


The Thirteenth Dalai Lama's Sojourns at Kumbum Monastery between 1906 and 1909: (Further) Lessons on International Politics, Necessary Reforms in Tibet, and the Dalai Lama's Role in Amdo*

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Introduction

he Younghusband expedition from British India to Tibet in 1904 and the subsequent flight of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama Tubten Gyatso (Thub bstan rgya mtsho, 1876–1933) is generally considered a major turning point in Tibet's 20th century political history and has therefore attracted considerable academic research and discussions.¹ The Thirteenth Dalai Lama was ill-advised by the Buryat monk Agvan Dorzhiev (1854–1938) when he fled Lhasa for Mongolia in the hope of receiving protection and an invitation from the Russian tsar Nicholas II (1868–1918). These never materialized due to Russia's own international and domestic crises, namely the 1904–05 Russo-Japanese War and the 1905 Russian Revolution.² Furthermore, the Tibetan hierarch had underestimated the Manchu Qing Court in Beijing and considered it too weak to effectively support Tibet against British India. Quite to the contrary, the Qing Court took advantage of his absence from Lhasa to strengthen its own grip on Tibet. To make

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¹ See, for example, Mehra 1968; Lamb 1986: 222–285; Goldstein 1989; Dawa Norbu 1990; Smith 1996; McKay 2009. I wish to thank my co-editors and anonymous peer reviewers for their insightful suggestions and comments on a previous version of this paper. Of course, any mistakes and misinterpretations remain mine.

² Agvan Dorzhiev, also spelled Dorjiev and Agwan Dorjiev, was called Ngawang Lobzang (Ngag dbang blo bzang) in Tibetan. The Dalai Lama had already met him in Lhasa in the late 1880s, when Dorzhiev became his assistant tutor for debate and his unofficial teacher for “foreign affairs.” For more detailed information on this important personage, see Jampa Samten and Tsyrempilov 2012; Tsyrempilov 2011; Andreyev 2003 and 2008; Snelling 1993; Kuleshov 1996; see also <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Agvan-Dorjiev/13510>, accessed May 15, 2023.

matters worse, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and his Mongolian host, the Eighth Jebtsundampa Khutagt (1870–1924)—also often referred to as the Bogd Khan—did not get along well.³ Therefore, after about two years of exile at different locations in Mongolia, the Tibetan hierarchy moved on to Amdo. Although it was presumed he would only pass through Amdo on his way back to Lhasa, the Buddhist ruler remained at Kumbum (Sku 'bum) Monastery at the Sino-Tibetan border for over a year from November 1906 to December 1907. Thereafter, instead of returning home, he first went on an extended pilgrimage to the sacred Buddhist site of Mount Wutai (Wutaishan 五台山) in Shanxi 山西 Province from February 1908 to September 1908 and from there to Beijing.⁴ When the Dalai Lama left Beijing in late December 1908 to finally return to Lhasa, he once again passed through Amdo and stayed for another three to four months at Kumbum Monastery from mid-February to early June 1909. Altogether, he spent about eighteen months of his five years in exile in Amdo but, surprisingly, this long spell has not attracted much academic attention and is usually summarized in a few sentences.⁵

After leaving Urga, the Dalai Lama travelled in Amdo giving teachings. He stayed primarily at Kumbum (sku 'bum) Monastery, which marks the spot of Tsongkhapa's birth. There he received a de-legation from Lhasa which brought news of events in Lhasa and urged him to return. The Dalai Lama decided instead to go to Beijing, leaving in the summer of 1908.⁶

In contrast to what might be expected from the short notes like the one quoted above, I argue that the Dalai Lama's sojourn in Amdo was of major importance for his future policies for Tibet for three reasons. First, the Dalai Lama gained further important lessons on international

³ Ishihama 2019a and 2022. His Mongolian name was Agwaan luwsan choiji nyima danzan wangchug (Tib. Ngag dbang blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma bstan 'dzin dbang phyug).

⁴ For the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's stay at Wutaishan, see Sperling 2011: 389–410, for his stay in Beijing, see Jagou 2009: 349–378.

⁵ The Thirteenth Dalai Lama's first exile lasted from July 1904 to December 1909. Of those five and a half years, the Dalai Lama spent two years in Mongolia, one and a half at Kumbum Monastery, half a year at Wutaishan and about three months in Beijing. The rest of the time was spent traveling.

⁶ Tsering Shakya, <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Thirteenth-Dalai-Lama-Tubten-Gyatso/3307> accessed May 15, 2023. In Tada Tokan's, Glenn Mullin's and Charles Bell's otherwise quite detailed biographies of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama we find the same brevity when they recount the Dalai Lama's sojourn in Amdo. Tada 1965: 46; Mullin 1988: 71–72; Bell 1946: 69.

At that time, Urga, which later became known as Ulaanbaatar, was called Ikh Khüree in Mongolian, Da'a Khu ral or Da khral in Tibetan and (Da) Kulun 大庫倫 in Chinese.

relations and power politics by meeting, for the first time, several non-Russian Westerners at Kumbum Monastery and, most importantly, by engaging with a new foreign advisor, i.e., the Japanese Buddhist monk Teramoto Enga 寺本婉雅 (1872–1940). Thereby further widening his outlook, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama not only discarded his former policy of avoiding personal contacts with Westerners, but he even began to pro-actively seek new contacts with representatives of other foreign powers besides Russia. Second, as demonstrated in Teramoto's travel diary, the Tibetan reform plans—in addition to the projects for Tibet's military and foreign relations—also included more autonomy, if not complete independence, from Qing China (1644–1911), and were the topic of controversial debates among the Dalai Lama's close advisers. The rift into two opposing factions among the Tibetan entourage was widening, while the Dalai Lama was still wavering between the different options. And last not least, I argue that the Tibetan hierarch's experiences with the Gansu and Amdo elites, foremost the conflict with the head of Kumbum Monastery, forced the Dalai Lama to re-examine the limits of his religious and temporal power in Amdo. Accordingly, this study is divided into three main parts, followed by a short conclusion.

As for sources, the Tibetan ones include the biographies of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and of those in his entourage who accompanied him into exile, as well as of some high-ranking Amdo reincarnations.⁷ Regarding Chinese primary sources I mainly rely on the official Chinese historical works for the Qing period, i.e., the *Qing shilu* 清實錄 (Veritable Records of the Qing Dynasty, QSL) and the *Da Qing huidian* 大清會典 (Collected Regulations and Statutes of the Great Qing, DQHD). The Tibetan and Chinese sources are complemented by various foreign sources: among these Teramoto Enga's travel diary is the most detailed and insightful for this study followed by the diary of the Buryat intellectual Bazar Baradin (1878–1937).⁸ Apart from the

⁷ These include the biographies of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama (Phur lcog 2010), the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa (Dros dmar tshe ring rdo rje 2013) and the Third Gurong (Bstan 'dzin 1994). Please note that for many important personages of early 20th century Amdo, such as the Fifth Akya Khutugtu and the Seventh Changkya Khutugtu, we only have short summative biographies, if any at all. Furthermore, the existing biographies often provide disappointingly little information about the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's stay in Amdo. As for biographies of the Dalai Lama's entourage, see, for example, Byams pa 'phrin las 1990 and Tsarong 2000.

⁸ Teramoto's *Zōmō Tabi Nikki* 藏蒙旅日記 [Travel Diary to Tibet and Mongolia] was published by his nephew in 1974. Although Teramoto sometimes confused people and events, his diary is an essential source of information not found elsewhere. The diary has recently been translated into Chinese and published in Taiwan. Baradin's *Life in the Tangut Monastery of Labrang*—published in Russian—contains

accounts of these two Tibetan and Mongolian speaking foreign Buddhists and intellectuals, we also have at hand a few reports by foreign Christian missionaries stationed in Lanzhou 蘭州 and Xining 西寧, as well as those of a handful of foreign explorers who were visiting the Sino-Tibetan border area at that time. Last not least, Chinese, Tibetan, and Nepalese primary sources were occasionally quoted in diplomatic official correspondence, i.e., in the files of the British Foreign Office and the India Office as well as in those stored at the Political Archives of the German Foreign Ministry. These provide details not found elsewhere.⁹

1. *Further Lessons on International Relations*

Most studies on the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's first exile have focused on his stays at Wutaishan and in Beijing in 1908 and, more recently, on his sojourn in Mongolia from 1904 to 1906. The latter have already started to refute the former assumption that the Dalai Lama only seriously extended his knowledge about international power politics while at Wutaishan and in Beijing.¹⁰ Indeed, the Dalai Lama had already been confronted with international power politics in the late 19th century, when conflicts with British India occurred on the Tibetan border to Sikkim. Moreover, the Tibetan hierarch had started to learn more about the Western world through the Russian imperial lens of his Buryat tutor and adviser Agvan Dorzhiev in Lhasa. As early as from 1898 to 1901 did Dorzhiev travel to a number of European capitals as some sort of diplomatic envoy for the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan hierarch had possibly already then started to grasp the imminent danger that Tibetan passivity in "international relations" beyond the Tibetan Buddhist world posed for the Tibetan pre-modern state. Thus,

some interesting gossip from, and observations about Labrang Tashikhyil (Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil) Monastery on the eve of the Dalai Lama's arrival in Amdo. Baradin was a student of the famous Russian Indologist Fedor Shcherbatskoi (1866–1942) and employed by the Russian Committee for the Study of Central and East Asia when he traveled to Labrang. See Snelling 1993: 124 and Garri in this RET issue. I wish to thank Xenia de Heering for her support with the translation of excerpts of the Russian text by Baradin, and Maki Takano for reading important excerpts of Teramoto's travel diary with me. Any mistakes and misinterpretations remain, of course, entirely mine.

⁹ For this paper I was able to access British and German archives and I wish to thank the French National Research Agency (ANR) (Project ANR-21-CE27-0025-Natinasia) for supporting my research there. Important documents from Russian, Buryat, and French archives are discussed in other articles of this RET issue. I also thank Rahel Tsering for sharing her knowledge about the German Foreign Office files with me.

¹⁰ Jagou 2009: 369; Bell 1946: 74; Palace 1998; Sperling 2011: 395; Bulag 2013; Kobayashi 2019 and Ishihama 2022.

Dorzhiev was already trying to secure some goodwill if not support for Tibet from other European governments against the British threat long before the Dalai Lama went into exile.¹¹

However, it was only during his exile that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama started to personally interact with foreign powers other than Tibet's direct neighbors. Several more recent studies already highlight how both Russian officials and the Tibetan hierarch seized the opportunity to get into direct contact in Urga, where the Dalai Lama personally met with Russia's consuls, its new ambassador to China Dmitrii Pokotilov (1865–1908) on his way to Beijing, and different members of Russian expedition teams like Captain Petr Kuz'mich Kozlov (1863–1935) and the less studied Russian Indologist Fedor Shcherbatskoi (1866–1942).¹² Since the Dalai Lama had refused to receive any non-Buddhist foreigners in Lhasa, these Russians were the first Westerners the Dalai Lama directly interacted with. They thus set the scene for those who met the Tibetan hierarch later at Kumbum, not only relating to protocol but also to the hierarch's expectations to meet with a foreign official envoy—or at least semi-official envoy—when he granted an audience to a western foreigner.

1.1. *Teramoto Enga*

One of the key players at Kumbum who needs to be introduced in more detail was the aforementioned Japanese Buddhist monk Teramoto Enga. The also politically active Teramoto was connected to the Higashi Honganji, a Japanese Buddhist sect that had launched a missionary enterprise in China as early as in 1876.¹³ Teramoto arrived in Beijing in 1898 and began studying Chinese, Mongolian, and Tibetan as well as Tibetan Buddhism at the famous Tibeto-Mongolian Monastery, the Yonghegong 雍和宮, in Beijing. Teramoto repeatedly travelled back and forth between Japan, Beijing, and Amdo until 1909. Thanks to his networking skills, he easily befriended Qing officials, Japanese diplomats in Beijing and many high-ranking Tibetan and

¹¹ Dorzhiev traveled to Paris and possibly London in 1898 and repeatedly to St. Petersburg between 1898 and 1905. He apparently also tried to make contact with the German Prince Friedrich Leopold of Prussia (1865–1931) when the latter passed through Urga in about 1905, see Political Archives of the German Foreign Office (GFO), PAAA_RZ201_018056_052-053, German Legation report of Apr. 16, 1909. Teramoto met Dorzhiev in Beijing in November 1908 and occasionally mentioned him as Gaawan (Agvan) in his diary; Teramoto 1974: 207, 221, 231. For more detailed information on Dorzhiev, see the references in FN 2.

¹² For more information, see I. Garri's contribution in this RET issue.

¹³ For more information on the origin and role of the Higashi Honganji 東本願寺 in China, see Chen 2009.

Mongolian Buddhist monks alike, among them the Fifth Akya Khutughtu Lobzang Tenpai Wangchuk Sönam Gyatso (A kya/kyA/rkyA ho thog thu Blo bzang bstan pa'i dbang phyug bsod nams rgya mtsho, 1869/74–1909) of Kumbum Monastery and the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. Teramoto was critical of both Russia and Great Britain and believed in Pan-Asian ideas and the so-called Okuma Doctrine, namely, that Japan should save other Asian nations from Western imperialism and help them modernize. For Teramoto, the Dalai Lama was the natural leader to unite Asian Buddhists, but he felt that the Dalai Lama's flight had been a serious mistake and had damaged the latter's religious and political power. He therefore feared that Tibetan Buddhism was in decline and that a weak Dalai Lama would also curtail the influence of Buddhism in Asia as a whole. In order to counterbalance these negative developments, Teramoto attempted to convince the Tibetan hierarch and his entourage to get into closer contact with Japan which could act as Tibet's new protector, and to reconcile with Qing China. In addition, Teramoto hoped the current situation might at least lead to the modernization of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhist institutions, which he considered as too backward to meet the challenges of modern times.¹⁴

After two years of preparations at Kumbum Monastery between February 1903 and February 1905, Teramoto travelled to Lhasa in May 1905 and then left Tibet via India after a surprisingly short stay of only two to three months, supposedly because the Dalai Lama was already in exile.¹⁵ By April 1906, Teramoto was back in Beijing and then returned to Kumbum as soon as he learned that the Dalai Lama was to stay at that monastery. He arrived there in September 1906, about two months before the Dalai Lama, and by late November 1906 he was already acquainted with the Tibetan hierarch and his close attendants and became their discussion partner on international politics and reform ideas for Tibet. What probably served as a door opener for Teramoto was a complimentary letter by Abbot Ōtani Kōei 大谷光瑞 (1876–1948), the head of the Higashi Honganji Buddhist sect in Kyoto, which he presented to the Dalai Lama during his first audience.¹⁶ That another Buddhist leader from Asia—apart from Buryats and Kalmyks in Russia—was seeking his contact must have been comforting for the

¹⁴ Berry 1995: 58–79; Kobayashi 2019: 41–47; Teramoto 1974: 203, 207, 214.

