1993

Cultural-historical geography of Tibetan immigration to Missoula Montana

Christopher Alan MateÌ

The University of Montana

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd

Recommended Citation
MateÌ, Christopher Alan, "Cultural-historical geography of Tibetan immigration to Missoula Montana" (1993). Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers. 5343.
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/5343

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
Permission is granted by the author to reproduce this material in its entirety, provided that this material is used for scholarly purposes and is properly cited in published works and reports.

** Please check "Yes" or "No" and provide signature**

Yes, I grant permission ✓
No, I do not grant permission __

Author's Signature Christopher Mate

Date: 10/7/93

Any copying for commercial purposes or financial gain may be undertaken only with the author's explicit consent.
A CULTURAL-HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF TIBETAN IMMIGRATION TO MISSOULA, MONTANA

By

Christopher Alan Maté

B.S., The University of Montana, 1979

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

The University of Montana

1993

Approved by

Chairman, Board of Examiners

Dean, Graduate School

Date

October 13, 1993
What are the relationships between the act of Tibetan resettlement and the persistence, loss, or modification of specific cultural traits? Why do cultural traits persist, decrease, or increase in intensity from one setting to the next? This study examines the relationships among cultural traits, physical settings, and cross-cultural interactions, and their effects upon cultural persistence. Elements of culture to be considered include: governmental relations, religion, livelihood systems, language, and formal education. The principal physical factors considered are geology, topography, climate, and ecology. Three geographical settings are examined: historical Tibet from which the Tibetans emigrated; the resettlement communities in India and Nepal, where they resided prior to their arrival in Missoula, Montana; and Missoula itself.

Cross-cultural interactions address the modification of selected cultural traits as the Tibetans adapted to the differing conditions of resettlement communities in India and Nepal, and later, Montana. The thesis characterizes Tibetan environmental systems and culture prior to 1950, thereby establishing a benchmark for the analysis of cultural change.

This thesis then explores the social implications of the changes identified. The research included review of pertinent literature, interviews, and a questionnaire. Initial contact with the immigrants was made possible through involvement in the Tibetan-U.S. Project, Montana. The gathering of information was conducted between October, 1992 and June, 1993. Of the eighteen Tibetans currently residing in Missoula, eleven actively participated in interviews, and fifteen responded to the questionnaire.

The study indicates that the process of resettlement from Tibet to India and Nepal, and ultimately to Missoula has modified Tibetan culture traits in the following manner: The value attached to governmental relations had increased in India and Nepal with a slight decreases in the United States. The value assigned to religion remained constantly high in India and Nepal with a slight to moderate decrease in Missoula. Livelihood systems have been progressively modified throughout the resettlement process. Language retention remained constantly high in India and Nepal with a slight decrease in Missoula. Formal education increased in value in India and Nepal, and has remained relatively constant in the United States.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ............................................. ii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .............................. v
LIST OF TABLES ...................................... vi
GLOSSARY OF TERMS ................................. vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................. ix
INTRODUCTION ...................................... 1

Chapter

1. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT: TIBET ............... 3
   Geographical Position ........................... 3
   Geology ...................................... 4
   Topography .................................. 6
   Climate ...................................... 9
   Ecology .................................... 11
   Analysis and Summary of Physical
     Environment as a Factor of Culture .... 15

2. CULTURAL TRAITS: TIBET ....................... 17
   Government and Religion: Before 1950 .... 17
   Livelihood Systems ........................... 28
     Pastoralists ................................ 29
     Agriculturalists ............................ 30
     Religious Communities .................... 31
     Merchants and Specialty Occupations ... 33
   Language ..................................... 36
   Formal Education ............................. 38
   Family ..................................... 38
ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Historic Tibet, A.D. 822-1951</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Physical Map of Tibet</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Birth Place and Resettlement of Tibetan Immigrants</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Importance of Cultural Trait in Tibet</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Cultural Trait Changes throughout the Resettlement Process</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Birth Date, Place and Age, of Tibetan Immigrants</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Residence in India and Nepal of Tibetan Immigrants</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Livelihoods of the Families and Individual Tibetan Immigrants</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Formal Education and Marital Status of Tibetan Immigrants</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Geographical:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name Cited</th>
<th>Tibetan Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinghai Hu</td>
<td>Koko Nor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmaputra</td>
<td>Tamjyak-Kamba (Tsangpo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huang</td>
<td>Ta-Ho-Pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indus</td>
<td>Sing Chin Kamba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mekong</td>
<td>Dza-chu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salween</td>
<td>Nag-chu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutlej</td>
<td>Lang Chin Kamba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yangtze</td>
<td>Dri-chu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religious:

Bon: Pre-Tibetan Buddhist shamanistic religion in Tibet.

Geluk-pa sect: Fourth Tibetan Buddhist sect founded by Tsong Khapa, a Tibetan scholar in the fourteenth century. It gained the support of the Mongolian rulers in the sixteenth century and consolidated political control over Tibet in the seventeenth century under the leadership of the Vth Dalai Lama. Emphasis focussed upon sutra studies with the tantra studies reserved for only the most advanced religious scholars and lamas.

Kangyu-pa sect: Second Tibetan Buddhist sect founded by Marpa, a Tibetan scholar, known as the translator in the eleventh century A.D. Emphasis was on both the tantra and sutra teachings and practices.

Nying-pa sect: First Tibetan Buddhist sect founded by Padma Sambhava, an Indian Buddhist scholar in the eighth century A.D. Emphasis focussed upon tantra teachings and practices.
Om-Mani-Padme-Hum: The English translation is, "Hail the Jewel in the Lotus Flower." It is the sacred, six-syllable Avalokitesvara mantra often chanted in Tibet.

Sakya-pa sect: Third Tibetan Buddhist sect founded by Atisha, an Indian Buddhist scholar in the eleventh century A.D. Emphasis was on both tantra and sutra teachings and practices. It was the first sect to be supported politically and financially by the Mongolian rulers of China.

Wildlife:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Genus/Species</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian black bear</td>
<td>Ursus torquatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bharal (blue sheep)</td>
<td>Pseudois nahoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grey wolf</td>
<td>Canis lupus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jackal</td>
<td>Canis aureus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lynx</td>
<td>Felis lynx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>musk deer</td>
<td>Moschus moschiferus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red deer</td>
<td>Cervus xanthopygus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red fox</td>
<td>Canis vulpes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sand fox</td>
<td>Canis leucopus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>snow leopard</td>
<td>Felis uncia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibetan antelope</td>
<td>Pantholops hodgsoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibetan gazelle</td>
<td>Gazella picticaudata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibetan wild ass</td>
<td>Equus hemionus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wooly hare</td>
<td>Lepus oiostolus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yak</td>
<td>Bos grunniens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First, I am appreciative to all of the Tibetan immigrants for their cooperation throughout the study. The numerous occasions shared provided the opportunity to both gather cultural information and welcome them into our community. Secondly, I would like to express my appreciation to the taxpayers of Montana, who provided partial support for the study. I also wish to thank the faculty and staff of The University of Montana, with special thanks to the members of the Department of Geography. I would specifically thank my fellow students: Keith Blount, who was responsible for producing the computer generated maps and graphs; Lloyd Duman, who assisted with the editing; and Scott Purl, for assisting with the formatting of the final draft. I would also like to extend special thanks to Frank Bessac of the Department of Anthropology for his advice and the loan of pertinent literature. Finally, I would like to thank my committee: Jeffrey Gritzner, Chairman; Darshan Kang; and Stephen Siebert for their patience and assistance throughout the preparation of this thesis.
INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This study examines the cultural history of Tibet, and the cultural impacts of resettlement upon a selected Tibetan population residing in Missoula, Montana. Available data regarding resettlement provides practical information of potential importance to sponsors, support groups, and governmental agencies assisting Tibetan immigrants. The approach taken might also be of use in identifying potential cross-cultural conflicts for other immigrant groups resettling in the United States.

Statement of Problem

How do particular cultural traits fluctuate throughout the resettlement process? This study attempts to answer that question by examining the interactions among particular cultural traits and physical settings. The cultural traits to be examined include: governmental relations, religion, livelihood systems, language, and formal education. The principal physical factors considered are geology, topography, climate, and ecology. Three geographical settings are examined: historical Tibet, from which the Tibetans emigrated; the resettlement communities in India
and Nepal, where they resided prior to their arrival in Missoula, Montana; and Missoula itself.

**Statement of Hypothesis**

By characterizing Tibet's physical environment and its culture prior to 1950 as a benchmark, the direction of change for each selected cultural trait can be determined, and described as having decreased, remained constant, or increased in value for the group studied.

**Methodology**

Information was gathered for the study by reviewing pertinent literatures, collecting data through personal interviews, and through the administration of a questionnaire. Initial contact with the immigrants was made possible through involvement as a volunteer with the Tibetan-U.S. Project, Montana. Over a period of seven months, approximately fifteen interviews took place between the author and members of the study group. The interviews and questionnaire focussed upon the direction of change in the previously specified cultural traits. Of the eighteen Tibetans currently in Missoula, eleven actively participated in interviews. The questionnaire was developed and distributed after the interviews were completed. Fifteen of the immigrants responded to the questionnaire.
CHAPTER 1

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT: TIBET

Geographical Position

As defined by the current Tibetan government-in-exile, seated in Dharamsala, India, in 1950 both political and ethnic Tibet was located between 78 and 103 degrees east longitude and between 27 and 39 degrees north latitude. It covered an area of approximately 2,300,000 square kilometers. As depicted on the China Map produced by the National Geographic Society in 1991, it included the entire provinces of Xiang and Qinghai, the western regions of Gansu and Sichuan, and the northwestern region of Yunnan. It was bordered by prominent mountain ranges--notably the Himalaya on the southern border; the Karakorum on the western border; and the Kunlun Shan and Altun Shan on its northern and northeastern margins.

