Hu proposed a

⁵³³ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 379; Wang, *Deng Xiaoping Yu Xizang Gongzuo*, 63-64.

⁵³⁴ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 338-355.

Five-Point Communique as a solution over Tibet that focused on the Dalai Lama. Hu, on behalf of the Chinese authority, again expressed his support for the return of the Dalai Lama and his followers. He gave his word that the Dalai Lama's status would be maintained as it was before 1959, and that he would be appointed as vice president of the National People's Congress and vice chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. As a national leader, the Dalai Lama's residence would be arranged in Beijing and he could occasionally visit Tibet.⁵³⁵

Hu spoke in a tone of readiness whilst establishing a framework that the Tibetan issue consisted mainly of disputes over the Dalai Lama and the return to China of exiled Tibetans.⁵³⁶ Such content, however, was not accepted by the Dalai Lama and the TGIE. Even though the CCP recognised that Tibet had a distinct ethnocultural identity, it was suggested that the line of empowerment was vague and therefore relevant affairs must still be "under the united leadership of the central government."⁵³⁷ This Five-Point Communique came to outline instruction for the CCP to negotiate with the delegations from the Tibet Government in Exile.⁵³⁸

As well as the visits of the fact-finding teams, several rounds of talks between Beijing and the Dharamsala took place simultaneously. The first exploratory negotiation team, comprising of Juchen Thubten Namgyal,⁵³⁹ Phutsok Tashi Takla,⁵⁴⁰ and Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari⁵⁴¹ visited Beijing to discuss solutions to the Tibetan issue in 1982.

⁵³⁵ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui Dangshi Yanjiushi, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Lishi Dashiji*, 371-372.

⁵³⁶ Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon*, 68.

⁵³⁷ Ibid, 64.

⁵³⁸ Wang, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce*, 196.

⁵³⁹ Then served as the Prime Minister of the TGIE.

⁵⁴⁰ He is the husband of an elder sister of the Dalai Lama and participated in the negotiation of the 17-Point Agreement in 1951. In 1980 he served as an official in the exiled Tibetan government.

⁵⁴¹ Founder of the Tibetan Congress Youth and Voice of Tibet. He also served as one of the two

However, their preliminary talks with officials from the United Front Work Department did not achieve any impressive results, since both sides reportedly failed to achieve an agreement.⁵⁴²

Issues around Tibet's autonomy and unification of all Tibetan regions were strongly debated. Firstly, by referring Ye Jianying's "Nine-Point System towards Taiwan," Tibetan delegations proposed to apply the model of 'one country, two systems' to Tibet.⁵⁴³ In the received response, the Dharamsala's suggestion was vehemently denied by Beijing, who claimed that this mode was designed for solving institutional differences between socialist mainland China and capitalist Taiwan. Given that Tibet had been liberated and undergone socialist reform, this premise could not be applied to this case.⁵⁴⁴

In addition, both sides debated for a proposal calling for the amalgamation of three traditional Tibetan provinces into a single administrative entity. Advocated by the Dharamsala's delegations, a creation of such unitary administration now referred to as a unification of 'great Tibet',⁵⁴⁵ could genuinely satisfy the needs of all ethnic Tibetans. Once again, however, such suggestions were refused by the representatives of the Chinese United Front Department as they insisted that Tibet had been granted autonomy.⁵⁴⁶ Instead, Beijing's delegations aimed to orient discussion to the Dalai Lama's return based on the Five-Point Communiqué. This stance was not acceptable

negotiation representatives with Kalsang Gyaltzen, responsible for the negotiation with officials from Beijing in 2002-2011.

⁵⁴² Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/2057, "R F Wye to N J Cox Esq on Tibet," November 15, 1982.

⁵⁴³ Arpi, *Dharamsala and Beijing*, 77-79.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid, 80.

⁵⁴⁵ Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon*, 71.

⁵⁴⁶ Arpi, *Dharamsala and Beijing*, 80; Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/2057, "R F Wye to N J Cox Esq on Tibet," November 15, 1982.

to Dharamsala, since the Dalai Lama explicitly refused to limit the scope of the Tibetan issue to his own status.⁵⁴⁷ As the outcome, both sides agreed to have a further round of negotiations.

Two years later, the same members of the Tibetan delegation arrived in Beijing for the second exploratory talks in October 1984. However, no further progress was made in this meeting between the TGIE and the United Front Work Department represented by Yang Jingren and politburo member Xi Zhongxun.

Following the topics in the first negotiation, the delegations of Dharamsala proposed to make Tibet a de-militarised area, a ‘zone of peace’,⁵⁴⁸ which subsequently became a part of the Dalai Lama’s Five-Point Peaceful Plan delivered at the US Congress in 1987 and the Strasbourg Proposal at the European Parliament in 1988.⁵⁴⁹ The delegations also referred to a plan regarding the Dalai Lama’s return to Tibet in 1985.⁵⁵⁰ Beijing’s response was to deny the zone of peace. In addition, the Chinese government repeated the point that Tibet had been granted autonomy and they also reasserted that the rearrangement of all Tibetan administrative districts was unacceptable since such adaptation would involve vast territories and cause high costs.⁵⁵¹ The Beijing delegation also refused the proposal of the Dalai Lama’s return stating that Tibet was under intensive modernisation construction so the timing was inappropriate.⁵⁵² Instead, Beijing firmly reiterated Hu’s Five-Point Communique.

⁵⁴⁷ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 385.

⁵⁴⁸ Norbu, *China’s Tibet policy*, 321.

⁵⁴⁹ Dalai Lama, “Five Point Peace Plan,” *His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*, September 21, 1987.

⁵⁵⁰ Arpi, *Dharamsala and Beijing*, 82.

⁵⁵¹ Norbu, *China’s Tibet Policy*, 322.

⁵⁵² Arpi, *Dharamsala and Beijing*, 82.

Given these clear divisions, the negotiation ended without any breakthroughs.⁵⁵³

The stagnation of dialogue to a large extent reflected incongruence in mutual acknowledgement and the increasing sense of uncertainty. Beijing and Dharamsala talked cross purposes in terms of the agenda, though their concerns on the well-being of Tibetans overlapped. Beijing seemed to welcome the return of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan exiles though a framework had been settled based on Hu Yaobang's Five-Point Communique. Observing Beijing's strategy in these discussions, it is argued that regime security concerns were a key standpoint. As Tsering Topgyal contends, 'raising questions beyond the scope of personal status would potentially raise questions about the CCP's ruling legitimacy'. He argues,

*Acknowledging the existence of a 'Tibet issue' destroys the neat ideologically constructed edifice of liberation, equality, unity, legitimacy, stability and Tibetan contentment, and the sense of closure that Beijing has propagated in front of the Chinese and international Publics. It would revive...questions....that Beijing believes it had left behind.*⁵⁵⁴

As a result, the reaction of the CCP was to refuse Dharamsala. Indeed, concerns regarding Beijing's legitimacy were sensed by the central authority, who expressed no recognition of the political status of Dharamsala. This also explains why the Chinese authority claimed that negotiations took place only between the delegations of the

⁵⁵³ Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/2603, "N Inkster to J Ashton Esq on Visit of Dalai Lama's Delegation," December 3, 1984.

⁵⁵⁴ Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 74.

Central government and the Dalai Lama himself, rather than the Tibetan Government in Exile.⁵⁵⁵ In addition, as Tibet was under Beijing's control, Beijing could use this advantage to force Dharamsala to accept its conditions and ultimately, it could dominate the negotiating agenda.⁵⁵⁶ All these conditions may have driven Beijing's firm stance not willing to make compromise.

Scholars argue that the previous conflict and mistrust between Beijing and Dharamsala negatively impacted negotiations. According to this perspective, the contradiction between the 'one country, two systems' mode and the existing ethnic regional autonomy was not the main reason for Beijing's repeated rejection of the Dalai Lama's suggestions. Rather, the CCP was concerned about Dharamsala's demands for 'high degree autonomy' and the unification of all ethnic Tibetan areas. The authorities were uncertain whether such demands were to be Dharamsala's alternative approach to achieving Tibetan independence.⁵⁵⁷ Given that Tibet once reached *de facto* independence prior to 1949, the CCP could not tolerate a repetition of history. In this logic, any idea that may involve implication of independence, be it past, present or future, was sensitive and unacceptable. Dialogue degenerated into stalemate.

Conversely, the delegations of Dharamsala must insist that negotiations should discuss Tibet's status for all ethnic Tibetans. Goldstein believes that the ethnographic constitution of exiled Tibetan refugees might play a role. In his view, given that many refugees were from transregional Tibetan areas and not the current TAR, it would be

⁵⁵⁵ Wang, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce*, 194-199.

⁵⁵⁶ Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 76.

⁵⁵⁷ Barry Sautman, "Association, Federation and 'Genuine' Autonomy the Dalai Lama's Proposals and Tibet Independence," *China Information* 14, no. 2 (2000): 32; "Resolving the Tibet Question: Problems and Prospects," *Journal of Contemporary China* 11, no. 30 (2002): 80-82.

extremely difficult for the TGIE to limit the discussion to the Dalai Lama's personal status without arrangement for ethnic Tibetans in China.⁵⁵⁸ When they raised this proposal to Beijing, however, the latter then perceived the negative implication and reacted with rejection; therefore, a major predicament formed.

The insight of asymmetric power relations is useful to draw the logic of predicament here. According to their viewpoint, the differences in size and condition would lead to differences in attention and perception of interest as well as the interaction.⁵⁵⁹ In this case, while both sides showed willingness to contact, a consensus was hard to reach given the distinct positions.

With time, both Beijing and Dharamsala agreed to continue new initiatives in order to break the deadlock. The assignment of Gyalo Thondup by the TGIE forged new connections to the Chinese government in 1986.⁵⁶⁰ Given his previous role since 1979 as the bilateral bridge between Beijing and the Dharamsala, the CCP responded more favorably. Both sides pursued renewed dialogue in 1987.⁵⁶¹

However, such a concurrence of events soon overshadowed this burgeoned interaction once more. Aiming to increase its capacity and impose pressure on Beijing, the Dalai Lama and the TGIE launched a campaign of internationalisation of the Tibetan issue through their global networks, including refugee communities, Buddhist centres, and various sympathetic NGOs pursuing external aids. The Dalai Lama himself also utilised his charisma to draw public attention to the Tibetan issue when visiting abroad.

⁵⁵⁸ Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon*, 71.

⁵⁵⁹ Womack, *China among Unequals: Asymmetric Foreign Relationships in Asia*, 82-84.

⁵⁶⁰ Thurston and Thondup, *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*, 272.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid*, 273.

Their commitments achieved success in the West and the Dalai Lama gained the opportunity to deliver his “Five-Point Peaceful Plan” in the US in 1987,⁵⁶² as well as in the “Strasbourg Proposal” in France in 1988.⁵⁶³ These factors amounted to heavy pressure on the Chinese authorities who reacted in fiercely. The relationship between Beijing and Dharamsala soon degenerated when several anti-governmental protests occurred in Lhasa in the late 1980s and Beijing construed these as a conspiracy by the West and the Dalai Lama.⁵⁶⁴

Regarding the breakout of unrests, senior Chinese officials initially still attributed them to the side-effects of the Cultural Revolution.⁵⁶⁵ Issuing the “Decisions on the Issues about Three Temples in Lhasa and Jokhang,” Beijing designated the Panchen Lama to defuse the monks and nuns and the government granted a larger opportunity for Buddhist practice.⁵⁶⁶

However, considering the increased demonstrations and a severe pro-Tibet independence protest during the Great Prayer Festival, some cadres suggested that the demands were irreconcilable and should not be tolerated. The Party was concerned that the situation would spiral out of control. After an investigation by Qiao Shitue, the Secretary of Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), Beijing adapted its yearly policy of uniting upper-class leaders. In his report, Qiao Shi suggested that the Party should protect its interests and dominate its policy-making rather than making concessions to opponents. He viewed the ethnic tension and demands from

⁵⁶² Dalai Lama, “Five Point Peace Plan.”

⁵⁶³ Dalai Lama. “Strasbourg Proposal 1988,” *His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*, June 15, 1988.

⁵⁶⁴ Wang, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce*, 169-172.

⁵⁶⁵ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 501; Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/3991, “The Far East,” February 11, 1988.

⁵⁶⁶ Wang, “Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce De Lishi Kaocha,” 105-109

activists, even from the ‘upper class’, as a contradiction to the Party. In December 1988, the Central government concurred with his viewpoint.⁵⁶⁷

1989 was an important turning point, not only for the Tibetan issue but also China’s pro-democratic movement. Two significant and connected events happened that deeply affected Chinese politics and Beijing’s foreign relations. In March, a new wave of Tibetan demonstrations occurred in Lhasa and incurred harsh oppression from the government. Martial law was imposed locally for an entire year. Around the same time, demonstrations calling for political reforms began to occur in other Chinese cities. On the 4th of June, Beijing’s brutal crackdown over student demonstrations appalled the global audience. Governments worldwide harshly criticised Beijing’s actions and imposed sanctions.⁵⁶⁸ These events were regarded as a violation of human rights and were met with critical international concern.

In October 1989, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Dalai Lama, commending his long-term struggle for Tibet and the practice of non-violence.⁵⁶⁹ For pro-Tibet campaigners and Tibetan ethno-nationalists, receiving the award symbolised international support and this victory could impose greater pressure on the Chinese government. Beijing, however, did not react as expected.

Waves of pressure, domestically and internationally on Chinese human rights and issues regarding Tibet caused governance insecurity for Beijing.⁵⁷⁰ By the end of 1989, the Central Politburo, led by the General Secretary Jiang Zemin, held a meeting

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁸ BBC, “1989: Massacre in Tiananmen Square.” *BBC*, June 4, 1989.

⁵⁶⁹ DIIR, *International Resolutions and Recognitions on Tibet (1959-2004)*, 1.

⁵⁷⁰ Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 54-55.

in Tibet. On that occasion, the CCP leadership decided to put political stability and economic growth as the priority and measures for setting policy regarding Tibet; in fact the authority tightened social control.

Thus far, a transition of Sino-Tibetan interactions from mitigation to tensions has been explored, during which the involved actors constantly changed their standpoints and tactics surrounding set goals. The scenario of tension turned into substantial confrontation in which one actor aimed to destroy the other. A more accommodating attitude towards the Dalai Lama and the TGIE entirely gave way to the concept of confrontation. This phenomenon will be discussed in relation to the Third Tibet Work Forum. Domestic and international regulatory factors will be explored.

Chinese State Tense Modernisation and Tibetan Backlash

This section discusses the significant dynamics that radicalised the Sino-Tibetan relationship. It focuses specifically on the domestic aspect of China's modernisation construction and considers derived negative effects in detail.

Modernisation was a key component in China's steady strategy to demonstrate its friendliness as well as served as a way of integrating Tibet. Praising its own achievement, the *PRC's Ethnic Minorities Policy and Its Practices* of 1999 addressed that "Through its experience and practice over the past fifty years, China has proven that it is on a correct track.....the commitment of reform and open and modernisation construction will allow all ethnic groups to develop in a more rapid and prosperous

way.”⁵⁷¹

Nevertheless, the real situation is far more complex. Scholars noted that the uneven distribution of economic growth and broader modernisation, was having a negative effect on Tibet and Tibetans, including marginalization.⁵⁷² Tibetans adopted defensive measures to the established policy structure in various forms of demonstration, aiming to overcome these difficulties. However, their acts were regarded as challenges to the Central authority and thus provoked the latter’s stronger will to adhere to established policies. A spiral interaction was manifesting.

High Dependence on State

Reasons for the Tibetan sense of marginalisation were plentiful. A noticeable factor concerned Tibet’s inability to develop an independent fiscal system. For a long period of time, Tibet’s finances relied heavily upon subsidies from the state. In 1980-1993, the Central government even subsidised 100% of Tibet’s yearly revenue.⁵⁷³ Aiming at improving this dependence, Beijing sought to stimulate Tibet’s local economy and so provided public infrastructure and channeled external capital through subsidies and various assisting projects. The Chinese government helped to increase the total gross domestic product of Tibet on a yearly basis. From 1994 to 2000, Tibet’s GDP rate increase was more than 10%, on average⁵⁷⁴ The personal average income of Tibetans also experienced improvement during this period. However, these improvements were

⁵⁷¹ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *Zhongguo De Shaoshu Minzu Zhengce Ji Qi Shijian* (National Minority Policy and its Practice in China), September 27, 1999.

⁵⁷² June Dreyer, “Economic Development in Tibet under the People's Republic of China,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 12, no. 36 (2003): 411-430; Emily Yeh, “Tropes of Indolence and the Cultural Politics of Development in Lhasa, Tibet,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97, no. 3 (2007): 595-598.

⁵⁷³ Bureau of Statistics of the Tibet Autonomous Region, *Tibet Statistical Yearbook* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2015), 75.

⁵⁷⁴ Wei Jin, *Xizang: Yuanzhu Yu Fazhan* (Lhasa: The Tibet People's Publishing House, 2010), 229.

questionable due to Tibet's rate of financial self-sufficiency and the average personal revenue of Tibetans being lower than the rest of China.⁵⁷⁵ Moreover, an understanding that the main drive of Tibet's economic growth was determined by policies of subsidy and investment from Beijing and other supporting inland provinces proved difficult for Tibet to gain agency on economic affairs.⁵⁷⁶ From this aspect, the economic reform during this period did not achieve the main task of setting up the Tibet Work Forums to create a self-reliant Tibetan economic model. Rather, financial dependence on Beijing remained. As we will examine in the next chapter, the imposition of the project Western Development (xibu da kaifa 西部大开发) after 2000 strengthened this tendency.