¹⁵ Teramoto apparently also managed to meet the British Trade Agent William Frederick O'Connor (1870–1943) in Gyantse (Rgyal rtse), the British Political Officer Charles A. Bell (1870–1945) in Chumbi and Lord George Curzon (1859–1925) in Simla; Berry 1995: 67–71.

¹⁶ Ōtani Kōei was the head of the Higashi Honganji Buddhist sect, a sub-sect of the Japanese Pure Earth Sect (Jōdo Shinshū 浄土真宗, Ch. Jingtū 淨土). See also FN 13.

Dalai Lama in his predicament of exile and he began exchanging letters with Ōtani Kōei while in Amdo.¹⁷

Moreover, Teramoto urged the Dalai Lama to visit Japan and to open diplomatic relations with Japan, proposals the Dalai Lama and his advisors apparently seriously considered but which did not materialize.¹⁸ To this end, Teramoto later also arranged the Dalai Lama's meetings with Ōtani Sonyū 大谷尊由 (1886–1939), the brother of Ōtani Kōzui, at Wutaishan and with various Japanese embassy and military officials in Beijing in 1908.¹⁹ It seems that the Japanese government was only indirectly interested in the Dalai Lama and in Tibetan affairs, namely only insofar as they related to their political interests in Mongolia and Manchuria. Furthermore, Japan was bound by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 which—although mainly directed against Russia's expansionary policy in Asia—also prohibited direct involvement in Tibetan affairs.²⁰ Therefore, it is not entirely clear whether Teramoto's agenda for Tibet and the Dalai Lama actually concurred with that of the Japanese government and whether Teramoto was in fact a Japanese spy or acted on his own behalf. It is evident, however, that Teramoto did have a political agenda when meeting with the Dalai Lama and his advisors and that he attempted to influence them accordingly.²¹

1.2. *Western visitors*

The first western foreigners who happened to cross paths with the Dalai Lama within days after his arrival at Kumbum in early November 1906 were, ironically, British citizens, namely, the Xining based Christian missionary H. French Ridley (1862–1944) and explorer Lieutenant John Weston Brooke (1880–1908). Not surprisingly, Brooke described

¹⁷ For the Buryat and Kalmyk Buddhist connections, see Ishihama 2019a and Takehiko 2019.

¹⁸ Teramoto 1974: 236–237.

¹⁹ Qin 2005: 122–125, 128–129.

²⁰ For Anglo-Japanese relations and the repercussions for their respective Tibet Policies, see Klein 1971–1972.

²¹ For Teramoto's activities in China and Tibet, see also Berry 1995, Kobayashi 2019, Tafel 1914 vol. 2: 91–92, and Qin 2005: 131. The German Legation in Beijing considered Teramoto as a Japanese spy; GFO, PA AA RZ 201-018055-70, German Legation report of Apr. 9, 1907. Baradin also mentions that many monks at Kumbum eyed Teramoto with suspicion; Baradin 2002: 164. We do know that Teramoto regularly reported to the Japanese military attaché and Vice-Chief of Staff, General Fukushima in Beijing while he was in Amdo because the letters are listed in his diary. For more information on Fukushima, see Saalen, 2018: 69–86 and Esenbel 2018: 87–117. Tada, on the other hand, mentions Teramoto only as an interpreter for the Japanese delegation at Wutaishan; Tada 1965: 48.

the Dalai Lama as rather stiff and unfriendly at their joint audience. Brooke endeavored to receive permission for his expedition to travel to Lhasa but, not unexpectedly, was unsuccessful. One or two months later in early 1907, the German explorer Dr. Albert Tafel (1876–1935) paid his respects. To Tafel's surprise the Dalai Lama made small talk and was well informed about Germany's location in Europe. However, he evaded the political topics Tafel tried to discuss. Unfortunately, Tafel did not record which topics he had raised with the Dalai Lama, but it is very likely Tafel had hoped to elicit statements on the Tibetan stance on Great Britain, Russia, and China and the Dalai Lama's future plans.²²

It is especially noteworthy that, while contacts with Buryat, Mongolian, and Japanese monks in Lhasa before 1904 had apparently followed the traditional Tibetan court protocol, these rules were then slowly changed for non-Buddhist visitors during the Dalai Lama's exile. During their some twenty to thirty minute audiences, Ridley, Brooke, and Tafel were still expected to stand in front of the Dalai Lama's elevated throne where he sat cross-legged, and they were not allowed to take a photo of him. These rules were already considerably loosened in early 1908, when the Dalai Lama stayed at the Buddhist sacred site at Wutaishan where he met with about ten foreigners from different countries and, in addition, adopted another foreigner as his unofficial adviser, namely the American ambassador and Tibetologist, William W. Rockhill (1854–1914).²³ When the Russian explorer Captain Kozlov, who had already made the Dalai Lama's acquaintance in Mongolia in 1905, again met the Dalai Lama at Kumbum in March 1909—after the latter's return from Beijing—Kozlov described the ambiance at the audience and their numerous subsequent informal meetings as very relaxed. The Dalai Lama allegedly even shook hands with Kozlov who was not only allowed to take a photo of the Dalai Lama but was also invited to Lhasa. They apparently repeatedly talked at length about European affairs for which the Dalai Lama showed a keen interest, and Kozlov also mentions that the Dalai Lama possessed an atlas with Tibetan notes—apparently an atlas from the Russian geographer Eduard Petri (1854–1899)—which they consulted during their meetings.²⁴ Therefore, we see a stark contrast to the stiff protocol followed with Brooke, Ridley and Tafel two years earlier and a clear shift

²² Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 92–94.

²³ Rockhill had already started a correspondence with the Dalai Lama in 1905, spent a week with him at Wutaishan, and repeatedly saw the Dalai Lama during his stay in Beijing. Rockhill 1910: 91; Sperling 2011; Meinheit 2011; Kobayashi 2019.

²⁴ The atlas was most probably the 1903 edition of the *Uchebnyi Geograficheskii Atlas* (Manual Geographical Atlas), published by Marks in St. Petersburg. I wish to thank Irina Garri for this information.

towards a Dalai Lama who felt considerably more relaxed with western foreigners.²⁵

1.3. The Dalai Lama's new diplomatic initiatives

As mentioned above, by the time that the Dalai Lama reached Kumbum in late 1906, he had already made his first indirect and cautious steps into the western diplomatic and academic community by exchanging letters and presents with foreign governments, particularly with the Russian tsar through Dorzhiev. Moreover, the new Russian and Buryat contacts in Mongolia had informed the Tibetan hierarch about the recent surge in academic interest in Buddhism, and notably Tibetan Buddhism, by Western and Asian countries in addition to geographic and other scientific interests in Tibet. Teramoto and the Westerners whom the Dalai Lama met at Kumbum and later at Wutaishan, confirmed this academic interest, which seems to have encouraged the Dalai Lama and his advisors to actively reach out to other nations besides Russia.²⁶

Indeed, in every meeting with foreign explorers at Kumbum, the Dalai Lama now actively inquired whether they carried messages from their governments for him, apparently hoping that foreign governments would secretly offer support or at least would try to get into direct contact with him. However, only Kozlov could answer this question in the affirmative.²⁷ Thus, with no obvious foreign support forthcoming but an occasion of sending a new "tribute mission" to Beijing in early summer 1907,²⁸ a by now presumably rather frustrated Dalai Lama and his advisers decided to pro-actively contact the representatives of several imperial powers in Beijing, namely the USA, Russia, Japan, France, Germany and, last not least, even their foe Great Britain. To this end, the Tibetan hierarch wrote personal letters to several Western ambassadors and dispatched them with his "tribute envoys" to Beijing. As a complete novelty, he invited several foreign dignitaries to meet him at the Buddhist sacred site at Wutaishan, where he planned to travel before his return to Tibet.

It seems that the aforementioned Russian Indologist Shcherbatskoi played an important role in this major shift in the Dalai Lama's

²⁵ For the Dalai Lama's changing attitudes towards foreigners, see also Mannerheim 2008: 764–766; d'Ollone 1912: 305; d'Ollone 1988: 363; Kozlov 1925: 219–224.

²⁶ See, for example, Kobayashi 2019.

²⁷ Brooke in Fergusson 1911: 5–6; Teramoto 1974: 218, 237; Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 92–94; Kozlov 1925: 219–224.

²⁸ This new mission was sent in response to an edict received from the Qing Emperor Guangxu 光緒 (1871–1908) through the Dalai Lama's returning first mission sent from Mongolia in 1905 or 1906; Teramoto 1974: 234–236.

attitudes, because he was the one who had already suggested to the Dalai Lama during his stay in Urga in 1905 to get into contact with W. W. Rockhill in Beijing.²⁹ The Dalai Lama followed this recommendation and thus gradually started to build an international body of advisers. While at Kumbum, the Dalai Lama continued to receive advice not only from the Buryat Dorzhiev and the circle close to him, but by then also from a Japanese monk, namely Teramoto, and, possibly in writing, by an American diplomat.

The Dalai Lama's two emissaries who left Kumbum in late June 1907, were called Lobzang Tenzin (Blo bzang bstan 'dzin, n.d.) and Jamyang Tenpa ('Jam dbyangs bstan pa, n.d.) who I have not been able to identify with certainty yet. Lobzang Tenzin was—according to Teramoto—a third rank Tibetan official, and he described himself as belonging to Drepung ('Bras spungs) Monastery in Lhasa and as having been in personal attendance of the Dalai Lama throughout his exile. All we learn about Jamyang Tenpa is that he was Lobzang Tenzin's deputy, spoke good Chinese and had travelled between Beijing and Lhasa by land and sea already four or five times.³⁰ According to the Dalai Lama's biography, however, Jamyang Tenpa seems to have been the higher-ranking official, bearing the title of *sku bcar* ("favorite") *mkhan che* and Lobzang Tenzin of *mkhan chung*.³¹ After arriving in Beijing, both envoys started their visits to the aforementioned foreign

²⁹ Kobayashi 2019: 43–44; I. Garri in this RET issue.

³⁰ In Chinese, the tribute envoy (*gongshi* 貢使) Lobzang Tenzin is named Luosang-Danzeng 羅桑丹增 and titled *nangsu* 囊素 (Tib. *nangso*), see Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan 2002: 129, doc. 155. For further references to Lobzang Tenzin and sometimes Jamyang Tenpa, see, for example, Lobsang Dansong Nangsu (GFO, PA AA RZ 201/18055 161–166, German Legation report of Feb. 5, 1908), Lo Sang Tan Tseng (British Library (BL), IOR/L/PS/20/259, "East India (Tibet). Further Papers Relating to Tibet. In Continuation of CD. 2370," *Parliament Papers* (hereafter quoted as BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259) 1910: 146, doc. 233, Jordan to Edward Grey, Feb. 4, 1908, *da kanbu* (*mkhan po*) Rosan tanjin and Jamian danba (Teramoto 1974: 237), *Khenpo* Lobzang Tendzin (Mannerheim 2008: 764), Khampo Lozang Tenzin (Meinheit 2011: 417–418), and Sba yer mkhan po Blo bstan (Sperling 2011: 394). He might possibly be identical with the Sixty-second abbot of Drepung Gomang, Lobzang Tenzin (Blo bzang bstan 'dzin, abbot 1909–1913); see online <https://www.drepunggomang.org/monastery-s-abbots?view=article&id=401&catid=9>, accessed Apr. 28, 2023.

³¹ Phur Icoq 2010: vol. 2, 40–41, 104. *Mkhan che* usually designated a high monk official of the third rank in the traditional Tibetan government, whereas *mkhan chung* was a rank/title for monk officials that corresponded to the fourth rank (Tib. *rim bzhi*) officials in the lay aristocratic side of the traditional government bureaucracy, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/tibetan-oral-history-project/articles-and-essays/glossary/#s>, accessed Dec. 12, 2023.

legations in late January 1908.³² They delivered presents and a complimentary letter from the Dalai Lama to the German Legation on January 25, 1908, and in this letter the Dalai Lama expressed his wish to meet with the German ambassador at Wutaishan.

The Dalai Lama's letter read:

[... Salutory address ...]

I have found peace and quiet during my travels so far. When I now send the abbot Lobsang Dansong Nangsu with presents (one painting, one hata [i.e., khatak (kha bdags)], ten bunches of Tibetan incense, and three bolts of cloth) to Your Excellency, then this is in accordance with the customs of my country.

Your Excellency highly respects the teachings of the Buddha, which gives me hope that a good relationship will develop between us. Should your Excellency have any instructions or requests, I beg to communicate this order to Abbot Lobsang Dansong Nangsu, who will inform me about it. I would be very happy if I could talk to your Excellency personally after my arrival at Wutaishan.

[... Closing phrase ...]

(The Dalai Lama's personal seal)

Dated 12th day of the 5th month (June 22, 1907, according to the Chinese and early Sept. 1907 according to the Tibetan calendar). (My translation from German)³³

The British Minister John N. Jordan (1852–1925) received the same two emissaries a few days later, on January 28, 1908, with a merely “complimentary letter of good-will” by the Dalai Lama, which, however, apparently did not contain an invitation to Wutaishan. If it did, then Jordan made no mention of it. The letter and oral messages to Jordan indicated that the Dalai Lama planned to return to Lhasa and to arrive there in late 1908, after a three-month visit to Wutaishan. A visit to Beijing was not planned, it said.³⁴

Jordan also mentioned that the French and Japanese Legations received similar letters. I have not seen the letters to the legations of

³² For a table listing the Dalai Lama's personal meetings in Beijing in late 1908, see Kobayashi 2019: 49. However, the meetings with the Germans and the French are not listed.

³³ GFO, PA AA RZ 201/18055 166, German Legation report of Feb. 5, 1908. The original letter in Tibetan—together with its Mongolian translation prepared by a monk from the Yonghegong in Beijing—has unfortunately been lost. I wish to thank Dr. G. Keiper of the GFO Political Archives for investigating and sharing this information. The Tibetan date provided by the Embassy translator, Erich Hauer, is incorrect: it should be June 23, 1907 instead of “early September”, see <https://www.lotsawahouse.org/Cgi/phugpa.pl?year=1907>.

³⁴ BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 141, doc. 222, Jordan to Grey, Jan. 29, 1908 and 146, doc. 233, Jordan to Grey, Feb. 4, 1908.