The A.D. 821-822 treaty between Tibet and China that demarcated Tibet's eastern border reveals the imprecision with which the borders were established. Richardson notes that the document is a revision of a "clumsy, literal rendering" translated from the original treaty carved on a stone pillar in Lhasa, Tibet in the ninth century:
Tibet and China shall abide by the frontiers in which they are now in occupation. All to the east is the country of Great China; and all to the west is, without question, the country of Great Tibet. According to the old customs horses shall be changed at the foot of the Chiang Chun pass, the frontier between Tibet and China. At the Suiyung barrier the Chinese shall meet Tibetan envoys and provide them with all facilities from there onwards. At Ch'ing-shui the Tibetans shall meet Chinese envoys and provide all facilities. On both sides they shall be treated with customary honour and respect in conformity with the friendly relations between Nephew and Uncle.\textsuperscript{1}

For an historical boundary map, see Figure 1.\textsuperscript{2}

**Geology**

According to A. Hallam, the geology of Tibet can be explained as a result of an interplate collision consistent with the continental-drift hypothesis first presented in 1912 by a German meteorologist, Alfred Wegener.\textsuperscript{3} When the Indian subcontinent, part of the Indo-Australian plate, collided with the Asian continent, its leading edge was subducted under the Eurasian plate. The collision forced the continental crust of India under the Eurasian plate. The buoyancy of the crust caused a section of the Eurasian plate to rise--later to be named the Tibetan Plateau. Over

\textsuperscript{1}H. E. Richardson, *Tibet and Its History*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 244-245.

\textsuperscript{2}J. F. Avedon, *In Exile From the Land of Snows* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), inside front cover.

HISTORIC TIBET A.D. 822-1951

Figure 1
time, a slight south-southeastward sloping plateau evolved. In the Middle Tertiary Period, 30-40 million years ago, Tibet experienced extensive mountain building in the South and Southeast. The Gangdise Mountains, an east-west range, formed along the Southern edge of the plateau. It was followed by the north-south Hengtuan Mountains, a complex range of mountains in southeastern Tibet. Thereafter, the Himalayan range began to form on the southern border.4 Since that period, Tibet has been geologically active, with numerous hot springs emerging along the fault zones.

Tibet has abundant mineral deposits. Among them are coal, oil, iron, chromium, zinc, lead, copper, tin, silver, gold, uranium, borax, and various salts.

Topography

The topography of Tibet is the result of a combination of tectonic, erosional, and depositional processes that have taken place over time. The Tibetan Plateau, or the Qing Zang Gaoyuan, covers about 80 percent of Tibet. Known as the "Roof of the World," the plateau has an average elevation of approximately 4,000 meters and is characterized by numerous mountains ranges, basins, and lakes. The plateau's many lakes are brackish because of poor drainage, low rainfall, high evaporation rates, strong winds, and

generally favorable conditions for the weathering, erosion, and deposition of parent material.

Tibet is the source of several of Asia's major rivers. The Salween flows southward through Burma (Myanmar) into the Andaman Sea. The Mekong flows southeastward into the South China Sea. The Yangtze flows eastward into the East China Sea. The Huang flows northeastward into the Bo Hai, north of the Yellow Sea. The main tributary of the Brahmaputra flows through a long, narrow east-west valley between the Gangdise and the Himalayan ranges. In Tibet, the tributary flows eastward for several hundred miles. There it meets the Hengtuan Mountains and is diverted southward, flowing into the Bay of Bengal. The Indus and Sutlej rivers originate in the southwest and flow through India and Pakistan, where they merge and ultimately flow into the Arabian Sea.

In the northeast of Tibet, a depression in the plateau exists, called the Tsaidam Basin (Mongolian for "salt marsh"). It is a closed drainage basin with thousands of small lakes. Its floor ranges from 2,500 meters to 3,000 meters in elevation. The basin ranges up to 850 kilometers from east to west, and 250 kilometers from north to south.

The Qinghai Hu (Blue Lake) is located in a closed drainage basin east of the Tsaidam Basin. It is the largest salt lake in Tibet, with an area of roughly 4,400 square kilometers. For a physical map of Tibet, see Figure 2.
Figure 2

PHYSICAL MAP OF TIBET

Legend
- Lake
- Mountains
- River

China

Tibet

India

Pakistan

Altun Shan

Kunlun Shan

Qinghai Hu

Gandisa Shan

Shankar

Nepal

Burma

Figure 2
Climate

Tibet's climate can be characterized as one of extremes; it is the result of several variables. Other than topography, and seasonal wind patterns, the high elevation of Tibet is a major climatic determinant. Barometric pressure at 5,000 meters is approximately 45 percent lower than at sea level. This thin atmosphere has 45 percent less oxygen for a given volume of air, higher levels of ultra-violet radiation, and higher than average levels of sunlight. It averages approximately 3,400 hours per year.\(^5\)

The consequence of the combined climatic factors has both negative and positive impacts upon the Tibetan culture. For instance, high levels of ultra-violet radiation are believed to contribute to the high prevalence of cataracts among the Tibetans, and lower levels of oxygen necessitate the use of bellows to promote the combustion of sheep- and goat-dung fuel used extensively by Tibetan pastoralists for food preparation and the heating of homes. Conversely, the high altitude helped to deter invading armies from the lowlands which suffered in Tibet from the symptoms of hypoxia.

The plateau is subject to eight to nine months of dry, windy winter, and three to four months of intermittent rain, hail, or snow storms in the summer. The moist southwest

monsoon winds blow across India in the summer, moving from a high-pressure center in the Indian Ocean to a low-pressure center over Tibet. Most of the moisture falls before it reaches Tibet—however some precipitation reaches the Brahmaputra River region in southern Tibet.

During the winter, the monsoon’s direction is reversed. Dry, cool northeasterly winds blow across Tibet and India from a high-pressure center slightly north of Tibet in Central Asia. The average annual precipitation of Northwest Tibet is 100 millimeters. It increases to 600 millimeters in the south and to as high as 2,000 millimeters in southeastern Tibet.

Temperatures vary temporally and spatially, with the greatest daily variability occurring on the high plateau. For example, in the Pala region of Central Tibet, the temperature for the coldest month averages -13 degrees centigrade, while winter daily variation ranges between +4 degrees and -34 degrees centigrade. The average temperature for the warmest month is -3 degrees centigrade, while daily variation during the summer ranges between +38 degrees and 0 degree centigrade. In the lower southern basin mountain valleys, for example in Lhasa, the average temperature for the coldest month is -3 degrees and +20 degrees centigrade for the warmest month. Although the temperatures are lowered by high altitude and wind chill factors throughout

---

Tibet, the intense, ample sunshine helps to warm and dry
the living and lifeless of Tibet.

Ecology

The plant and animal life of Tibet are both diverse and
abundant. Ornithologists have documented a particularly
diverse avifauna. The diversity of animal life is
reflected in the following:

Across the Tibetan plateau have been found over 530
species of birds, over 190 species of mammals, more
than 40 species of reptiles and 30 species of
amphibians, in addition to 2300 species of insects.

As a preindustrial society, Tibetans are greatly
influenced by, and dependent upon, their plant and animal
life. The plants and animals can be divided into two
categories: wild and domesticated.

Wild plants: In the cold, dry northern region, sparse
shrubs and sedges grow in isolated pockets of well-drained,
water-rich soils. The central high plateau is associated
with a diverse alpine steppe vegetation. The genera
Artemisia, Stipa, Orinus, and Carex are all prominent on the
plateau. The alpine steppe vegetation supports the pastoral
communities, as well as the wild animals of the region.

The rugged mountain ranges of southeastern Tibet have a

---

7Charles Vaurie, Tibet and Its Birds (London: H. F. &
G. Witherby, 1972), 103.

8Yeshe De Project, Ancient Tibet: Research Materials
north-south orientation, resulting in a multitude of micro-climates and soil conditions that foster numerous site-specific plant and animal communities. The southern Brahmaputra River valley is characterized by alpine steppe vegetation in the higher, western headwater region. True forests begin east of Lhasa at approximately 93 degrees east longitude. Beginning at the highest altitudes of true forests, conifers dominate with deciduous trees increasing as altitude decreases. The genera *Tsuga*, *Pinus*, and *Quercus* dominate the upper true forest zone. Further to the southeast, the high forests grade into tropical forests as the elevation decreases and rainfall increases from west to east. The southeastern region has a diverse vegetation of coniferous and deciduous forests composed of over 1,000 species.\(^9\)

**Wild animals:** Goldstein and Beall reported having "always encountered herds" of Tibetan antelopes, Tibetan wild asses, and Tibetan gazelles when travelling between the ten nomadic encampments of pastoralists who participated in their study.\(^{10}\) Some of the other wild fauna include: yak, musk deer, red deer, bharal (blue sheep), Asian black bear, snow leopard, lynx, wild hog, grey wolf, jackal, red fox, sand fox, and wooly hare.\(^{11}\) Please refer to the Glossary

\(^{9}\)Yeshe De Project, 57-60.

\(^{10}\)Melvyn Goldstein and Cynthia Beall, 132.

\(^{11}\)Yeshe De Project, 67-73.
Domesticated plants: Plants are limited primarily by their adaptability to the environmental conditions and the importance assigned to them by the Tibetan people. Traditional cereal crops include: barley, wheat, and buckwheat, while peas and potatoes also do well. At the lower elevations, rice, maize, onions, cabbage, tomatoes, cauliflower, garlic, celery, mustard, radishes, turnips, and strawberries are popular. Grapes and bananas are cultivated in the southeast.

In the lowlands, fruit trees include apples, oranges, tangerines, peach, pear, and walnuts. Some of them were introduced by Sikh and Ladakhi soldiers who were taken prisoner by Tibetans during the Tibetan-Dogras War of 1834-1842, and were granted permission to settle in the southern valley region of the Brahmaputra River. Apricots and jujube are cultivated in the southwestern Tibet.

Domesticated animals: Domesticated animals include goats, sheep, cattle, yak, yakows, horses, donkeys, mules, Bactrian camels, guard dogs, and hunting dogs. Yakows, also known as dzo, are the hybrid offspring of yak and cattle, and surpass their parents in strength and vigor. They are also more adaptable, being less sensitive to higher temperatures.