Economic Development to Societal Changes

The sheer torrent of subsidies from the Central government and external investment significantly reshaped Tibet's industrial structure. By 2000, around three-quarters of the population in the TAR were working for the primary sector. While agriculture and husbandry employed the majority of the Tibetan population, the contribution of the primary sector to the GDP gradually declined.⁵⁷⁷ By 1991, it still occupied 50.8% of local GDP. Nevertheless, after the Third Tibet Work Forum began to call for acceleration in the transformation of Tibet's economic system, the secondary and tertiary sectors received massive investment and in 1997, local GDP subsequently surpassed the primary sector. By 2005, the primary sector only contributed 19.1% of the local GDP.⁵⁷⁸ The relevant issues in this period did not only include resource distributions amidst industries, but also included impacts that resulted from this

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid, 227.

⁵⁷⁶ Andrew Fischer, "The Political Economy of Boomerang Aid in China's Tibet," *China Perspectives* 3 (2009): 49.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid, 40.

⁵⁷⁸ Jin, *Xizang*, 247-248.

transformation. Given this aspect, income inequality along with urban-rural division was likely to surge.

The income gap also existed among different ethnicities in Tibet, which brought about widespread dissatisfaction regarding ethnic isolation. When the government transformed the industrial structure and introduced market competition, local Tibetans, with their lack of technical skills and high rate of illiteracy, tended to hold an inferior position within the labour market. Due to its geographic isolation, Tibet was less developed than other regions of China. As mentioned previously, the central subsidies and assisting projects mainly invested in the second and tertiary sectors were dominated by construction and administrative costs.⁵⁷⁹ Yet, since these institutionalised investments were provided for by external members of the dominant Han Chinese ethnicity and industrial structures were essentially shaped by conditions adapted to the mainstream Han Chinese culture, such as Mandarin fluency and connections to government or business networks to inland provinces. This preferred dimension and its reproduction therefore alienated relations between major firms and indigenous Tibetans.⁵⁸⁰ The dominance of powerful firms from inland provinces hindered the protection or promotion of locally-oriented companies and business models. Therefore, the potential for inter-ethnic stratification emerged and could have intensified due to the context of low ethnic interdependence and competition. Ethnic conflict and demands for separatism were likely to emerge.

Elsewhere, tourism was conceived as a balanced approach to economic growth and preservation of local tradition, though its effect deviated from expectations. In his

⁵⁷⁹ Jin, *Xizang*, 270

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid, 50.

research, Ben Hillman narrated how tourism simultaneously escalated both national and ethnic identity of Tibetans. In his view, though the state-led investment in Tibetan tourism pushed local economic growth; national identity of Tibetans towards the PRC was not at the same time being strengthened. Rather, during the process, the dynamics of marketisation and the influx of local and migrated Tibetans reinforced their 'ethnic consciousness and a renewed pride in their cultural heritage'.⁵⁸¹

Migration

A further key issue brought about by the rapid modernisation project is Chinese migration. This has been a controversial debate between Beijing and Dharamsala as well as among scholars. In his notorious Five-Point Peaceful Plan for resolving the Tibetan issue delivered in Washington in 1987, the Dalai Lama explicitly addressed and demanded Beijing to cease its policy of Han Chinese migration transfer.⁵⁸² In 1988 in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, the Dalai Lama brought up this issue once again.⁵⁸³ In its response, Beijing denied all accusations and claimed that the freedom of movement was a civil right. However, the government admitted that there had been sections of the 'floating population' who temporarily resided in Tibet because of either the assisting projects or enterprise. Since the Second Tibet Work Forum institutionalised assisting projects and tourism, tens of thousands of Tibetans from neighboring provinces and non-Tibetan migrants throughout the state flocked to Tibet to take advantage of modernising constructions. The influx of these migrant workers further accelerated after the meeting of the Third Work Forum. The official statistical figures illustrate that the size of the Tibetan population did not dramatically change and they composed 94.97% of the total population in 1982 and

⁵⁸¹ Hillman, "Ethnic Tourism and Ethnic Politics in Tibetan China," 4-6.

⁵⁸² Dalai Lama, "Five Point Peace Plan."

⁵⁸³ Dalai Lama, "Strasbourg Proposal 1988."

94.07% in 2000.⁵⁸⁴ However, as Goldstein observed, the groups of floating people still had a huge impact, “the number of these non-Tibetans is unprecedented in Tibetan history and has turned Lhasa, the political heart of Tibet, into a city where non-Tibetan residents appear to equal or exceed the number of actual Tibetans.”⁵⁸⁵

In some way, this influx of migration strengthened communications between Tibet and other Chinese provinces. Strategically and politically speaking, this phenomenon was conducive to Beijing’s nation-building project.⁵⁸⁶ Both Deng and Jiang repeated the notion that there was no harm in increasing interaction between Tibet and inland provinces, and the fundamental measure was “What is best for Tibetans and how Tibet can develop ahead of the pace in China’s Four Modernisation.”⁵⁸⁷ What they expected was that waves of migration would accelerate the natural process of ethnic integration.⁵⁸⁸ However, given that demographic figures change so fast and that the migratory population increased with their advanced capacity over local Tibetans, the sense of uncertainty over environmental and societal aspects could be perceived by Tibetans. The sense of marginalisation could widely spread. In this way, the potential of ethnic tension escalated.⁵⁸⁹

In summary, modernisation projects in China brought about complex effects. Its performance on an economic aspect was impressive though various changes to Tibetan society, including environment and culture, resulted in new issues. Some

⁵⁸⁴ Zhongguo Minzu Tongji Nianjian Bianji Weiyuanhui, *Zhongguo Minzu tongji Nianjian* 2013, 686-687.

⁵⁸⁵ Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Drago*, 94.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 95-96.

⁵⁸⁷ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 397-398; 480-481.

⁵⁸⁸ Baogang He, “Minority Rights with Chinese Characteristics,” in *Multiculturalism in Asia*, eds. Will Kymlicka and Baogang He (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005), 56-79.

⁵⁸⁹ Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 93-96.

regarded these changes as threats which formed uncertainty, fear, and resistance.

China's variant standpoint shall be considered. Beijing's stricter control in Tibetan affairs, especially those with regard to culture and religion,⁵⁹⁰ triggered a deep sense of dissatisfaction. With its adaptation of united work policies towards the 'upper-class people,' Beijing began intervening in various aspects of life, with a particular focus on Tibetan Buddhism practices. During a speech to CCP's cadres in Tibet in 1990, Jiang Zemin stated that religion was not permitted to be a banner for separatists. Instead, it must be under the leadership from patriot, who supported the CCP.⁵⁹¹ In another conference on religious affairs, Jiang also called for a higher degree of regulation in terms of the number of temples, monks and nuns. Importantly, the state claimed that it had the ultimate authority to recognise the re-incarnation of 'living Buddhas'.⁵⁹² Influenced by these distorted regulations, many Tibetans, including religious leaders, were reported to escape to India and abroad, seeking spiritual teaching and leadership. One of the major religious leaders was Kamapa in 2000.⁵⁹³

As the logic of security dilemma reveals, Tibetan resistance would only render a firmer stance from the Chinese government to institutionalise its employment and radicalise the spiral interaction with a final outbreak of conflict and violence.

Internationalisation of the Tibetan Issue and Chinese Threat Perception

⁵⁹⁰ For a general information can see Potter, 2003; Mukherjee, 2010.

⁵⁹¹ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 426.

⁵⁹² Ibid, 445-454

⁵⁹³ BBC, "Tibetan Lama Meets Spiritual Leader," January 8, 2000.

This section limits its discussion of regulatory factors in Sino-Tibetan interactions in the 1980s and 1990s, with a focus on the international dimension. It focuses on the commitment of internationalisation of the Tibetan issue in the US and Europe that assisted Dharamsala to counter the asymmetric power of Beijing. As suggested by the existing literature,⁵⁹⁴ these individual international supports not only kept the Tibetan issue active, but their actions are also taken as important regulatory factors accounting for Beijing's adaptation of a stronger standpoint by the 1990s.

The Dalai Lama's Promotion and the internationalisation of the Tibetan Issue

Since his successful visit to Western Europe and the US in the 1970s, the Dalai Lama gained an international platform beyond India. In the 1980s, his appearance abroad radically increased after the launch of the strategy of internationalisation. As Table 5-1 shows, the number of the Dalai Lama's visits to foreign countries in the 1980s doubled compared to the previous decade. In the 1990s, the visiting number doubled again compared to the 1980s.

Table 5-1 Number of Dalai Lama Visits to Foreign Countries

	1959-1969	1970-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999
Number	2	20	52	116

Source: Organized from *His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*⁵⁹⁵

Reviewing the top five countries that the Dalai Lama visited in the 1980-90s, in Table 5-2 (see next page), the majority were Western countries that keenly promoted values of democracy and human rights. They also accepted most Tibetan refugees apart from

⁵⁹⁴ Han, *Contestation and Adaptation; Topgyal, China and Tibet*.

⁵⁹⁵ Dalai Lama, "Brief Biography," *His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*.

India, Nepal and Bhutan.⁵⁹⁶ These intensive visits in the two decades ultimately raised public concern of the Tibetan situation in global civil society.

Table 5-2 Top 5 Frequent Countries the Dalai Lama Visited in the 1980s-1990s

	USA	Germany	Switzerland	France	UK	Ratio to the total Visits (%)
1980s	5	7	4	4	4	43
1990s	9	8	8	7	6	33

Source: Organized from *His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*⁵⁹⁷

Amidst the countries that the Dalai Lama visited in these two decades, Taiwan was a special case that provoked Beijing. For a long time, the Republic of China based in Taiwan claimed (and still claims) its ‘constitutional’ sovereignty over Tibet, and to this extent, Tibet is engaged in a complex and sensitive Cross-Strait relationship, with individual interactions between Taipei-Dharamsala and Beijing-Dharamsala that manifests into a triangular relationship.⁵⁹⁸ In the 1960s and 1970s, Dharamsala sent several senior officials to Taiwan in order to improve the bilateral relationship.⁵⁹⁹ Such efforts continued and by the 1990s, huge progress was made. In 1997, when the island was having its first presidential election by popular vote, the Dalai Lama visited Taiwan. Understanding the context of the Beijing-Taipei relationship, he explicitly restated that he did not seek Tibet’s independence but only its autonomy. He called for the application of ‘one country, two systems’ to Tibet, as the Dharamsala’s delegations

⁵⁹⁶ Tibet Data, “Tibetan Population,” *Tibet Data*, May 2015.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁸ Tenzin Tethong, “Tibet and Taiwan: Past History and Future Prospects,” *Bimonthly Journal on Mongolian & Tibetan Current Situation* 15, no. 4 (2005): 59-70.

⁵⁹⁹ These officials included P. T. Takla, brother in law of the Dalai Lama, W.G. Kundeling, a minister for Religious and Cultural Affairs of the TGIE, and Gyalo Thondup. Ibid, 62; 65.

previously proposed.⁶⁰⁰ However, Beijing was concerned that the Dalai Lama had formed a political alliance with Taipei and that the two sides would mutually support each other.⁶⁰¹ Consequently, since then, Beijing added a condition requesting a public statement that “Taiwan is a province of China” from Dharamsala to their bilateral negotiation.⁶⁰²

This growing problem involved dual characteristics of the Dalai Lama himself, since he was a spiritual leader in Tibetan Buddhism as well as a political leader in the TGIE. From the outset, when Beijing began to expand its international relations with the West after acquiring its position in the United Nations Assembly and Security Council, the Chinese government expressed a relatively flexible attitude towards the international space enjoyed by the Dalai Lama, as long as his visit was identified with religious intent. However, with the Dalai Lama’s frequent appearances in front of a global audience with other religious leaders such as the Pope or the Bishop of Canterbury in the UK, impressions of him as a fighter for Tibetan autonomy from the perspective of the Chinese government inevitably went beyond a religious dimension. Following the Japanese Prime Minister, Suzuki Zenko’s first meeting with the Dalai Lama in 1980, an increasing number of political leaders, not only the ruling administration in different countries, began to meet him. The Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman met him, as did the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs and its vice-President in Jakarta.⁶⁰³ These meetings reinforced the Dalai Lama’s global influence. Further, the development of Tibet and bilateral negotiations between

⁶⁰⁰ CNA News, “Dalai Lama Fang Tai De Yingxiang (The Influence of Dalai Lama’s Visit of Taiwan),” *CAN News*, March 28, 1997.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

⁶⁰² Sautman, “The Tibet Issue in Post-summit Sino-American Relations,” 7; “Resolving the Tibet Question,” 79.

⁶⁰³ Dalai Lama, “Brief Biography.”

Beijing and Dharamsala drew more international attention.⁶⁰⁴ By making his speeches in front of the US Congress and the EU Parliament, the Dalai Lama further broadened the global pro-Tibet network.

The Nobel Prize award raised the profile of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan issue to worldwide recognition. Associated with the issue of China's human rights abuses, many civil groups in individual states called for a more active stance taken by their governments towards the PRC. In addition, increasing western journalistic reports concerning Beijing's crackdown over Tibetan demonstration further shaped the negative image of the Chinese government. Factors ranging from individual national interests and distinct ties with Tibet, led these external actors to provide various aid to the TGIE. Though it was clear that no foreign government chose to risk its relationship with Beijing by recognising the government of the Dalai Lama, their normative criticism of human right abuses imposed a certain degree of pressure on China.

In its responses, faced by external critics, Beijing resorted to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of a sovereign state, and claimed that there was no universal definition concerning human rights. Beijing also regularly viewed its rising economy as a means to prevent the Tibetan issue from hindering China's relationship with other countries. Meanwhile, following the guideline of 'grasping with both hands,' the CCP promoted economic growth in Tibet as a means to improve the well-being of its people and tighten control in its fight against local separatism. This chapter now examines the factor of Tibet in the US/China policy.

⁶⁰⁴ Kauffmann, *The Agendas of Tibetan Refugees*, 97-98.

Tibet in the Sino-American Relations

The discussion concerning Tibet in the US Congress in the 1980s-1990s played a more active role and directed relevant policies whereas the administration adopted a more cautious attitude. Since the normalisation of Sino-American diplomatic relations in the mid-1970s, Washington was consistent with its official policy towards Beijing and accepted Tibet as part of China while cautiously prevented Tibet from becoming a considerable problem in the bilateral relationship. However, widespread concerns by the US public and the ongoing lobbying of civic groups for Tibet effectively shaped Washington's foreign policy towards Beijing during these decades. When the Dalai Lama and the TGIE internationalised their pro-Tibet campaign, several US congressional representatives immediately responded, and then pushed the administration to take action.

The first influential breakthrough for the Tibetan political cause came on the 24th of July 1985, when Li Xiannian visited Washington as the first president of the PRC after both countries officially established diplomatic relations. A letter, co-signed by the 91 Congress members from the House and Senate was submitted to President Li, addressing their support for direct dialogue between Beijing and Dharamsala. This letter also expressed concerns involving the situation of Tibet and requested Beijing to reconsider the aspirations of the Dalai Lama.⁶⁰⁵

The U.S. Congress adopted a more active standpoint in 1987. In June of that year, the House of Representatives approved the Bill of H.R. 1777, in which it criticised the Chinese government's policies against Tibetans, which resulted in the suffering and deaths of more than one million people. Subsequently, the amended version to H.R.

⁶⁰⁵ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 413-414.

1777 of the Senate suggested linking Tibetan human rights to the US arms sale to China.⁶⁰⁶ On the 21st of September, the Dalai Lama was invited to the Human Rights Caucus of the House of Representatives, where he gave a powerful and influential speech, addressing his knowledge about the China-Tibet relationship in the past and his suggestions for a future Tibet. The Dalai Lama claimed that before its illegal occupation, Tibet was an independent buffer state amid China, India and Russia. In addition, he publicly proposed the “Five-Point Peaceful Plan.” On this occasion, the Dalai Lama not only delivered his perspectives to the US political elites and the public, he also enhanced Dharmshala’s bargaining power with Beijing.

One week after the Dalai Lama’s speech, a series of pro-Tibet independence demonstrations occurred in Lhasa. The first demonstration occurred on 27th September, and then on 1st October, followed by more demonstrations in the following months. In most cases, the local police wanted to dismiss these demonstrations and thus the situation caused skirmishes in the city centre as more participants joined.⁶⁰⁷ The degree of violence varied; however, the Chinese government’s responses to the arrest of ethno-nationalist demonstrators drew international attention.

The US Congress identified the Tibetan demonstrations and Beijing’s suppression as evidence of China’s human rights abuses. Both houses, along with the media, urged the Reagan Administration to act. Congress added several points regarding Tibet in the Foreign Relations Authorisation Act (Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989), which was then signed by President Reagan as Public Law 100-204 on the 22nd of December 1987.

⁶⁰⁶ Xu, “The United States and the Tibet Issue,” 1067-1068.

⁶⁰⁷ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 465-466..

According to this law, the US government expressed its sympathy for the suffering Tibetans and, importantly, Tibet should be taken as ‘an important factor’ in Sino-American relations. Meanwhile, Congress suggested that the US government should instruct its officials to protect human rights violations in Tibet. The US government should also urge the PRC government to actively develop a dialogue with the Dalai Lama regarding the future of Tibet.⁶⁰⁸ Congress expressed full support for the Dalai Lama. The successive Clinton Administration inherited the heritage of this law and expounded it in the 1990s.

Entering the 1990s, more resolutions with respect to Tibet were initialised by Congress which then appeared in the annual Foreign Relations Authorization Acts. Repeatedly, Congress requested the Administration to encourage the development of negotiations between Beijing and Dharamsala, as evidenced in Sec. 901, H.R.3792 (Public Law 101-246)⁶⁰⁹ and Sec. 1702 (C)(1)(G), H.R.1561 (Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1996-1997).⁶¹⁰ Sec. 225 and Sec. 702 of H.R.3792 also illustrates the support of Congress by specifically authorising an appropriation to assist exiled Tibetan students. In Sec. 234, H.R.3792 (Public Law 101-246), Congress urged to support Tibet with greater intensity through the ‘Voice of America’.⁶¹¹ Moreover, in several resolutions, Congress intentionally adopted an ambiguous stance that separated Tibet from China e.g. Sec. 236, H.R.2333 (Public Law 103-236)⁶¹² and Sec. 407, H.R.1253 (Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY 1997-1998)⁶¹³. In some cases, Congress listed Tibet as a separate section and as ‘occupied,’ e.g. Sec. 536,

⁶⁰⁸ GovTrack, *H.R. 1777 (100th): Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989*, December 22, 1987.