France, Japan, the US and probably Russia, but I assume they also included invitations for a personal meeting at Wutaishan. This invitation was apparently only accepted by the US Minister Rockhill, although he claimed he himself had suggested to the Dalai Lama to meet at Wutaishan. Notably, although the other legations did not send their ambassadors, all had—accidentally?—at least one of their citizens visit Wutaishan privately, and all requested an audience with the Dalai Lama.³⁵ It must have been very frustrating for the Dalai Lama that the foreign nations he had contacted through his envoys in Beijing, were all friendly but non-committal and that most of them already indicated they regarded Qing China as Tibet's rightful sovereign and the Dalai Lama only as the religious head of Tibet.³⁶

Despite the poor results of this and other diplomatic initiatives of the Dalai Lama, it is evident that already during his sojourn at Kumbum in 1907, the Tibetan hierarch tried to reach out to the other main imperial powers—in addition to Russia—through their representatives in Beijing in order to test who he could expect support from and to what degree. Moreover, as we learn from various sources, the Dalai Lama actively sought more information about the international treaties concerning Tibet, about China's reform plans for Tibet, and general advice on how to proceed with Qing China.³⁷ By fleeing in 1904, the Dalai Lama had evaded personally participating in the negotiations with British India for the Lhasa Convention. In hindsight this might have been purposely misinterpreted by Great Britain and China as a license not to involve the Tibetan ruler in any of the Tibet-related treaties that were subsequently concluded during his exile. Among these were the Anglo-Chinese Adhesion Agreement of 1906 and the Anglo-Chinese-Tibetan Trade Regulations of 1908.³⁸ Another important

³⁵ For Japan, the Buddhist priest Ōtani Sonyū, came with several other Japanese (including Teramoto); for Great Britain, District Officer Reginald F. Johnston (1874–1830); for Russia, explorer and military officer Carl G. Mannerheim (1867–1951) and possibly the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aleksandr Izvol'skii (1856–1919); for France, explorer and military officer Henri d'Ollone; and for Germany, Consul Hubert Knipping (1868–1955) from Tianjin. See BL, L/PS/10-147, Jordan to Grey July 9, 1908, and BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 159, doc. 249, Jordan to Grey, July 21, 1908; Teramoto 1974: 283–284; Jagou 2011: 29; Meinheit 2011: 416; Sperling 2011: 394–400.

³⁶ Rockhill to Theodore Roosevelt Nov. 8, 1908, British National Archives (BNA), FO 535/12-1909; GFO, PA AA RZ 201/18055 166, German Legation report of Feb. 5, 1908; BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 141, doc. 222, Jordan to Grey, Jan. 29, 1908 and 146, doc. 233, Jordan to Grey, Feb. 4, 1908.

³⁷ Teramoto 1974: 244; BNA, FO 535/12-1909, Rockhill to Roosevelt Nov. 8, 1908; BNA, FO 535/12-1909, Jordan to Grey Nov. 25, 1908; BL, L/PS/10-147, Jordan to Grey June 30, 1908; Meinheit 2011: 416.

³⁸ British intelligence from Lhasa stated that the Dalai Lama, while still in Mongolia, had learned about the Anglo-Chinese Adhesion Agreement in a letter from the

treaty was the Anglo-Russian Treaty of August 1907 which, of course, only indirectly concerned Tibet but was of major importance to Tibet, because both Russia and Great Britain explicitly acknowledged Chinese suzerainty over Tibet.³⁹ All of these agreements have been studied before and I will therefore not discuss them again.⁴⁰

One important but concealed element of the new Anglo-Russian understanding about Tibet, which already started in mid-1906 long before the actual agreement was signed in August 1907, was to keep the Dalai Lama away from Lhasa. According to rumors circulating in Gyantse (Rgyal rtse) in central Tibet, in July 1906 the Dalai Lama had started planning his return from Mongolia to Lhasa. From the outset British India had no interest in the Dalai Lama returning to Lhasa anytime soon, lest this would complicate their negotiations with both China and Russia. When in the autumn of 1906 the British learned from the Russian Legation in Beijing that the Tibetan hierarch was already in Gansu Province, they immediately asked for reassurances that China had no intention of allowing the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet for the time being.⁴¹ Meanwhile, the British ambassador to Russia in St. Petersburg, Sir Arthur Nicolson (1849–1928), was striving to ascertain the Russian stance in this matter. While the Russians in June 1906 still stated an interest in having the Dalai Lama back in Lhasa, already one month later, i.e., in July 1906, the new Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Aleksandr Izvol'skii (1856–1919) suggested to the British ambassador in St. Petersburg that the two governments should mutually agree not to take steps for facilitating the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet, leaving China to do as she wished.⁴² Thus, the Russians tried to please both the British and Qing China at the same time and quickly adjusted their politics as needed while also trying to keep the Dalai Lama favorably disposed towards Russia, even though they did not

Qing Emperor in which the Qing government requested the Tibetan hierarch to return to Lhasa as soon as possible. The Dalai Lama then sent letters from Mongolia to the regent in Lhasa and to his superintendent to inform them accordingly. BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 68–69, doc. 130, encl. 6, dated Dec. 13, 1906, Political Officer, Sikkim, to Indian gov., Dec. 20, 1906.

³⁹ The Dalai Lama apparently only received a copy of the Anglo-Russian Treaty of August 1907 from the British legation in late 1908; Smith 1996: 167; Mehra 2012: 125.

⁴⁰ Lamb 1986: 262–274; Mehra 1968: 287–349; Smith 1996: 160–164. See also the detailed German legation report of Apr. 8, 1908, about the Anglo-Chinese-Tibetan Trade Agreement, GFO, PA AA RZ 201/18055 172–185.

⁴¹ BNA, FO 371/23 and BL IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 63, doc. 115, Jordan to Grey, Oct. 31, 1906 and 62, doc. 109, Jordan to Grey, Dec. 5, 1906 and 76, doc. 126, Jordan to Grey, Dec. 29, 1906.

⁴² Farrington 1980: F14 and G4; BNA, FO 371/176-1906; FO 371/177-1906. Izvol'skii even claimed that the Russians had let the Dalai Lama know that his return to Tibet was undesirable at present. BL, L/PS/10-147, Nov. 26, 1906.

offer him the kind of political support he expected. This is also evident from Irina Garri's contribution to this RET issue.

Russia did, however, remain in contact with the Dalai Lama during his stay in Amdo, both openly through Kozlov, for example, and covertly through special envoys, who brought at least five letters in 1907. Apparently, the Dalai Lama also secretly sent envoys from Kumbum via Mongolia to Russia.⁴³ Furthermore, the Dalai Lama received at least some assistance from Russia in the form of military training and possibly for the purchase of modern weapons. More on this later.

While the Dalai Lama was now actively reaching out to Western imperial powers and Japan to establish or intensify initial contacts, he certainly already had future meetings with the Manchu Guangxu 光緒 Emperor (r. 1875–1908) and Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧 (1835–1908) in mind, as well as with foreign ambassadors in Beijing. Although the Tibetan hierarch kept denying his intention to travel to Beijing until mid-1908, he had already requested his regent⁴⁴ in Lhasa in mid-1907 to send him a large quantity of valuable items like tiger skins, ivory etc. which made suitable gifts for the Manchu Court. And according to District Officer Johnston, who met the Dalai Lama on July 5 at Wutaishan, the Dalai Lama had even started to study Chinese with a teacher from Beijing.⁴⁵ Thus, Teramoto was evidently mistaken when he repeatedly noted in his diary that the Dalai Lama secretly continued to trust only in Russia for support. Moreover, Teramoto did his best to convince the Tibetan hierarch and his advisors of the opposite, namely that Russia was weak and unreliable whereas Japan now offered itself as a suitable substitute.⁴⁶

2. *Reform Plans for Tibet*

In various conversations with Teramoto at Kumbum, the Dalai Lama and his close advisors readily acknowledged the necessity to reform Tibet's military and its foreign relations, thus averting further threats from British India and aiming at more, if not complete, independence from Qing China. Moreover, the modernization of Tibet's religious

⁴³ Teramoto 1974: 227, 233, 244.

⁴⁴ The Eighty-sixth Ganden Tripa Lobzang Gyeltsen (*Dga' ldan khri pa* Blo bzang rgyal mtshan, 1840–n.d., died after 1909) served as regent.

⁴⁵ BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 141, doc. 222, Jordan to Grey, Jan. 29, 1908, and 146, doc. 233, Jordan to Grey, Feb. 4, 1908; BNA, FO 371/223-1907, report of the Nepalese Representative dated July 29, 1907; BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 159, doc. 249, Jordan to Grey, July 21, 1908.

⁴⁶ Teramoto 1974: 225, 227, 233–234, 244, 246.

institutions was also discussed, but unfortunately, Teramoto's notes do not provide any details on this point.⁴⁷

Although the Dalai Lama in exile remained the temporal leader of the Tibetan government in the eyes of most Tibetans and continued to rule through his appointed regent, namely the throne-holder of Ganden (Dga' ldan) Monastery,⁴⁸ China at the same time further increased its authority in Lhasa through its amban, Lian-yu 聯豫 (1858–?; posted to Tibet from 1906 to 1912) and the special envoy Zhang Yintang 張蔭堂 (1860–1935) who were both busy developing their own reform proposals for Tibet. Apart from this rivalry, governing from exile posed numerous other difficulties for the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government, one major one being slow communication and the circulation of many rumors. When the Dalai Lama and his advisors deliberated possible reforms for Tibet while at Kumbum, it is questionable how well informed they were, indeed, about the latest events in Lhasa and Kham (Khams). We do know the Dalai Lama definitely kept involved in central Tibetan affairs and even dismissed and appointed several government officials in Lhasa while in exile.⁴⁹ Furthermore, he followed developments in Lhasa with regard to both Chinese and British activities through a handful of official delegations, among them the so-called “tribute delegations” from Lhasa to Beijing which stopped at Kumbum on their way back and forth. These not only brought the latest news—albeit weeks or months old—but apparently also continued to implore the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet. The Dalai Lama, on the other hand, sent at least two advance caravans to Lhasa from Kumbum and, like the Lhasa government, the Dalai Lama could easily send emissaries disguised as pilgrims.⁵⁰

As regards official Tibetan delegations, we know, for example, that a delegation of the Tibetan governing council (Kashag, *bka' shag*)

⁴⁷ “Today [May 26, 1907] at 9 o'clock I [Teramoto] paid a visit to the Dalai Lama's personal physician Raaman [Tib. *bla sman*] in order to confirm how mature the plans were to reform the Tibetan Buddhist institutions,” see also Teramoto's conversation with Sorupon [Tib. *gsol dpon?*]; Teramoto 1974: 231.

⁴⁸ See FN 44.

⁴⁹ The Dalai Lama reinstated three former kalon (*bka' blon*) while in exile, and dismissed other officials, among them the Nechung oracle who had accompanied him into exile, see Shakabpa 1988: 221; BNA, FO 371/223-1907, report of the Nepalese Representative dated July 29, 1907. See also FN 77.

⁵⁰ Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 83. For a likely example of covert envoys, see FN 77. Unfortunately, the role of the Dalai Lama's high commissioner in Amdo (Amdo *gar pön*/ (A)mdo *sgar dpon*) who was based at the important trade mart of Tongkhor (Stong 'khor), some 20 km west of Xining, remains understudied. In the 19th/20th century he probably and essentially served as a trade and tribute agent (*tshong dpon*/ *tshong spyi*) and possibly as the Dalai Lama's quasi “ambassador” to the Qing Court. On the role of the 17th century Amdo Garpön, see Tuttle 2023: 571.

arrived at Kumbum from Lhasa on November 30, 1906, just a month after the Dalai Lama. Furthermore, an unnamed emissary of a “Kaar-ron,” i.e., a Tibetan cabinet minister (Kalon, *bka' blon*), from Lhasa is mentioned by Teramoto for February 1907 as was a tribute delegation returning from Beijing for May 1907.⁵¹ Presumably, Kashag trade agents also came to meet with the Dalai Lama, and the German explorer Tafel mentions he saw many Tibetan aristocrats from central Tibet among the crowds at Kumbum.⁵² Unfortunately, we know next to nothing about possible communications between the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and the Ninth Panchen Lama Tubten Chokyi Nyima (PaN chen bla ma Thub bstan chos kyi nyi ma, 1883–1937), who both the Manchus and the British tried to use as the Dalai Lama’s substitute for conducting Tibetan affairs. Interestingly, the Panchen Lama went to visit British India in 1906, when the Dalai Lama was still in exile in Mongolia. One Chinese source mentions the Panchen Lama sent envoys from Tashilunpo (Bkra shis lhun po) together with the Kashag delegation that visited the Dalai Lama in Mongolia at the end of 1905 or in early 1906. This raises the question of whether the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama did not, in fact, have a secret understanding on testing the British attitudes while the Panchen was in India and on how to react towards the Qing Court.⁵³

⁵¹ Teramoto 1974: 221, 224–225, 235; Ya 1991: 255.

⁵² Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 83, 94; Phur Icoq 2010: vol 2, 110.