Tibet is divided into two ecological zones delineated
by altitude. The upper zone starts at the altitude where crops cannot be grown by traditional agricultural methods, and stops at the upper vegetation line. This zone is the exclusive domain of the pastoralists. It is characterized by rolling steppe dominated by natural vegetation. Goldstein and Beall reported collecting over seventy-five native species of herbaceous plants on actively grazed rangeland in the upper zone. Within the zone, occasional micro-sites of potential agricultural land can be found. However, high probability of frost, hail, or snow during the short growing season eliminates the land's usefulness for an agricultural livelihood.

The lower zone is predominantly the domain of the agriculturalists. Cropland is rare in Tibet, except in the southern valley region and the eastern region of the Amdo province. Ekvall determined that the upper limit of the lower zone decreases from south to north, ranging from approximately 4,575 meters at 27 degrees north latitude to two 2,750 meters at 38 degrees north latitude. Trees are primarily restricted to southern Tibet on the foothills of the Himalaya and Hengduan Shan.

---


13 Melvyn Goldstein and Cynthia Beall, 179.

14 Robert Ekvall, 7.
Analysis and Summary of Physical Environment as an Influential Factor of Tibetan Culture

The physical environment of the Tibetan culture region has been presented to provide a basis for evaluating the impact of the environment upon Tibetan culture. Geographers, who support a doctrine known as environmental determinism, "believe human behavior, individually and collectively, is strongly affected, and even controlled or determined by the environment that prevails." However, most geographers refuse to believe humans are completely controlled by their physical environments. They point out, for example, that societies emphasizing science and technology tend to have fewer restrictions imposed upon them by their physical environment than those that do not. As noted by de Blij:

One inescapable conclusion is that the degree of influence of the natural environment declines with increasing modernization and technological sophistication. De Blij prefers the use of the term "natural geography" to "physical geography" to include the factors of soils, plants, and animals. The Tibetan leadership neither promoted nor embraced science and technology as a focus of their cultural activities. Instead, they chose a path guided by their religious doctrine. This ideology

---


16H. J. de Blij, 234.
encouraged Tibetans to recognize their economic activity with the characteristics of their environmental systems. Tibetan livelihood systems, artifacts, and institutions, all reflect a dependency upon and respect for, the natural environment.
A study of the history of Tibetan government and religion reveals a mixture of factors responsible for its current form. Tibetan Buddhism also known as Lamaism, evolved from a combination of three recognized religions: Bon, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

Bon is the earliest recognized religion of Tibet. The belief system was based upon an attempt to appease various forces in the natural world. The wild countryside, animals, the natural occurrences of earthquakes, sudden storms, and treacherous mountain travel conditioned the minds and bodies of the inhabitants. These forces became gods for the people, gods conceived to have the power to help or harm, to create or destroy. As the religion evolved, showing respect by means of offerings to the gods became common practice. The rituals were a recognition and respect of transcendental power and an attempt to come to terms with that power.

The founder of the Bon religion was the Iranian Prince Shernab Michoche. Some Tibetan religious scholars believe he was an incarnate of the Indian Prince Gautama Siddhartha, Buddha Shakyamuni (563-483 B.C.). Others believe he was a terrestrial Buddha, alive in the eleventh century B.C. During a brief visit to Western Tibet, he reportedly introduced shamanistic teachings and exorcism practices to many followers and students throughout Tibet. He is credited for the organization of the Bon religious practices currently practiced by many Tibetans.

The death rite entails an effigy burning to exorcise the dead of evil in order to assure that the following life began pure. The death rite is also practiced by Tibetan Buddhists. Rites of human blood sacrifices were also practiced to prolong the life of the practitioner. The religion thrived in Tibet, supported by national as well as local authorities for several hundred years. Eventually, Bon was challenged by Buddhism, introduced into Tibet from India.

Buddhism was founded by the Indian Prince, Gautama Siddhartha. He is not the first, nor will he be the last terrestrial Buddha. Buddha can be defined as one who grasps the true meaning of reality and acts upon this meaning to reach nirvana, a state of all-knowing. This particular Buddha was responsible for transmitting the Buddhist

\(^{18}\text{Ibid., 124.}\)
The essence of Guatama Siddhartha's teachings was initially communicated orally and preserved by memory. Rhys Davids believes it was first recorded in writing no sooner than a century after his death. The principal tenets of his teachings are found in the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. It is written that Gautama reached enlightenment while meditating under a peepul, or bo, tree (*Ficus religiosa*) in the town of Bodh Gaya, India. Afterward, he expounded his beliefs to five companions under a peepul tree in the Park of the Gazelles at Varanasi (Benares), India. The following is a translation by Edward Thomas of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path from early Buddhist scripture:

Now this, monks, is the noble truth of pain: birth is painful, old age is painful, sickness is painful, death is painful, sorrow, lamentation, dejection and despair are painful. Contact with unpleasant things is painful, not getting what one wishes is painful...

Now this, monks, is the noble truth of the cause of pain: the craving which tends to rebirth, combined with pleasure and lust, finding pleasure here and there, namely the craving for passion, the craving for existence, the craving for nonexistence.

---


Now this, monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of pain, the cessation without a remainder of craving, the abandonment, forsaking, release, nonattachment.

Now this, monks, is the noble truth of the way that leads to the cessation of pain: this is the noble Eightfold Way, namely right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindedness, right concentration.

This is the noble truth of pain: Thus, monks, among doctrines unheard before, in me sight and knowledge arose, wisdom arose, light arose.\textsuperscript{21}

In order to support this noble, enlightening religion, the religious order took charge of the administration of Buddhist teachings. The religious leaders established the three jewels of Buddhism as permanent, unshakable essentials that every disciple, lay or monastic, must accept. As explained by members of the study group, they include: the Buddha, his teachings or religious doctrine, and the religious community.

As time passed, two schools of Buddhism, the Hinayana and the Mahayana, evolved in India. The Hinayana school considers that the goal of the practitioner is to achieve nirvana, never to return to the physical world. The Mahayana school, on the other hand, postulates that the ideal is to achieve worthiness of obtaining nirvana and to return to the physical world as a Bodhisattva, an enlightened being, to help others find the way.\textsuperscript{22}


\textsuperscript{22}Frank B. Bessac, "Peoples of Inner Asia", (Missoula: University of Montana, 1972), 32.
the Mahayana school that most greatly influenced Tibetan Buddhism. In Tibet, Bodhisattvas are called lamas.

Parallel to the evolution of the two schools, from approximately A.D. 500, there was an increased use of yoga or trance meditation to attain nirvana by the Mahayana school. Yoga acts upon the subconscious level, which is where pure truth is believed to be found.\textsuperscript{23} Buddhist and Hindu practitioners believe that it is the most direct route to the discovery of absolute truth.

Tantric Buddhism evolved as a method to directly contact the tantric Buddhas, who are eternal Buddhas existing only on the plane of pure thought. Tantras teachings are recorded in the Tangyur, a collection of scriptures written by Indian and Tibetan religious scholars. The successful practice of these scriptures reportedly enables the practitioner to predict future events and conduct mystical feats. It is the tantric form of Buddhism which was first introduced into Tibet.

The period between 247 B.C. and A.D. 842 represents Tibet's earliest recorded political unification. The first of forty-one kings entered the Yarlung valley near the confluence of the Brahmaputra and Yarlung Rivers, where he encountered a group of Tibetans. He was described as being strangely different from other men in Tibet. When asked

\textsuperscript{23}James B. Pratt, \textit{The Pilgrimage of Buddhism} (New York: 1928), 244-258.
where he came from, he pointed to the sky. The Tibetans were awe-struck. Equating the sky with the home of gods, they raised him to their shoulders and carried him to their local ruler. He became known as the Nya-khri, or "Neck-Enthroned" king. He is credited with unifying twelve small kingdoms in Tibet and introducing the earliest Buddhist teachings to Tibetans by means of magical powers that were stronger than the Bon shamans who opposed him. He was the first of seven kings who handed over the throne to their first son when their sons were old enough to ride a horse. The old king then reportedly disappeared into the sky. From the reigns of the eighth through the thirty-second king, the Bon religion again dominated in Tibet. Buddhism, once again entered Tibet in the fifth century A.D., when the twenty-eighth king received a mysterious gift:

In the water-bird year of 433 A.D. lHa-tho-tho-ri at the age of sixty received the first sacred Buddhist texts to reach Tibet. Accounts say that the sky on that day was full of rainbows and beautiful heavenly music could be heard. In a rain of flowers, a casket descended from the sky to the uppermost roof of the castle of Yum-bu-bla-sgang. Opening the casket, the king found books.... The king also received the Cintamani, the sacred Six Syllable Avalokitesvara Mantra, OM MANI PADME HUM, carved on precious stones twelve inches high, and a golden stupa. That night in a dream, the king received a prediction that in five generations the one who could understand these things would be born.24

King lHa-tho-tho-ri reportedly lived 120 years, content that his dream would come true.

24Yeshe De Project, 169.
King Songtsan-sgam-po ruled between A.D. 594 and 649. He is credited with first uniting Tibet as a nation, initiating an era of political and military expansionism. He was believed to be an incarnate of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, the God of Mercy (Chenreze in Tibetan), who firmly established Buddhism throughout Tibet. Through his military strength, marriages were arranged with Princess Bhrikuti, the daughter of the King of Nepal, in A.D. 621 and with Princess Wen Cheng, the daughter of the Emperor of China, in A.D. 641. Both princesses were believed to be incarnates of Tara, the wife of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, the God of Mercy.²⁵

Each princess possessed statues of Buddha that King Songtsan-sgam-po wished to have relocated to Tibet. Two temples were built in Lhasa to house the statues. The Buddha statue, Jo-bo-chen-po, brought by Princess Wen Cheng was initially placed in the Ro-mo-che temple while the statue, Jo-bo-chung-ba, brought by Princess Bhrikuti, was placed in the gTsug-lag-khang temple.²⁶ Soon after the death of King Songtsan-sgam-po in A.D. 649, the statues were switched in location. Since that time, the Jo-bo-chen-po statue has resided in the gTsug-lag-khang

²⁵Charles A. Sherring, Western Tibet and the British Borderland: The Sacred Country of the Hindus and the Buddhist. (London: Edward Arnold, Publisher to the India Office, 1906), 242.