⁶⁰⁹ CongressGov, *H.R.3792: Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991*.

⁶¹⁰ Congress.Gov, *H.R.1561: Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1996 and 1997*.

⁶¹¹ CongressGov, *H.R.3792*.

⁶¹² Congress.Gov, *H.R.2333: Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995*.

⁶¹³ Congress.Gov, *H.R.1253: Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999*.

H.R.2333 (H.R.2333-Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY 1994-1995),⁶¹⁴ Sec. 1602, H.R.1561 (Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY 1996-1997),⁶¹⁵ and Sec. 104, H.R.1211 (Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY 2000).⁶¹⁶ All these demonstrated Congress's support for Tibet.

In comparison, the White House took more factors into consideration and attempted to mitigate radical Congressional resolutions in order to maintain America's China policy. For example, when the 103th Congress suggested an establishment of a Special Envoy for Tibet who would rank as an Ambassador responsible for the Tibetan issue, the Clinton Administration initially opposed it. However, faced by a similar bill in the following 104th and 105th Congress in 1997, it finally established the position of Special Coordinator for Tibetan issues within the State Department as a compromise. This position of Coordinator was, however, designated by the Secretary of State thus it was not an ambassadorial rank.⁶¹⁷

In general, following the presidencies of Reagan and Bush, the successive Democratic Administration adopted a more favorable attitude towards Tibet in the 1990s. The Tibetan issue was not acknowledged as an 'official issue' in Sino-American relations, but in practice, Washington took a prominent position.⁶¹⁸ President George Bush initially met with the Dalai Lama in 1991. This meeting was not only the first direct communication between a US leader and an exiled Tibetan leader, but it also substantially encouraged an international constituency for Tibet. The subsequent President, Bill Clinton, also met with him at least four times (1993, 1994, 1997 and

⁶¹⁴ Congress.Gov, *H.R.2333*.

⁶¹⁵ Congress.Gov, *H.R.1561*.

⁶¹⁶ Congress.Gov, *H.R. 1211: Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2000*.

⁶¹⁷ Kerry Dumbaugh, *Tibet: Problems, Prospects, and U.S.* (Policy. CRS Report for Congress, 2008), 18.

⁶¹⁸ Sautman, "The Tibet Issue in Post-summit Sino-American Relations," 13-15.

1998) in both a formal and informal manner. In addition, considering the US-China relationship, the Clinton Administration restated the US's acceptance of China's sovereignty over Tibet, and that the US government did not recognise the political status of the Tibetan Government in Exile. These statements repeatedly contend that the US government did not have a strategic interest in Tibet but only concerned itself with local human rights. Since there were other political and economic issues mixed with the developing Sino-American relationship, the US Administration's policy left an adequate leeway for operation. It was also a result of balancing factors between Congress, US civil society, and diplomatic relations with the PRC.⁶¹⁹

Tibet in the Sino-European Relations

The Tibetan issue drew increased attention in the US since the mid-1980s and showed a similar tendency in Europe with the topic always associated with democracy and human rights. This development was concurrent with an increasing integration of diverse European countries that aimed to shape its self-image as a normative power.⁶²⁰ Rather than challenging the principle of China's sovereignty over Tibet, the European Union and its member countries expressed their concerns on Tibetan human rights since the 1950s. Nevertheless, the European view of narrating human rights as a universal value was not shared by Beijing, which insisted on the superiority of its national sovereignty and refused such external interference. The divergent understandings between Beijing and the European countries not only showed a conceptual gap, it also formed a contradiction to the Sino-European relationship in practice.⁶²¹

⁶¹⁹ Melvyn Goldstein, "The Dalai Lama's Dilemma," *Foreign Affairs*. February (1998): 92-94.

⁶²⁰ European Union, *Human Rights*, https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/human-rights_en.

⁶²¹ Zhongqi Pan, "Managing the Conceptual Gap on Sovereignty in China-EU Relations," *Asia Europe Journal* 8, no. 2 (2010): 227-243.

After the Lhasa demonstration occurred, the European Parliament in Strasbourg immediately passed a resolution on the 14th of October 1987 condemning Beijing's excessive reaction to the protesting Tibetans. This resolution urged the PRC government to respect religious freedom and cultural rights of Tibetans who had been harassed since the occupation, though it also noted that Beijing showed improvements on the restoration of Tibetan Buddhism and political participation. In addition, the European Parliament expressed its support to the Dalai Lama's "Five-Point Proposal" by referring to it as a basis for settling Tibet's future status and relations between the Chinese and Tibetan people.⁶²² Corresponding to the European Parliament, many member states also passed their individual resolutions domestically. One of the important cases was West Germany passing a resolution on the 15th of October 1987. Similar to the content of the European Parliament, the German parliament expressed its recognition of the liberation policies of Beijing but condemned the violation of human rights in Tibet. In addition to urging Beijing to encourage constructive dialogue with the Dalai Lama, the parliament emphasised that the German government and people should preserve Tibetan culture and religion both in Tibet and in exile, and grant them scholarships in German schools.⁶²³

On the 15th of June, 1988, the Dalai Lama was invited to the European Parliament, where he further integrated his previous Five-Point Plan into the "Strasbourg Proposal." Importantly, he publicly announced that he only sought Tibet's autonomy. He also articulated many concrete points in terms of building a democratic institution in Tibet, processes of transforming it into a peaceful zone, which gained praise in the West.

⁶²² DIIR, *International Resolutions and Recognitions on Tibet*, 8.

⁶²³ *Ibid*, 210-211.

Following this, many countries took this proposal as the basis to encourage Beijing-Dharamsala negotiations. Faced with this question from Beijing, the President of the European Parliament, Lord Henry Plumb, claimed that the Dalai Lama's visit was merely private. In a previous statement, the European Parliament also reclaimed its recognition that Tibet was part of Chinese territory.⁶²⁴

Facing the repeated occurrences of demonstrations in Tibet and the Chinese government's implementation of martial law in Lhasa in 1989, the European Parliament supported the Tibetan aspect. However, it avoided challenging China's sovereignty. In its resolution, the EU parliament demonstrated its willingness to mediate in the conflicts of Tibet and urged Beijing to discuss its future with the Dalai Lama. However, in its response, the Chinese government insisted on the supremacy of sovereignty. It claimed that the European resolution was an attempt to interfere in China's domestic affairs.⁶²⁵

Parallel to the collapse of the Socialist camp in East Europe, the European Union was officially established and replaced its predecessor, the European Community, through the Treaty of the European Union of 1993. Gaining a higher degree of power of collective action, the European representatives played a more active role in the political component of Union's China policy regarding Tibet.

Maintaining a long-term principle of constructive engagement, the EU made greater efforts in the 1990s. In addition to the resolutions passed by the EU parliament, the

⁶²⁴ Annie-Marie Blondeau, Katia Buffetrille and Donald Lopez, *Authenticating Tibet: Answers to China's 100 Questions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 121-122.

⁶²⁵ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 411-413.

EU regularly expressed its concerns over Chinese human rights through co-sponsoring the UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and its sub-commission and building a direct dialogue with Beijing.⁶²⁶ Since 1995, a biannual 'EU-China Human Rights Dialogue' discusses issues with regard to the rule of law, torture, the death penalty, civil and political freedoms, and rights of ethnic minorities. Through interactions among diplomatic officials, academic exchanges and co-operation projects, this dialogue aims to integrate China in an institutionalised framework.⁶²⁷ Tibet, most of the time, appeared as a topic raised by the EU.

As some scholars have noted, the EU prioritises the application of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as a norm regarding Tibet and the PRC; however, the Chinese government has not ratified the Covenant after having signed it in 1998. Beijing insists on its policies in Tibet, and aims to prevent the EU from contacting and supporting the exiled Tibetan government.⁶²⁸

In its response to the promotion of the Tibetan issue as a human rights problem by the EU, the Chinese government frequently rebuffed and asserted that the issue essentially concerned Chinese sovereignty, rather than human rights. Beijing stressed that the alternative concept of collective rights was its own interpretation of human rights. A conceptual gap, therefore, existed in bilateral communications.⁶²⁹ At the same time,

⁶²⁶ Philip Baker, "Human Rights, Europe and the People's Republic of China," *The China Quarterly* 169 (March 2002), 53-57; Reuben Wong, "Towards a Common European Policy on China? Economic, Diplomatic and Human Rights Trends since 1985," *Current Politics and Economics of Asia* 17, no. 1 (2008): 170-173.

⁶²⁷ Katrin Kinzelbach and Hatla Thelle, "Taking Human Rights to China: An Assessment of the EU's Approach," *The China Quarterly* 205 (2011): 60-79.

⁶²⁸ Carol Glen and Richard Murgu, "EU-China Relations: Balancing Political Challenges with Economic Opportunities," *Asia Europe Journal* 5, no. 3 (2007): 335-336.

⁶²⁹ Jing Men, "Between Human Rights and Sovereignty: An Examination of EU-China Political Relations," *European Law Journal* 17, no. 4 (2011): 534-550.

through the expansion and strengthening of commercial trades with individual EU member states, the Chinese government strived for reconciliation within the EU. Emphasising the mutual economic cooperation, Beijing aimed to deviate concern from the debates over Tibet.

The Third Tibet Work Forum and Chinese Enhanced Control

The dialogue between Beijing and Dharamsala in the 1990s ceased while informal communications between both sides continued. Though a meeting was held in Beijing in June 1993,⁶³⁰ the situation was an overall stalemate. Both sides proclaimed their existing willingness to negotiate though, in fact, progress was in stagnation. Each side perceived the other as a rival and this did not help seek mutual understandings. Rather, the failure of the Dalai Lama and Beijing to work together to choose the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama in 1995 manifested these bilateral conflicts.⁶³¹ At that time, Beijing unleashed a patriotic education in Tibetan monasteries and temples and implemented an anti-Dalai Lama campaign.⁶³² The Dalai Lama's photos and worship were banned due to his status as the Tibetan spiritual leader. The Sino-Tibetan relationship pervaded a sense of uncertainty, the Chinese campaign provoked the Tibetan emotional backlash and instigated sporadic protests in Tibetan regions.

Another conspicuous indicator featuring such tensions was evident in the launch of the Third Tibet Work Forum on 20-23 July 1994.⁶³³ As explained, policies regarding Tibetan affairs were further prioritised. First of all, both previous conferences were

⁶³⁰ DIIR, *International Resolutions and Recognitions on Tibet*, 134.

⁶³¹ Zhu, *Xizang Qianyan Wenti Yanjiu*, 364-370; Isabel Hilton, *The Search for the Panchen Lama* (WW Norton & Company, 2001)

⁶³² Zhao, *A Nation-state by Construction*, 218-223; 234-236.

⁶³³ Zhu, *Xizang Qianyan Wenti Yanjiu*, 16-17; 41-42.

convoked by the Party Central Secretariat in advance and the Party cadres conducted a field survey. The Party then published an official statement in which instructions were revised after an investigation. Conversely, since the Third Work Forum, all investigations were conducted before the launch of the conference. In addition, the third forum was co-launched by the Party Central and State Council as well as relevant governmental officials. Such innovations demonstrated that Beijing raised the Tibetan issue in its national strategies

On this occasion, anti-secession was highlighted as the priority task, equaling the economy. Beijing instructed a slogan as a guideline: ‘yige zhongxin, liangjian dashi, sange quebao 一个中心，两件大事，三个确保’, meaning ‘Centralising of economic construction, grasping of economy and stability, and ensuring of the acceleration of Tibet’s economy, of social progress and of improving living standards.’⁶³⁴ Clearly, the main notion of the new campaign was concerned with economic development and political stability was regarded as a vital condition. The Chinese authorities summarised it as the ‘grasping with both hands’. Jiang Zemin expressed, “Tibet is not permitted to be separated from the motherland, and nor is it permitted to undergo a long-term low development in the future.”⁶³⁵ A determination to push development in Tibet can be determined.

This policy transition accompanied the occurrence of certain domestic and international events in the late 1980s, as discussed in the previous sections. Demonstrations in 1987, 1988, and 1989 and the enormous pro-Tibet independence movements and uprisings towards Chinese rule in Lhasa astonished Beijing. New

⁶³⁴ Wang, “Zhongguo Gongchandang Xizang Zhengce De Lishi Kaocha,” 100-111.

⁶³⁵ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 460.

policies initiated from the early 1980s illustrates Beijing's attempt to resolve the Tibetan issue through improving inter-ethnic relations and economic development. However, Beijing met with a dilemma.

On the one hand, a stable economic growth proved to be a remarkable accumulation of the state's power and the CCP leaders believed that they were implementing a correct policy. On the other hand, demands that called for more autonomy that turned into self-determination by Tibetans triggered the CCP's apprehension to its rule in Tibet.

A historical context must be considered. At that time, in addition to Tibetan demonstrations, some demonstrations also occurred in the rest of China. Student demonstrations occurred in Beijing and many cities in 1989. Voices sought for democratic transformation and resulted in a chain-like collapse of communist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe, as well as the Soviet Union, which strongly disintegrated the Chinese government's negative perception towards these demonstrations. Also, the successful internalisation of the Tibetan issue further rendered Beijing's antagonism towards external intervention. Eventually, a hard-line approach was taken both internally and externally. The CCP decided to continue the modernising reform but within a confined manner. The previous loosening of control regarding politics was no longer maintained.

For Beijing, the boost of economic growth was the most important leverage to facilitate Chinese national identity for Tibetans.⁶³⁶ The Third Work Forum declared the intent to increase fiscal subsidies for developing local industries. From 1994 to

⁶³⁶ Song, *Dangdai Zhongguo De Xizang Zhengce Yu Zhili*, 306-311.

2000, the Chinese central government subsidised Tibet with 92 percent of total costs on average per year.⁶³⁷ In relation to this, the Work Forum announced a new nationwide range of assisting projects for the TAR. Fifteen provinces and cities were designated to provide various support to their individual ‘partners’ in Tibet. Other than funding local infrastructures, every three years, these provinces sent technical specialists and party cadres to Tibet throughout all administrative levels. State-owned enterprises also abjured to this assisting project.⁶³⁸ Thus, they were channeled to Tibet, either establishing branches or being responsible for local constructions.

Education was also an important aspect involved in this project. Not only had public schools from these provinces recruited teachers to support Tibetan education, they also provided funding for Tibetan students.⁶³⁹ In terms of infrastructure, Beijing invested massively in traffic construction, including railways, roads, as well as aerial transportation.⁶⁴⁰ As a result, communications between the Tibet autonomous region and inland provinces were strengthened. Through building an increasing intertwined network via capital and individual support, the Chinese government expected to achieve an immediate and obvious profit.

Meanwhile, the CCP launched policies aimed at stabilising Tibet’s political and social environment. Since the early 1990s the Dalai Lama and his government were targeted as another key source of conflict in addition to ‘Western anti-China hostile force’ that was continually blamed as the main cause for ethnic tensions. At the Third Tibet Work Forum, Beijing not only publicly devalued all proposals suggested by the Dalai Lama

⁶³⁷ Jin, *Xizang*, 95.

⁶³⁸ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui Dang Shi Yanjiushi, *Zhizheng Zhongguo Xizang Juan*, 195.

⁶³⁹ Jin, *Xizang*, 171-174

⁶⁴⁰ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui Dang Shi Yanjiushi, *Zhizheng Zhongguo Xizang Juan*, 191-193.

in the 1980s, but also re-called him and the TGIE as the ‘Dalai clique’ whose ultimate goal was to separate Tibet from China with supporters from hostile Western forces.⁶⁴¹ Jiang Zemin set a tone that regarded the disputes between Beijing and the ‘Dalai clique’ as a war of defence of the motherland and as an opposition of separatism for all Chinese people, including Tibetans. This was a clear signal illustrating that Beijing adopted a hardened attitude towards any actor who could potentially threaten its rule.

With regard to other measures to tighten control, Beijing specifically targeted traditional Tibetan figures. The ‘upper-class people’ were now redefined as those who sincerely supported the CCP. Those who were deemed as separatists would endure severe repression.

Finally, Buddhism, which had strong ties with the Dalai Lama and a deep impact on Tibetan daily life, became another sensitive arena that Beijing carefully monitored. Having paid a large subsidy to restore Tibetan Buddhism in various dimensions, the Party sought to win the hearts and minds of Tibetan Buddhist disciples. In the meantime, the CCP drew regulations for monasteries and institutions. As nationalism was regarded as advantageous to legitimatise the CCP’s rule, a patriotic education campaign that emphasised inclusiveness of the Chinese nation for all citizens of the PRC, regardless of their ethnicity, was promoted in the 1990s.⁶⁴² In its association, religion is addressed to accept patriotic education by the name of promoting ‘co-adaptation of religion and Socialism’. The key notion was deemed that disciples must prioritise the status of the Party-state and support the integrity of the state and

⁶⁴¹ Song, *Dangdai Zhongguo De Xizang Zhengce Yu Zhili*, 305.

⁶⁴² Zhao, *A Nation-state by Construction*, 238.

ethnic unity rather than religious belief.⁶⁴³

It is apparent that the CCP turned to adopt a tougher standpoint to Tibet to enhance its national security, very different from its position a decade ago. Since then, the CCP retained its tough attitude to policy-making. However, Tibetan discontent did not dissolve. Rather, as the next chapter will present, their emotional fear and resentment turned into further distrust and resistance to Beijing

Conclusion

Thus far, this chapter presents a transition of Sino-Tibetan relations from a low- to a high-uncertainty societal dilemma. It explores the Chinese government's moderate means of implementing modernising policies in terms of reform and opening up relations with other countries. Beijing's benign gesture was considered with its direct contact with the Dalai Lama and exiled Tibetans. The chapter then assesses the tension involving the fact-finding teams and the Sino-Tibetan bilateral negotiations as well as domestic and international events regarding the situation of Tibet.

