


The Thirteenth Dalai Lama and the Water-Rat Year Chinese War (1912)

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Introduction

he arrival of Sichuan troops in Tibet, the establishment of a Chinese republic in 1912, the Water-Rat year Chinese war, and the expulsion of Chinese troops from Tibet put an end to the priest-patron relationship that existed between the Dalai Lamas and the Manchu emperors and led to the establishment of Tibet's *de facto* independence.¹ However, this assertion needs questioning in order to examine the emergence of a national consciousness among the highest Tibetan authorities prior to the Water-Rat year War, the mutiny by the Chinese army in Tibet and the damage caused by Manchu and Chinese soldiers. Little is known about the actions and ideas developed by Tibetans during this period, with the exception of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama Tubten Gyatso's (Thub bstan rgya mtsho, 1876–1933, reigned from 1895 to his death), which are often cryptic and sometimes contradictory; those of a few generals who valiantly defended positions; and the monastic communities', some of whom supported one side rather than another.

The sources available to me while preparing this article are of very different kinds. From a general point of view, research into relations between China and Tibet requires drawing on sources that illustrate representative theoretical frameworks, and others that involve normative ones. Studying the period and events considered in this article is no exception to this rule. Thus, regarding sources that allow

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¹ The notion of the “union of politics and religion” (Tib. *chos srid zung 'brel, lugs zung* or conjugated order / *lugs gnyis* or dual order / *tshul gnyis*; Ch. *zhengjiao he yi* 政教合一) is usually considered as a tool for analyzing the relations established between Lhasa and Beijing in the Qing period (1644–1912), see, for instance, Ruegg 1991 and 1995; Ishihama 2004; Pirie 2017.

interpretations, two patterns are observed. The first concerns Chinese sources, namely archives, travel diaries, war accounts, and press articles that are contemporary to the events narrated. The second focuses on Tibetan sources. First, Tibetan masters' biographies, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's, for instance and also Tibetan lay and monk officials' biographies which were mostly written—in English—many years after their subject/object deaths and their exile from Tibet. Second, we find a few arcane lines quoted in the narration of biographies written in Tibetan and in Chinese and published in China as early as the mid-1980s, when the subject/object was born before the early 20th century. The Tibetan model is normative, as is that of the Chinese dynastic annals and monographs and raises the question about the message the author intends to communicate about the subject/object of the hagiographies, his actions and his ideas, since these sources were written *a posteriori* after day-to-day notes had been taken down by people close to them. Both theoretical models are complemented by diplomatic archives. The British Raj's are obviously richer than the Chinese ones, but the French diplomats based in Southeast Asia or in China also deliver an outsider's point of view that offers a broader vision of the Asian continent's and Inner Asia's geopolitics. All these sources induce an exegesis of interpretations that also mobilizes the historiographic work already undertaken. However, the volume of information in Chinese, British, besides the French sources contemporary to the 1908–1912 period is much less substantial in Tibetan ones. The details that abound in the first sources quoted are absent from the Tibetan sources I have consulted, resulting in a certain imbalance that is difficult to restore so far, despite the British archives, which gave the translations of many documents issued at that time in Chinese or Tibetan. T.W. Shakabpa (Dbang phyug bde ldan Zhwa sgab pa (1907–1989), the Tibetan government former finance minister (from 1939 to 1950), historian, and author of the book *Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs* [*A Political History of Tibet*] published his work in Tibetan (1976) and in its English publication (1967; which was published prior to the Tibetan one), Dorje Yudon Yuthok (1912–1998), *House of the Turquoise Roof* (1990; in English), and Dundul Namgyal Tsarong, *In the Service of His Country: The Biography of Dasang Damdul Tsarong, Commander General of Tibet* (2000; in English) are the only sources written by Tibetans that give a detailed description of the events at that time as far as I know.²

The fact remains that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama Tubten Gyatso's actions, along with their consequences as recorded in various sources,

² For this article, I use mainly the last translation of this book by Derek F. Maher 2010: 720–750; Shakabpa 1976: 167–250; Dorje Yudon Yuthok 1990: 19–27; Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 25–45.

hold our attention: his exile in Inner Asia and China (1904–1909), his negotiations with the Manchu amban (1910), his departure to British India (1910–1912) and his organization of the Tibetan resistance from India to Tibet (1911–1912).