²⁶Yeshe De Project, 200-29.
temple and is referred to as Jo-khang, currently "the holiest place in all Tibet."27

Given the social prominence and personal strengths of the king and his wives, they were able to establish an alternative religion to Bon. Other important issues addressed by the king were the development of a Tibetan script; the recording in writing of a constitution and laws for Tibetans; the relocation of the capital to Lhasa, home of the gods; the building of Buddhist temples throughout Tibet; and the translating and recording into script of numerous texts, including those received by King lHa-tho-tho-ri in A.D. 433. Although Buddhism was promoted by the kings, there was opposition from rival Bon supporters. In A.D. 762, an Indian Buddhist scholar, Padma Sambhava, was invited by the king of Tibet to subdue the demons of Bon practitioners. His success lead to the establishment the Nying-pa sect. It focussed upon the doctrine of tantras and the establishment of religious communities, the third jewel of Buddhism. Between A.D. 792-794, a debate took place in the newly built monastery of bSam-yas near Lhasa, between leading scholars from the Indian and Chinese Buddhist schools. The king of Tibet decided that the Indian school "proved superior," and was proclaimed the official religious doctrine.28

27Hugh Richardson, 63.
28Yeshe De Project, 270.
After this period of strong cultural development, the political and religious unity of Tibet faded. Two centuries of strong military leadership ended in A.D. 842 with the assassination of the last king of the Nya-khri Dynasty, King Glang-dar-ma. He was "remembered primarily for his ruthless persecution of Buddhism and a strong supporter of the Bon religion." The aristocracy soon gained control, fragmenting society along family and religious lines.

In A.D. 1042, Atisha, an Indian Buddhist scholar, visited the rulers of western Tibet who wanted Buddhism to flourish once again. His teachings prompted a revival resulting in the development of strong alliances between the aristocratic families and monasteries. In A.D. 1073, the Sakya ("Pale Earth") Monastery was built, from which the Sakya-pa sect evolved that stressed a balance between the sutras and the tantras doctrines. The sutras are recorded in the Kagyur, a collection of scriptures, based upon the teachings of Buddha and some of his disciples. More than a century elapsed before the Mongolian army paid a visit:

In A.D. 1239, when the Mongol emperor Godan sent an army to within a hundred miles of Lhasa, Sa-ky-a Pandita was asked to represent the Tibetans. He pacified the army's commander and was invited to visit Godan's court in Liang-chow.29


Sa-kyā Pandita reportedly taught Buddhism there, until his death in A.D. 1251. He was followed by Phak-pa, his nephew, who also went to the Mongol court to teach. He taught Kublai Khan, who gave him the title, Ti Shih, "Teacher of the Emperor." Out of respect for the religious teachings, Kublai Khan appointed Phak-pa the political ruler of all Tibet. A mChod-Yon or "priest-patron" relationship evolved, in which the priest (lama) provided religious needs for the Mongolians, and the patron, the Mongolian ruler, provided protection and support for the teachings and teachers of Tibetan Buddhism.

The result of this relationship was an integrated Tibetan religious-political system controlled by the monasteries and the aristocratic patrons from within and outside of Tibet. New monasteries and new Buddhist sects evolved. The semi-reformed Kangyu-pa sect, one similar to the Sakya-pa sect, and the reformed Geluk-pa sect were established.

The Geluk-pa sect was founded between A.D. 1357 and 1417 by Tsong Khapa. He believed that there needed to be a clear separation between monks and lamas who focussed upon tantra practices, and those who carried out monastic duties. He argued that the communal lifestyle and outward community orientation of the monasteries were not compatible with the individual, inward focus of tantra practices. They were best achieved in seclusion based upon a relationship between
one teacher and a single pupil. He felt that the practices should neither become common knowledge nor subject to abuse, as he felt had occurred too often in the past.\textsuperscript{31}

Tibetans accept Tsong Khapa as a reincarnation of Chenreze, the father of Tibetans in their creation story and the incarnate of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. The Geluk-pa sect gained the support of the Mongolian rulers in the sixteenth century when Sonam Yatso, the leader of the Geluk-pa sect, was given the title Dalai Lama, "Ocean of Wisdom," by the Mongolian ruler Altan Khan. The Dalai Lama, with the help of Altan Khan was responsible for the construction of the Kumbum Monastery at the birthplace of Tsong Khapa.

In the seventeenth century, under the leadership of the V\textsuperscript{th} Dalai Lama, the Geluk-pa sect consolidated their political control over Tibet with the backing of Gusri Khan, a Mongolian Leader.\textsuperscript{32} The V\textsuperscript{th} Dalai Lama was responsible for building the Potala, "Home of the Gods," in Lhasa on the site of the palace built by King Songbtsan-sgam-po. This became the permanent winter residence for the Dalai Lama, and the Norbu Lingka, the summer residence, was built later. He initiated a yearly tradition of the Monlan, the "Great Prayer," a three-week festival in Lhasa, starting two days prior to Loshar, the Tibetan New Year's Day.

\textsuperscript{31}Thubten Norbu and Colin Turnbull, 199-200.

\textsuperscript{32}Hugh Richardson, p. 41.
The 5th Dalai Lama's teacher was named abbot of the Shigaste Monastery. Upon the abbot's death, he was proclaimed a reincarnation of a Dhyani Buddha (Opame), "Buddha of Boundless Light," by the Dalai Lama and given the title Panchen Lama. There are five Dhyani Buddhas--Buddhas existing exclusively on a spiritual plane. As noted by Cassinelli and Ekvall:

From a doctrinal point of view, the Panchen Lama is a more exalted figure than the Dalai Lama, since the spiritual plane is higher than the material, but because of this spiritual characteristic, Panchen Lamas found it more difficult to engage in worldly affairs. The Dalai Lamas thus became both the temporal and spiritual leaders of Tibet, although all Tibetans always have had the highest reverence for the Panchen Lamas. 33

The Geluk-pa sect retained dominant political and religious control in Tibet until the invasion by the Chinese army in 1950.

Livelihood Systems

Through time, the Tibetan culture evolved, influenced by both internal and external physical and human factors. According to the XIVth Dalai Lama, traditional Tibet had an estimated population of seven to ten million people in 1950. He claimed that the estimation was based upon a rough government census in 1947 recorded by the Legal Inquiry

33C. W. Cassinelli and Robert Ekvall, 5.
Committee on Tibet in Mussoorie, India in 1959.\textsuperscript{34}

Approximately 50 percent were pastoralists, 25 percent agriculturalists, 20 percent members of religious communities, and 5 percent merchants and/or individuals working in specialty occupations.

Pastoralists

Pastoralists are described as a tough, quiet people with an air of dignity and contentment. Experience in the management of domesticated livestock, passed from generation to generation, has permitted the pastoralists to maintain a livelihood adapted to their natural environment. From Goldstein and Beall:

We build no canals to irrigate pastures here, nor do we fence and sow our pastures with grass seed to enhance yields. They tried to make us do this during the Cultural Revolution, but that is not our way of doing things. The Changtang is a ferocious place, wait you will see for yourself. One minute the air is calm and the sun is shining, the next it is hailing. It is not possible to try to control and alter the Changtang. We do not try, instead we use our knowledge to adjust to it.\textsuperscript{35}

Their livestock included: yaks, yakows, sheep, goats and horses. Horses are used primarily to visit friends or agrarian communities, in livestock raids, or to pursue livestock thieves. They are not used for herding their

\textsuperscript{34}Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, Tibet and the Chinese People’s Republic: A Report to the International Commission of Jurist, (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1960), 290.

\textsuperscript{35}Melvyn Goldstein, and Cynthia Beall, 48.
livestock, except during encampment relocation. Their sheep are adapted to the environment of the high altitude zone and support the needs of the pastoralists. The diversity and quantity of livestock were dependent upon the unique qualities of the individual pastoral families, and the unique physical and human circumstances they experienced. The lack of competition from agriculturalists for the land, as noted previously in the discussion of Tibetan ecology, permitted this cultural complex an opportunity to prosper and contribute to the greater Tibetan society. Their livestock provided meat, milk products, hides, wool, felt, cashmere, and transportation for themselves and others within Tibet and beyond. These goods were traded for agricultural products, such as barley, rice, sugar, and tea, as well as manufactured products, such as household goods, weapons, and jewelry. The material support that they gave to the religious community was critical for that institution's survival. The kind and amount of support given was dictated by their capacity and faith. In return, they received spiritual and medical support. Their way of life, on a daily and seasonal basis, is examined in considerable detail by Goldstein and Beall, and Ekvall.

Agriculturalists

Agriculturalists complement the pastoralists in providing Tibetans with a stable and healthy diet. Prior to
1950, the agricultural land was dominated by three institutions: the state government, religious sects, and aristocratic families. The landlords of all three institutions leased land to families, or hired laborers, when their own family could not actively work all of the land. That social structure adequately produced and stored barley, the primary grain in Tibet, without the need of additional imports. Although Tibet's high elevation promotes low temperatures, the prevalence of clear skies permits the sun's energy to warm the soil, thereby promoting seed germination and plant growth. Irrigation of crops increased the certainty of an acceptable harvest. Prior to the 1950 Chinese invasion, all agricultural practices were conducted by humans and draft animals. Oxen and yakows were favored over yak for their manageability and higher milk production. Additionally, wealthy agriculturalists often had herds of sheep and yak, hiring herders to care for the animals.

Religious Communities

Religious communities were a dominant force in the lives of most Tibetans. In a religious sense, they were the third jewel of Tibetan Buddhism, followed by the Buddha and his teachings. Beginning with the support of Buddhism by

---

the early kings, monasteries grew in size and numbers. It was customary for one son of each family to enter the monastery to serve the laity as his teachers directed. Daughters were also welcome to enter a nunnery, however there were far fewer nuns than monks in the religious communities. Support by the general population was enhanced by this direct family tie. An estimated 18 to 20 percent of Tibet’s population were lamas, monks, or nuns living in 3,000 to 6,000 monasteries across Tibet prior to China’s 1950 invasion.