The regulatory factors played significant roles to the point where the Sino-Tibetan bilateral relationship was stagnant. This chapter provides a detailed review of events leading to this situation. It revisits the dynamics of Tibetan dissatisfaction towards Chinese modernisation and the latter's tougher position in Beijing-Dharamsala interactions. The raised external concern regarding Tibet explains China's insecure perception and resulting firmness in its approach. These domestic and external pressures forced Beijing's adaptation from its tolerant attitude to a tough stance since

⁶⁴³ Zhu, *Xizang Qianyan Wenti Yanjiu*, 330-363.

the mid-1990s. The notion of ‘grasping with both hands,’ which emphasised political stability and economic growth, gradually dominated Beijing’s mode of decision-making and was developed in future years.

Whereas the potential to reconcile existed, the Sino-Tibetan relationship was enmeshed in a downward spiral created by unilateral modernisation, negotiating standoffs, and international critics. Both actors were trapped in confrontation. In the next chapter, Sino-Tibetan conflicts and China’s commitments will be discussed.

Chapter Six

Integration of Tibet and Sino-Tibetan Societal Conflict, 2000-2012

Introduction

This chapter examines the Sino-Tibetan relationship from 2000 to 2012 against a background of Chinese conspicuous growth not only domestically but also in its global socio-politico-economic areas.⁶⁴⁴ It argues that Sino-Tibetan bilateral interactions in this period featured as a high-uncertainty societal dilemma, assessed through the PRC commitments to Tibet and the Tibetan response as well as rounds of Beijing-Dharamsala negotiations.

The notion of high-uncertainty societal dilemma stresses uncertainty concerning the actor's intent on conflict within the classic security dilemma, under which actions aimed at maintaining and strengthening security and societal identity by the first group, would engender reactions from others thus resulting in further insecurity. Within these circumstances, involved actors are very sensitive to their opponents' intentions and behaviour. Most likely, the actors would manipulate and exaggerate the opposites' abilities. In turn, the interaction intensifies the tension.

Applying this notion in this chapter, the Sino-Tibetan relationship is illustrative in its own right. With its strengthened state capacity, Chinese authorities were able to

⁶⁴⁴ Bijan Zheng, "China's Peaceful Rise to Great-power Status," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 5 (September-October 2005): 18-24; Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia," 64-99.

employee various means to promote economic development for national integration in Tibet; the radical policy continued even after the riot of 2008.

Beijing's intention is clearly revealed in the governmental publication of three White Papers for ethnic minorities from 1999 to 2009.⁶⁴⁵ Indeed, some projects contained non-political and well-being-improvement purposes, and this research recognises this venture. However, focus is on the generated conflictual dynamics to which Tibetans were uncertain about Beijing's policies. In the meantime, Beijing's tougher degree of control on Tibetan society further reinforces this impression.

Domestic and international regulatory factors served as a negative catalyst for the Sino-Tibetan relationship during this period. Major state-induced projects aimed at pushing national integration through economic development resulted in Tibetan uncertainty and fear towards China's launched campaigns. This can be seen by Dharamsala's repeated calls for moderating societal intrusion in the rounds of negotiations, and Phuntsog Wangyal, a significant Tibetan figure,⁶⁴⁶ who expressed heavy concerns about Tibet and Tibetans with four letters to the President Hu Jintao between 2004 and 2008.⁶⁴⁷ Beijing refuted these demands by asserting the legitimacy, benefits, and correctness of its policies, however, the policies did not contribute to a formation of solid Chinese national identity.

⁶⁴⁵ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *Zhongguo De Shaoshu Minzu Zhengce Ji Qi Shijian*; *Zhongguo De Minzu Quyu Zizhi* (Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China), February 28, 2005; *Zhongguo De Minzu Zhengce Yu Ge Minzu Gongtong Fanrong Fazhan* (China's Ethnic Policy and Common Prosperity and Development of All Ethnic Groups), September 27, 2009.

⁶⁴⁶ Melvyn Goldstein and Sherap Dawei, *A Tibetan Revolutionary*.

⁶⁴⁷ Bapa Phuntsok Wangyal, *Pingdeng Tuanjie Lu Manman: Dui Woguo Minzu Guanxi de Fansi* (New Century Media & Consulting Co. Ltd, 2014), 369-403.

Conversely, Tibetan societal identity insecurity was exacerbated and ethno-nationalist sentiments were ignited during the process. Tensions and sporadic demonstrations took place, including a large scale anti-government protest on the 14th of March 2008. Since 2009 to the present day, self-immolations of monks, nuns and Tibetan youth can be witnessed on the street. These protests were not only constituted as isolated events, but also gave birth to agency of ethnic mobilisation against the ruling authority. The government's subsequent repressions and political campaigns only further complicated the tension and spiral.

While the international community increased concerns for Tibet, it appeared to only maintain Beijing's insistence on a tough standpoint. Given the comprehensive consideration of relations with China, most major powers soon chose silence and limited criticism of human rights but their occasional interventions in different forms still posed concerns for the Chinese authority.

To narrate the Sino-Tibetan societal dilemma, the discussion is divided into six parts. It begins with a discussion concerning China's commitment to strengthen economic development and political control in Tibet since 2000. Following this, this chapter analyses the Beijing-Dharamsala negotiation of nine rounds from resumption to stalemate, suggesting core divisions. This chapter then considers the Tibetan backlash to Chinese policies, in which the 14th March Incident of 2008 and self-immolations after 2009 are examined. The fifth section examines the external concerns regarding Tibet relating to the PRC's international relations. This chapter concludes by suggesting that the cyclic demonstration-repression indicates the failure of China's commitment and implies that it must adapt its policy to be more inclusive in building a national identity and peacefully resolve the Tibetan issue.

Grasping with Both Hands: Beijing's Radical Integration of Tibet

With its increased state capacity, the Chinese authority became more confident and adopted an active attitude towards long-term issues, to which the stability of Tibet constituted a vital concern.⁶⁴⁸ Under this context, “Grasping with both hands,” centered upon economic development and social control, was launched and soon its overreaching influence intruded Tibetan societal life.

The ideology behind this policy was to repress anti-governmental activities and eliminate roots and dynamics of Tibetan resistance. The CCP's leadership at the Fourth Tibet Work Forum in 2001 highlighted the inseparability between Tibet and China. The Chinese authorities stated, the ‘battle with the Dalai Clique and its foreign anti-China supporters’ was essentially a continuation of ‘anti-Imperialism and anti-Hegemonism as well as anti-Separatism; it is a ‘struggle for protecting the state’s integrity’.⁶⁴⁹ This section presents China’s commitments to such thinking through economic and political approaches that could be combined

Economic Commitment

It should be noted that China’s policies contained multiple non-political tasks but their association and implication for national security were implicit. Hu Jintao, in his speech to the Tibetan representative team of the National People’s Congress on the 5th of March 2001, stated that boosting rapid development was extremely important for Tibet, not only for the purpose of enhancing the standard of living of all ethnicities,

⁶⁴⁸ David Goodman, “The Campaign to ‘Open Up the West’: National, Provincial-level and Local Perspectives,” *The China Quarterly* 178 (2004): 317-334.

⁶⁴⁹ Zhu, *Xizang Qianyan Wenti Yanjiu*, 189-191.

but also because it would be conducive to “strengthening ethnic unity and remaining territorial integrity of the motherland.”⁶⁵⁰ In his speech at the Fourth Tibet Work Forum on the 25th of June 2001, the President, Jiang Zemin, also related rapid economic development to nation-building. He stated, “Only by accelerating development of Tibet can we consolidate unity of all [Chinese] ethnicities, and safeguard frontier and border defense.”⁶⁵¹ The White Paper of 2009 *China's Ethnic Policy and Common Prosperity and Development for All Ethnic Groups* also stressed that common prosperity cannot be achieved without ethnic unity and integrity of the state.⁶⁵² These statements expressed a clear signal that Beijing aimed to promote Tibetan loyalty towards the state through economic commitment.

The Chinese authorities worshipped the effects of modernisation. As the studies of Deutsch and Birch illustrate,⁶⁵³ modernisation always accompanies the creation of a unifying market, urbanisation, and transformation of patterns of social communication. Individuals in this process would be brought into a group membership and their new identity thereby forged. The construction of public infrastructure was expected to facilitate this process.

At this time, the Chinese government proposed projects affiliated with Western Development (xibu da kaifa 西部大开发), which was couched within terms of the reduction of regional imbalances between the eastern provinces and the west. A main instruction was to adapt the national industrial structure and direct economic capital

⁶⁵⁰ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Wei Yuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 543.

⁶⁵¹ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Wei Yuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 552.

⁶⁵² The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *Zhongguo De Minzu Zhengce Yu Ge Minzu Gongtong Fanrong Fazhan*.

⁶⁵³ Deutsch, “The Growth of Nations”; Birch, *Nationalism and National Integration*.

from the east to the west. For Tibet, the Central government subsidies were 92% of total costs on average per year, between 1994 and 2000.⁶⁵⁴ By 2000, the gross domestic product (GDP) of TAR expanded 2.27 times compared to 1993, with an annual growth rate of 12.4% on average per year.⁶⁵⁵ Even though Tibet was still one of the economically disadvantaged areas at the time, Beijing believed that these figures justified its policies. The Central government continued its intensive modernisation in Tibet along with massive fiscal subsidies and assisting projects.⁶⁵⁶

The Fourth Tibet Work Forum instigated an overwhelming degree of investment in Tibet. During the period of the Tenth Five-year Plan (2001-2005), the central government provided 37.9 billion yuan as fiscal subsidy and 32.2-billion-yuan investment and assisted projects in Tibet.⁶⁵⁷ In the Eleventh Five-year Plan (2006-2010), the invested assisting projects jumped to more than 137 billion yuan.⁶⁵⁸ These subsidised and invested projects covered various aspects. Amongst them, infrastructural construction and transportation occupied 30.8% of all budgets. Investments in agriculture, husbandry, forestry and water construction took 25.97%, energy construction 13.76% and post and telecommunication 11.29%.⁶⁵⁹ Moreover, Tibet was exempt from taxation; including central and shared tax. As a result, Tibet was provided with unprecedented support in economic resources, more than ever before.

⁶⁵⁴ Jin, *Xizang*, 95.

⁶⁵⁵ Sung, *Dangdai Zhongguo De Xizang Zhengce Yu Zhili*, 315-316.

⁶⁵⁶ Andrew Martin Fischer, "Subsidizing Tibet: An Interprovincial Comparison of Western China Up to the End of the Hu – Wen Administration," *The China Quarterly* 221 (2015): 73-99.

⁶⁵⁷ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 553.

⁶⁵⁸ Tibet Daily, "Zizhiqiu Zhao Kai Jingji Xingshi Tongbao Dianshi Dianhua Huiyi (Conference on Economic Situation Launched in Tibet Autonomous Region)," *Tibet Daily*, July 27, 2010.

⁶⁵⁹ Jin, *Xizang*, 311-319.

In addition, state-induced projects from the ‘brotherhood’ provinces and cities, as well as state-owned enterprises (instructed to be responsible for the development of assigned units) were brought into discussion. These brotherhood units provided funding and regularly sent technical specialists and cadres to assist Tibet. By 2010, more than 4741 experts and cadres were channeled to Tibet across urban and remote areas, helping local constructions. In the educational sector, these partner provinces and cities were also responsible for providing training courses and relevant infrastructure. They were also instructed to provide additional positions for students to study in these provinces and cities; programmes ranging from primary school and college.⁶⁶⁰ Consequently, communication between people in Tibet and these brotherhood provinces were strengthened and extended. It helped to forge ‘we-group’ awareness to some extent, but, as will be discussed, tension was rife.

Moreover, these modernisation strategies created a comprehensive and complex traffic communications network between Tibet and Chinese provinces. Extensive traffic systems were created in remote areas and the growth of networks provided the state with a higher level of capacity to intervene in economic, social, and cultural aspects. To this extent, the state can effectively impose its will. Instructed by a policy termed as Prosper Frontier and Enrich Residents (xing bian fu min 兴边富民),⁶⁶¹ the local government, throughout different levels, border areas in particular, instilled massive resources for building roads, bridges, enhancing energy, and extending telecommunication.

These public infrastructures substantially strengthened communications within

⁶⁶⁰ Xinyuan He, *Xizang Kuayueshi Fazhan Yu Changzhijiuan De Qianyan Wenti Yanjiu* (Beijing: China Tibetology Press, 2014), 220-229.

⁶⁶¹ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 557.

previously isolated villages, and channeled them to the cities and vice versa. The expansion of infrastructure increased dynamics of human and capital throughout Tibet, and in turn, motivated Tibetans to leave inland provinces. The state expected that national integration would be achieved through daily practices and activities.

One of the most influential infrastructure projects launched by the Fourth Tibet Work Forum and Western Development was the proposal of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway.⁶⁶² Previously, similar plans concerning building a railway connecting Tibet and other provinces were discussed among Communist senior officials since the 1950s, but given the technical difficulties and cost, the project was able to be started in 2000.⁶⁶³ The CCP's leadership was keen on its construction. Jiang Zemin stated in November 2000, 'Building this railway is necessary in terms of political and military aspects. It will be advantageous for developing tourism and improving communication between Tibet and the inland provinces. Taking factors of economic development, political stability, national defense, consolidation of ethnic unity, and anti-separatism into account, we must build the Qinghai-Tibet Railway'.⁶⁶⁴ Since its construction, its impact has been overwhelming.

Connections between Tibet and neighboring provinces improved. A direct access from the heart of Tibet to Beijing was also created. For geopolitical strategy, the railway itself not only improved the state capacity for territorial control, but also ensured a more effective military projection of the People's Liberation Army to the border areas.⁶⁶⁵ Chinese products from inland provinces were now available in Tibet at a

⁶⁶² Abanti Bhattacharya, "Strategic Implications of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway, *IDS Comment*, July 7, 2006.

⁶⁶³ Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui Dangshi Yanjiushi, 2011: 188; 212-214.

⁶⁶⁴ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 548-549.

⁶⁶⁵ Jung-sung Hsu, "The Qinghai-Tibet Railway's Impact on Tibet," *Bi-monthly Journal on Mongolian*

lower price, and likewise, Tibetan products were available in other regions. In general, Tibet is completely merged into the Chinese domestic market.⁶⁶⁶ In addition, the railway brought about great mobility between Tibetans and people from other regions. By comparing the figures of the National Census in 2000 and 2010, it is revealed that people moving out of Tibet to Qinghai expanded by 6.68, to Gansu by 4.86 and to Shaanxi by 9.22.⁶⁶⁷ Beijing was satisfied with this phenomenon and claimed that it improved inter-ethnic communication. However, migration flows in such a short time also resulted in inter-ethnic tension.

Political Commitment

In addition to policies initiated in economic terms, there were other policies and political campaigns that pursued regulation and restriction. Importantly, political ideology was prioritised. A higher degree of control was also implemented, initially from the local CCP's cadres.

The Fourth Tibet Work Forum explicitly announced that all Communist Party members, cadres and officials in particular, must study and demonstrate firm support to the Marxist views of motherland, ethnicity, religion and culture; and atheism and Materialism were called in practice. These were known as the education of 'Four Marxist Views and Two -Isms (si guan er lun 四观二论)'.⁶⁶⁸ This education was not only taken as a measure for career promotion, but also as a measure overseeing private life. Regardless of original ethnic backgrounds, these official employees were

and Tibetan Current Situation 14, no. 5 (2005): 11.

⁶⁶⁶ Tibet Daily, "Qing Zhang Tielu Gei Xizang Dailai Le Sheme (What Have the Qinghai-Tibet Railway Brought to Tibet)," *Tibet Daily*, August 26, 2015.

⁶⁶⁷ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 554.

⁶⁶⁸ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 549.

regulated to avoid association with any religious events, including ritual ceremonies, except for business work purposes.⁶⁶⁹ Considering that Buddhism occupied influential sectors in Tibetan customs and daily life, such regulation incurred a negative reaction.

Campaigns on patriotic education and the ‘Three Inseparables’, noting that Han Chinese, Tibetans, and all ethnic minorities were inseparable, were also imposed, initially targeting Party members in Tibet. The Work Forum stated, through these crusades, that members were expected to ‘identify the reactionary essence of the Dalai Clique and realise the importance of ethnic unity’ and ‘safeguard motherland’s integrity’.⁶⁷⁰ In September 2001, the new CCP Secretary of the TAR Guo Jinlong, declared a slogan ‘Drawing Two Lines and Reaching One Responsibility (huaqing liangge jiexian, jin dao yige zeren 划清两个界线，尽到一个责任)’. Its main notion was that all cadres, differing from ordinary citizens, must not have any religious belief and that is their duty to create a stronger united multi-ethnic state. Clearly, it was a statement forbidding religious practice.⁶⁷¹ After the outbreak of the 14th of March Incident in 2008, it was reported that Beijing adopted stricter measures.⁶⁷² Since April 2008, achievements regarding anti-separatism also became a key indicator for promotion.⁶⁷³

The Chinese authorities tightened control in monasteries and temples by preventing religious communities forming ties with anti-government movements. After the

⁶⁶⁹ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 544-545

⁶⁷⁰ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 558-559.

⁶⁷¹ Ibid, 956-958.

⁶⁷² Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 586-587.