⁵³ As has been pointed out by Fabienne Jagou, both the Manchu and the British considered the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama to have equal powers in their respective territories, i.e., in U (Dbus) and Tsang (Gtsang). According to Geluk hierarchy, the Panchen Lama was second behind the Dalai Lama and in case of conflict or absence of a Dalai Lama, the Qing Court had previously asked the Panchen Lama for his advice although the Panchen Lama traditionally did not exercise temporal power in Tibet. Nevertheless, after the Dalai Lama had fled into exile in 1904, both the Manchus and the British tried to diminish the Dalai Lama’s role by using the Panchen Lama as his substitute for conducting Tibetan affairs. Maybe in order to evade growing Manchu pressure, the Panchen Lama decided to visit British India in January 1906, which delighted the British but angered the Manchu government. The Panchen Lama’s unexpected visit to India also led to numerous rumors. In Amdo, for example, it was rumored that the Panchen Lama had been abducted to India by the British and put into jail, and that only through various miracles performed by the Panchen Lama himself, the British not only freed him but even escorted him, with a guard of honor, to Tibet’s border. Then in late 1906, the Panchen Lama proactively asked to visit Beijing, probably to account for his trip to India, but the Qing Court was hesitant. Only in March 1907, it was decided that the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama should be invited for an audience to Beijing, however, their arrivals should be delayed further. Then in spring 1908 was an invitation for the Panchen Lama seriously considered by the Qing Court but it never materialized, probably because the Qing Court only intended to use the visit of the Panchen Lama as an incentive for the Dalai Lama to come to Beijing. See Jagou 2009: 355–357, 373 FN 22; Rockhill 1910: 75–76 FN 2, 77; Teramoto 1974: 207; BNA, FO 371/23-1906; BL IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 157, doc. 243, Jordan to Grey May

2.1. Qing reform plans for Tibet

We might surmise that the Dalai Lama and his advisors were well aware of the general existence of reform programs by the Qing government for Tibet through communications from Lhasa and possibly through Tibetan contacts in Beijing. In 1907, these—although often competing—programs by both the Amban Lian-yu and Zhang Yintang also found their way into Chinese newspapers. For example, the mostly positive responses of various Chinese ministries to one of Lian-yu's early 1907 proposals, which focused on the military and minting, was published in detail in the *Beijing Gazette* on July 19, 1907. However, only in November 1907 did the Dalai Lama learn from Teramoto that the project to establish Chinese provincial administrative structures in Tibet had been postponed because of the expected high costs. Indeed, at their meeting in Beijing in 1908 Dorzhiev complained to Rockhill that the Chinese government had deliberately left the Dalai Lama in the dark about its reform plans for Tibet, especially regarding its internal administration. The project to convert Tibet into a Chinese province continued to be of great concern to the Dalai Lama, and he apparently repeatedly voiced his objections to the Qing Court.⁵⁴ Furthermore, we should recall that Chinese and Manchu official opinion about the Dalai Lama's role in Manchu reform efforts for Tibet was split into two main factions. Some argued it would be better to keep the Dalai Lama out of Tibetan politics altogether and pay him extra money for staying out. Others preferred to involve the Dalai Lama in

27, 1908; O'Connor 1931: 94; *Qing shilu* 清實錄 [Qing Veritable Records] (QSL) Guangxu juan 568, 光緒三十二年十二月壬辰 (Feb. 12, 1907) and QSL Guangxu juan 569, 光緒三十三年二月癸亥 (Mar. 5, 1907); "'Da Qing huidian' Lifanyuan shiliao (er) 大清會典理藩院史料(二)" (DQHD) 2009: 168; Baradin 2002: 158–59, *North-China Herald* June 6, 1908: 643; Sept. 19, 1908: 693; Oct. 24, 1908: 204; Nov. 6, 1909: 309. See Ya (1991: 254) for the Tashilunpo (Bkra shis lhun po) envoys to the Dalai Lama in Mongolia. See also O'Connor 1931: 126–127 where he states that the Dalai Lama was well-informed about the details of the Panchen Lama's stay in India.

⁵⁴ On Lian-yu's reform proposals and the reactions of the various Chinese ministries, see GFO, PA AA RZ 201/18055 99-114, German Legation report of July 30, 1907 and BNA, FO 535/12-1909, Rockhill to Roosevelt Nov. 8, 1908. Lian-yu's proposal was made at about the same time when his opponent, the special envoy to Tibet, Zhang Yintang, drew up reform programs for Tibet as well and submitted them to the Tibetan Tsokdu (tshogs 'du; National Assembly). One proposal also focused on strengthening the military, another on recasting the Tibetan government on the Chinese pattern, see Ho 2008: 217–218 and Kobayashi 2020: 314–327. For newspaper reports on Chinese reform plans on Tibet, see, for example, the *North-China Herald* Nov. 8, 1907: 366; Feb. 28, 1908: 490; Mar. 27, 1908: 759; Apr. 16, 1908: 151–12; May 16, 1908: 399–400; June 6, 1908: 643; Sept. 26, 1908: 753–754. We might assume that reports in Chinese language newspapers were as numerous.

the Manchu reform efforts *in* Tibet.⁵⁵ For example, the important, Shanghai based English-language newspaper *The North-China Herald* repeatedly quoted Amban Lian-yu, Zhao Erfeng 趙爾豐 (1845–1911), and other Qing officials as saying that, to execute the Qing reform plans in Tibet, it was essential that the Dalai Lama should return to Lhasa to support them.⁵⁶

2.2. Tibetan reform plans

Nonetheless, the Dalai Lama and his advisors continued to make their own reform plans for Tibet while in Amdo. One main issue was the modernization of the Tibetan army. As demonstrated by Alice Travers, some fruitful attempts at modernizing the Tibetan army had already been made starting in the late 19th century, but the renewed Tibetan defeat by British India certainly reinforced the need for further reforms. This, as mentioned above, was also a major concern for the Manchu officials in Lhasa, although for different goals, namely to assert Qing authority over Tibet.⁵⁷ In fact, in February 1907, Teramoto mentioned that the Dalai Lama planned to build a modern army of 50,000 to 60,000 troops within the next ten years and that he already had ten Russian Buryats or Mongols among his retinue whom he had hired as military instructors. Whether they belonged to the escort that was later forbidden to enter Tibet due to British—and Qing—objections is not entirely clear but seems quite likely.⁵⁸ Furthermore, the Tibetan hierarch's close attendant and future Tibetan commander general, Tsarong Dasang Damdul (Tsha rong zla bzang dgra 'dul, 1888–1959), had already received some initial military training by the Russians while in Mongolia.⁵⁹ However, these newly planned troops not only needed to be trained but also equipped. When the Tibetan hierarch sent a large advance caravan to Lhasa in early 1907 and again in 1909, it was suspected transporting considerable amounts of arms and

⁵⁵ Yudru Tsomu 2022: 641–642; GFO, PA AA RZ 201/18055 183–184, German legation report of Apr. 8, 1908.

⁵⁶ See, for example, *North-China Herald* Feb. 28, 1908: 490; Mar. 6, 1908: 558; Mar. 27, 1908: 759; Apr. 16, 1908: 151–152; June 6, 1908: 643.

⁵⁷ Travers 2021: 994–1003. See also Andreyev 2003 on early Tibeto-Russian modernization plans for the Tibetan army.

⁵⁸ BNA, FO 371/177-1906, Morley to Government of India, May 4, 1906; Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan 2002: 214, doc. 273. For more information on the Buryat escort that had already been formed during the Dalai Lama's stay in Mongolia, see I. Garri in this RET issue.

⁵⁹ Teramoto 1974: 225. On Tsarong's role during the Dalai Lama's exile, see Tsarong 2000: 16–25; <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Tsarong-Dasang-Damdul/7929> accessed May 15, 2023. Interestingly, Teramoto does not seem to mention him, at least not by name.

ammunition, probably mostly purchased directly in the Xining area, which was a well-known location for a lively under-the-counter arms trade. Due to the booming wool trade which had brought new wealth to Amdo starting from the late 19th century, there was ample demand and supply for arms and ammunition, especially among the Amdo Tibetan nomads.⁶⁰

In addition, the modernization of the Tibetan army became even more pressing with the violent Sino-Tibetan conflicts that started to erupt in the Kham area in 1905, and we might assume some of the weapons from Amdo also found their way into Kham.⁶¹ The efforts of the provincial government of Sichuan to develop its border region with Tibet in terms of agriculture, mining, and trade according to the New Policies (*xinzheng* 新政) suggested by the Qing Court had roused local Khampa opposition, sometimes violent, especially when the number of Buddhist monks in the local Tibetan monasteries was to be limited. In order to get the situation under control, the Sichuan provincial government appointed its commander-in-chief Ma Weiqi 馬維騏 (1846–1910) and the magistrate (*daotai* 道台) Zhao Erfeng to quell the uprisings. They did so with great cruelty, especially Zhao Erfeng who wiped out whole monasteries in the summer of 1906.⁶² News of these disturbing events reached the Dalai Lama both in Mongolia and later in Amdo. In 1908, the Chinese government even demanded the Dalai Lama to assist in quelling the uprisings in Kham because he was suspected of inciting the continued violent resistance.⁶³

Due to this large demand for modern military equipment, the Dalai Lama also reached out to the German Legation in Beijing in 1908 and inquired whether he could buy arms and ammunition from Germany.⁶⁴ Presumably, he asked the same question to other legations as

⁶⁰ On the Dalai Lama's attitudes towards arms and warfare, see Venturi 2014 and Travers 2021. Dorzhiev apparently sent one of his Buryat students to Kumbum to organize and travel with the advance caravan to Lhasa in 1907; Teramoto 1974: 207, 221. Even Teramoto was suspected to have furnished the Dalai Lama with five hundred rifles; Baradin 2002: 164–165. On the caravans and arms trade in the Xining 西寧 area, see Kozlov 1925: 111, 112, 135; Tafel 1914: vol. 1, 220 and vol. 2, 83; QSL, Xuantong zhengji juan 1, 宣統元年閏二月庚寅 (Mar. 31, 1909); Horlemann 2012.

⁶¹ Tafel mentioned that he saw chieftains from Kham among the crowds at Kumbum, and we can safely assume there were also many undercover envoys among the Tibetan pilgrims not only from Lhasa but probably also from Kham. Tafel 1914: vol. 1, 215.

⁶² For more detailed accounts see Relyea 2018 and Relyea in this RET issue; Sperling 1975.

⁶³ Sperling 1975: 26; Rockhill 1910: 77; DQHD 2009: 224–226.

⁶⁴ In late 1908, the envoys of the Dalai Lama—unsuccessfully—inquired about buying 30,000 to 40,000 rifles plus ammunition from the Germans; see GFO, PA AA

well. Furthermore, in 1908–1909 rumors circulated that the Dalai Lama was considering taking on international loans to finance his reform plans.⁶⁵

Politically, the Dalai Lama definitely pondered on his own and Tibet's future status regarding Qing China. There is evidence that by mid-1907/the end of 1907, the Dalai Lama once again seriously considered meeting the Manchu emperor although, outwardly, the Dalai Lama continued to negate the existence of this plan up to mid-1908 as already mentioned above.⁶⁶ The Dalai Lama's only effective means to demonstrate some independence from the Qing Court was to play his own cat and mouse game about his travel plans, namely where he would go, when and at what pace. Although the Qing Court had also repeatedly changed its mind with regard to its preferred domicile for the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan hierarch's temporizing attitude annoyed the Manchu government greatly, especially since it had no means to force the Dalai Lama to travel faster when he either feigned illness or claimed that heat or cold hindered his travel plans.⁶⁷

From his conversations with the Dalai Lama and his advisors at Kumbum, Teramoto surmised that the Dalai Lama only pretended to seek a reconciliation with the Qing Court. According to Teramoto, outwardly the Tibetan hierarch intended to apologize for his mistakes in order to keep his former position as spiritual and temporal head of

RZ 201/18055 247–252, German legation report of Nov. 5, 1908. Jordan mentioned that an officer of the German Legation guard allegedly presented an illustrated book of German arsenals to the Dalai Lama at Wutaishan; BL, L/PS/10-147, Jordan to Grey, July 9, 1908. I have not been able to verify this.

⁶⁵ *North-China Herald* Nov. 21, 1908: 462; Feb. 13, 1909: 411; Mar. 6, 1909: 558.

⁶⁶ Teramoto (1974: 215, 244) mentioned that the Dalai Lama had already requested an audience with the Manchu emperor while in Mongolia, which was then denied to him. However, the Tibetan tribute envoys to Beijing who continued their journey from Kumbum in June 1907, were not only supposed to ask for permission for the planned visit to Wutaishan, but to request once again an audience for the Dalai Lama; BL IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 159, doc. 249, Jordan to Grey, July 21, 1908.

⁶⁷ *North-China Herald* Nov. 23, 1906: 441; Oct. 4, 1907: 54; Feb. 28, 1908: 490; Mar. 6, 1908: 558; Mar. 27, 1908: 726; June 20, 1908: 772; July 18, 1908: 169; Sept. 12, 1908: 634. While, at first, the Qing Court had pressured the Dalai Lama to return from Mongolia to Lhasa as soon as possible, in late 1906, it apparently explicitly ordered the Dalai Lama to remain at Kumbum Monastery for the time being and await further instructions; Ya 1991: 256. At the same time, the Manchu government was apparently in constant fear that the Dalai Lama might flee again while he was at Kumbum; *North-China Herald* Mar. 20, 1909: 686; BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 146, doc. 233, Jordan to Grey, Feb. 4, 1908 and 157, doc. 243, May 27, 1908. The German Legation still reported on Apr. 8, 1908, that the Dalai Lama would probably return to Lhasa from Wutaishan. In contrast, Teramoto (1974: 246–247) had already guessed in November 1907 that the Dalai Lama would travel on to Beijing. Finally, on July 19, 1908, the Dalai Lama was summoned once again to Beijing by imperial decree.

Tibet and possibly to ask for more autonomy (Jp. *jichi seido*, Ch. *zizhi zhidu* 自治制度). However, Teramoto also suggested in his diary that by 1907 the Dalai Lama was already covertly aiming at Tibet's complete independence (Jp. *dokuritsu*, Ch. *duli* 獨立) from Qing China and counted on China's inability to implement its reform plans for Tibet because of its own relative weakness.⁶⁸

The Dalai Lama has lost confidence in the Manchu Court and with Russia's support he wants to fling off the restraints of the Manchus. At the same time, he wants to repel the British from Tibet. This volition is very strong and not extricable.

[Diary entry of May 18, 1907]

[...] originally, the Dalai Lama wanted to receive support from Russia to drive the British out [of Tibet], to resist the Beijing government and to realize his dream of Tibet as an independent country. But after arriving here [at Kumbum], the Dalai Lama outwardly regrets his mistakes and therefore wants to travel to Beijing. Since the costs for installing a new provincial governor in Tibet are currently too high, the Beijing government has postponed this project for the time being. [Nevertheless,] it is a fact that the Beijing government's true intention has already been leaning towards the policy of establishing a new provincial governor. The Dalai Lama was very surprised and therefore wants to travel to Beijing with the expectation to firmly establish his rule over Tibet by urging the Guangxu Emperor [to consent] at an audience.

[Diary entry of November 23, 1907]⁶⁹

These comments by Teramoto already indicate the ambivalence that persisted in the Dalai Lama's intentions vis-à-vis the Qing Court regarding his own and Tibet's status. During his stay in Beijing in 1908, the Dalai Lama unsuccessfully requested the right to memorialize to the Qing throne directly, i.e., without the detour through and interference from the viceroy of Sichuan and the Court of Colonial Affairs (*Lifanyuan* 理藩院). This seems to indicate a willingness to accept Qing suzerainty at least in some quarters. Further examples are provided below. On the other hand, the Dalai Lama had intended to leave two or three trusted councilors to represent his interests in Beijing, thus possibly imitating the foreign legations in Beijing, but the Qing Court

⁶⁸ Teramoto 1974: 215, 224–225, 227–228, 233; BNA, FO 535/12-1909, Rockhill to Roosevelt, Nov. 8, 1908. A note in the *North-China Herald* (Sept. 4, 1909: 590) suggested that the Dalai Lama had mentioned his own reform plans for Tibet to the Qing Court.