Monastic life for all of the sects of Tibetan Buddhism and the Bon religion had become increasingly harmonized over time. The primary difference, was that the Bon monks were permitted to marry, whereas Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns were not. The spiritual and political head of each monastery was an abbot. In addition to assuring the religious education of monks, he also performed religious rites for the living and dead, and was responsible for attending to the financial and material needs of the monastery. All those entering a monastery were expected to take the first sixteen vows of monkhood and become a rapjung, a first-grade monk. The first four main vows included: the practice of celibacy, and abstinence from killing, lying, and stealing. To become a getzul, a second-grade monk, thirty-six vows were required. To become a gelong, the third and highest grade of monk, 253 vows were
taken. Theoretically, a monk may choose between studies or a non-student role in the monastery. Those who decided to pursue the academic path had two bodies of scripture to memorize and debate: the Kagyur, a collection of sutra scriptures, and the Tangyur, a collection of tantra scriptures. Non-scriptural studies included Tibetan grammar and Sanskrit, astrology, astronomy, medical science, political science, general literature, and art. Craftsmen, artisans, and individuals trained in special religious rites were needed to direct lay workers or perform directly the multitude of tasks required to maintain the institution.37

Merchants and Specialty Occupations

Merchants came from all three of the preceding groups. For our purposes, the need to distinguish between large- or small-volume merchants, types of merchandise, or full- or part-time is not essential to this study. It is significant that internal and international trade have been actively pursued in Tibet for over 1,000 years.

Because of its geographical location, Tibet bordered several countries that sought commercial ties. Many of the Tibetan merchants had family ties in one or more of the countries with which they traded. Throughout Tibet, commercial goods were transported on the backs of pack animals. Pastoralists transported twenty- to thirty-pound

37Thubten Norbu and Colin Turnbull, 261.
sacks of salt on the backs of sheep from the numerous salt flats high on the plateau south to agricultural and religious communities. There it was traded in the fall for barley and household needs. Exports included: salt, wool, cashmere, domesticated animals, hides, and pelts. Caravans of yaks, mules, and donkeys were the preferred animals of transport. As an indication of the importance placed upon commerce, as well as the associated duties, several wars with neighboring countries were fought. As noted by Richardson, treaties were signed in A.D. 1683 and A.D. 1842 between Tibet and Ladakh; in A.D. 1856 between Tibet and Nepal; in A.D. 1886 between Tibet and Burma; and in A.D. 1890 and A.D. 1893 between Great Britain and China relating to Sikkim and Tibet. In A.D. 1903-1904, a British military expedition advanced to Lhasa on the grounds of enforcing the A.D. 1890 and A.D. 1893 Great Britain and China trade agreements, and to preclude possible Russian dominance of Tibet. Resulting from the war, the A.D. 1904 Convention between Great Britain and Tibet was concluded in Lhasa.38 According to Fleming, British success was attributed to its vastly superior weapons and the use of approximately 200 two-wheeled carts—an efficient vehicle for transporting critical war supplies.39 Traditionally, wheeled transport

38 Hugh Richardson, 245-56.

was not used prior to that time in Tibet. By the 1920s, the British wanted to build a road from India to Lhasa for motorized transport in support of their trading ventures. The Tibetan transportation interests convinced the Tibetan government not to permit it on the grounds that it would destroy their livelihood.

Specialty occupations evolved for two principle reasons. The first revolved around religious beliefs. Killing animals, of all types, is believed to be a sinful act that results in the accumulation of bad karma. Therefore, if a family were wealthy enough or could barter services or goods, men were hired to butcher their livestock in the fall to meet their needs for meat during the winter. Butchers were often Muslim men or the least prosperous Buddhists men, but never women. They were also employed to do other "unclean" tasks, such as the castration and ear-brand cuttings of livestock. Disturbance of the land was also considered sinful. The Bon faith believed that land was the property of soil gods. To work old, established fields was accepted. However to disturb new land for cropping or mineral exploitation would anger the gods. The Buddhists similarly believed that the cultivating of old, established fields was bad for one's karma. The killing of soil fauna was grounds for the religious community to abstain from all agricultural work that disturbed soil.
By virtue of their occupations, butchers and hunters--the takers of life, smiths, the diggers of the earth, and makers of tools of violence were relegated to a social status below other Tibetans. Three restrictions were imposed upon them and their families, referring to them as having "impure bones." They were not permitted to share a common cup with those with "pure bones," to marry outside of their own occupational group, or to enter themselves or their children into the religious community.40

Other specialty occupations emerged from the demand for skilled workers in the religious, political, and commercial sectors of Tibetan society. Teachers, doctors, soldiers, postal carriers, transportation workers, masons, carpet weavers, and artists were all full-time occupations.

Language

King Songbtsan-sgam-po (A.D. 620-649) perceived the benefit of a written language to accomplish his desired goals of nation building. Recent studies suggest that the alphabet created was modelled upon the Indian Gupta script.

Soon after his reign began, Songbtsan-sgam-po saw the need for a government guided by clearly established laws to stabilize the country and promote moral behavior. A system of writing was essential for this purpose, as well as for bringing the teachings of the Dharma to the people of Tibet. Songbtsan-sgam-po gave his trusted minister Thon-mi Sambhota the task of

devising such a system, sending him abroad to work with foreign scholars. As Thonmi became learned in many different scripts, he created an alphabet to represent the sounds of the spoken Tibetan. Choosing from among the fifty Indian letters, he adapted thirty symbols for consonants and devised variant forms for use in combinations. Three "head letters" were to be written as superscripts; four "tail letters" were to be written as subscripts. From among the fourteen vowels of Sanskrit, he selected four signs to be written above or below the consonants, while each consonant was to contain an inherent "a" just as in Sanskrit. Some letters were modified to represent sounds not existing in the Indian languages, while signs for sounds not used in Tibetan were omitted. Thonmi worked out spelling rules for combining letters and determined which consonants could serve as prefixes and suffixes.41

According to the Tibetan immigrants, the most accurate and complete Tibetan dictionary compiled is The Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary. It is the result of a joint venture started in 1978, between Tibetan and Chinese scholars. Their interest in bridging the language barrier was a result of the Chinese expansion into Tibet, which began in 1950 and continues today. The three-volume dictionary project was completed and published in 1987 by the School of Minority Printing Press in Beijing, China. In 1959, Wylie42 presented a standard system of Tibetan transcription for the English language. The former Tibetan political historian, Shakabpa, noted it as the preferred Tibetan-English system of transcription.

41Yeshe De Project, 189.
Formal Education

The institution of formalized education reflected the cultural values of Tibetans. A profound sense of respect for the independence of the family, combined with their devotion to Tibetan Buddhism, resulted in two forms of formal education: the educational system for the religious community, as presented earlier, and private secular studies. Each family privately paid a teacher and decided who within their family would attend school. The decision was based upon a perceived need-to-know basis. The result was that children of the aristocracy who were destined for government service, family-estate management, or a life of leisure, and sons of merchants were usually the only children taught in a formal manner. Studies focused upon spelling, grammar, and Tibetan penmanship. The children of the pastoralists were the least likely to partake of formal education, with the exception of those chosen for a life in the religious community.

Family

The Tibetan family is near from birth to death. It is the core unit of Tibetan culture that supports individual Tibetans in their mutual quest in life dictated by the three jewels of Buddhism. While interviewing the immigrants, the author was queried why Americans upon becoming adults preferred to live apart from their parents? The individuals
indicated that in the Tibetan culture, the bond between child and parent is extremely strong. As a result of that bond, most Tibetan families chose to live in a household comprised of two or more generations. Other Tibetan sources support the claim of strong family bonds. As remarked to Dawa Norbu by his mother:

I am your mother, you are my son only for this short mortal life, why must we separate when we are at liberty to live together?  

Marriage and death were two important events for the family. Marriage was strictly a family matter with neither the church nor the government involved. Most families worked and planned for a large, prosperous family. Children and elders were both treated with respect, for both added greatly to the happiness and welfare of the family. With regard to behavior, "shyness and modesty were considered virtues" in young women. The practice of parents arranging the marriage of their children was normal, however the young, especially the more independent minded, often eloped. The patriarchal nature of Tibetan culture is suggested in the following Tibetan proverb: "Girls and garlic should be sold before their scent dies."

Aristocratic families were extremely concerned that marriage assure that the family’s property be safeguarded. Although monogamy was the norm for the commoner, wealthy

---

43Dawa Norbu, 18.

44Dawa Norbu, 91.
families of all livelihoods often practiced polygamy or polyandry as a method of protecting or increasing wealth. Traditionally, sons inherit the property and land, whereas daughters are given away in marriage.

Ideally, a newly married couple will live with the family of the man. However, if a family has few or no men, it would seek a man to marry into the family to live and work with the women's family household. At other times, a new couple decided, or were forced by circumstance to build a new home.

Death was a time of sadness and joy for all. The time comes for practicing the Buddhist doctrine of nonattachment, and to provide the soul with spiritual guidance in the period between the death of the old body and the birth of the next body. The period between is known as Bardo, and involves seven stages of seven days, with each stage broken down into seven parts. After forty-nine days of prayers, the services are completed and the body is disposed of.  

The preferred method of disposal was by cremation, however, because of the absence or scarcity of wood, the desired fuel for cremation, most families yielded the bodies to the sacred Tibetan vultures. The body was prepared by cutting the flesh from the bones and pulverizing and mixing the bones with barley flour. The prepared body was then placed on rock outcrops for the vultures' pleasure. If it were

45Thubten Norbu and Colin Turnbull, 111.

40
consumed quickly, it was considered a good sign. If not, the remains were gathered quickly and buried.\textsuperscript{46}

\textbf{Analysis and Summary of Cultural Traits}

The cultural traits held in common by all Tibetans include their religious ceremonies and belief in Buddhism, language, and their government. Within the various Tibetan cultural complexes exist combinations of cultural traits that separate them from the other Tibetan subcultural complexes. For example, pastoralists had adopted traits that proved effective in sustaining that particular form of livelihood over time. The specialization of individuals within each subcultural complex imparted cohesiveness to the complex. The tight bond among family members favored a social setting that assured the health and welfare of all family members. The parent-child relationship provided an avenue to transfer orally the skills and the knowledge of the culture.