⁶⁷³ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Guojia Minzu Shiwu Weiyuanhui, *Minzu Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian 2003-2009* (CCCPC Party Literature Press, 2010), 279.

dispute between Beijing and Dharamsala over the search for the 11th Panchen Lama in 1995,⁶⁷⁴ the Party carried out larger-scale purges to impose its authority. In this way, most abbots of monasteries and temples had to be filtered and approved by the government. Likewise, campaigns including the education of ‘Four Marxist Views and Two -Isms’ and patriotic education were overwhelmingly imposed within monasteries and temples. Namely, the purpose of these crusades was to create a legal basis for religious activities.⁶⁷⁵ In reality, the state attempted to eradicate roots of interference with politics and prioritised the Central authority from the beginning.⁶⁷⁶

After the 14th March Incident, Beijing designated measures monitoring religious activities. The Party established resident cadres in most monasteries and temples. For these cadres, the tasks included collecting personal data of monks and nuns and they were responsible for delivering instructions from the party and reporting on matters to the Party. Also, they had to monitor the families of monastical members, spying on them to prevent any potential anti-separatist movements.⁶⁷⁷ To foster patriotic awareness, the government requested that images of Party leaders and the national flag must be hung in temples and monasteries. As a result, during my field-survey in Lhasa, it was common to see flags flying on the roof of monasteries.

The promulgation of Regulations on Religious Affairs by the State Council in 2004 revealed a commitment that the state institutionalised regulation of religious activities.⁶⁷⁸ This law is applied to all religions in China; Tibetan Buddhism is included. According to Article 27, the law explicitly addresses that non-recognition of

⁶⁷⁴ Zhu, *Xizang Qianyan Wenti Yanjiu*, 364-370.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid, 372.

⁶⁷⁶ Zhao, *A Nation-state by Construction*, 236-237.

⁶⁷⁷ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui, *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 599.

⁶⁷⁸ The State Council. *Zongjiao Shiwu Tiaoli (Regulations on Religious Affairs)*, November 30, 2004.

Rinpoche (Tibetan living Buddha) as the religion's internal affair. It belongs to the public and must be under government monitoring. In 2007, the State Administration for Religious Affairs issued 'Reincarnation Law'. This step represented the authority's further institutionalisation of managing Tibetan Buddhism, as it required that all 'living Buddhas' wishing to reincarnate, must support the idea of 'national unity and ethnic consolidation' and acquire prior governmental approval.⁶⁷⁹ Understanding the profound influence that the Dalai Lama and other exiled Buddhist leaders have, the CCP regards the Buddhist reincarnation system as a contested arena and aims to completely prevent external intervention, concerning Dharamsala in particular, through the establishment of these laws.

Finally, there were innovated policies and campaigns accelerating economic development and political control, as well as anti-separatist campaigns during this period. Beijing sought means to gain the loyalty of Tibetans through improving material conditions, and in the meantime, fight to stifle potential opponents. One such effort was a crusade instructed by the Fourth Tibet Work Forum which was termed as 'Strengthening Base and Maintaining Root (qiang ji gu ben 强基固本)'.

The project of 'Strengthening Base and Maintaining Root' was carried out through corporation with many existing Tibet-assisting projects. Initially, Beijing infused budgets for local administration construction. The detailed programmes included provision of more local public infrastructure-building and raising of allowances for Party cadres and state employees. Meanwhile, the government redesignated its assisting projects in terms of human resource allocation. Accordingly, many aid-Tibet

⁶⁷⁹ State Administration for Religious Affairs of PRC. *Zangchuan Fojiao Huofo Zhuanshi Guanli Banfa* (Reincarnation Law), July 18, 2007.

cadres, technical experts and servants from the ‘partner’ units would be relegated to county level, while previously, they were designated to serve at provincial level.⁶⁸⁰

Beijing also endeavoured to disseminate its messages in-depth. Since 2000, the government invested in a project by which it aimed to enhance radio and television broadcasting in Tibet and Xinjiang, officially termed as the ‘Tibet-Xinjiang Project (Xixin gongcheng 西新工程)’.⁶⁸¹ Again, this project was instigated with the aim of reducing the information gap between urban and rural areas. But its political implication to nation-building was clear. As Jiang Zemin instructed, the task of this project was to transmit the ‘voice of the party and the state’ to millions of households; moreover, it would transmit ‘China’s voice to the world and suppressed foreign hostile force and ethno-splittism.’⁶⁸² Since 2002, the government officially commenced this project; in 2014, radio could reach 93% of the TAR, and television had also reached 94.51%.⁶⁸³ With the expansion of these institutions and infrastructures, Beijing could, in a broader and deeper manner, dominate local society and prevent residents from receiving external radio waves.

Through all these factors, Beijing carried out intensive and extensive policies and campaigns through economic and political means. These modernisation projects attained evident economic developments and progress, conspicuously improving living conditions for local people. These established infrastructure and frequent inter-communications with the people also projected an effective integration of Tibet

⁶⁸⁰ Song, *Dangdai Zhongguo De Xizang Zhengce Yu Zhili*, 315.

⁶⁸¹ Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xizang Zizhiqiu Weiyuanhui, *Xizang Gongzuo Wenxian Xuanbian*, 898.

⁶⁸² Boshu Zhang, *Zhongguo Minzhu Zhuanxing Zhong De Xizang Wenti* (Hong Kong: Suyuan Press, 2014), 197.

⁶⁸³ Zhongguo Minzu Tongji Nianjian Bianji Weiyuanhui 2013, *Zhongguo Minzu Tongji Nianjian* 2013, 476-477; 481.

into the state, pursuing the emergence of a solid Chinese national identity. More significantly, tight controls were imposed more broadly to minimise and eliminate anti-government opponents. Such an aggressive line of thinking reflected its direct contacts with Dharamsala. The following section discusses this in detail.

Stalemate of Beijing-Dharamsala Negotiations

The Chinese authorities resumed its direct negotiation with Dharamsala in 2002. Previously, due to disputes over recognition of the 11th Panchen Lama's reincarnation in the mid-1990s, their informal contact stalled; before that, formal dialogue had been suspended since the late 1980s. It is believed that the resumption was in line with the respective stance of both sides. For Dharamsala, its pursuit for talks was illustrative as this was also a primary goal for internationalising the Tibetan issue. Some observers associated the resumption to regular concerns and calls from the West, who played a vital role. Beijing was motivated to restart the talks because it needed to consider the powerful influence of the Dalai Lama, the TGIE, and Tibetan diaspora ties when forging its policies. These factors related to Chinese domestic and international politics, contributing to nine rounds of face-to-face meetings in the post-2000 era.⁶⁸⁴

Initially, many international observers regarded the negotiations as positive. Prior to the initial meeting, Gyalo Thondup, the elder brother of the Dalai Lama was allowed to return to Tibet. He visited his hometown in Qinghai province (Amdo) where he and the Dalai Lama lived in the 1950s, and other places including Lhasa and Shigatse,

⁶⁸⁴ Rongsong Xu, "Zhongzang Tanpan Zhi Sikao Yu Yanpan (Analysis of Sino-Tibetan Negotiation)," *Bi-monthly Journal on Mongolian and Tibetan Current Situation* 12, no. 5 (2003): 2-6.

TAR.⁶⁸⁵ Upon his return to India, Gyalo Thondup expressed optimism over the "great changes in the outlook of the Chinese Government," speaking in a positive tone about "great changes inside Tibet including many good roads and significant development in the cities."⁶⁸⁶ Following his trip, a four-member delegation, headed by the Special Envoy Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen, also visited Lhasa, Shigatse, Chengdu, Shanghai and Beijing, marking the first formal contact between Chinese and the Dalai Lama's representatives in September 2002. In his comment on this talk, Lodi stated that there were two main aims for this trip. The first was to reestablish direct contact with Beijing and create a good atmosphere. Secondly, they wanted to elucidate and clarify the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach. He was personally satisfied with the outcome.⁶⁸⁷

Subsequently, a yearly meeting seemed to be almost institutionalised. The second, third and fourth rounds of negotiation were launched respectively in May 2003, September 2004 and on June 30-1 July 2005.⁶⁸⁸ Upon the fifth negotiation in Guilin City in February 2006, Samdhong Rinpoche, the former Prime Minister of the TGIE summarised these experiences of talks, praising that "The first round was more [about] tourism, during the second there were some talks; the third one there was an elaborate exchange of views; during the fourth in Bern we were able to respond to all their suspicions and doubts and during the fifth we had the feedback on our explanation. It is not something static, it is moving."⁶⁸⁹

⁶⁸⁵ Thurston and Thondup, *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*, 289-292.

⁶⁸⁶ Radio Free Asia, "Dalai Lama's Brother Urges China to Lift Tibet Curbs, Open Talks," *Radio Free Asia*, August 9, 2002.

⁶⁸⁷ Arpi, *Dharamsala and Beijing*, 180.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 181-182.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 200.

However, the result may counter this optimism. These nine rounds of contact had not yet reached any concrete breakthrough. Little evidence enclosed that the Chinese authority compromised its tough policies.

In the sixth round of negotiation in July 2007, Lodi Gyari admitted that the bilateral talks reached a critical stage.⁶⁹⁰ After the outbreak of the 14th March Incident, the negotiation became a standoff. In November 2008, the Vice Minister of the United Front Work Department, Zhu Weiqun, at a press conference, said that “anything but independence can be discussed” was a distortion of Deng Xiaoping’s talks with Gyalo Thondup. What Deng mentioned was that only when Dharamsala accepts that ‘Tibet is part of China’ would the Central government be willing to talk about the ‘future arrangement for the Dalai Lama and the exiled Tibetans.’⁶⁹¹ Such a statement was instantly refuted by Gyalo Thondup in Dharmasala on the 19th of November, and he insisted that Deng never expressed such a statement to him.⁶⁹² In this way, Deng’s original notion may have become an unsettled question and an important signal that showed resumed negotiations reached a deadlock. In spite of the regularity of their meetings, it seemed that the talks were saddled with certain irreconcilable preconditions, conditions, and contradictions.

During the negotiation meetings, Beijing was concerned with proposals from Dharamsala that centralised on ‘unification of all Tibetan regions’ and ‘meaningful autonomy’ into the agenda. The Dharamsala delegation insisted that the TGIE only

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid, 204.

⁶⁹¹ China Review News, “Tongzhanbu Jiu Yu Dalai Daibiao Shangtan Qingkuang Fabuhui (Press of Negotiation between United Front Work Department and the Dalai Lama's Envoys),” *China Review News*, November 10, 2008.

⁶⁹² Phayul, “Gyalo Thondup Reconfirms Deng Xiaoping’s Offer on Tibet Talks,” *Phayul*, November 19, 2008.

sought the preservation of Tibetan societal identity and ethnic characteristics in terms of culture and religion. Thereby, the ‘unification of all Tibetan regions’ or establishing a unitary Tibetan autonomous region responsible for Tibetan societal affairs within the PRC’s state framework, was an approach to achieve ‘meaningful autonomy,’ and should produce a win-win result. Dharamsala contended that this was an appropriate compromise as the proposals accepted China’s sovereignty and its notion was also in line with the PRC’s Constitution and Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law; the proposals also aligned with the Dalai Lama’s Middle Way Approach.⁶⁹³

Dharamsala’s ideas were echoed by some CCP cadres. Phuntsog Wangyal, the founder of the Tibetan Communist Party who played an important role in the liberation of Tibet, wrote four letters to President Hu Jintao between 2004 and 2008, expressing a similar standpoint. He suggested that the unification of all Tibetan regions does not violate the spirit of Regional Ethnic Autonomy. It is argued that by forming a coherent standpoint to ethnic minority, an increase in inter-societal harmony and the state’s stability and national integration would be the result.⁶⁹⁴ Phuntsog Wangyal called for Beijing’s permission to return the Dalai Lama, noting that his spiritual influence on Tibetans will be helpful to local governance.⁶⁹⁵ Echoing Wang Lixiong’s point; ‘Dalai Lama is the key to the Tibet question’, Phuntsog Wangyal asserted that reaching a peaceful solution must take the Dalai Lama into account.⁶⁹⁶

Beijing denied these demands, insisting on its correctness of approach over Tibet. Moreover, through explicitly dismissing the existence of the Tibetan issue, the CCP

⁶⁹³ Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 100-105.

⁶⁹⁴ Wangyal, *Pingdeng Tuanjie Lu Manman*, 63-75; 375-382.

⁶⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 381

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 383.

turned to limiting the scope of talks onto the Dalai Lama's personal status under the preconditions that he had to 'abandon the separatist activities' and announce that 'Tibet and Taiwan are inalienable part of China's territory'.⁶⁹⁷ Beijing's condition was in turn unacceptable for Dharamsala.

Given these phenomena, Beijing's uncompromising stance is evident. On the 26th of August 2005, the politburo of the CCP issued that the Three Insistences — the Party's leadership, socialist system, and Regional Ethnic Autonomy — were fundamental principles dominating policies over Tibet, including negotiations with Dharamsala.⁶⁹⁸ Reading between the lines, the implication from this statement are not that these three aspects guide Tibetan policy but that the 'the Party's leadership' instructs the policy prior to others. Following this logic, it should be illustrative that Beijing would not grant any flexibility facing Dharamsala's demands.

In addition to direct negotiations, Beijing employed the strategy of megaphone diplomacy towards Dharamsala through publishing a series of White Papers. The international community should be targeted as well. These White Papers served as demonstrations and propaganda of the CCP's achievements, and were used to justify the Party's superiority over the old regime in Tibet. The White Paper of Modernisation of 2001 narrated various progresses in Tibetan society, which were brought about by the PRC's modernisation projects.⁶⁹⁹ In 2004, another White Paper, titled *Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet* suggested that Chinese authority empowered Tibetans with autonomous rights in political, economic, cultural, and religious areas. This White

⁶⁹⁷ Taiwan was not engaged in the preconditions in the Sino-Tibetan negotiation until the Dalai Lama's visit of Taiwan in 1997.

⁶⁹⁸ Xizang Tongshi Bianweihui. *Xizang Tongshi Dangdai Juan*, 542-543.

⁶⁹⁹ *Xizang De Xiandaihua Fazhan Daolu* (Modernisation Development in Tibet), November 8, 2001

Paper also rejected the Dalai Lama's call for 'one country, two systems' by saying that Tibet has been under a historical context different from Hong Kong and Macao, and claimed that it enjoyed a system of autonomy therefore any changes is a violation of Constitution.⁷⁰⁰ The White Papers *Peaceful Liberation of Tibet by 60th Anniversary of 2011*⁷⁰¹ and *Successful Practice of Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet* issued in 2015⁷⁰² also attributed to current progress in Tibet in the CCP's systems and plans. All these points clearly demonstrated Beijing's firm standpoint that the authorities had no willingness to adjust the status quo.

In 2008, the TGIE presented the *Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People*, as the latest proposal to Beijing. Its delegations stated that this submission was a response to the inquiry from Du Qinglin, the Minister of United Front Work Department, with regard to the resolution of the Tibetan issue. This Memorandum again marked an important and concrete modification for Dharamsala, since it was designed within the Constitution of the PRC and Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy. Alternatively, it requested Beijing to conceive a single administration for all Tibetans concerning their unique ethnic characteristic. As the Memorandum stated:

*Tibetans can benefit greatly from the rapid economic and scientific development the country is experiencing. While wanting to actively participate and contribute to this development, we want to ensure that this happens without the people losing their Tibetan identity, culture and core values.*⁷⁰³

⁷⁰⁰ Xizang De Minzu Quyu Zizhi (Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet), May 23, 2004.

⁷⁰¹ *Sixty Years since Peaceful Liberation of Tibet*. July 2011.

⁷⁰² *Successful Practice of Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet*, September 06, 2015.

⁷⁰³ Central Tibetan Administration, *Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People* (2008).

However, claiming that the Memorandum still violated the Three Insistences and the Chinese Constitution, Beijing dismissed this proposal once more. At a press conference, the Vice Minister of the United Front Work Department, Zhu Weiqun outlined that the fundamental intention of the Memorandum was a separatist plot. He stated:

*These individual articles about 'meaningful autonomy' dichotomise the united leadership of Central government and Regional Ethnic Autonomy. It [Memorandum] intends to deny, restrict and weaken the central power...Despite its decoration with wordings of Constitution and Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy, its essence was still 'greater Tibet' and 'high autonomy' which we have recognized as 'semi-independence,' 'independence in disguise' and 'Tibet independence'.*⁷⁰⁴

A question regarding Beijing's insistence should be raised. Compromises and modifications have been seen in Dharamsala's position. Demands and contents of proposals evolved with time and aspirations to find a workable approach to preserve Tibetan society remained.⁷⁰⁵ However, Beijing labelled these distinct suggestions as a package of 'semi-independence' and 'independence in disguise.' Reinterpreting Deng

⁷⁰⁴ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *Zhongyang Tongzhanbu Changwu Fubuzhang Zhuweiqun Zai Guowuyuan Xinwenban Xinwen Fabuhui Shang Tanhua* (Vice Minister of United Front Work Department Zhu Weiqun's Talk at the State Council). November 10, 2008.

⁷⁰⁵ Topgyal, "Identity Insecurity and the Tibetan Resistance against China," 523.

Xiaoping's statement that "anything but independence can be discussed" as "nothing involving the independence issue could be discussed," Smith argued that Beijing would reject Dharamsala as long as the latter's demands considered such implication. In his view, China only aimed to manipulate Tibetan identity to fuse with Chinese national identity. Potential threats to this process would fuel Beijing's apprehension.⁷⁰⁶ Therefore, Beijing adopted a self-defined attitude and was sensitive to any demands that contained potential challenge to its rule and national integration in Tibet.⁷⁰⁷ The Chinese authorities stuck to a firm standpoint while the Envoys of Dharamsala elucidated their standpoint that they would not challenge PRC's sovereignty.

With the retirement of the Dalai Lama from his political role in the TGIE and the shift of Chinese power to the Xi Jinping Administration, no further rounds of dialogue have taken place since the ninth round of negotiation in February 2010. When talks resume, they will deserve attention. Until now, the hardline approach still constitutes the CCP's policy-making.

Backlash, Conflicts, and Resulting Factors

The imposition of tougher control along with the policy of "grasping with both hands" provoked Tibetan grievances. This section continues an examination of Tibetan demonstrations with the 14th March as the primary focus along with subsequent self-immolations.