⁶⁹ Teramoto 1974: 233, 246.

apparently declined this request as well.⁷⁰ Not only did the Tibetan hierarchy fail to achieve these goals, but worst of all, the Dalai Lama's Chinese titles were modified in such a way that the Dalai Lama clearly became subordinate to the Qing. Therefore, according to Charles A. Bell (1870–1945), Rockhill, and others, not only was the Dalai Lama himself made to feel his subordination, but he was also openly demeaned in the eyes of the interested international community.⁷¹ We might assume that the Dalai Lama's stay in Beijing thus further reinforced his inclinations to seek independence from Qing China.

2.3. The Dalai Lama's Tibetan advisers at Kumbum

Teramoto also confirmed the Dalai Lama's advisory council was already split into two main factions, namely the pro-Russian faction and the pro-Qing faction, as had already been hinted at by Richardson and others during the time before the Tibetan hierarchy had fled from Lhasa.⁷² At Kumbum, the Dalai Lama's advisors had long discussions concerning how the Dalai Lama should react to the imperial power plays of China and the foreign nations. In 1907, the pro-Russian faction, in which Teramoto also included the Dalai Lama most of the time, was still counting on Russia's active support to achieve Tibet's independence, possibly further encouraged by the Dalai Lama's important but understudied Mongol advisors such as Prince Khanddorj.⁷³ Teramoto regarded the Dalai Lama's personal senior physician, Tekhang Jampa Tubwang (Bkras khang byams pa thub dbang, 1863?–1922), as the leader of the pro-Russian faction at Kumbum. He was a close confidant of the Tibetan hierarchy and usually in attendance when the Dalai Lama received foreign visitors. He also often served as a go-

⁷⁰ BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 172, doc. 266, Jordan to Grey, Dec. 23, 1908; DQHD 2009: 224–226.

⁷¹ Bell 1946: 74, 77; BNA, FO 535/12–1909, Rockhill to Roosevelt, Nov. 8, 1908; BL, IOR/L/PS/20/259, 1910: 170, doc. 264, Jordan to Grey, Nov. 11, 1908; Ishihama 2019b: 88–90.

⁷² Richardson 1962: 89: "When the expedition was at Lhasa, it came to light that a large body of Tibetan officials had been opposed to the Dalai Lama's flirtation with Russia." Teramoto (1974: 233) used *Qing Lu liang dang* 清露兩黨 to describe these two factions.

⁷³ The presence of Mongolian princes in the Dalai Lama's entourage at Kumbum is repeatedly mentioned. For an unnamed prince from Khalkha who wished to meet Jordan in Beijing, see BL L/PS/10-147, Jordan to Grey Nov. 11, 1908, and for a "Hanta Wang" of the "Tushetu Khanate" who seems to be identical with the aforementioned but unnamed prince, see BNA FO 535/12-1909, Jordan to Grey, Nov. 25, 1908. Hanta Wang was obviously the same as Prince Mijiddorjin Khanddorj (or Khando-van in Russian) whose headquarters were at Van Khüree and who served as the Mongolian Foreign Minister from 1911 to 1913; Korostovetz 1926: 152–154; Bulag 2013: 7.

between and it had been Jampa Tubwang who had made the first contact with Teramoto at Kumbum shortly after the Dalai Lama's arrival. According to Teramoto, the physician who he called Raaman (transcribing his Tibetan title *bla sman*), was comparatively openminded and progressive and also supported the idea of the Dalai Lama's visit to Japan. Initially, Teramoto repeatedly discussed his reform ideas with him, including those for Tibet's Buddhist institutions and Tibet's political options in international relations. However, when Teramoto later discovered that Jampa Tubwang belonged to the pro-Russian faction, their relationship cooled off.⁷⁴

In contrast, the pro-Qing faction supported the idea of an audience with the Qing Emperor and promoted a reconciliation with the Qing Court, counting on the Dalai Lama's reinstatement to his former position and on cooperating with China in implementing reforms in Tibet.⁷⁵ The person considered to be the leader of the pro-Qing faction at Kumbum was a high-ranking Mongol *khenpo* from Drepung Monastery in Lhasa who Teramoto calls Doruwa *kanbu* in Japanese, obviously transcribing the Tibetan title Dulwa *khenpo* (*'Dul ba mkhan po*). Teramoto mentions that he was among the top five in Drepung's ecclesiastical hierarchy, and he came to replace Jampa Tubwang as Teramoto's discussion partner. With him, Teramoto also discussed reforms for Tibet's Buddhist institutions and possible support from Japan through the afore-mentioned Higashi and Nishi Honganji. Dulwa *khenpo* also served as the Dalai Lama's interpreter for Mongolian and Chinese.⁷⁶

Furthermore, a *zongli kanbu* / *zongli dachen* (superintendent/Lord Chamberlain) Chichiabu *kanbu* (*spyi khyab mkhan po*) and a Ronneru *chienpo* (*mgron gnyer chen po?*) were among the advisors of the Dalai

⁷⁴ Various sources confirm that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's court physician was present at audiences and that Jampa Tubwang was comparatively progressive and reform-oriented. After the Dalai Lama's return from India, Jampa Tubwang's rank was elevated to *chikyap khenpo* (*spyi khyab mkhan po*, the senior ecclesiastical official, also translated as "chief abbot" and "Lord Chamberlain"). See Bell 1992: 123, 131; Snelling 1993: 124; Kozlov 1925: 272, 224, Tada 1965: 52; Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 93–94; van Vleet 2011: 356–358; Byams pa 'phrin las 1990: 414–420; and online <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Khyenrab-Norbu/3955>, accessed June 20, 2023; and the *Who Was Who in Tibet* by Frank Drauschke http://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/biography_468.html, accessed Oct. 30, 2023. A photo is also published in Ishihama 2019a: 22, fig. 1–3. For Teramoto's meetings with the physician see Teramoto 1974: 222, 224–226, 231, 233–234, 244–245.

⁷⁵ Teramoto 1974: 225, 246.

⁷⁶ Teramoto 1974: 230, 232–233, 236, 238, 241, 244, 248; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 20, 30; Sperling 2011: 391. Teramoto's Doruwa *kanbu* might be identical with the 19th century 'Dul ba mkhan po Blo gros, or possibly his successor. His personal name was Rta tshag yongs 'dzin blo gros, mentioned in BUDA as the teacher of the Fourth Gungthang (1824–1859). See <https://library.bdr.io/show/bdr:P2261?uilang=en>, accessed July 4, 2023.

Lama with whom Teramoto discussed Tibetan reform plans, but it is not clear what they discussed in detail and which faction they belonged to.⁷⁷ The same is true for a so-called *kantien* Sorupon (*mkhan chen gsol dpon?*) who Teramoto worked with to translate Japanese toponyms into Tibetan.⁷⁸ The rumor, however, that the Buryat adviser Dorzhiev was at Kumbum together with the Dalai Lama was mistakenly spread by the British missionary Ridley who had confused Dorzhiev with a Tibetan “minister” who he later called Im-ki Kampa.⁷⁹

Interestingly, Teramoto’s judgement about the Dalai Lama’s Tibetan advisors in general was rather negative. He considered them ignorant of modern affairs and politics but arrogant at the same time. By May 1907, Teramoto was wondering whether the conflicts between the two factions had not started to worsen day by day and whether the Dalai Lama was, in fact, well and correctly informed by his advisors. Apparently, the Dalai Lama even discharged some of his attendants precisely because he felt misinformed.⁸⁰ In contrast to Teramoto, the scholars Parshotam Mehra and Nikolay Tsyrempilov argue the designation as “pro-Russian” and “pro-Qing”—and later “pro-British”—is not how the Tibetans understood their internal conflict. Instead, the dissension was about whether to support further integration with China or strive for Tibetan independence, even if this required

⁷⁷ Ronneru followed in rank after the Dalai Lama’s superintendent, i.e., zongli kanbu/ zongli dachen Chichiabu kanbu (*spyi khyab mkhan po?*). The latter is probably identical with Yutok Puntsok Pelden *spyi khyab* (G.yu thog phun tshogs dpal ldan, b. 1860) who had accompanied the Tibetan hierarch to Urga; Teramoto 1974: 226–227, 231–232; <https://library.bdrc.io/show/bdr:P6697>; and Rahul 1962: 177. According to several reports of the Nepalese Representative dated July 29, Aug. 19, and Sept. 2, 1907, the Dalai Lama had dismissed the *spyi khyab mkhan po* together with the Nechung (Gnas chung) oracle, the Twelfth *kuten* (*sku rten*) Gobo Choje (*Go bo chos rje*) Lobzang Sonam (Blo bzang bsod nams), while in Amdo and both returned to Lhasa together with a senior attendant of the Dalai Lama called Injim Kesang (*? Kelzang). See British National Archives FO 371/223-1907. See also Im-ki Kampa in the report by Ridley; British National Archives FO 535/12-1909 who might be identical with Kalsang in the photo published in Ishihama 2019a: 22, fig. 1-3. For the Nechung oracle, see also Thubten Ngodup 2009: 216–219; <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Lhalung-Gyeltsen-Tarchin/13725>; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 41.

⁷⁸ Teramoto 1974: 231–232. Teramoto had presented a map of Japan to the Dalai Lama which Sorupon was supposed to translate into Tibetan. In a Russian autobiography of Dorzhiev, both a “soibon” and a “sobon” are mentioned as having accompanied the Dalai Lama into exile to Mongolia with “soibon” being interpreted as “attendant” and “sobon” as the tea and food steward, i.e., *gsol dpon*. See Andreyev [2001] 2008: 39; Snelling 1993: 124. For a photo of the *mkhan chen gsol dpon* see Ishihama 2019a: 22, fig. 1-3.

⁷⁹ For the incorrect rumor about Dorzhiev’s presence at Kumbum, see, e.g., Mehra 2012: 135. For Im-ki Kampa, see also FN 77.

⁸⁰ Teramoto 1974: 233–234. See also FN 77 which mentions the return of some of the Dalai Lama’s close attendants to Lhasa.

protection by a third power.⁸¹ This might also explain why even the Dalai Lama's "pro-Russian" advisors were seeking and considering the opinions of Teramoto who was anti-Russian and pro-Qing, but represented another "third power", namely Japan. As mentioned before, Teramoto preferred Tibet to remain under China's sovereignty but with Japan in the role of protector and advocate.

2.4. Modernization experiences in the Amdo-Chinese borderland

As regards possible sources for the Dalai Lama's and his advisers' reform ideas on how to further modernize the country, we should also take a short look at the general situation in the Amdo-Chinese borderland at the time of the Dalai Lama's arrival. Between 1901 and the eve of the Chinese revolution in 1911 the wider Xining and Lanzhou area was a typical example of top-down modernization projects as promoted by the Qing Court's New Policies. The local officials endeavored to modernize and strengthen their border troops, to open pastureland for cultivation, to start mining projects and to establish new schools and tax offices. In addition, Gansu governor Sheng-yun 升允 (1858–1931) who had formerly lived abroad in Europe as a Qing diplomat, had already introduced a police force, established an imperial post office, and installed streetlights in Gansu's capital Lanzhou. The major project of building the first iron bridge over the Yellow River (Tib. Rma chu, Ch. Huanghe 黄河) in Lanzhou with foreign help was also well under way in 1907.⁸² Many of these measures were facilitated by the already mentioned wool trade boom in Amdo, which had started in the last decade of the 19th century and brought many traders, also foreign, from China's coastal cities together with new ideas and new products. Some of the new wealth trickled down to the Amdo Tibetan nomads and through their offerings also to the local Tibetan monasteries. Furthermore, many of Amdo's elites had already traveled to Beijing and Shanghai—or even to Japan, such as the Fifth Akya Khutugthu—and were thus accustomed to foreigners and acquainted with many modern innovations.⁸³ It might therefore not come as a surprise that Amdo probably saw autonomous Tibetan modernization efforts much earlier than U (Dbus) and Tsang (Gsang) in central Tibet.⁸⁴ The Dalai Lama thus evidently experienced many

⁸¹ Tsyrempilov 2011: 217; Mehra 1976: 2.

⁸² Tafel 1914: vol. 1, 152–153, vol. 2, 85; Mannerheim 1969: 514, 518–531; Bruce 1907: 285–293.

⁸³ Accompanied by Teramoto, the Fifth Akya Khutugthu and his entourage traveled to Japan for several weeks in summer 1901; Berry 1995: 63.

⁸⁴ Lobsang Yongdan 2014; Horlemann 2012; Horlemann 2021.

things modern and unknown to him already in Amdo and before he traveled by train to Beijing, stayed in the highlands of British India and visited Calcutta.

3. *The Dalai Lama's Role in Amdo*

Before we turn to the Dalai Lama's role in Amdo, we should take a brief side glance at his stay in Mongolia. Initially, the Tibetan hierarch had not intended to stay in Mongolia and Amdo for any long period of time, but his unexpected and extended sojourns also offered a unique chance to reconnect with followers of Tibetan Buddhism outside of central Tibet. To revitalize these contacts during his exile was an opportunity the Dalai Lama apparently used well. However, after a long and fruitless wait for an invitation from the tsar during which sustaining the Dalai Lama and his continually growing retinue had become a heavy economic burden for the Mongol princes and people, the Tibetan hierarch finally decided to leave Mongolia and return to Lhasa via Amdo. Moreover, the Dalai Lama apparently did not get along well with the highest Living Buddha in Mongolia, the Eighth Jebtsundamba Khutagt. The latter was suspected of being jealous because valuable donations from the Mongol Buddhist followers were now diverted from him for the Dalai Lama's benefit. At the same time, the Tibetan hierarch was indignant that the Jebtsundamba disregarded major Vinaya rules by getting married, smoking and drinking alcohol.⁸⁵

In some respects, the Dalai Lama's sojourn in Amdo resembled his stay in Mongolia in that the Tibetan hierarch attracted large numbers of pious pilgrims from Amdo and beyond and received lavish donations.⁸⁶ At the same time, the Dalai Lama's extended stay at Kumbum

⁸⁵ That the relationship between the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and the Eighth Jebtsundamba was, however, much more complex than this, has already been demonstrated by Uradyn Bulag and others and is not the topic of this paper. See Bulag 2013; Tsering Shakya 2005: 144; Tsarong 2000: 17–19; Shakabpa 1988: 221; Ishihama 2019a: 19–35. Teramoto claims that the Dalai Lama had actually been advised by the Jebtsundamba to come to Mongolia, possibly with the goal to travel on to Russia, and that the Tibetan hierarch could come to Urga without previous permission from Beijing. When this turned out not to be the case, their relationship soured; Teramoto 1974: 206, 215.

⁸⁶ The pilgrims were mainly from Alashan, the Ordos region, from Kokonor, as well as local Mongols and Tanguts mixed with Khampas and central Tibetans. With regard to Amdo Mongols, we know that princes from four Mongolian banners in Tsaidam welcomed and supported the Dalai Lama on his flight from Lhasa through Tsaidam to Mongolia in 1904. Among them, the Khuluk Beise Namdan-choikhür (Rnam 'dren chos skor, n.d.) was especially keen to help and continued to stay in contact with the Dalai Lama's court through letters and gifts. Ishihama 2022: 42–43, 47, 50–52; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 28, 37.