\textsuperscript{46}Ibid., 110.
CHAPTER 3

TIBETAN RESETTLEMENT IN INDIA AND NEPAL

The Tibetan immigrants are not emigrating from Tibet of their own volition. Hegemony by the military forces of China since 1950 has forced them to leave, to obey China's rule, or to be imprisoned or executed. Complete control of Tibetan territory and its resources is the primary goal for the Chinese government. As noted by P. C. Chakravarti:

Peking is pursuing the traditional Chinese policy of expansionism. Every strong Imperial regime in China has in the past attempted to expand its borders. There has been a revival of this historic trait now that China is again strong, its government centralized and its life and thought completely regimented.47 Chakravarti believed a combination of a militant nationalism with an estimated army of 2.5 million soldiers, at a time of rapid economic growth in China, provided the Chinese with the means to occupy and exploit Tibet, a nation with whom they shared a common border. Given Tibet's geographical location, the incorporation of Tibet into China would greatly expand opportunities for commercial activity.

Tibet and China have historic cultural ties of long standing. A priest-patron relationship, similar to that

---

established earlier with the rulers of Mongolia, took place between A.D. 1720 and 1912. During that period, an Amban, a representative of China, resided in Lhasa. The Manchu Chinese influence was limited to political and material artifacts that primarily impacted the aristocracy of Tibet. In 1950, the Chinese influence was felt once again. In March, 1959, after nine years of increasing Chinese control over the Tibetan way of life, the XIVth Dalai Lama, accompanied by government officials and family members, fled on foot and horseback to India. There they were granted political asylum.

In May, 1959, the International Commission of Jurists, focussed its attention upon Tibet-China relations. The commission is a non-governmental organization with a category "B" consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council. It established an independent committee, the Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, charged with "the task of investigating events in Tibet in a detached and judicial manner and reporting to the Commission." The committee, composed of ten law professionals representing Africa, Asia, and Europe, was chaired by Purshottam Trikamdas, a senior advocate on the Supreme Court of India. Sources of information for the investigation included publications in the official Chinese press and the Chinese-controlled Tibetan press, radio

---

48Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, 3-6.
broadcasts, statements by Tibetan refugees, authoritative writers of recent and contemporary Tibetan history, and published official documents. The inquiry focussed upon three topics: genocide, the human rights of the Tibetans, and Tibet’s status in international law. The following conclusions were reported by the Legal Inquiry Committee:

Genocide: According to the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December, 1948, human groups against which genocide is recognized as a crime in international law are national, racial, ethnical and religious. The COMMITTEE found that acts of genocide had been committed in Tibet in an attempt to destroy the Tibetans as a religious group, and that such acts are acts of genocide independently of any conventional obligation. The COMMITTEE did not find that there was sufficient proof of the destruction of Tibetans as a race, nation or ethnical group as such by methods that can be regarded as genocide in international law.

Human Rights: The COMMITTEE examined evidence in relation to human rights within the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nation.

The COMMITTEE in considering the question of human rights took into account that economic and social rights are as much a part of human rights as are civil liberties. They found that the Chinese communist authorities in Tibet had violated human rights of both kinds.

The COMMITTEE came to the conclusion that the Chinese authorities in Tibet had violated the following human rights, which the COMMITTEE considered to be standards of behavior in the common opinion of civilized nations.

Article 3: The right to life, liberty and security of person was violated by acts of murder, rape and arbitrary imprisonment.

Article 5: Torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment were inflicted on the Tibetans on a large scale.
Article 9: Arbitrary arrests and detention were carried out.

Article 12: Rights of privacy, of home and family life were persistently violated by the forced transfer of members of the family and by indoctrination turning children against their parents. Children from infancy upwards were removed contrary to the wishes of the parents.

Article 13: Freedom of movement within, to and from Tibet was denied by large-scale deportations.

Article 16: The voluntary nature of marriage was denied by forcing monks and lamas to marry.

Article 17: The right not to be arbitrarily deprived of private property was violated by the confiscation and compulsory acquisition of private property otherwise than on payment of just compensation and in accordance with the freely expressed wish of the Tibetan people.

Article 18: Freedom of thought, conscience and religious were denied by acts of genocide against Buddhists in Tibet and by other systematic acts designed to eradicate religious belief in Tibet.

Article 19: Freedom of expression, and opinion was denied by the destruction of scriptures, the imprisonment of members of the Mimang group and the cruel punishments inflicted on critics of the regime.

Article 20: The right of free assembly and association was violated by the suppression of the Mimang movement and the prohibition of meetings other than those called by the Chinese.

Article 21: The right to democratic government was denied by the imposition from outside of rule by and under the Chinese Communist Party.

Article 22: The economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for the dignity and free development of the personality of man were denied. The economic resources of Tibet were used to meet the needs of the Chinese. Social changes were adverse to the interests of the majority of the Tibetan people. The old culture of Tibet, including its religion, was attacked in an attempt to eradicate it.
Article 24: The right to reasonable working conditions was violated by the exaction of labor under harsh and ill-paid conditions.

Article 25: A reasonable standard of living was denied by the use of the Tibetan economy to meet the needs of the Chinese settling in Tibet.

Article 26: The right to liberal education primarily in accordance with the choice of parents was denied by compulsory indoctrination, sometimes after deportation, in communist philosophy.

Article 27: The Tibetans were not allowed to participate in the cultural life of their own community, a culture which the Chinese have set out to destroy.

Chinese allegations that the Tibetans enjoyed no human rights before the entry of the Chinese were found to be based on distorted and exaggerated accounts of life in Tibet. Accusations against the Tibetan "rebels" of rape, plunder and torture were found in cases of plunder to have been deliberately fabricated and in other cases unworthy of belief for this and other reasons.

The Status of Tibet

The view of the COMMITTEE was that Tibet was at the very least a de facto independent State when the Agreement on Peaceful Measures in Tibet was signed in 1951, and the repudiation of this agreement by the Tibetan government in 1959 was found to be fully justified. 49

Three resolutions were passed in 1959, 1961, and 1965 by the United Nations in protest to China's Tibetan policy.

The XIVth Dalai Lama, the present spiritual and secular leader of the Tibetan Government in Exile, clearly stated

49 Ibid., 3-6.
the government's position on the political status of Tibet:

At no time since the founding of our nation in 127 B.C. have we Tibetans conceded our sovereignty to a foreign power.\textsuperscript{50}

The Chinese government's position on the political status of Tibet is clearly stated in the \textit{Beijing Review}. It declared that Tibet has been part of China since A.D. 1271 when Mongolian rulers established the Yuan Dynasty in China in A.D. 1271-1368. The article states that Tibet has no more right to independence than any other autonomous region in China. "Regional autonomy is acceptable for minority nationals but independence is asking too much!"\textsuperscript{51}

\textbf{Physical Environment}

The change of the physical environment resulting from their resettlement to Indian and Nepal was considerable for the Tibetans. Of the nineteen Tibetans in the study, twelve were born in Tibet, six in India, and one in Nepal. Please see Table 1 and Figure 3 for information regarding the birthplaces and ages of immigrants. The individuals are identically grouped by sex and ordered by age, oldest to youngest on all tables. The twelve who were born in Tibet at elevations of 3,000 to 6,000 meters needed to go through


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth Date</th>
<th>Birth Place</th>
<th>Age: 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tseten Bhuti</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Shungpa, Tibet</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sonam Dolma</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Magra, Tibet</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tenzing Chemi</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Byllakuppe, India</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Passang Dolma</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Lhasa, Tibet</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lhamo Tsering</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Silma, India</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thinley Choden</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Darjeeling, India</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nyima Dolma</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Dege, Tibet</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ngawang Choney</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Mundgod, India</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ngawang Choden</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Kathmandu, Nepal</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yeshi Loden</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Ngamrin, Tibet</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Dawa Tsering</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Tsokho, Tibet</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Tseten Phunksok</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Sakya, Tibet</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Palden Dhundop</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Shalung, Tibet</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Samten Wosser</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Popa, Tibet</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Pema Kunsang</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Tsakho, Tibet</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tashi Phunksok</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Nyanyam, Tibet</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Nyinchak Tsering</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Tekha, Tibet</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Kalsang Tashi</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Mussoorie, India</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Lobsang Khedup</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Byllakuppe, India</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Birth Place and Resettlement of Tibetan Immigrants

Figure 3
a period of physiological adjustment. Some descended over 5,000 meters in their resettlement process. Those born in India and Nepal recalled no physical discomfort associated with the lower elevation.

Climate

The climatic regimes of Tibetan settlements in India and Nepal were characterized by higher temperatures and greater precipitation than those in Tibet. Seasonal and daily temperatures were generally less extreme and less variable in India than in Tibet. India and Nepal, as is true of southern Tibet, have a climate strongly influenced by the monsoon winds. The study group lived in or near Tibetan resettlement communities which, although dispersed over India, tended to be clustered in two areas. In northwestern India and Nepal, the climate is characterized as subtropical, with warm, moist summers and mild, dry winters. For those in southwestern India, a tropical rainforest climate bordering upon a tropical savannah climate resulted in hot, wet summers and warm, dry winters. Please refer to Table 2 and Figure 3 for details.