⁷⁰⁶ Warren Smith, "Sino-Tibetan Dialogue: Talks or Tourism?," Contemporary Tibetology Seminar, presented at Mongolian & Tibetan Affairs Commission (November 22, 2003) , 55-57 .

⁷⁰⁷ Central Tibetan Administration, *Note on the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People* (2010).

Initially, occasional protests emerged as isolated cases. With time, they turned out to be widespread demonstrations across all Tibetan regions beyond the TAR.

The eruption of the 14th March Incident in 2008 that took place before the opening of the Beijing Olympic Games marked the largest scale of Tibetan riot since 1959. The Incident soon created waves of anti-governmental protests,⁷⁰⁸ pervading the entire Tibetan regions in other provinces.⁷⁰⁹ Mass demonstrations commenced from the 10th of March 2008. Due to the initial crackdown and subsequent arrests by the police, it gave rise to further protests. Here, the spiral ‘ping-pong’ responses between protesters and the authority were discernible, which then escalated to a higher degree of conflicts.⁷¹⁰

On 14th March, angry protesters burned stores and attacked governmental buildings in central Lhasa. Meanwhile, disturbance also occurred in other pan-Tibetan regions. In its response, Beijing immediately blockaded local telecommunication, employed military crackdown, and arrested demonstrators. Its harsh reaction has yet to receive international concern and condemnation.⁷¹¹ The Incident itself shadowed the image of a rising China, but on the other side, it also provoked fervent nationalist sentiment in and outside China to counter pro-Tibetan opinions until the holding of the Olympics Games.⁷¹² Afterwards, since 2009, occasional yet endless wave of Tibetan self-immolations to express ethnic discontents emerged and spread across all Tibetan areas.⁷¹³

⁷⁰⁸ Barnett, “The Tibet Protests of Spring 2008.

⁷⁰⁹ Tsering Woesser, *Shunian Xueshi Hou: 2008 Xizang Shijian Dashiji* (Taipei: Yunchen Wenhua, 2009).

⁷¹⁰ Topgyall, *China and Tibet*, 158-160

⁷¹¹ Ibid.

⁷¹² Hui Wang, “The “Tibet Issue” Between East and West,” *Chinese Sociology & Anthropology* 42, no. 4 (2010): 26-27.

⁷¹³ International Campaign for Tibet, “Self-immolations by Tibetans,”

Having been reported by the vast media news, governmental and non-governmental reports as well as academic literature, causes and explanations of these demonstrations are highly debated. The Chinese government mainly attributed them to deliberate obstructions and masterminded by the ‘Dalai Clique and their foreign patrons’ in order to disintegrate the nation. On the other side, Dharamsala claimed that these were the outcomes of Tibetan frustration and disappointment with Beijing's policies with regard to “economic development, political stability and tightening of control over religious tradition and Tibetan culture” and “interference in and suppression of both religion and language, the forced removal of Tibetan nomads from the grasslands and the population transfer policy that moves Chinese to the Tibetan Plateau and reduces Tibetans to an increasingly disenfranchised and marginalised minority in their own land.”⁷¹⁴ Both arguments reflect divergent perceptions and understandings.

A wide range of opinions can be found in international media outlets. Geoff Dyer and Richard McGregor took economic disparity and excessive political control into account for the disturbances.⁷¹⁵ Elsewhere, Pankaj Mishra regarded the main dynamics of the 14th March Incident as the discontents of Tibetans towards rapid social change.⁷¹⁶

Moreover, scholars have also discussed distinct factors triggering these disturbances. Focusing on the demographic scope and protested content, Shakya argued that the

<https://www.savetibet.org/resources/fact-sheets/self-immolations-by-tibetans/>.

⁷¹⁴ Central Tibetan Administration. *2008 Uprising in Tibet: Chronology and Analysis* (Dharamsala: DIIR, 2008), 189; Central Tibetan Administration, *Why Tibet is Burning*.

⁷¹⁵ Geoff Dyer and Richard McGregor, “Tibet Untamed: Why Growth Is Not Enough at China’s Restive Frontier,” *Financial Times*. March 31, 2008.

⁷¹⁶ Pankaj Mishra, “At War with the Utopia of Modernity,” *The Guardian*, March 22, 2008.

primordialist and ethnonationalist sentiments by Tibetans towards Beijing's repressive rule was the main drive. He termed self-immolations as a 'changing language', which was a new form but old goal against the CCP.⁷¹⁷ In addition, Topgyal argued that it was the logic of insecurity dilemma in which both the Chinese state and ethnic Tibetans aimed to strengthen their 'national' identity, to resist change in this cyclical confrontation. For Tibetans, demonstrations and self-immolations were acts and counter-measures to express the threat to Tibetan identity due to Beijing's policies.⁷¹⁸ From another aspect, based on his field-survey in the pan-Tibetan area, Hillman regarded the socio-economic disparity as the main cause behind these tragedies.⁷¹⁹

Putting them together, this research ascribes the outbreaks of 14th March Incident and self-immolations as a result of the Central government's way of securitisation as well as the defects of social, economic and cultural aspects, political repression, and Tibetan resistance. The dynamics were a mixture of widespread discontent to the socio-economic disparity and tough control upon Tibetan society, considering the fact that unemployed youth and oppressed monks were the main participants. Also, external factors are acknowledged in relation to various statements amidst exiled Tibetan organisations to long-term China-Tibet tensions and the sensitive time-line of the 2008 Olympics.⁷²⁰ This research suggests that ethnic discontent could be mobilised and turned into a neonationalist sentiment, given the fact that the existence of social inequality and local tensions were high along the ethnicity line.

This research claims that China's policies involved internal contradictory dynamics.

⁷¹⁷ Shakya, "Self-Immolation," 19-39.

⁷¹⁸ Topgyal, *The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict*, 183-203.

⁷¹⁹ Hillman, "Ethnic Tourism and Ethnic Politics in Tibetan China."

⁷²⁰ Phayul, "Exiled Tibetans plan protest March to Tibet ahead of Beijing Olympics," *Phayul*, January 4, 2008.

As the Chinese government continued its dual focus on economic development and political control, the benefits and contradictions of the policies provide the simultaneously dynamics of integrating and disintegrating the nation-state.

State-led modernisation development did not fully impress local Tibetans with a sense of inclusiveness. Rather, with regards to the multiplex aspects, a sense of social and economic exclusion was sensed.⁷²¹ Scholarly literature argued that many Tibetans considered themselves as passive participants in this modernisation process with rising uncertainty and concerns that their traditional society changed in a very short time. For many farmers and herdsmen, rapid urbanisation dramatically reshaped the landscape and impacted their traditional basis in farming and herding. Consequently, they had to move into urban areas to acquire their livelihoods. Once there was no sufficient employment opportunity for new labourers, it caused a potential threat for social stability.⁷²²

A research report entitled “Investigation of the Social and Economic Causes of the 14th March Incident in Tibetan Areas” completed by Gongmeng Law Research Center, a non-governmental organisation in Beijing expressed a similar viewpoint. Pointing to the main body of violent participants, which were unemployed youths, Gongmeng argued that the 14th March Incident was a long-term side-effect of state-led modernisation.⁷²³ A research, published by the China Tibetology Center, an official think tank advising Beijing on its Tibetan policy, also adopted this viewpoint. In this

⁷²¹ Andrew Martin Fischer, *State Growth and Social Exclusion in Tibet: Challenges of Recent Economic Growth* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2005); “Population Invasion” versus Urban Exclusion in the Tibetan Areas of Western China,” *Population and Development Review* 34, no. 4 (2008): 631-662.

⁷²² Fischer, “Subsidizing Tibet,” 88-97.

⁷²³ Gongmeng Law Research Center. *Zangqu 3.14 Shijian Shehui Jingji Chengyin Diaocha Baogao*, 2009.

study, the author stated that the 14th March Incident was, in essence, a reflection of a variety of social predicaments amidst Tibetans within the background of a rapid modernisation process.⁷²⁴ In short, the Chinese government failed to evenly distribute its economic growth achievement.

In the previous section, modernisation accompanying restructuring of societal identity was discussed. This can bring about identity homogenisation. However, the situation can be conversed. Horowitz identifies that, when a societal group recognises its members' economic and political conditions becoming inferior, and the modernisation promotor, usually the state, cannot counter dissent, the group senses deprivation and suspension towards the practice.⁷²⁵ Moreover, when people sense the loss of original ethnic distinctiveness, the group can become anxious. Ethnic tension is thus fueled.

With the Western Development project, the Chinese government invested hundreds of billions of yuan in the TAR and wider Tibetan areas. Many public infrastructures were deliberately constructed as a means to pushing economic growth, extracting resources, and integrating Tibet to a national entity. Vast assisting projects and inducement policies to Tibet and Tibetans were also committed and subsequently reshaped the original environment. Walking along the streets of Lhasa now, visitors may feel like they are in the middle of a Chinese inland city.

From 2001 to 2014, the Tibetan average annual growth rate per capita net income of rural residents (yuan) was 14.1%, and income increased from 1331 in 2000 to 7359 in 2014. During the same period, the average annual growth rate of the per capita net

⁷²⁴ He, *Xizang Kuayueshi Fazhan Yu Changzhijiu De Qianyan Wenti Yanjiu*, 119.

⁷²⁵ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 95-139.

income of urban residents (yuan) was 9.8% with income increasing from 6448 in 2000 to 22016 in 2014.⁷²⁶ It is without a doubt that this figure represents that a extremely fast development occurred. However, the conditions in Tibet was still far behind the national average. According to a figure in 2014, the national average per capita net income of rural residents (yuan) was 9892 and urban residents 29381.⁷²⁷ Although progress in Tibet was overwhelming, a serious economic gap between Tibet and other regions exists. Even worse, many Tibetans perceive Tibet as the losing party during this process.

By considering the yearly amount that the Central government subsidised the TAR, a picture of extreme dependence from Tibet on the state can be seen. (Table 6-1, next page). According to local statistics, the proportion of the state's subsidy in the TAR's total revenue, in 2001-2010, was, on average always exceeding 90%. This figure demonstrates that Beijing has made huge efforts to support Tibet. On the other hand, it also points that Tibet still has not established its own fiscal independence.

Moreover, the way this external resource was utilised merits concern. As mentioned in the previous section, the state mainly focused on infrastructure-building. In association with this means of resource distribution, the industrial structure of the three sectors in Tibet was reconfigured, thus changing the scenario also forced Tibetans to change their way of life. While the primary industry took up 72.9% in employment in 2000, its percentage was sharply reduced to 53.6 in 2010 and 43.7 in 2014. In the same period, the tertiary industry grew from 21.2% in employment, up to 35.5 in 2010 and 41.6 in 2014. The contributions of GDP of the three industries also

⁷²⁶ Bureau of Statistics of the Tibet Autonomous Region, *Tibet Statistical Yearbook*, 12-13.

⁷²⁷ National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China, *Zhongguo Tongji Nianjian 2015* (*China Statistical Yearbook 2015*) (China Statistics Press, 2016).

revealed a clear scenario. In 2000, the primary sector occupied 30.9% of local GDP. However, this was cut to 9.9% in 2014. Regarding the tertiary industry, the figure increased from 45.9% in 2000 to 53.3% in 2014. Assessing these changing figures — employment in the primary industry rapidly decreased but continued to be the largest sector. The existence of an income gap between the primary and tertiary industries meant that economic inequality was exacerbated within a very short time. In addition, local construction, mainly planned by the central government, heavily favoured urban over rural areas therefore disparity only broadened.

Table 6-1

Proportion of Governmental Subsidies in Total Revenue of TAR (2001-2014)

Year	Total Revenue (yuan)	Subsidies revenue of government (yuan)	Proportion (%)
2001	1018566	944776	92.7
2002	1398795	1311470	93.7
2003	1387906	1287564	92.7
2004	1479554	1359655	91.8
2005	2058670	1915340	93
2006	2229029	2007860	90
2007	3101337	2804127	90.4
2008	3864431	3578559	92.6
2009	5018573	4709465	93.8
2010	5734659	5309980	92.5

Source: Organised from Xizang Zizhiqu Tongjiju, *Xizang Tongj Nianjian 2015 (Tibet Statistical Yearbook 2015)* (China Statistics

Press, 2015), 75

Another important factor that accelerated social change in Tibet was the sheer presence of migration. Table 6-2 (see next page) illustrates that it is evident that while the total population in Tibet increased by more than 10% between 2000-2010, the proportion of Tibetans decreased by 2.14% during this decade. One implication is that the non-Tibetan population — migrants — rapidly increased. Also, some observers have suggested that most migrants were mainly from Han and Muslim ethnic backgrounds.⁷²⁸ The influx of Chinese immigration into the TAR was multiplex and had mixed results, given the context that the TAR was enjoying massive financial support from the Central government and the Western Development project.

The State's tremendous modernising projects brought thousands of assisting technical experts from individual 'brother' provinces and cities. Businessmen, as well as migrants, were looking for better economic opportunities and came not only from the neighboring provinces, but also from eastern coastal areas.⁷²⁹ The restructuring of industries also drove Tibetans from rural areas to the cities. These investments opened up a window of opportunity, but the influx of external migration also devalued the state's original purpose. Compared to local Tibetan residents, these non-Tibetan migrants tended to enjoy more advantageous status since they were often equipped with better connections and skills and on average, were highly educated.

⁷²⁸ Fisher, "Population Invasion versus Urban Exclusion in the Tibetan Areas of Western China," 631; Wang, Hui Wang, "The 'Tibet Issue' Between East and West," *Chinese Sociology & Anthropology* 42, no. 4 (2010): 22.

⁷²⁹ While most recent migrants to Tibet were considered to be attracted by economic factors, a research by Zhu and Qian contended that some migrants were looking for an 'authentic Tibet'. Hong Zhu and Junxi Qian, "'Drifting' in Lhasa: Cultural Encounter, Contested Modernity, and the Negotiation of Tibetanness," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 105, no.1 (2015): 144-161.

Table 6-2

Proportion of Tibetans in Total Population of TAR⁷³⁰

Year	Proportion (%)	Population
2000	94.07	262
2010	91.93	300

Source: Organised from Zhongguo Minzu Tongji Nianjian Bianji Weiyuanhui 2013, *Zhongguo Minzu Tongji Nianjian 2013*, 688

With the expansion of infrastructure and urbanization, certain industries such as tourism started to boom. However, some surveys showed that the majority of Tibetans only had limited access to these new opportunities, either because of their lack of skills, such as Mandarin, or lack of connections to networks that controlled dominant sources of wealth in the economy. Without institutionalised protection, the simple logic of market principle exacerbated this bias. Therefore, economic inequality still existed and intensified across the urban-rural and urban-ethnic divide.⁷³¹ When commenting on the occurrence of the 14th March Incident, Hillman expressed a similar perspective. He argued that many Tibetans did not enjoy the fruits of the developing process. Though there was no systematic discrimination to Tibetans, non-Tibetans and other external migrants were more competitive. The sense of deprivation appeared amidst the indigenous Tibetans. He further contended, “Because of the rosy picture painted by statistics and the state media, most Chinese are unaware that Tibetans have been among the big losers of China’s economic miracle, and that, within Tibetan areas, the pace of economic modernisation has polarized Tibet’s economy, rewarding a minority of Tibetans with state jobs, but marginalising the

⁷³⁰ The official statistics include other ethnic minorities since 2000.

⁷³¹ Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 95.

majority of Tibetans, who are poorly equipped to access new economic opportunities.”⁷³² Therefore, a situation that Fisher terms as ‘ethnically exclusionary growth’ occurred in the TAR.

In addition to the negative impacts brought about by state-led modernisation, the high degree of anti-separatism with regard to social monitoring and control placed pressure upon local Tibetans and intensified their discontent. A wide range of state measures, such as ‘Strengthening Base and Maintaining Root’, patriotic education and ideological campaigns about “Four Marxist Views and Two -Isms’. were imposed to suppress voices of oppositions, as this chapter discussed, and this did not completely eradicate resentment. Rather, it led to a sense of threat and even pushed such discontented emotion to the ethnonationalist claim. While the harsh crackdown may quickly deal with the occasional uprisings, they were ineffective in eliminating the root causes. Once people did not perceive any internal route or opportunity to overturn the suppressive status quo, or there appeared no other alternative to counter the suppression, demonstration against the state could occur.

The surveillance of Tibetan Buddhism, which constituted an important part of Tibetan culture, posed a most controversial aspect. It has been witnessed that the state provided rich resources to restore and conserve temples and monasteries over Tibetan regions. In the meantime, the state also provided funding to preserve Tibetan Buddhism and invested in related projects. However, due to the fact that the Party recognised that Buddhism has a potential in mobilisation and the national loyalty-contestation of Tibet, it targeted the latter with the imposition of a variety of regulations. Consequently, these restrictions received widespread complaints among

⁷³² Hillman, “Ethnic Tourism and Ethnic Politics in Tibetan China,” 9.

local communities and drew international concern. The exceeding interventions were regarded as the CCP's distortion of religious development, as could be seen through the protestors during the 14th March Incident and the immolated monks calling for genuine freedom to practice Buddhist tradition. It was resentment that drove them to go on the street or burn themselves. Moreover, it is pointed out that the regulations of Atheism and Marxism on the Party Cadres also created pressure, the ethnic minority cadres in particular, who were forced to disconnect from their local social networks. In *Sky Burial*, Wang Lixiong discussed his experience in a Tibetan Prefecture, Yunan, where he saw a Tibetan Senior Colonel, and a number of officials, worship the holy mountain.⁷³³ He argued that it was impossible to separate religion from Tibetan daily life. Frustration is also rife in Tibetan cadres in my field-survey. One interviewee suggested, "I do not like this policy. I do not know why the Party cares about this...[Because of that] I cannot attend many events in my village."⁷³⁴

In summary, attributing the dynamics of Tibetan backlash merely to external factors may simplify the explanation. Assertions about the primordialist and nationalist confrontation between Chinese and Tibetans may also fail to capture the impacts of social construction on Tibetan ethnic or national identity and neglect the positivity of Beijing's policies. Drawing from insight of modernist perspective, this chapter contends that the Tibetan backlash was mainly a complex contradiction of the Chinese government's nationalising policies. If the ruling authority does not adjust its current means, the dynamics of the backlash will not disappear and similar riots will be seen in the future.