Monastery certainly was a drain on the local economy, but apparently it caused more dissatisfaction than in Mongolia. This was probably due to the ethnically and religiously diverse population in northeastern Amdo.⁸⁷ Moreover, on the surface the Dalai Lama's conflicts with the Fifth Akya Khutughtu at Kumbum—to be examined below—resembled those with the Eighth Jebtsundamba in Mongolia.

3.1. Religious Activities of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama

Kumbum was arguably the most important Tibetan Monastery in the northeastern corner of Amdo at the time when the Thirteenth Dalai Lama visited. It is therefore quite natural that the Dalai Lama—apart from the more temporal activities already mentioned above—was also very engaged in religious activities, namely giving teachings and blessings, supervising theological exams and taking part in debates.⁸⁸ Moreover, the Dalai Lama also received teachings and empowerments from high-ranking Amdo lamas such as the highly revered Fourth Amdo Zhamar Gendun Tenzin Gyatso (Zhwa dmar Dge 'dun bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho, 1852–1912) from Lamo Dechen (La mo bde chen) Monastery.⁸⁹ However, it seems that the Tibetan hierarch mostly stayed at Kumbum and hardly ever left the monastery in 1907, unlike his later more active sojourn in Beijing.⁹⁰ Interestingly, apart from Jakhyung (Bya khyung) Monastery, where he stayed for a few days in 1909, he did not visit other major Gelukpa monasteries in Amdo such as Labrang Tashikhyil (Blab rang bkra shis 'khyil) and Chone (Co ne) Monasteries although he had received invitations shortly after his arrival at Kumbum.⁹¹ Other Amdo monasteries and sights were only visited when the Dalai Lama was passing by on his way to Wutaishan and on his return journey from Beijing to Lhasa. It is worth noting that on these occasions the Dalai Lama not only received but also made donations and offerings from his treasury.

⁸⁷ Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 82–83; 86; Bulag 2013: 8, 10.

⁸⁸ Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 17–47; Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 89; Teramoto 1974: 218–219, 221, 224.

⁸⁹ Teramoto 1974: 219; Karsten 1997: vol. 2, 260; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 22–24. <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Fourth-Amdo-Zhamar-Gendun-Tendzin-Gyatso/3296>, accessed Nov. 16, 2022. Teramoto transcribed Zhamar as Shamaru zon (*tsang*).

⁹⁰ Tsering Shakya (2005: 144), however, states that the Dalai Lama went on short pilgrimages to different sites while in Amdo. When the Dalai Lama was in Beijing, he visited several temples and made offerings; Jagou 2009: 368.

⁹¹ Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 104–107; Baradin 2002: 187, 189–190, 208–209; Farrer 1926: vol. 2, 107.

Naturally, the list of Amdo dignitaries who paid their respect—either personally or through representatives—to the Dalai Lama while he stayed at Kumbum was very long. Among them, we find the then still teenage Seventh Changkya Khutugthu Lobzang Pelden Tenpai Dronme (Lcang skya ho thog thu Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan pa'i sgron me, 1891–1957) who was the main incarnation at Gonlung (Dgon lung) Monastery. As the highest-ranking Khutugthu residing in Beijing and originally from Amdo, he later also welcomed the Dalai Lama to Beijing in 1908.⁹² The Eleventh Tongkhor Lobzang Jigme Tsultrim Gyatso (Stong 'khor Blo bzang 'jigs med tshul khri ms rgya mtsho, 1891–1909), then also a teenager, repeatedly met the Dalai Lama at Kumbum and later accompanied him to Wutaishan and Beijing.⁹³ From Labrang Monastery, Alak Nyendrak tsang (A lags Snyan grags tshang, n.d.)⁹⁴ and the Fifth Hortsang Sertri Kelzang Pelden Drakpa (Hor tshang gser khri Skal bzang dpal ldan grags pa, ?–1912?)⁹⁵ were heading two delegations sent out to invite the Dalai Lama to Labrang.⁹⁶ The Seventh

⁹² The biography of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama mentions that Changkya Khutugthu sent representatives to welcome the Dalai Lama in Amdo and gifts for Tibetan New Year. It seems as if he himself was also present at Kumbum at some point; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 15, 30–33; Rockhill 1910: 78. For more information on the Seventh Changkya, see Zhao 2002 and Hamugetu 2022.

⁹³ The Eleventh Tongkhor is repeatedly mentioned in the biography of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama for the year 1907; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 16–18, 29, 31. Ya 1991: 260–261 and <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Eleventh-Tongkhor-Lobzang-Jigme-Tsultrim-Gyatso/3735>, accessed Nov. 16, 2022. Apparently, the Dalai Lama asked the Qing Court for permission to take the Eleventh Tongkhor to Lhasa so that he could continue his studies there; Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan 2002: 186, doc. 246.

⁹⁴ Baradin 2002: 191. Alak Nyendrak tsang had been appointed as the head of the first Labrang delegation to the Dalai Lama. He spoke perfect Mongolian and discussed with Baradin many topics such as the Russo-Japanese war, the Russian Revolution, and the affairs of the Dalai Lama. He is also mentioned in the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's biography as having paid his respects right after the Dalai Lama's arrival at Kumbum; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 18.

⁹⁵ Baradin 2002: 191–192. The Fourth Hortsang Sertri was an important reincarnation lineage at Labrang. He was chosen to head the second delegation to Kumbum. He might be the Ho tshang 'Od zer who is mentioned for Dec. 2, 1906 (17th day of the 10th month), in the Dalai Lama's biography; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 20.

⁹⁶ The Fourth Jamyang Zhepa had requested to be informed immediately if the Dalai Lama refused to visit Labrang so that he could pay his respects to the Dalai Lama at Kumbum; Baradin 2002: 164–165. According to the biography of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa, he actually met the Dalai Lama at Kumbum for a short audience in May 1907, but little detail is provided and the biography remains more or less silent on the Dalai Lama's sojourn in Amdo; Dros dmar 2013: vol. 2, 665–666. The biography of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama only mentions that the Jamyang Zhepa sent presents to the Dalai Lama for Tibetan New Year, but these were apparently presented through the Jamyang's representatives; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 30; Dros dmar 2013: vol. 2, 659; <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Fourth-Jamyang-Zhepa-Kelzang-Tubten-Wangchuk/2758>, accessed May 15, 2023.

Zhapdrung Karpo Gendun Tenzin Norbu (Zhabs drung dkar po Dge 'dun bstan 'dzin nor bu, 1873–1927), one of Lamo Dechen's main reincarnations, met the Dalai Lama at least at Wutaishan and possibly again at Kumbum in 1909.⁹⁷ When the Thirteenth Dalai Lama later inaugurated a new monastery for exoteric and esoteric Buddhism at Wutaishan, he also invited several *geshe* (*dge bshes*) degree holders from Amdo to take part in the planned debating events.⁹⁸

3.2. Contradictory Attitudes towards the Dalai Lama

Regarding the general monk community, Baradin stressed the deep devotion for the Dalai Lama expressed by the monks at Labrang. When the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa Kelzang Tubten Wangchuk ('Jam dbyangs bzhad pa (B)skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug, 1856–1916) decided to hold theological examinations in front of the Dalai Lama, the monks were very excited and moved. After it became clear the Dalai Lama would not visit Labrang, the monks were depressed but made plans to form a large pilgrimage group to Kumbum instead.⁹⁹

On the other hand, there were also some critical voices. According to Baradin, the more senior and learned monks at Labrang were quite indifferent or even negative about the Dalai Lama and, in direct comparison, considered the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa as his equal in sanctity. For these lamas, the Dalai Lama was apparently only great in terms of his temporal power in central Tibet. Similar statements have also been reported for senior monks at Kumbum.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Teramoto supposed that the Dalai Lama had generally lost face in Amdo due to his ill-advised flight from Lhasa and the Guangxu Emperor's dismissive attitude.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Kim Hanung 2019: 88 and <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Seventh-Zhabdrung-Karpo-Gendun-Tendzin-Norbu/8861>, accessed June 23, 2023. He visited Beijing twice: once during the Qing era in 1908 and for an extended stay from 1912–1914 during the Republican era.

⁹⁸ Ishihama 2022: 41. The *geshe* degree is a Tibetan Buddhist academic degree for monks and nuns.

⁹⁹ Baradin 2002: 187, 190, 204. The biography of the Dalai Lama indeed mentions a monk delegation from Labrang; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 33.

¹⁰⁰ Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 90; Baradin 2002: 104, 184–185; Teramoto 1974: 201, 203.

¹⁰¹ Teramoto 1974: 200. The flight of the Dalai Lama as a topic of discussion with and among Tibetans has been mentioned by several authors. The German explorer Wilhelm Filchner, for instance, noticed in 1904 how interested in politics and well informed the Tibetan clergy was. Filchner also pointed out that, as a result of the events in Lhasa [i.e., the Younghusband Expedition], the [Amdo] Tibetans had been severely incensed, so much so that the British missionary Ridley in Xining did not dare to get close to Kumbum Monastery anymore. Filchner 1911: 60, 239–241.

The Finno-Russian explorer and military officer Carl G. Mannerheim (1867–1951) who missed the opportunity to meet the Dalai Lama at Kumbum but later had an audience with him at Wutaishan, recorded in his travel diary on March 27, 1908:

To indicate the importance of Labrang I was told that, when the Dalai Lama reached the Sining monastery, a few days' journey from Labrang, on his flight from Tibet, the 'Gegen' of this monastery sent him the following message: 'The Saviour at Labrang [i.e., Jamyang Zhepa] invites the Saviour at Lhasa to visit him and his monastery' to which the Dalai Lama replied: 'Tell your master at Labrang that there is only one Saviour – the Saviour at Lhasa'.¹⁰²

Although this quote seems to be mainly anecdotal in nature, it indicates the Dalai Lama was perceived as arrogant by the narrator. Equally, the most important Nyingmapa (Rnying ma pa) hierarch in the Kokonor region, the Third Gurong Orgyen Jikdrel Choying Dorje (Dgu rong O rgyan 'jigs bral chos dbyings rdo rje, 1875–1932) is said to have commented rather negatively on the Dalai Lama's activities. "Speaking with reference to the Dalai Lama, Allog-Sku-rin [i.e., Alak Gurong] claimed that this Pope of Buddhism concerned himself too much regarding unnecessary affairs; it were better for him if he attended strictly to his religious duties."¹⁰³ Of course, in the Third Gurong's Tibetan hagiography, we do not find a similar quote, but in the rather short paragraph on the Dalai Lama's stay in Amdo it is mentioned that apart from listening to as many of the Dalai Lama's initiations and teachings as possible and apart from making large and expensive offerings, the Third Gurong rejected an invitation by the Dalai Lama to accompany him to China which can be interpreted as an expression of his displeasure with the Tibetan hierarchy.¹⁰⁴

The high costs of the Dalai Lama's travel to and extended stay in Amdo were openly discussed not only among the Chinese population but also within the monastic communities. Teramoto and others mention that the Chinese villages along the Dalai Lama's travel routes complained bitterly about the extra taxes which were levied.¹⁰⁵ But also the Mongolian and Tibetan populations in the wider Xining area were obliged to pay taxes in kind to the Chinese administration to cover the costs for the Dalai Lama's visit. We do not learn, however, whether the

¹⁰² Mannerheim 1969: vol. 1, 566.

¹⁰³ C&MA missionary Snyder in *Alliance Weekly* Feb. 17, 1912: 313.

¹⁰⁴ Bstan 'dzin 1994: 152. For more information on the Third Gurong, see Horlemann 2021.

¹⁰⁵ Teramoto 1974: 206, 211, 213–215; Bulag 2013: 8; Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 82, 86–87; Brooke in Fergusson 1911: 2; GFO, PA AA RZ 201/18055 52–53, German Legation report March 7, 1907.

latter did so readily or as grudgingly as the Chinese.¹⁰⁶ Regarding the attitudes of monastic communities, Baradin relates that when the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa wished to invite the Dalai Lama to Labrang Monastery and discussed this idea with Labrang's monastic council in late October 1906, the majority of the lamas on the council apparently objected, referring to the monastery's empty treasury. Only when the Jamyang insisted on the invitation was it decided to divide the expected costs among the monk population and Labrang's dependent estates.¹⁰⁷ Kumbum Monastery, which had renovated the Dalai Lama's living quarters as well as the prayer hall and other locations within the monastery compound before the hierarch's arrival, attempted to cover its expenses by fixing minimum prices for an audience with the Dalai Lama for certain groups such as incarnations and chieftains.¹⁰⁸

3.3. *The conflict between the Dalai Lama and Akya Khutughtu*

However, the major source for controversy and unease among Kumbum's monastic community and beyond seems to have been the conflict between the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and the Fifth Akya Khutughtu Lobzang Tenpai. The latter was the highest-ranking reincarnation of Kumbum Monastery and the representative head and proprietor of the monastery. Although Akya spent most of his time in Beijing and Dolonnor in Inner Mongolia, he travelled to Amdo in 1907 presumably to pay his respects to the Dalai Lama at Kumbum.¹⁰⁹

The conflict between the two hierarchs was apparently sparked by the Dalai Lama's dissatisfaction with monastic discipline at Kumbum, which he found slack.¹¹⁰ He, therefore, tightened it by issuing a total of three or four sets of new monastic constitutions (Tib. *bca' yig*) for Kumbum Monastery, i.e., one each for the Medical and the Esoteric Colleges at Kumbum in 1907, and one for the Kalacakra School and possibly a general one in 1909.¹¹¹ In addition, he replaced the abbot (*khri chen* /

¹⁰⁶ Teramoto 1974: 211.

¹⁰⁷ Baradin 2002: 158–159.

¹⁰⁸ Baradin 2002: 184–185, 189; Tafel 1914: vol. 2, 89 and Anon. 1909 Apr. 3: 17: Minor reincarnations and chieftains were supposed to pay between eight and twenty taels for an audience with the Dalai Lama.

¹⁰⁹ However, Akya himself did not reside at Kumbum but moved to one of Kumbum's branch monasteries or hermitages, i.e., to Senge qiubu si 森格秋布寺 (Katakana: Senge ruchiyubu, probably Tib. Sengge sgrub), 15 *li* from Kumbum which served as a hermitage for the Akya lineage. See Teramoto 1972: 232; Karsten 1997: vol. 1, 298. I would like to thank Wu Chen for sharing several sources concerning the Fifth Akya Khutughtu with me.