While the Tibetan government was already politically active on the international scene (signing treaties with Nepal in 1856 and Sikkim in 1888 and sending Buryat monk Agvan Dorzhiev (1854–1938) to Europe and Russia as the Dalai Lama's emissary in the 1890s), the Dalai Lama's first exile led to his personal involvement in the international power-play then developing in Inner Asia. During his first exile, the Dalai Lama became an avid student of international power politics (and reform ideas for Tibet), but without managing to successfully intervene in the game yet, not for want of trying. However, this exile taught him where he stood as a religious and political figure, not only with regard to British India and Russia, but also to Qing 清 China, Mongolia, Amdo (A mdo), and Kham (Khams). During his second exile, the Dalai Lama was much more self-confident in dealing with foreigners (including the Manchu and later the Chinese) and he played a direct role in global interactions although the complexities of British domestic and international politics prevented him from reaching all his goals. He still lacked the terminology and conceptual understanding of global politics and Russia's, Britain's, and the Qing's machinations. However, the Dalai Lama then better conceptualized the forces at work and how Tibet might define itself within those forces, hence the negotiations that preceded the Simla Convention to draw Tibet's borders and define its status on the international stage (1913–1914).

The Dalai Lama's exile in Inner Asia and China (1904–1909)

The Dalai Lama's actions during his first exile in the wake of the 1904 British invasion of Tibet, which lasted until his return to Lhasa (Lha sa) in December 1909 confirm his determination to assert his sovereignty on the international scene and the breadth of his political power over Tibetan territory and beyond.³ During his whole exile, he was approached by many international politicians, diplomats, and emissaries from various governments, who instructed him on international issues.⁴ His travels, meetings, and decisions impacted Inner Asia's

³ For the most recent study on the Younghusband mission, see Diemberger and Hugh-Jones 2012; on the Russian in Tibet, see Andreyev 1996 and 2001.

⁴ See Bianca Horlemann's paper in this issue. Kobayashi 2019; Sperling 2011; Meinheit 2011; Jagou 2009; Andreyev 1993, and also online <https://blogs.loc.gov/international-collections/2022/10/the-thomas-wilson-haskins-digital-collection-1902-1908/>.

geopolitics and reshaped the distribution of forces at the same time as when China was losing its position as privileged spokesperson on the Asian territory.⁵

In Lhasa, during his absence and without Manchu intervention, the British negotiated the surrender of Tibet with the Regent, *Ganden Tripa* Meru Lobzang Gyeltsen (*Dga' ldan khri pa* Rme ru blo bzang rgyal mtshan, regent from 1904 to 1909) appointed by the Dalai Lama before his departure to Mongolia, China, and Amdo to sign the Lhasa Convention (1904). Under its terms the Tibetans ratified both the treaties agreed on between China and Britain in 1886 and 1890 and were forced to open two new markets for the British: one at Gyantse (Rgyal rtse), in the Tsang (Gtsang) region, and the other at Gartok (Sgar thog), in the Ngari (Mnga' ris) region; in addition to the one at Dromo (Gro mo)⁶ in the Chumbi Valley which had been established earlier under the 1890 agreement, but which had not yet been implemented. Moreover, the Tibetans committed to not negotiating with other countries without Britain's consent, and to paying a war indemnity.⁷ Then, with the signature of the Lhasa Convention, the Russians feared the establishment of a British Protectorate in Tibet and the specter of an independent and powerful Tibet, confirming that Tibet found or put itself at the center of a rapidly mutating world where alliances were being shaken up.⁸ A treaty involving Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet was then signed between Russia and Great Britain in 1907. It outlined their respective spheres of influence and included the mutual promise to "comply with Tibet's territorial integrity and to abstain from all interference with the Tibetan internal administration."⁹ In the text, both parties recognized China's suzerainty over Tibet and committed themselves to not entering into negotiation with Tibetan authorities without prior consultation with the Beijing government (*Beijing zhengfu* 北京政府).¹⁰ The British archives make it obvious that these treaties prevented the British from taking action in favor of the Dalai Lama and position towards the status of Tibet as a country.