Cultural Traits

Government and Religion

As in Tibet, government and religion were intertwined. The Dalai Lama was the spiritual and secular leader of the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country: India or Nepal</th>
<th>Settlement Community: In or Out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseten Bhuti</td>
<td>Gangtok, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonam Dolma</td>
<td>Darjeeling, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenzing Chemi</td>
<td>Byllakuppe, India</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passang Dolma</td>
<td>Dharamsala, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lhamo Tsering</td>
<td>Byllakuppe, India</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinley Choden</td>
<td>Dharamsala, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyima Dolma</td>
<td>Bir, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngawang Choney</td>
<td>Mundog, India</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngawang Choden</td>
<td>Kathmandu, Nepal</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeshi Loden</td>
<td>Rajpur, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawa Tsering</td>
<td>Shillong, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseten Phunksok</td>
<td>Orissa, India</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palden Dhundop</td>
<td>Mussoorie, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samten Woser</td>
<td>Orissa, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pema Kunsang</td>
<td>Dharamsala, India</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashi Phunksok</td>
<td>Rajpur, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyinchak Tsering</td>
<td>Byllakuppe, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalsang Tashi</td>
<td>Mussoorie, India</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobsang Khedup</td>
<td>Byllakuppe, India</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tibetans in exile. With the support of the Indian Government, the Tibetan Government-in-Exile was formed, and located in Dharamsala. This was not a democratically elected government. Rather, as explained by individuals in the study group, people were selected to serve according to their ability. A cabinet was created composed of seven ministries and a legislature composed of eleven members: two representing each of the three regions of historical Tibet--U-Tsang, Amdo, and Kham--and one representative from each of the five major religious orders of Tibet.

The Tibetans in India and Nepal are not automatically granted citizenship by either country upon the basis of birthplace. They are recognized as citizens of Tibet, living in exile, and travel internationally with documents provided by their host-country government. In the course of interviewing the immigrants on the subject of governmental politics, several mentioned that in 1992 their government announced that it would begin to hold democratic elections for positions in the legislature.

Buddhism in India, the basis of Tibetan Buddhism, provided spiritual support for the over 100,000 Tibetans in exile living in India and Nepal since 1959. Since 1959, Tibetans have built temples and monasteries throughout India and Nepal. The three leading Geluk-pa monasteries: Sera, Drepung, and Ganden, destroyed by the Chinese in Tibet, were reconstructed in the southwest of India in the resettlement
community of Byllakuppe. In India, the Tibetan religious communities have become more reliant upon themselves and non-Tibetan sources for their physical needs than had been the case in Tibet. For the laity, the traditional family altar was still the primary center of worship.

Livelihood Systems

Tibetans who wished to and were able to leave Tibet, discovered pursuing a livelihood in India or Nepal demanded a change of strategy and skills. The resettlement process resulted in restrictions and opportunities not previously experienced in Tibet. Land was limited to one acre for each individual who was fortunate enough to be given a place to live in one of the resettlement communities. Whereas in Tibet, crops grown on one's land provided the basic food necessities of the family, in India the crops were sold and desired foods, such as rice, wheat flour, and beef, were purchased in the market. In order to augment the family's income, all of the Tibetans who lived in a resettlement community reported working in the commercial clothing trade from November through March each year. Five of them earned a living working for the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. For a comparison of livelihoods pursued by their families in Tibet, India or Nepal, and individually in Missoula, please refer to Table 3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Tibet</th>
<th>Livelihood: India or Nepal</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseten Bhuti</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>H, C</td>
<td>SMO, H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonam Dolma</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenzing Chemi</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A, C</td>
<td>MSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passang Dolma</td>
<td>A, M</td>
<td>SMO</td>
<td>SMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lhamo Tsering</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A, C</td>
<td>SMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinley Choden</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>SMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyima Dolma</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>CW</td>
<td>D, H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngawang Choney</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A, C</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngawang Choden</td>
<td>A, P</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>SMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeshi Loden</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>-TGE, C</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawa Tsering</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>-M, C</td>
<td>SMO, D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseten Phunksok</td>
<td>A, M</td>
<td>M, MN</td>
<td>D, FP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palden Dhundop</td>
<td>A, P</td>
<td>TGE</td>
<td>SMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samten Woser</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A, C</td>
<td>SMO, FP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pema Kunsang</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>TGE</td>
<td>CO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashi Phunksok</td>
<td>A, P</td>
<td>TGE</td>
<td>CO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyinchak Tsering</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D, FP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalsang Tashi</td>
<td>A, M</td>
<td>TGE</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobang Khedup</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A, C</td>
<td>D, FP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Livelihoods: Agriculture (A), Carpet Weaver (CW), Commerce (C), Computer Operator (CO), Dishwasher (D), Food Preparation (FP), Housekeeper (H), Medical Nurse (MN), Medical Social Worker (MSW), Military (M), Newspaper Assembler (NA), Pastoralists (P), Sewing Machine Operator (SMO), Tibetan Government in Exile Employee (TGE)
Formal Education and Language

When the XIV\textsuperscript{th} Dalai Lama entered India in 1959, he and his advisors established priorities for the tasks most urgently in need of attention. The education of the children and the preservation of the Tibetan language were among those tasks. Schools were built in the resettlement communities and all children were encouraged, though not required, to attend. The curriculum included Tibetan cultural and language studies, and Western studies based upon the Indian public-school curriculum. Also included were Hindi and English language studies. Of the nineteen Tibetans in the study group, only one studied in Tibet under Chinese rule. The Tibetan and Chinese language were both taught at his elementary school in northeastern Tibet. Please refer to Table 4 for details regarding formal-educational levels earned by individual in the study group.

Family

Changes in family affairs were primarily a result of two factors. First, with the assembling of a new Tibetan government and circumstances brought on by the Chinese government, a focus upon cultural preservation and the unification of the Tibetans in exile became a priority. The Indian government aided the Tibetans by providing land for those most in need. Since 1960, approximately fifty resettlement communities have been established in India.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Formal Education, in Years</th>
<th>Married</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseten Bhuti</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonam Dolma</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenzing Chemi</td>
<td>12+3+3</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passang Dolma</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lhamo Tsering</td>
<td>12+3</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinley Choden</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyima Dolma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngawang Choney</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngawang Choden</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeshi Loden</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawa Tsering</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseten Phunksok</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palden Dhundop</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samten Woser</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pema Kunsang</td>
<td>12+3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashi Phunksok</td>
<td>12+3+1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyinchak Tsering</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalsang Tashi</td>
<td>12+3</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobсанг Khedup</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There, government officials routinely recorded information on the births, deaths, marriages, and health matters of family members. Previously they were considered affairs of the family, not of the government.

The second factor was the need for the Tibetans to live within the context of Indian society. Fortunately, Tibetans pride themselves upon being congenial and resourceful, as hinted by the following Tibetan proverb translated by A. L. Shelton:52 "If you do not quarrel, you are safe. If you have no debts you will be rich." Marriage ceremonies, that lasted five days in Tibet, were completed in three days in India. The religious death rite of Bardo continued to be followed, however the method of disposal of the body was restricted to cremation in India. Overall, the importance of a strong family bond was overwhelmingly expressed by the study group.

Analysis of Resettlement-Generated Cultural Trait Changes

How has the resettlement process from Tibet to India and Nepal impacted the following Tibetan cultural traits: governmental relations, religion, language, livelihood, and formal education? Have their cultural significance persisted, decreased, or increased for the Tibetans?

The Tibetan's relationship to their government has

increased in significance. The Tibetan Government-in-Exile has developed an increasingly interactive relationship with its citizens. This increased interdependency is a direct result of Tibetan resettlement within a foreign culture and physical environment. Within this new environment, the Government has provided the community with essential services, such as education, housing, and health care, and has acted as a voice for its people both nationally and internationally. In turn, the community actively supported its Government through volunteer work, military service for the Indian Government, and financial assistance. In 1989, the XIVth Dalai Lama was recognized as a leader for world peace when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. That recognition has contributed to increased financial and political support worldwide.

Religion appears to be equally significant in the two settings. The support provided by the families of the study group in India and Nepal is reported to be similar to that provided in Tibet. However, certain changes in the religious institutions were implemented out of necessity as a result of the resettlement process. In the early years, the material needs of the religious communities could not be fulfilled by the Tibetans in exile. Traditional support from the pastoralists was essentially absent. Agriculturalists in exile no longer controlled the land and animal resources as they had previously. The result was
insufficient food and material goods to support their families and large religious communities. Many of the young Tibetans, including many from the religious community, chose to serve in the Indian military. The remainder of the religious community were compelled to work the land to satisfy their food needs. Additionally, non-traditional support flowed in from host nationals and their governments, as well as from distant individuals, organizations, and governments sympathetic to the Tibetan refugees. Over the past thirty-four years, the Tibetan Buddhist communities in India and Nepal have predominately flourished.

The Tibetan language was used strictly among Tibetans in India and Nepal. It was the language of the home and was taught in all of the Tibetan resettlement schools. On the street, Hindi was spoken in India, while Nepalese was spoken in Nepal. It appears from conversations and observations during the study, that Tibetan was the preferred language in India and Nepal for all of the individuals in the study group. The conclusion is that the Tibetan language was as important in India and Nepal as it was in Tibet.

The study indicates a decrease in the significance of agriculture as a livelihood. The livelihood activities in Tibet were described as being slower paced than in India or Nepal. The seasonal nature of work for agriculturalists in Tibet, combined with the traditional beer-drinking and associated social activities with to the harvest, create a
favorable impression of the profession. The varied livelihoods of the immigrants in India and Nepal were also described as slow paced, however long hours and long weeks were noted by several individuals. None in the study group indicated having purchased or rented land to pursue a profession in agriculture in India or Nepal.

Formal education appears to have increased in significance. Both female and male students were encouraged to participate in India and Nepal. The schools played an important role in unifying the Tibetans, preserving their culture, and helping them to adapt to their new setting. Livelihood opportunities for some of the older immigrants as a result of their formal education experiences can be noted by examining tables 3 and 4. Governmental employment opportunities were exclusively male and predominately held by those with the highest levels of formal education within the immigration study group. Equally or more important than employment opportunities, formal education undertaken by the younger generations of Tibetans helped to bridge the multiple divisions between Tibetans and their culturally dissimilar neighbors of India and Nepal.
CHAPTER 4
RESETTLEMENT TO MISSOULA, MONTANA

Official United States Government action to permit legal immigration of Tibetans into the United States began in October, 1987. The subcommittees on Human Rights and International Organizations and on Asian and Pacific Affairs held hearings to assess the escalating tensions between the Tibetan people and the Chinese government. The subcommittees analyzed the issue within the context of implications for the relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China. Action by private citizens of the United States on behalf of provisions for the legal immigration of Tibetans, began when a national organization, the Tibetan-U.S. Resettlement Project, was organized. The results of both the hearings and the Tibetan-U.S. Resettlement Project's efforts helped to include a provision in the Immigration Act of 1990 that provided visas for 1,000 displaced Tibetans to emigrate to the United States as stated by the following:
IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1990

SEC. 134. TRANSITION FOR DISPLACED TIBETANS.
(a) IN GENERAL. Notwithstanding the numerical limitations in sections 201 and 202 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, there shall be made available to qualified displaced Tibetans described in subsection (b) 1,000 immigrant visas in the 3-fiscal-year period beginning with fiscal year 1991.