⁷³³ Wang, *Tian Zang*, 512

⁷³⁴ Personal interview in Beijing.

International Concerns on Tibet and China's Insistence

This section moves on to discuss concerns from international communities and to explore the extent these concerns influenced the Sino-Tibetan relationship. This research finds that while the pro-Tibet movement acquired international concerns, the PRC's sovereignty over Tibet and governance were not essentially challenged. Beijing firmly insisted on its tough position under such international pressure.

The issues of Tibet drew wide international attentions. The reasons behind this are related to successful internationalisation by the Dalai Lama, TGIE, the Tibetan diaspora community, and existing pro-Tibet societies and organisations such as the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT). The factor of increased global interest in the behaviour of a rising China should also be accounted for. The evolvement of the Tibetan issue is engaged in China's foreign relations. Statements, legislations and actions taken by certain governments towards China concerning Tibet can be observed.

Soon after the eruption of the 14th March Incident and subsequent crackdowns by the Chinese government, several major European leaders immediately expressed their support to Tibetan demonstrations. Resolutions and statements were made in individual states, calling for Beijing's respect of Tibetan human rights and holding a dialogue with the Dalai Lama.⁷³⁵ The European Parliament also launched a meeting to consider a common consensus towards boycotting the Beijing Olympics opening

⁷³⁵ Dumbuagh, *Tibet*, CR20-21; Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 158-159.

ceremony.⁷³⁶ Whereas the EU did not ratify this decision, some leaders, including Polish President Donald Tusk, Czech president Vaclav Klaus, German chancellor Angela Merkel, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, and European Parliament Speaker Hans-Gert Poettering, decided to stay away from the opening ceremony.⁷³⁷ Elsewhere, concerns and demands requiring the Chinese authority to restrain its suppression in Tibet and launch communication with the representative of the Dalai Lama could also be seen in the US,⁷³⁸ Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Taiwan. To summarise, the achievement of the internationalisation of the Tibetan issue, in general, reached another peak. Pro-Tibet campaigns mushroomed and formed a wider extensive transnational network to facilitate public awareness to this issue.

The Dalai Lama is regarded as the most significant figure of the TGIE, the exiled as well as the large body of Tibetans inside China, and his popularity can be in a positive way promoting global concerns on the situation of Tibet. A variety of figures uncovers this trend. It was reported that wherever the Dalai Lama gave a talk, the occasion was crowded with attendants. Also, when *Time Magazine* began its annual selection of one hundred most influential people in the world since 2004, the Dalai Lama was listed in the ‘influential leaders and revolutionaries’ category three times in 2004, 2005 and 2008, overlapping President Hu Jintao in the same years. In addition, the number of the Dalai Lama’s overseas visit also reveals this trend. The total sum of overseas visits between 2000 and 2009 was 121, surpassing total visits in the 1990s (116) and the 1980s (52). While having retired from his political role in 2011, the Dalai Lama still

⁷³⁶ Darren Ennis, “EU Assembly Moots Olympics Ceremony Boycott,” *Reuters*, April 10, 2008.

⁷³⁷ Zhen Li, “World Leaders to Attend Beijing Olympic Opening Ceremony,” *Epoch Times*, August 7, 2008.

⁷³⁸ Members of 110th Congress passed H.R.1077 calling on China’s end of its crackdown in Tibet and engaging in dialogue with the Dalai Lama. Dumbaugh, *Tibet*, CR21.

conducted overseas visits and expressed his comments on Tibet and China's policy.

However, facing such wide concerns, China was not forced to adjust its position but instead responded in a perfunctory manner. Beijing took several actions to respond to international concerns. For example, the principle of sovereign equality was often raised by Beijing, who called for non-interference with Tibet-related affairs as it is a Chinese domestic affair. Elsewhere, in the case of the 14th March incident, by acknowledging the high degree of international pressure, Beijing held dialogues with representatives of the Dalai Lama though the authority insisted on every measure it imposed without additional steps. In association with this, the Chinese government tended to resort to a diplomatic rhetoric that called for the promotion of bilateral friendship between the two peoples through cooperation rather than criticism of each other. The politico-economic clout was utilised to deter external assistance to Tibet. For instance, when learning about the Dalai Lama's EU-visit and meeting with the French President Sarkozy, who was also serving as EU President at the time in Poland in late November 2008, Beijing announced cancellation of the EU-China Summit, scheduled to be held on the 1st of December of the same year.⁷³⁹

The insight of Mylonas can be drawn here to explain Beijing's behaviour. According to his perspective, when there is an external patron actor towards the domestic societal group who is in conflict with its home state, the state's assertion and adoption of suppression tends to be evident. In particular, this phenomenon tends to be fiercer when the home state is holding a revisionist status.⁷⁴⁰ In this case, Mylonas argued that the rise of China and its action towards Tibet should be applied.

⁷³⁹ BBC, "China Protest at EU-Dalai Meeting," BBC, December 7, 2008.

⁷⁴⁰ Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation-building*, 17-49.

Warren Smith's comment on China's long-term skepticism to international concerns on Tibet may also be useful to support this point. He pointed out that the Chinese authorities often regarded these concerns as commitment for deterring China's rise. Given such presumption, Beijing thereby tended to deny and resist foreign criticisms or opinions.⁷⁴¹

The former Party Secretary of the TAR Zhang Qingli's statement may provide some clarity. In the CCP's journal *Qiu Shi* of 2009, he explicitly claimed that Tibet is a 'battlefield between China and the international anti-Chinese force.' He described most of these foreign comments and suggestions as 'the hostile force's aim at disintegrating Chinese territory through the Tibetan issue.'⁷⁴²

Facing Beijing's insistence, many governments often chose not to collide with China because of Tibet, giving different contexts and reasons. While many European leaders chose not to attend the opening ceremony due to Beijing's crackdown of Tibetan demonstrations, more than 80 representatives of states and governments were present and the attendance created a new record.

In summary, China's sovereignty over Tibet was not challenged. However, Beijing still kept eyes on powerful state statements and actions. This chapter now selects cases within the US, UK and India and briefly charts their engagement with the Tibetan issue with China in the post-2000 era.

⁷⁴¹ Warren Smith, China's New Offensive on Tibet," *Radio Free Asia*. March 18, 2009.

⁷⁴² Qingli Zhang, "Zhuazhu Fazhan He Wending Liangjian Dashi Tuijin Hexie Xizang Jianshe (Focusing on Development and Stability, Creating a Harmonious Tibet)," *Qiu Shi* 2 (2007).

US Government: Administration and Congress

Among these wide governmental supports to the Dalai Lama, the US serves as one of the most important actors. While the US Administration has always been consistent with its official position towards the PRC, accepting Tibet as part of Chinese territory, the occasional meetings between the President, Secretary of State, senior officials and the Dalai Lama promoted the Tibetan issue. The making of Tibetan-related resolutions and laws by the US Congresses also created a powerful effect.

In the Bush presidency, some measures posing pro-Tibetan implication were committed. Inheriting the legacy of the former Clinton Administration, President George W. Bush similarly adopted an active stance on the Tibetan issue.⁷⁴³ The President publicly met with the Dalai Lama at least four times (2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007). On many occasions, he encouraged the establishment and direct dialogue between Beijing and the Dalai Lama. In October 2001, during his attendance at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum, Bush spoke about the Tibetan issue to Jiang Zemin.⁷⁴⁴ During his visit to China in 2005, Bush again explicitly urged the necessity of improvements of religious freedom and human rights with the Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and the President Hu Jintao, and called for their engagement with the Dalai Lama and his representatives. In 2006, similar suggestions were raised again when Hu Jintao visited Washington. All these signaled the importance of Tibet in the Bush Administration's China policy.

A significant legislation within the US government's Tibet policy after 2000 was the

⁷⁴³ Rosemary Foot, "Bush, China and Human Rights," *Survival* 45, no. 2 (2003): 176-177.

⁷⁴⁴ International Campaign for Tibet, "Bush Raises Tibet with Chinese President," October 17, 2001.

Tibetan Policy Act (TPA), which included the H.R. 1646, Foreign Relations Authorisation Act of Fiscal Year 2003 (P.L. 107-228), enacted by President Bush on the 30th of September 2002.⁷⁴⁵ Accordingly, this Act provided a variety of aid-Tibetan institutions “to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people to safeguard their distinct identity.” This Act suggested and legalised that the President and Secretary of State should conduct steps to engage the Chinese authorities into dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, and to ensure the implementation of the agreement, when such an agreement is reached. In addition, an annual report concerning actions taken by the President and Secretary of State and the status of the Beijing-Dharamsala negotiation shall be provided. Moreover, the TPA established a position of Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues affiliated to the Department of State. This was an advanced institutionalisation of the position originally designed by the Secretary of State in 1997.

The essential objective of the Special Coordinator is to “promote substantive dialogue between the government of the People’s Republic of China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives.” The main duties of the Special Coordinator include “coordinate the United States Government policies, programs, and projects concerning Tibet” and “vigorously promote the policy of seeking to protect the distinct religious, cultural, linguistic, and national identity of Tibet, and pressing for improved respect for human rights.” There are other specific contents within the TPA, including economic development, environmental protection, release of political prisoners in Tibet, and a proposed establishment of a State Department office in Lhasa. Considering its comprehensive characteristics, the creation of the TPA represented a practical initiative to support Tibet but avoided direct challenge to Chinese sovereignty.

⁷⁴⁵ Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, *Tibetan Policy Act of 2002*, May 16, 2003.

The US Congress also conducted a number of appropriations to fund pro-Tibetan programmes. These programmes included assistance to the NGOs that work for Tibetan communities in China, academic and skill-based exchange for Tibetans in China, Voice of America and Radio Free Asia; Tibetan-language broadcasts, and a wide range of assisting projects for Tibetan refugees in South Asia.⁷⁴⁶ Most of them were the continuation or expansion of the previous projects made since the 1990s. In 2006, the 109th Congress passed legislation to award the Dalai Lama a Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of his international status and accomplishments. While this decision subsequently provoked criticism from Beijing, President Bush finally agreed with this proposal and attended the awarding ceremony on 17th October 2007.⁷⁴⁷

As an overview, the commitments from the US government as a whole has kept the Tibetan issue active and raised Chinese doubt. However, it is noticed by scholarly literature, the US Administration and Congress often demonstrated a nuanced understanding regarding China and Tibet.⁷⁴⁸ The US administration is more coherent in the position that 'Tibet is a part of China'. President Obama explicitly and repeatedly expressed that the US government does not support the independence of Tibet to the Dalai Lama in their meeting of 2010.⁷⁴⁹ However, with regard to the standpoint of Congresses, the scenario is more complex.

As Lawrence pointed out, an inconsistency in Congress' statements and actions existed in relation to Tibet. In some cases, the congressional legislation sought to

⁷⁴⁶ Susan Lawrence, *The Tibetan Policy Act of 2002: Background and Implementation* (CRS Report for Congress, 2014), 9-12.

⁷⁴⁷ Dumbuagh, *Tibet*, CR20.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid, CR15; Topgyal, *China and Tibet*, 130.

⁷⁴⁹ Matt Spetalnick, "Obama Meets Dalai Lama, Angering China," *Reuters*, February 18, 2010.

distinguish Tibet and China, and even termed it as an ‘occupied country’. For example, with the appropriation of Tibetan refugees, the TPA narrated them as people “who have fled Chinese occupied Tibet.” In the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003 (P.L. 108-7), the Congress also individually lists China and Tibet, implying that they are separate political entities.⁷⁵⁰ On the other hand, in some cases, Congress appeared to accept a status for Tibet as part of the People’s Republic of China. However, entering the post-2000 era, Congresses’ stance was further congruent and recognised Tibet as part of China. For example, in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2000 (P.L. 106-113), Tibet was termed as “minority areas” of China. Similarly, in P.L. 108-7 (2003), P.L. 108-199 (2004), P.L. 108-447 (2004), P.L. 109-102 (2005), P.L. 110-161 (2007), P.L. 111-8 (2009), P.L. 111-117 (2009), P.L. 112-74 (2011), and P.L. 113-76 (2014), they all referred to Tibet and Tibetans as “Tibetan communities in the Tibetan Autonomous Region and in other Tibetan communities in China.”⁷⁵¹

Great Britain’s recognition of China’s sovereignty over Tibet

Historically speaking, Great Britain was a leading actor in promoting a special status for Tibet, in that it only recognised China’s suzerainty over it during the colonial period. After building formal relations with Beijing, London adopted this ambiguous position for a long time and avoided any direct challenges to the PRC’s sovereignty within its official statements.⁷⁵² However, a ministerial written statement, dated on the 29th of October 2008, publicly showed that Great Britain adjusted its stance. David Miliband, the UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs confirmed the British government’s stance by stating that the UK government did not

⁷⁵⁰ Lawrence, *The Tibetan Policy Act of 2002: Background and Implementation*, 8.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid, 9.

⁷⁵² For example, see Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO 21/2423, “Parliamentary Question on Tibet,” November 22, 1983.

support Tibet, other than concerns on human rights issues. This statement also clarified the reason for the UK government's adaptation in which it suggested that the UK did take a special position towards China in the early 20th century. It only recognised China's suzerainty over Tibet but this was due to the geopolitical context at the time. However, with regard to the fact that the condition did not exist any more, such a position was 'outdated'. Miliband contended:

*Some have used this to cast doubt on the aims we are pursuing and to claim that we are denying Chinese sovereignty over a large part of its own territory. We have made it clear to the Chinese Government, and publicly, that we do not support Tibetan independence. Like every other EU member state, and the United States, we regard Tibet as part of the People's Republic of China. Our interest is in long-term stability, which can only be achieved through respect for human rights and greater autonomy for the Tibetans.*⁷⁵³

This statement clearly presented an insight of realpolitik adopted by the UK government that it did not intend to support separatism in China. It demonstrated that this European major actor ended its ambiguity on Tibet and for the first time, it accepted China's sovereign assertion. Yet it insisted on its high concern on normative values in this statement.⁷⁵⁴ Importantly, this view also reflected that Great Britain displayed a friendly gesture to the rise of China and provided it with diplomatic

⁷⁵³ Parliament of UK, "Written Ministerial Statements," October 29, 2008.

⁷⁵⁴ Chang, "A 'Realist' Hypocrisy?," 330-331.

support.⁷⁵⁵

Sino-Indian statements and Tibet

A previous chapter suggested that a great body of scholarly literature indicated that Tibet occupies a significant role in Sino-Indian relations with regard to the border issue.⁷⁵⁶ India is the long-term host to the Dalai Lama, tolerant of the TGIE, facilitates Tibetan cultural apparatus and is a tremendous material support. Despite keeping a low profile, accounts for a suspension of Beijing and to a large extent made a complicated triangle relationship in association to this border dispute.⁷⁵⁷

While having recognised China's sovereignty over Tibet by referring to it as 'Tibet Region of China' in the joint Panchsheel Agreement of 1954, New Delhi's assertion on the Tibet/China-India border, which was delimited by the 13th Dalai Lama's Tibetan government and British India at Simla Conference in 1914, was not accepted by Beijing. Thereafter, when the agreement of 1954 expired in 1962, a question was then raised whether the Indian government still adopted the same standpoint towards the status of Tibet. The Sino-Indian war of 1962 had triggered frontier conflicts and shadowed bilateral interactions. Both parties resumed diplomacy since the late 1970s, though the border dispute still waits to be settled. When the Dalai Lama visited the Tawang district or other territory-disputed areas, tension was evident.⁷⁵⁸ Moreover, the military presence on the Line of Actual Control—either from the People's Liberation Army or the Indian Armed Forces—often caused concern.

⁷⁵⁵ Barnett, "Did Britain Just Sell Tibet?," *The New York Times*, November 24, 2008.

⁷⁵⁶ Kalha, "Tibet as a Factor in Sino-Indian Relations Past and Present"; Steven Hoffmann, "Rethinking the Linkage between Tibet and the China-India Border Conflict: A Realist Approach," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, no. 3 (2006): 165-194.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁸ Ishaan Tharoor, "Beyond India vs. China: The Dalai Lama's Agenda," *Time*, November 5, 2009.

The triangular relationship between Beijing, Dharamsala, and New Delhi changed after 2000. In June 2003, the Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, committed a joint declaration entitled *Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China* with Chinese leaders during his visit to China. For the sake of creating a friendly environment for mutual cooperation, Beijing and New Delhi made several important statements to fit the interests of the counterpart. Significantly, Vajpayee recognised that 'the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the People's Republic of China's territory and as a reciprocal action, the Chinese government recognised India's sovereignty over Sikkim. Meanwhile, Vajpayee also committed a disallowance of Tibetans' engagement in anti-Chinese activities in India.⁷⁵⁹ These points were subsequently reaffirmed by a further joint statement of Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question when Wen Jiabao conducted his return-visit to India in 2005,⁷⁶⁰ and the Sino-Indian joint declaration in 2006 during Hu Jintao's visit.⁷⁶¹ 2006 was also highlighted as the 'India-China Friendship Year.' Viewing the increasing figures in various areas, the former Indian Minister of Rural Development, Jairam Ramesh, even coined the term 'Chindia' to describe the bilateral convergence. Following these statements, two more joint declarations were made in 2008 and 2010 during meetings between Chinese and Indian leaders.⁷⁶²

⁷⁵⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. *Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India*. June 25, 2003.

⁷⁶⁰ Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. *Joint Statement of the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China*, April 11, 2005.

⁷⁶¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, *Joint Declaration by the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China*. November 22, 2006.

⁷⁶² Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. *A Shared Vision for the 21st Century of the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China*. January 14, 2008; *Joint Communiqué of the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China*, December 16, 2010.