¹¹⁰ Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 108–109; Bell 1946: 78; Schram 2006: 385; Teramoto 1974: 230.

¹¹¹ It is not entirely clear whether the "general" monastic constitution for Kumbum was in fact a new set or refers to the three other sets as a whole; Ishihama 2022: 38, 56–57; Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 37. For outsiders like Tafel (1914: vol. 1, 217, 227 and

mkhan po; Ch. *fa tai* 法台) and two other important monastic officials at Kumbum, namely the disciplinarian (*dge bskos*) and the chant master (*dbu mdzad*), all without consulting Akya Khutughtu.¹¹²

Although Berthe Jansen's and Yumiko Ishihama's research shows that the Vinaya rules were a passion of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and dear to his heart—he had already presented *bca' yig* to several monasteries in Mongolia and would later present new monastic constitutions to monasteries in central Tibet as well¹¹³—in Amdo these activities were regarded as the Dalai Lama clearly overstepping his authority at Kumbum. Akya Khutughtu who was a few years older than the Dalai Lama and, as the reincarnation of Tsongkhapa's father, highly revered in Amdo, Mongolia, and at the Qing Court in Beijing, apparently did not accept being lectured and criticized by the Dalai Lama about the management of his monastery. In fact, in May 1907 Akya sent a letter in Mongolian to the secretariat of Kumbum Monastery to protest against the changes the Dalai Lama had introduced at Kumbum and requested that Akya's personal loan of 80,000 taels to the monastery should be reimbursed to him.¹¹⁴ The conflict between the two hierarchs became such an embarrassment and local scandal that the Chinese officials in Lanzhou and Xining decided to get involved

vol. 2, 89) and Kozlov (1925: 128, 217), however, the monks at Kumbum seemed to strictly follow the Vinaya rules and everything to be very orderly at the monastery.

¹¹² The elected abbot was apparently the Fourth Anjasu Lobzang Gendun Tenpa Rinchen (An 'ja' su Blo bzang dge 'dun bstan pa rin chen, 1874–1912?) who was replaced first by Ushidrak Zhabdrung Sonam Gyeltsen Nyima (U shi/shud brag Bsod nams rgyal mtshan nyi ma, 1861–?) and later by the Fifth Taktser Lobzang Tsultrim Jigme Gyatso (Stag mtsher blo bzang tshul khriims 'jigs med rgya mtsho, 1856–1916/20?) and/or the Sixth Sertok Lobzang Tsultrim Gyatso (Gser tog Blo bzang tshul khriims rgya mtsho, 1845–1908/1915); Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 42, 109. Ushidrak had studied for some time, probably in the late 1880s, at Sera Monastery in Lhasa. The Fifth Taktser was close to, or at least well acquainted with, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama since the 1880s and had already served as Kumbum's elected abbot twice, i.e., from 1880 to 1883 and again from 1892 to 1894. He is said to have helped the Dalai Lama to institute the new regulations at Kumbum. See Mullin 1988: 11–14 and the foreword by the Sixth Taktser Lama Tubten Jigme Norbu (Stag mtsher thub bstan 'jigs med nor bu, 1922–2008) in Mullin 1988; Karsten 1997: vol. 1, 276, 292 and vol. 2, 16, 224, 254; Tafel 1914: vol. 1, 235; Ishihama 2022: 38; <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Fifth-Taktser-Lobzang-Tsultrim-Jigme-Gyatso/2393>, accessed Mar. 02, 2023. Ushidrak Tulku is repeatedly mentioned in the biography of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama for the year 1907 and the Fifth Taktser is called Kumbum's "top" tulku (Sku 'bum dang rtse sprul sku) while Akya is mentioned by name—as A rkya ho thog thu—only once. See Phur lcog 2010: vol. 2, 18, 21, 31, 41–42, 108–109.

¹¹³ Jansen (2018: 21, 134) mentions further *bca' yig* of the Dalai Lama which were all written after 1920. Ishihama (2022: 56–57), on the other hand, lists twenty-three *bca' yig* composed by the Dalai Lama up to 1909 with the earliest dating from 1888. She also lists three more for monasteries in *mdo smad*.

¹¹⁴ Teramoto 1974 : 230.

and sent the Amdo-Tibetan speaking Muslim Ma Fuxiang 馬福祥 (1876–1932), the then military commander of Xining (Xining *zhenzong-bing* 鎮總兵), to mediate. After several fruitless attempts to convince Akya to come to Kumbum and after Teramoto, who had known Akya for many years, had offered to serve as an additional mediator, Akya and the Dalai Lama finally met for one short formal audience on July 15, 1907.¹¹⁵ Although the heated situation at Kumbum apparently calmed down thereafter, the meeting at the audience did not lead to reconciling the two hierarchs. Therefore, the Qing Court recalled Akya to Beijing—apparently according to his own wishes.¹¹⁶

However, the matter did not end there. More than a year later, after his return from Beijing to Kumbum in February 1909, the Dalai Lama wrote to the Xining Amban Qing-shu 慶恕 (1840–1919) in early March or April and requested the Guangxu Emperor to discharge Akya Khutughtu on grounds of the latter's immoral conduct, just as the Dalai Lama had done earlier with regard to the Jebtsundamba in Mongolia. It seems that Akya had returned to Kumbum before the Dalai Lama and, during the latter's absence, had revoked the changes made by the Dalai Lama. This, of course, had infuriated the latter.¹¹⁷ Akya then

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 150, 238; Phur lcoq 2010: vol. 2, 41.

¹¹⁶ Teramoto 1974: 232, 238, 244; QSL Guangxu juan 576, 光緒三十三年七月甲寅 (Sept. 2, 1907).

¹¹⁷ QSL, Xuantonq zhengji juan 1, 宣統元年閏二月壬辰 (Apr. 2, 1909) and Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan 2002: 205, doc. 269; Karsten 1997 vol. 2: 7; Jagou 2009: 370. In the QSL, the memorial of Qing-shu is noted under April 2, 1909, the Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, which provides a much longer and detailed version of the Dalai Lama's complaint, however, gives 宣統元年二月十一日 (Mar. 2, 1909). The charges against Akya were very similar to those that we found in Chinese and international newspapers against the Dalai Lama and the Jebtsundamba in Mongolia, i.e., that Akya was fond of luxury, drank, smoked tobacco, and hunted. In the account of the CICM missionary Cyriel van Belle, who lived in Gansu from 1885 to 1918, the Dalai Lama is said to have criticized Akya as being lax (i.e., in his Buddhist duties) and in love with luxury and money and demanded that Akya should send some of "the exuberance of means" to Lhasa. See van Belle 1921: 651–652. Ridley mentions that Akya was supposed to have gone hunting one morning while the Dalai Lama stayed at Kumbum and that Akya resented the Dalai Lama because he diverted all the donations to his own treasury. At the same time, he calls Akya "a genial, large-hearted gentleman" who "has a good name among the people in the lamasery and district round Sining"; Ridley (Anon. Apr. 3, 1909: 17). Louis Schram also provides a pro-Akya account of the conflict as he might have heard from the Kumbum lamas in 1911–1912 when Schram stayed at Kumbum to study Tibetan. He stated that "the Dalai Lama cut a sorry figure in Hsining in 1909" in his conflict with Akya. Furthermore, he added that "the Dalai Lama left, and the three appointed officials also left as quickly as possible for fear of being killed by the Kumbum lamas. The deposed officials assumed their jobs again, but Achia, deeming that he had irretrievably lost face, cut his throat. Several times I heard this

passed away in April 1909, after the Dalai Lama had sent his letter.¹¹⁸ The sudden death of Akya provoked two theories, namely, a. that Akya committed suicide because he had irretrievably lost face and b. that he was killed through sorcery by the Dalai Lama. In fact, several monks at Kumbum requested an investigation by the Xining amban's yamen. Before he left on June 3, 1909, the Dalai Lama apparently reinstated his new monastic rules and replaced the monastic officials once again. However, these officials, including the Fifth Taktser Lobzang Tsultrim Jigme Gyatso (Stag mtsher blo bzang tshul khrim 'jigs med rgya mtsho, 1856–1916/20?), left Kumbum soon after the Dalai Lama had left.¹¹⁹

In the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's biography by Phur lcog, the whole affair with Akya is summarized under the general topic of lax monastic discipline and the personal conflict between Akya and the Dalai Lama is glossed over. Akya's name and title is, in fact, mentioned only once or twice in connection with the Dalai Lama's stay at Kumbum and then only inconspicuously with regard to Akya's audience with the Tibetan hierarch. The affair was obviously too embarrassing to describe in more detail because it quite clearly demonstrated that the Dalai Lama did not have unquestioned religious and administrative authority over Amdo monasteries as the Dalai Lama himself might have assumed. That the Dalai Lama insisted on this authority nevertheless and even asked the Qing Court to intervene on his behalf and discharge Akya Khutughtu made the Dalai Lama look rather powerless. Moreover, it also implies that the Dalai Lama still accepted Qing authority, at least over Amdo's ecclesiastical elite, even if we explain the Dalai Lama's actions relating to Akya Khutughtu as an over-reaction to vent his frustrations. Namely that his position and status as the superior religious and political head of the Tibeto-Lamaist world had not only been questioned in Mongolia by the Eighth Jebtsundamba and by the Manchu Imperial Court while in Beijing, but even in Amdo which the Dalai Lama considered as part of his domain. Akya, on the other

tragic story, told by the Amban himself and by the officials at Kumbum," Schram 2006: 385.

¹¹⁸ After the death of the Fifth Akya another conflict ensued over his rightful successor, see Ridley in Anon. Feb. 8, 1919: 332; van Belle 1921: 652. The Sixth Akya Lobzang Lungtok Jigme Tenpai Gyeltsen (Blo bzang lung rtogs 'jigs med bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, 1910–1948) was recognized only in 1915, see Karsten 1997: vol. 2, 11.

¹¹⁹ See the memorial of Xining Amban Qing-shu in *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan* 2002: 218, doc. 280; Ding 2000: 44; Jagou 2009: 370; Karsten 1997: vol. 2, 8; Schram 2006: 385. The Dalai Lama's departure from Kumbum is described by Ridley in Anon. July 17, 1909: 140. Another, more plausible cause for Akya's death which is stated in the account of van Belle (1921: 652), is that Akya who was reportedly not in good health, died prematurely because the conflict had further afflicted his health. For the Fifth Taktser Rinpoche see FN 112.

hand, probably saw the Dalai Lama as a rival for influence and power in Amdo, Inner Mongolia, and in Beijing where Akya's religious position so far had only been surpassed by the above-mentioned Seventh Changkya Khutughtu.

Moreover, Yudru Tsomu's research highlights that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama received very negative reports in the Chinese language press while in exile in Mongolia and in China. The reports mainly focused on the Dalai Lama's collusion with Russia, his and his retinue's alleged arrogance and the substantial economic burden on the Qing Court and local economies along his route. In addition, the accounts were also often derogatory in terms of the Dalai Lama's personality.¹²⁰ We might thus wonder to what degree the Dalai Lama, his retinue, and Amdo Tibetans were aware of these comments and how this knowledge might have influenced their own perceptions and actions.

4. Conclusion

I have argued here that the Dalai Lama's long sojourn in Amdo had major effects on three important aspects that shaped the Thirteenth

¹²⁰ Yudru Tsomu 2022: 629–655. This negative image was frequently mirrored in the foreign press and in diplomatic correspondence. The Australian journalist George E. Morrison who worked for the British *Times* in Beijing reported: "Chinese newspapers are waging a campaign against the Dalai Lama and his mission, and casting scorn upon his country. The provincial officials of Shanxi, in which Wutaishan is situated, grumble loudly at the burden imposed on the provincial treasury by the entertainment of the Dalai Lama and his following. The Tibetans complain quite as feelingly of the treatment to which they are subjected by the Chinese authorities, and declare that of the sums alleged to be allotted to the treasury only a small proportion reaches them." Bell 1946: 71. And the US Minister in Beijing cum Tibetologist W. W. Rockhill later added: "The Dalai Lama Töbtsän-gyats'o has been depicted by recent writers, none of whom have, however, ever met him or heard much of him except from Tibetans (sic!) who had suffered through the acts of officials of his government and who naturally held him responsible for these acts, as a bloodthirsty, cruel, revengeful tyrant, an intriguer of the deepest dye, a criminal who ignores all law and justice, and who has deliberately plunged his country into the troubles of the last ten years which have resulted in the 'loss' of Tibet's independence' and the 'fostering on it of China's yoke,'" Rockhill 1910: 89–90. However, Rockhill himself also gave a very negative but seldomly cited description of the Dalai Lama in his letter to the US president of November 1908. "[...] the Dalai Lama cared very little, if at all, for anything which did not affect his personal privileges and prerogatives, that he separated entirely his cause from those of the people of Tibet, which he was willing to abandon entirely to the mercy of China. He did not care particularly concerning the contemplated administrative reforms, so long as he could feel assured that his personal honors and privileges were safe, and, if possible, slightly added to." See Bell 1946: 67; BNA, FO 535/12-1909, Rockhill to Roosevelt, Nov. 8, 1908. Moreover, Tafel (1914 vol. 2: 86) mentions rumors about the Dalai Lama having affairs with women, circulated by local Chinese and Tsaidam Mongols in 1906–1907.

Dalai Lama's future policies for Tibet, namely on Tibet's international relations, on Tibet's reform policies and on Tibet's claim of authority over Amdo.

While the Sikkim border conflict with British India in the late 19th century had been a wake-up call for the Dalai Lama and his government about the need for military reforms, the Younghusband Expedition and the subsequent exile propelled the Tibetan hierarch and his government into the realm of international powers politics. They had started to realize that they needed more and new allies to successfully deal with the double-crisis at home, namely the growing influence of British India and Qing China in central Tibet. Especially, the Dalai Lama's frustrations with the Qing government had kept growing during his long exile. Therefore, in a completely unprecedented move, as early as in 1907–1908, the Dalai Lama pro-actively reached out to other nations besides Russia, namely Japan, the US, Germany, France, and, quite remarkably, even to his former foe Great Britain in the hope of gaining more political leverage vis-à-vis Qing China. In 1908–1909 the Tibetans also asked for practical support, be it weapons from Germany and possibly other countries, military instructors, international loans etc. as has been demonstrated above. This major change in attitude, i.e., to loosen Tibet's self-imposed isolation, had certainly been initiated also by the Dalai Lama's new personal encounters with Russians in Mongolia and other Westerners at Kumbum. Especially his new political advisors, such as his Russian acquaintance Shcherbatskoi in Urga who had introduced him to Rockhill, played an active role and last not least, the Japanese monk Teramoto.