(b) QUALIFIED DISPLACED TIBETANS DESCRIBED. An alien described in this subsection is an alien who--
(1) is a native of Tibet, and
(2) since before date of enactment of this Act, has been continuously residing in India or Nepal.
For purpose of paragraph (1), an alien shall be considered to be a native of Tibet if the alien was born in Tibet or is the son, daughter, grandson or granddaughter of an individual born in Tibet.

(c) DISTRIBUTION OF VISA NUMBERS. The Secretary of State shall provide for making immigrant visas provided under (a) available to displaced aliens described in subsection (b)
(or described in subsection (d) as the spouse or child of such an alien) in an equitable manner, giving preference to those aliens who are not firmly resettled in India or Nepal or who are most likely to be resettled successfully in the United States.

(d) DERIVATIVE STATUS FOR SPOUSES AND CHILDREN. A spouse or child (as defined in section 101(b)(1)(A), (B), (C), (D), or (E) of the Immigration and Nationality Act) shall, if not otherwise entitled to an immigrant status and the immediate issuance of a visa under this section, be entitled the same status, and the same order of consideration, provided under this section, if accompanying, or following to join, his spouse or parent. 53

In 1991, the Tibetan-U.S. Project Montana, a voluntary organization was formed. It submitted a proposal to the national organization to consider Missoula as a resettlement site. Missoula was selected to be one of twenty sites throughout the United States, with the Tibetan-U.S. Project

Montana responsible for providing the organization and assistance deemed necessary to successfully resettle twenty Tibetans into the Missoula community.

Physical Environment

The change in the physical environment for the immigrants, as a consequence of their resettlement to Missoula, Montana from Indian and Nepal, was characterized as less extreme than that experienced in their move from Tibet to India. Missoula is located in western Montana, in a valley of the Rocky Mountains at approximately 1,000 meters in elevation. It is located approximately 47 degrees north latitude, 114 degrees west longitude, and is fifteen to thirty degrees farther north than the immigrants lived in India and Nepal. The shift northward results in a shorter daylight period during the winter than they previously experienced. Other than the shorter period of daylight, most in the study group expressed a dislike for what they termed the unsettled nature of the weather in Missoula during the winter of 1992 and the spring of 1993.

Cultural Traits

Religion for the study group has remained traditional. A small Buddhist monastery in Missoula provides a place for religious consultation when the individual deems it necessary. It is not a house of prayer per se, but provides
spiritual support for the community. Prayer, for the most part, is conducted in the privacy of the home, where an alter is arranged, and is a solitary affair.

The British influence shared by the study group and citizens in Missoula permits an easier understanding of the formal-education institutions. All in the study group are studying English with private tutors or in group sessions provided by a local, public-educational institution. English is the language of their places of work. However, given the short period of their presence in Missoula, and their emphasis upon employment at this stage of resettlement, formal education is not a primary issue of significance for the majority.

The livelihoods for all have changed from their previous occupations in India and Nepal. All of them work for an employer, with many of them working for two employers. In addition to working to pay for their living expenses, most are saving for the expense of resettling their immediate families in Missoula—a difficulty since most are working for a minimum wage.

**Analysis to Resettlement-Generated Cultural Trait Changes**

How has the resettlement process from India and Nepal to Missoula, Montana impacted the following Tibetan cultural traits: governmental relations, religion, livelihood, language, and formal education? Have their cultural
significance persisted, decreased, or increased for the Tibetans?

Governmental relations appear to have remained constant in significance. It was an act of the United States Government that permitted their legal entry into this country. However, as immigrants without citizenship status for at least five years, participation in government is limited to paying taxes and observing, while having the same legal rights and responsibilities as citizens of the United States.

Religion appears to be constantly high in significant in the two settings, although responses to the questionnaire indicate a slight to moderate decline in Missoula. Although the support of the family and the greater community is less, most of the immigrants expressed a need to live by the Buddhist doctrine. Worship in the home reportedly continues for those who previously practiced Buddhism.

The Tibetan language continues to be important in Missoula for the Tibetans. It is spoken primarily among themselves, as it was in India and Nepal. It is the language of the home and it is considered important by the Tibetans to maintain and pass it on to the next generation.

Formal education appears to persist at a similar level of significance in Missoula as it did in India and Nepal. Formal education played an important role in India and Nepal in unifying the Tibetans, preserving their culture, and
helping them to adapt to their new setting. While in India, those desiring to work for the Tibetan Government-in-Exile increased their opportunities by increasing the level of their formal education.

Livelihood as agriculturalists continues to decrease in significance for the immigrants. Life in India or Nepal was reported to be more slowly paced than in Missoula. However, livelihood activities in India and Nepal often were described as involving longer work days and work weeks than in Missoula. Two of the immigrants, who worked previously as part-time agriculturalists in Tibetan resettlement communities in India, indicated hopes to some day engage in that livelihood in the United States.

Analysis of the responses from the questionnaire supports many of the conclusions based upon the informal interviews and literature review. Fifteen of eighteen individuals in the study group responded. Please consult the appendix for a copy of the questionnaire in English. Consult the following graphs, Figures 4 and 5, for a summary and analysis of the responses to the questionnaire. Figure 4 reflects the mean response for the fifteen respondents to question 1. Figure 5 reflects the mean responses for the fifteen respondents to questions 2, 3, and 4. Plus fifteen represents the maximum increase, zero represents no change, and minus fifteen represents the maximum decrease of importance placed upon the five cultural traits under study.
Importance of Cultural Traits in Tibet

Cultural Trait Changes throughout the Resettlement Process

Figure 4.

Figure 5.
Conclusions

The conclusions reached are believed to represent the Tibetan immigrants in Missoula for the specific cultural traits studied. Because of the small population size of nineteen individuals, analysis by classes such as age, sex, or marital status has been avoided. Further, in order to obtain truthful, firsthand information during the process of interviewing and responding to questionnaires, individuals within the study group were promised complete confidentiality. Characterization of responses by classification would compromise that pledge.

The reasons for the changes documented included a combination of both physical and human factors, both internal and external to the Tibetan cultural region. It is believed that this report may provide a preliminary assessment that could facilitate cooperation between the Tibetan immigrants and individuals and organizations responsible for Missoula’s cultural affairs.

As indicated above, the hypothesis is that by utilizing Tibet and its culture prior to 1950 as a benchmark, the direction of change for each selected culture trait may be determined and stated as having decreased, remained constant, or increased in value for the study group.

The study indicates that the resettlement process as experienced by the study group, from Tibet to India and Nepal, and ultimately to Missoula, Montana, has
significantly impacted Tibetan culture traits. Although the review of literature, interviews, and questionnaire responses are not in total agreement, the following overall conclusions have been formed. Governmental relations increased in value in India and Nepal, and since have remained constant in value in the United States. Religion remained constantly high in value in India and Nepal with an indication of a slight to moderate decrease in Missoula. Agriculture as a livelihood has decreased in value throughout the resettlement process. However, concern for livelihood as a cultural trait continued to be of primary importance. The high value attached to language remained constantly high in India and Nepal with a slight decrease in Missoula. Formal education increased in value in India and Nepal, and has remained relatively constant in value in the United States.
APPENDIX

Questionnaire

The questions will focus on the importance of the following five (5) subjects for your family and or yourself.

1. --Formal Education
2. --Government
3. --Livelihood
4. --Religion
5. --Tibetan Language

Definition of importance for determining the importance of the five subjects: Importance will be based on the changes in the amount of three factors given to each of the five subjects. They include: time, money and thought. Did the three factors increase, decrease or remain about the same for you and or your family? With this as a definition for importance, please respond to the following questions.

1. While living in Tibet, on a scale of 1-5, 1=low, 5=high, rate your families' importance placed upon:
   1. --Formal Education 1 2 3 4 5
   2. --Government 1 2 3 4 5
   3. --Livelihood 1 2 3 4 5
   4. --Religion 1 2 3 4 5
   5. --Tibetan Language 1 2 3 4 5

2. While living in India or Nepal, did your families' importance placed upon the five subjects decreased, remained
about the same, or increased as compared to while living in Tibet?

1. -- Formal Education  decreased, about the same, increased
2. -- Government  decreased, about the same, increased
3. -- Livelihood  decreased, about the same, increased
4. -- Religion  decreased, about the same, increased
5. -- Tibetan Language  decreased, about the same, increased

3. Since your arrival in Missoula, Montana, has the importance for you for the five subjects decreased, remained about the same, or increased as compared to while living in India or Nepal?

1. -- Formal Education  decreased, about the same, increased
2. -- Government  decreased, about the same, increased
3. -- Livelihood  decreased, about the same, increased
4. -- Religion  decreased, about the same, increased
5. -- Tibetan Language  decreased, about the same, increased

4. At this time, would you desire: a decrease, about the same, or an increase in importance placed upon the five subjects?

1. -- Formal Education  decrease, about the same, increase
2. -- Government  decrease, about the same, increase
3. -- Livelihood  decrease, about the same, increase
4. -- Religion  decrease, about the same, increase
5. -- Tibetan Language  decrease, about the same, increase

71
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Sherring, Charles A. *Western Tibet and the British Borderland: The Sacred Country of Hindus and Buddhists.* London: Edward Arnold, Publisher to the India Office, 1906.


"What is behind the Dalai Lama’s Plan?" Beijing Review

White, Leslie A. The Evolution of Culture: The Development
of Civilization to the Fall of Rome. New York City:

Wylie, Turrel. "A Standard System of Tibetan
Transcription." Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies 22