To the present day, these joint declarations reached by Beijing and New Delhi after 2000, have consolidated China's 'legal' control in Tibet. In order to build a stable relationship with its counterpart, New Delhi adopted a low profile accommodating the Dalai Lama and many exiled Tibetans.

Conclusion

This chapter contends that the high-uncertainty security scenario is manifested as the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the post-2000 era. Mainly, the conflictual dynamics were from China's domestic environment. While many states expressed concerns for Tibet in this decade, during the 14 march Incident in particular, they did not demonstrate further supportive gestures.

As presented, with its growing power, the Chinese authorities exerted numerous means, covering intensive and extensive modernisation projects as well as harsh controls to achieve its nation-building project in Tibet. Indeed, these impositions were driven by a mind of national securitisation. The Chinese policies in Tibet was not isolated and occurred in other regions of China. Rather, an occurrence of debate among academics and policy makers over the second generation of ethnic identification was a reflection of this background.⁷⁶³

The accomplishment of economic growth was prominent in the improvement of local conditions, but — due to the biased negative conditions — an environment pervading

⁷⁶³ Rong Ma, "Lijie Minzu Guanxi De Xinsilu: Shaoshu Minzu Wenti De Qu-zhengzhijhua," *Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)* 41, no. 6 (2004): 122-133.

uncertainty and fear of identity loss by Tibetans was created. Local tensions and conflicts appeared.

Examining the burgeoned grievance across Tibetan regions, other than the TAR, this chapter highlights that Beijing's commitments rendered dynamics of backlash and anti-government and even anti-China sentiment. This cyclic repression-demonstration relationship thus indicates the failure of China's commitment and implies that China must adapt its current policy in a more inclusive way in order to build national identity, if the Tibetan issue and broader different ethnic tensions is to be peacefully and permanently resolved in the long run. Beijing's power asymmetrically surpasses Tibet. Beijing could repress its opponents and defend its position with its stronger and constantly increasing economic and political foundations but a consolidated national identity for Tibetans might take longer.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

This thesis sought to answer a question: How have Sino-Tibetan relations become increasingly tense and confrontational? To answer this question, it has analysed Sino-Tibetan interactions focusing on the development of the Tibetan issue and China's Tibet policy as well as selected events that occurred in Tibet from 1949 to 2012. This dissertation applies security dilemma theory, as a meso-level analytical framework integrating the factors of state-led modernisation and international intervention to analyse the dilemmatic scenarios. This dissertation examines causation and correlation over the conflicts. To make it clear, this dissertation not only investigates conflict as the outcome, but also reflects on conditions and underlies historical contexts creating peace and conflicts. This dissertation develops two types of societal dilemmas: low-uncertainty societal dilemma and high-uncertainty societal dilemma, to configure scenarios and dynamics between coexistence and violent confrontation. Having used it to analyse our cases, this thesis emphasises the dynamics to conflict mitigation within Sino-Tibetan interactions. Consequently, conflict is not argued as an inevitable consequence. Instead, escaping the predicament and peaceful resolution is workable.

Through a review of existing literature, this thesis identifies two main knowledge gaps. First of all, a large body of previous studies has been limited with regard to the underutilising of Chinese language sources and thus resulted in the biased interpretation of the Chinese perspective and understanding of historical detail. Secondly, insight offered by conflict theory is inadequate in studying this theme.

While there have been many valuable and useful works contributed by various disciplines, research that can provide a concise theoretical explanation is insufficient.

To fill these gaps, the thesis takes several steps. Firstly, it integrates more declassified Chinese archives and other first-hand material by accessing Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a periodical Internal Reference collected in the Chinese University of Hong Kong as well as plenty of edited volumes and collections published in China. Anonymous interviews and field work in China were conducted. In addition, this thesis accessed the UK National Archives for more information.

Secondly, this thesis turns to security dilemma theory. In chapter two, this thesis justified its advantages. For those who have adopted the rational choice approach, the structuralist arguments such as nationalism narrative, and socio-economic conditions in the studies, this research recognises their merits yet also notes their limitations regarding fragmentation and considers them to be to some extent, contradictory.

By employing these methods above, this thesis presents an argument that contains the standpoints of Chinese and Tibetans, focuses on the agent level of interaction, and integrates material and psychological bases of conflict. It demonstrates a more balanced and sympathetic angle to consider the conflict. This chapter recapitulates findings and implications from below.

Thesis Findings and Discussions

First of all, to answer the central question, this thesis argues that the increasingly tense and confrontational Sino-Tibetan relations are the outcome of contextual bilateral

interactions caused by a pervasive sense of uncertainty and the mechanism of the security dilemma, within which both the Chinese authorities and Tibetans perceive behaviours from the opposite side as threats. This thesis finds that as either side adopts means only aimed at defending and securising their self-defined society through various forms, such as increased commitment of intensive national integration and for a desire for a high degree of autonomy for Tibetan society, a sense of uncertainty would emerge and then activate tension and conflict through a spiral interaction.

At different times, negotiations were conducted in order to dissolve the divisions. However, as analysed, given that the demands were always associated with elements implicating danger to the societal securities of both sides, the formulated uncertainty only hindered the progress reaching little and falling into a stalemate.

In addition, this thesis observes that factors of state-led modernisation and international intervention, respectively and together, can result in societal dilemmas.

The Sino-Tibetan interactions affected by the two variables above featured outcomes between coexistence and violent confrontation. This finding not only helps to answer the central question, but also sheds more lights on questions regarding Sino-Tibetan interactions and issues of identity politics as well as possible resolutions to the conflict.

Chapter three, four, and five touched upon the scenario of low-uncertainty societal dilemma, presenting the Sino-Tibetan interactional outcome of harmony. In this examination, the periods of Tibet's incorporation into the PRC in the early 1950s and the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the mid-1970s-1980s, manifest conspicuous signals of

coexistence. This outcome is arguably affected by the conditions that the Chinese government adopted a modest standpoint of modernisation construction towards Tibet. Also, the aspect that Beijing was situated in a positive and stable international environment was important.

On the other side, this thesis discovers that a perception of threat can be provoked, initially from a sense of uncertainty and then the security dilemma. The scenario of high-uncertainty societal dilemma is identified in chapter three, four, five and six. Such configuration is identified from Sino-Tibetan interactions in the mid-1950s and the early-60s and the late-1980s-90s as well as the post-2000 era when the Chinese authority launched radical modernisation campaigns. As also shown, the resulting question and resistance from Tibetans triggered a tougher reaction from the Chinese which together led to the repetition of a vicious circle. Meanwhile, the external assistance e.g. mainly from the Chinese rivals, including Taiwan and the US and the distinct states towards Tibet at different times, often gave rise to the Chinese sense of insecurity, who thereafter enhanced modernisation along with local control as its defensive countermeasure. Consequently, the increased mutual threat perceptions and physical interactions went through a spiral process that eventually led to the outbreak of conflicts. Based on the specific contexts, the violence manifested different degrees in these periods.

To be explicit, the late-1950s demonstrated a picture of intense conflict; both the late 1980s and post-2000s era presented a degree between intermediate conflict and conflict. The situations of early-1950s and late-1970s presented the least violent scenario among these.

This thesis identifies the era of the Cultural Revolution as the type of real security threat given the absolute confrontation. It regards the Sino-Tibetan relationship at the time as an exception to security dilemma.

In addition to drawing the points above, this thesis presents some reflections worthy of further exploration. Firstly, this thesis highlights the dynamic evolution of the Sino-Tibetan relationship and highlights the role of actions and perceptions. To be explicit, from the examination of the bilateral relationship at the agential level the Sino-Tibetan conflict is not regarded as an inevitable consequence nor is it a zero-sum game. While conflicts frequently occurred, the empirical analysis in this thesis still uncovers that dynamics to mitigation existed. This discovery provides academic researchers and peace workers with another way of interpreting history and exploring possibilities of conflict resolutions.

For another, this research can serve as contributing to the literature of modernisation studies. This research has pointed out that state-led modernisation is conducive to the national integration, however, the formation and consolidation of ‘national identity’ is not a lineal and smooth process. In our examinations, the state’s intensive commitments, in particular the post-1990s, resulted in great concerns about societal survival within Tibetan society. With its rising state capacity, the Chinese state only kept strengthening such commitment for national integration and the sense of uncertainty emerged and spread and turned to be antagonistic to the state. Our research thus demonstrates that modernisation contains contradictory dynamics in terms of nation-building. A longer period of observation to Tibet and testing more empirical cases should be helpful regarding this reflection.

Finally, the presence of external assistance is addressed to have impacts on Sino-Tibetan relations. Very often, as Tibetans received external assistance which was interpreted as a conspiracy against Beijing, the bilateral relationship tended to deteriorate and tension and conflict easily escalated. However, at some points, this thesis also observes that Sino-Tibetan relations can be relatively peaceful under such condition and that Beijing did not perceive Tibetans as having a certain degree of external help as a potential threat. Based on this, researchers might further analyse various forms or timing and research more effective ways in mediating ethnic conflict.

Policy Implications

What we have examined from the previous chapters offer a set of policy suggestions. The suggestions are not only presented to the Chinese state but also to those involved more broadly in ethnic conflicts. This thesis suggests that the state government/nation-builder should bear greater responsibility in ethnic conflict and the state should balance its securitisation of societal identity and minority group's concern over societal identity. The state actor is highlighted given the often asymmetric feature between the state and its ethnic minority in the conflict. Viewing its overall capacity and powers, the state government is bound to have more resources and agency to create viable circumstance for solving the Tibetan issue.

Bearing Minority Concerns in Mind

Firstly, this thesis suggests that the state should be sensitive to the concerned areas of minority groups, in terms of nation-building and national integration in particular. In many countries, the states have empowered minority groups with local autonomy, allowing the latter to implement self-rule. While Beijing claims that it has provided

such rights, many Tibetans refute this based on Chinese authoritarian politics along with complex interactions between local government and its people. The Dalai Lama and the CTA based on this point keep demanding for 'genuine autonomy'. This has been a long-term debate and Beijing perceives Tibetan behaviours as a pursuit for independence.

It can be understandable that notions of self-rule or high degree of autonomy, in whatever forms, suggested by minority groups would alarm the state actor which is also sensitive to them as well. After all, a demand for substantial autonomy or turning to *de facto* independence would provoke the state's deep concern on the state's disintegration and ethnic separatism. However, it must be noted that the state's massive and intensive modernisation construction as well as nation-building agenda easily renders a sense of uncertainty to its minority groups. In this thesis's empirical examinations, the greater the financial costs and political capital invested in committing the CCP-defined Chinese national identity, and the higher its expectations and corresponding standards for measuring performance, the stronger the CCP's sense of insecurity after each failure. And, paradoxically, higher pressure is put on the government to achieve perfect nation-building by the ruling authority itself. Beijing's often compelling constraints, although being justified in the name of securitisation, radicalise the Tibetan sense of insecurity and their resistance.

In addition, with an ultimate goal of an increasing probability of mitigation, this thesis suggests that the state should take the minority group's concerns into account when coming up with well-being conditions improvement for them. In its relations, the proposed aspects should not only be focused on economic conditions. Rather, sensitive areas including culture and ethnic memory etc. must be considered and

prioritised. In relation to this, respect and recognition of ethnic and cultural diversity are required. This standpoint is also in line with the idea of asymmetric conflict studies. As literature suggests, conflict would only be appropriately resolved relying on communication and trust as well as the stronger actor's recognition of the weaker's autonomy.⁷⁶⁴

Improving the state-ethnic group's mutual trust should be kept in mind of the policy-makers that they should pay attention to the political and cultural sensibilities while proposing its policies for all minority groups. Various aspects of inequality, in particular social and economic dimensions between the majority and minority groups also need to be addressed.

Understanding the logic of uncertainty and the broader sense of fear and insecurity is crucial. Such understanding could help the involved actors in ethnic conflicts in both the domestic context and international environment to prevent confrontation, encourage accommodation and achieve peace. In short, sensibility and sensitivity should be highlighted in building a positive relationship.

Constructing International Alliance

To the extent of international politics, this thesis suggests that the state should prevent external intervention by constructing a positive environment for itself. From previous studies and the empirical chapters, the thesis demonstrated that under the condition that a minority group with overseas ties or external support tends to be mobilised and demands more substantial rights from its home state. In particular, when external

⁷⁶⁴ Womack, *China among Unequals: Asymmetric Foreign Relationships in Asia* (World Scientific, 2010), 85-86; "Resolving Asymmetric Stalemate: the Case of the Tibet Question," *Journal of Contemporary China* 16, no. 52 (2007): 457-460.

support to minorities increase, the demands from the minority group often raise as well. In this way, a triangular relationship among the minority group, its received degree of potential external support, and the nationalising home government, would shape their relationship patterns and thereafter the scenario of security dilemma. In line with this thinking, remaining in a positive relation with external powers should be pursued by the state.

However, this thesis does not suggest cutting any form of interaction between the ethnic group and the external actor. Rather, it suggests that the state and the minority should reach a consensus over certain areas and the minority should be allowed to have international spaces. It would be truculent if the state denies any existence of international space or from receiving any form of external facilitation for the minority group. By doing this, the behaviour would only raise external sympathy for the minority and it does not help to improve the home state-minority relationship. In the recent decade, as Beijing largely took economic means as tools to restrict and discourage foreign administrations from showing concerns on Tibet, and all time seemed to be overreactive by criticising foreign officials when they met with the Dalai Lama on a public occasion, Beijing's standpoint only received less support internationally. This way of adoption would be hard to mitigate tension. Rather, tension is often ratcheted up furthermore.

An implication from this thesis is that the state must be tolerant and allow reasonable space for the minority group. Delineating a mutually acceptable area and let the minority group enjoy its freedom would be helpful and a key step to improve the state-ethnic minority relationship within conflict.

Looking Forward

This dissertation draws on the theoretical insight from security dilemma theory and emphasises the core concept of uncertainty. It also addresses the factors of state-led modernisation and international intervention in influencing the emergence of ethnic tension and confrontation. For the future, researchers can advance the research about Tibetan issue based on this thesis, and explore the role of other factors. This thesis suggests that researchers can further probe into the correlation between different variables and the security dilemma and sense of uncertainty. As noted before, while the distinguished factors in this thesis can arguably affect the situations of security dilemma in terms of the onset and degree of violence, the factors are not exclusively sufficient conditions, nor are they the only necessary factors.

Meanwhile, it is without doubt that knowledge of this thesis is with its limitations. It meets challenges from both the macro- and micro- levels, which leave space for the future research. Firstly, having made efforts to dig into deeper understanding of ethnic conflict in Tibet, this thesis needs to get more understandings at the broader PRC national level. This thesis did not compare Tibet with other ethnic regions of China so a horizontal relationship between the Tibetan case and other minorities is unclear. Whether they have altogether, and how they constitute a single factor influencing Beijing's ethnic policy are not fully analysed. In addition, this thesis may also be limited with regard to a nuanced picture at the local level. Due to various barriers, the author was unable to conduct a satisfactory time of field research in Tibet. The field work was conducted only in Lhasa but no other districts. In this way, an understanding of manifestation of security dilemma at the local level can further support the argument of this thesis.

Overall, this thesis has contributed to research in the sense that it comprehensively covers structural and agential aspects of ethnic conflict, but one development towards either a broader picture or a minor one would be advantageous. It is pointed out that there are multiple actors and diverse perspectives within these levels. Such space for future research is thus worth considering

To fill the acknowledged gaps, the author would like to pay attention to areas beyond Tibet in the next project. Over the past years since the Chinese president Xi took office in 2012, it can be seen that tensions in Tibet continue. With the CCP's increasing strengthening of local control, the subject of Tibet has become more politically sensitive. Furthermore, Beijing's governance in other ethnic autonomous regions, Xinjiang in particular, and Beijing's relationship with Hong Kong and Taiwan is more destabilised than before. Pictures and slogans regarding securitisation of the Chinese nation and the state are conspicuous, and the insecure sense is pervasive throughout the Chinese state. This has raised questions about the CCP's practice in the domestic and international realms.

Accordingly, this thesis plans further research on application and adaptation of security dilemma theory to examine cases in the Chinese periphery i.e. ethnic minority regions, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Indeed, the sovereign status of Taiwan is essentially different from others, but it has been targeted as part of Chinese territory by Beijing since 1949. Resembling these areas, Taiwan-related affairs are under the regulation of the Department of United Front Work of the CCP in China. From Beijing's view, all

these areas touch on China's 'core interests'.⁷⁶⁵ Such line of thinking from Beijing can be discerned from our empirical studies. To this point, conducting a comparative study is workable. For the next project, the author will compare Chinese policies towards its periphery and at the same time explore the roles of nation-building and security dilemma.

Finally, having studied the issue of ethnic conflict of Tibet, the author remains optimistic while being cautious about the future. He believes that conflict is not inevitable; however, the role of perception of uncertainty must be emphasised. Threats to one actor exists when the actor considers itself in danger, regardless of whether that is objectively the case or not. As Booth and Wheeler remind us, the existence of uncertainty should not be possibly eradicated, but it is viable to carry out means to marginalise it.⁷⁶⁶

If conflict can result from the logic of security dilemma, it implies that peace can also be achieved through mitigation of a sense of insecurity. Knowing the theory has helped us move forward in this first step. In this way, this thesis highlights the dynamics of empathy and inter-subjectivity within actor interactions. What matters is not only actions the involved actors claim to securitise for themselves, but also about what others would have perceived these actions and how they would respond. In this era that fake news increasingly builds walls of distrust among people and waves of populism are identified in different corners, a sense of uncertainty is growing everywhere. At this time, building constructive communications and enhancing mutual-understandings are significantly meaningful!

⁷⁶⁵ Edward Wong, "Security Law Suggests a Broadening of China's 'Core Interests'," *New York Times*, July 2, 2015.

⁷⁶⁶ Booth and Wheeler, "Uncertainty," 151-153.

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