In addition to the Dalai Lama's efforts to improve his political and religious position vis-à-vis the Manchu Court, we notice his growing inclination to more radically redefine both his own and Tibet's relations with Qing China. Based on Teramoto's observations made at Kumbum Monastery in 1907, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had apparently already begun pondering over the possibility of seeking complete independence from Qing China while, ostensibly, he was still negotiating for more autonomy. Nevertheless, the actions of the Tibetan hierarch still remained ambivalent. For example, the Tibetan hierarch's requests to the Qing emperor to change the procedures for sending memorials to the Qing Court and to revoke the Khutughtu title of the Jebtsundamba in 1905 and of Akya in 1909 seem to indicate a willingness to accept Qing suzerainty at least in certain quarters.

With regard to the Dalai Lama's role in Amdo we have seen that not only his temporal power but even his religious authority was questioned by influential Amdo elites. This became particularly evident through the conflict with Akya Khutughtu. After the violent abolition of the Lobzang Tenzin (Blo bzang bstan 'dzin) Revolt in the 18th

century, Manchu influence in the wider Kokonor region had grown considerably and thereafter, Mongolian and Tibetan elites in north-eastern Amdo—both religious and secular—had started to have regular contacts with local Manchu and Chinese officials on various occasions. They thus quickly learned how to co-exist with the local Qing administration and also knew how to take advantage of it.¹²¹ Simultaneously, Lhasa's influence over important Amdo Geluk monasteries such as Kumbum and Labrang, had been in steady decline since the 18th century. Amdo's religious elites typically entertained triangular relations with central Tibet, Mongolia, and Qing China and they were as much—or possibly even more—oriented towards China and Mongolia as towards Lhasa.¹²² The most important religious link between Lhasa and Amdo were the monk students from Amdo who received advanced religious training at the three large monasteries of Lhasa, i.e., Drepung, Sera (Se ra), and Ganden (Dga' ldan), and later typically returned to their home monasteries. Among these were also high-ranking Amdo incarnations such as the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa of Labrang Monastery who, nevertheless, also paid his respects to the Chinese emperor during an extended visit to Beijing and Wutaishan. Others, however, such as the Fifth Akya Khutughtu and the Seventh Changkya Khutughtu, never visited Lhasa and had continued their studies in Beijing instead.

In addition, it should be noted that large stretches of Amdo, i.e., what are now the Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures (TAP) of Golok (Mgo log) and Yushul (Yul shul) in modern Qinghai Province, were more or less independent of both the Chinese and the central Tibetan government until the 1920s. Thus, at the time when the Thirteenth Dalai Lama stayed at Kumbum Monastery, Amdo was *not* under the political control of the Dalai Lama's government in Lhasa, although, it still entertained manifold religious, cultural, economic, and historic bonds with central Tibet as it did with Kham. That the temporal and religious power of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in Amdo was not only questioned by the Manchu government but even by Amdo Tibetan elites while the Tibetan hierarch was personally present must have been especially bitter for the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama probably had expected just the opposite, namely that his presence might bind Amdo closer to Lhasa again.

The exile certainly forced the Dalai Lama to rethink the theoretical and practical limits of his spiritual and temporal power in central Tibet

¹²¹ Oidtmann 2016a and 2016b. Regarding occasions for regular contacts, see, for example, religious festivals and the Kokonor sacrifice. This will be the subject of a forthcoming article titled "Ma Qi, the First Muslim Warlord of Early 20th Century Xining, His Network of Contacts to Tibetan Elites, and the Tibet Question."

¹²² Karsten 1997: vol. 1, 173; Schram 2006: 338; Kim Hanung 2019: 84, 94.

as well as in Amdo and Kham. Consequently, the delineation of clear borders with Qing China and British India became a new pressing issue as demonstrated just a few years later during the negotiations for the Simla Convention in 1913–14.

English Translation of Excerpts from the Travel Diary of the Japanese Buddhist Monk Teramoto Enga 寺本婉雅 (1872–1940),¹²³

1. Entry for February 17, 1907 (p. 225):

Tonight I met with the personal physician of the Dalai Lama, Raaman kanbu [i.e., *bla sman mkhan po*, Tekhang Jampa Tubwang (Bkras khang byams pa thub dbang, 1863?–1922)],¹²⁴ and we talked about the Tibet Question. The *khenpo* said: ‘Whether the Dalai Lama will return to Tibet, will be known after the 6th Chinese month [i.e., July 1907]. The Chinese officials who came to Lhasa, are still negotiating with the Tibetan officials. If the Beijing government gives the Tibetans the right of overall control [jp. *tōkatsuken* 統管權] and allows the Dalai Lama to remain in the position as Tibet’s ruler as before, then he will return to Tibet. If it is not like this, then the Dalai Lama will not easily return to Tibet.’¹²⁵ From this, we can see that the Dalai Lama will only return to Tibet under these preconditions.

2. Entry for February 25, 1907 (pp. 227–228):

Report to Vice-Chief of Staff, General Fukushima¹²⁶ [based in China]:

[address...] Last year, after my audience with the Dalai Lama, the Dalai Lama sent a personal letter in response to the abbot of the Higashi Honganji [Temple in Kyoto], Ōtani Kōei [1852–1923],¹²⁷ and thereafter, my relationship with the Dalai Lama became closer as well as the exchanges with the Dalai Lama’s superintendent [*zongli kanbu*

¹²³ *Zōmō Tabi Nikki* 藏蒙旅日記 [Travel Diary to Tibet and Mongolia]. Tokyo: Fuyō Shobō, 1974. I wish to thank Maki Takano for reading important excerpts of Teramoto’s travel diary with me. Any mistakes and misinterpretations remain, of course, entirely mine.

¹²⁴ For more information on the personal physician see FN 74.

¹²⁵ It is not clear where the direct quote ends, because the second quotation mark is missing. However, the next sentence seems to be Teramoto’s thought.

¹²⁶ For more information on Fukushima Yasumasa (1852–1919), see Saalen 2018: 69–86; and Esenbel 2018: 69–86.

¹²⁷ Ōtani Kōei was the head of the Higashi Honganji Buddhist sect, a sub-sect of the Japanese Pure Earth Sect (Jōdo Shinshū 浄土真宗, Ch. Jingtu 淨土). For more information on the origin and role of the Higashi Honganji 東本願寺 in China, see Chen 2009.

總理堪布]¹²⁸ and the Ronneru chienpo [Tib. *mgron gnyer chen po?*]¹²⁹ (a secondary official, Jp. *jikan* 次官) to whom I offered advice for developing Tibet. The Dalai Lama and his officials listened to my reform proposals and recognized that they should request help from Japan via the Qing government. At the same time, they still respect Russia, but the relations are not as close as before [...].

Since the Dalai Lama has arrived here in the ninth month of last year [i.e., November 1906], Russia has already sent five letters by special courier to the Dalai Lama. But some officials have not forwarded the Russian letters to the Dalai Lama, because they think that in the current situation the relationship with the Qing Dynasty and Japan should be improved. 'The Russian letters have been received by the Dalai Lama. But the officials are not in the position to force the Dalai Lama to answer the letters.' This was their response to the [Russian] envoys.

[... Summary: the Russians still try to entice the Dalai Lama to go north to Russia by using the Buryat Mongols who all speak Russian and bring presents for the Tibetan officials...] However, the Dalai Lama's intention to go north has changed since I [Teramoto] have translated a summative account of the history of Buddhism in Japan and the history of Japan into Tibetan. Although the Dalai Lama seems to plan to return to Tibet under the Qing Dynasty's order, I assume that he [now] trusts in Japan's leadership for the reform plans for Tibet. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance [1902–1922] does not permit Japan to openly intervene in Tibetan affairs, but after the expiration of the alliance he will lean on Japan, this becomes more and more certain [...].

3. Entry for May 18, 1907 (p. 233):

Today, I visited the Kantien Sorupon [i.e., *Khenchen* Sorupon (*mkhan chen gsol dpon?*)]¹³⁰ and the Doruwa kanbu [i.e., *Dulwa khenpo* ('*Dul ba*

¹²⁸ He is also called Chichiabu kanbu (*spyi khyab mkhan po*) and probably identical with Yutok Puntsok Pelden *spyi khyab* (G.yu thog phun tshogs dpal ldan, b. 1860) who had accompanied the Tibetan hierarch to Urga; Rahul 1962: 177; and <https://library.bdr.io/show/bdr:P6697>. According to several reports of the Nepalese Representative dated July 29, Aug. 19, and Sept. 2, 1907, the Dalai Lama had dismissed the *spyi khyab mkhan po* together with the Nechung (Gnas chung) oracle while in Amdo and both returned to Lhasa; see British National Archives FO 371/223-1907.

¹²⁹ The still unidentified Ronneru followed in rank after the Dalai Lama's superintendent, i.e., the *zongli kanbu*; see FN 77.

¹³⁰ "Kantien Sorupon" is not a personal name but the transliteration of a Tibetan official's title. In a Russian autobiography of Agvan Dorzhiev, the Dalai Lama's Buryat adviser, both a "soibon" and a "sobon" are mentioned as having accompanied the Dalai Lama into exile to Mongolia with "soibon" being interpreted as "attendant"

mkhan po)).¹³¹ I wanted to find out whether their intention that the Dalai Lama sends some people to Japan, is real. But the Dalai Lama and his adviser and personal physician are full of worries and not yet awoken from their dream of [having strong] relations with Russia. Their inclinations towards the north [i.e., Russia] are [still] very strong. Twenty days ago, they secretly sent two envoys with secret letters, one to Russia via Ganzhou 甘州 [i.e., modern Zhangye 張掖] and Liangzhou 涼州 [i.e., modern Wuwei 武威] and one to Dong Fuxiang 董福祥 [1839–1908]¹³² who lives in the vicinity of Alakexie 阿拉克謝 [i.e., Ch. Alashan 阿拉山] in Mongolia. [Summary: Teramoto voices his assumptions about Russian and Mongolian intrigues against Japan and that the Dalai Lama still counts on Russia to repel the British from Tibet. However, the Dalai Lama is skillfully maneuvering between Japan and Russia, and nobody knows what he really thinks.] He [the Dalai Lama still] expresses his wish to send people to Japan and exchanges letters with the Honganji for this purpose. On the surface, he wants to establish exchange with Japan, but secretly he still trusts in Russia. The Dalai Lama has lost confidence in the Manchu Court and with Russia's support he wants to fling off the restraints of the Manchus. At the same time, he wants to repel the British from Tibet. This volition is very strong and not extricable [...].

4. Entry for November 16, 1907 (p. 244):

Russia still has dealings with the Dalai Lama as before; this has not changed. Although, lately, it is being said that the Dalai Lama will travel to Beijing for an audience with the Qing Court, the Russian faction in the Dalai Lama's camp is still secretly consulting with Russia about [certain] issues. In March this year, two Buryat Mongols from Russia arrived here to negotiate something with the Dalai Lama. In April they returned to Buryatia as ordered by Russia. [However,] on the 25th of the ninth lunar month [i.e., October 31, 1907] these two people hurried from Buryatia to come here to negotiate with the Russian faction [again]. [Summary: Teramoto saw them at audiences with the

and "sobon" as the tea and food steward, i.e., *gsol dpon*; see Andreyev [2001] 2008: 39; Snelling 1993: 124. For a photo of the *mkhan chen gsol dpon* see Ishihama 2019a: 22, fig. 1-3.

¹³¹ Teramoto's "Doruwa kanbu" might be identical with the 19th century 'Dul ba mkhan po Blo gros, or possibly his successor. His personal name was Rta tshag yongs 'dzin blo gros, mentioned in BUDA as the teacher of the Fourth Gungthang (1824–1859); see <https://library.bdrc.io/show/bdr:P2261?uilang=en>, accessed July 4, 2023. Dulwa Khenpo, considered to be the leader of the pro-Qing faction at Kumbum, was a high-ranking Mongol *khenpo* from Drepung Monastery in Lhasa who also served as the Dalai Lama's interpreter for Mongolian and Chinese.

¹³² A former, but still influential Chinese general exiled to Gansu.

Dalai Lama. They secretly stay at the residence of the Dalai Lama's personal physician Raaman. Teramoto is not able to identify them, but he describes their appearances ...]

5. Entry of November 19, 1907 (p. 245):

Today arrived the news that the Dalai Lama received the imperial order to travel to Wutaishan in Shanxi [Province] on December 3 [...].¹³³

6. Entry of November 23, 1907 (pp. 245–247):

[...] Assumedly, if the Dalai Lama is soon leaving for Wutaishan, then he will also visit the Qing Court next year and will also express friendly feelings for me as Japanese. [Summary: Teramoto describes how he has promoted good relations between the Dalai Lama and Japan ...] The arrival of the present imperial order for the Dalai Lama to move on to Wutaishan and that of last winter to come here to Ta'ersi [i.e., Kumbum Monastery] has provided [the opportunity for] exchange with the people of the Qing faction about the utmost necessity for the Dalai Lama personally to benefit from [the occasion of] the Dalai Lama paying respect to the Qing Court in Beijing. When the Dalai Lama fled from Tibet to Urga in the previous year, why would he not receive the order to travel directly from Urga to Beijing or to Wutaishan? Needless to say, at that time the Dalai Lama did not wish to pay his respect in Beijing or at Wutaishan. His original intention was to associate with Russia and to rely on Russia to drive the British back to India. [Only] thereafter did he [start to] defy the Beijing government and wanted to realize his dream of Tibet as an independent country. But after arriving here [at Kumbum], the Dalai Lama outwardly regrets his mistakes and therefore wants to pay his respect to Beijing. Since the costs for installing a new provincial governor in Tibet are currently too high, the Beijing government has postponed this project for the time being. [Nevertheless,] it is a fact that the Beijing government's true intention has already been leaning towards the policy of establishing a new provincial governor. It seems that the Dalai Lama was very surprised [by this news] and therefore wants to travel to Beijing to firmly establish his rule over Tibet by urging the Guangxu Emperor [to consent] at an audience [...].

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BL: British Library, London, UK

¹³³ This news was sent in a telegram from the Japanese Legation in Beijing via Teramoto's friend Okajima in Lanzhou.

BNA: (British) National Archives, Kew, UK

GFO: Political Archives of the German Foreign Office (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes), Berlin, Germany

Published Collections of Archival Materials

DQHD: “‘Da Qing huidian’ Lifanyuan shiliao (er) 大清會典理藩院史料(二)” [Collected Regulations and Statutes of the Great Qing among the Materials of the Court of Colonial Affairs, vol. 2]. In *Tang Song Yuan Ming Qing Zangshi shiliao huibian* 唐宋元明清藏事史料彙編 [Collected Historical Materials on Tibetan Affairs during the Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties], ed. by Zhang Yuxin 張羽心 et al., vol. 11. Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2009.

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