The recognition of Manchu suzerainty over Tibet by two great powers was not enough for the Qing dynasty (1644–1912). A train of reforms was implemented by the then Amban in Lhasa, Lian-yu 聯豫

⁵ See Irina Garri's and Bianca Horlemann's contributions in this issue.

⁶ Dromo or Yatung is located in the Chumbi Valley, near Sikkim, Bhutan, and Nepal. Today, Dromo is in Yadong 亞東 County, Shigatse (Gzhis ka rtse; Ch. Rikazi 日喀則) Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region.

⁷ Lamb 1966: 36–51.

⁸ About the treaties signed between the British and the Chinese regarding Tibet, see Ling-wei Kung's paper in this issue.

⁹ Article 1 of the Convention, see van Walt van Praag 1987: appendix 12, 307.

¹⁰ van Walt van Praag 1987: 307–308.

(1858–?, amban from December 1906 to December 1912)¹¹ and the Assistant-Amban, Zhang Yintang 張蔭棠 (1864–1937, assistant-amban from December 1906 to March 1908) and in concert with Zhao Erfeng 趙爾豐 (1845–1911), the then viceroy of Sichuan Province.¹² Among the measures taken, a bilingual newspaper came into being, schools teaching Chinese were founded, and the project to reinforce the Tibetan army was carried out instead of sending fresh troops to Tibet by late 1907, by admitting Tibetans in the Chengdu Military School and in the Baoding Military School (*Baoding junxiao* 保定軍校). Others were also trained within the Chengdu 成都 arsenal while Manchu and Chinese officers were sent to Lhasa.¹³ It was also planned to create a 6,000-strong New Army (*xinjian lujun* 新建陸軍, abbreviated to *xinjun* 新軍) in Tibet. It was supposed to be composed of Manchu and Chinese soldiers (6 out of 10) and Mongol and Tibetan ones (4 out of 10).¹⁴

The Beijing government felt insecure regarding Tibet, and sent an army to Lhasa via the Kham Tibetan region, after failing to reach an agreement with the British to allow the New Army to go to Tibet via India.¹⁵ At the same time, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa.

Negotiations between the Dalai Lama and the amban (1910)

At least three testimonies relate the Dalai Lama's arrival in Lhasa and his behavior toward the Amban Lian-yu. The historian Shakabpa gives an account of all the receptions organized to celebrate the Dalai Lama's

¹¹ Lian-yu, from the Manchu Plain White banner, was a relative of the Grand Councilor Na-tong. He was prefect at Yazhou (*Yazhou zhifu* 雅州知府) before being appointed amban in Tibet from 1906 to 1912.

¹² Belonging to the Manchu Plain Blue Banner, Zhao Erfeng 趙爾豐 was then director-general of the Sichuan-Hubei 四川湖北 Railway and acting viceroy of Sichuan Province.

¹³ Ministère des Affaires Étrangères français (FMFA), Annex to letter no. 88, from Pierre-Rémi Bons d'Anty, the French consul at Chengdu to M. Boissonnas, the French chargé d'affaires at Beijing, December 24, 1907; Tibet's Military and Political Situation on March 1, 1908, from M. Brissaud-Desmaillet, the French military Attaché at Beijing, to the FMFA, Paris.

¹⁴ Ibid. About the Zhang Yintang project to reinforce the Tibetan army instead of sending fresh troops to Tibet from the beginning of 1906 and Lian-yu military reforms to increase the Manchu army in Tibet by recruiting Mongols and eventually Gorkhas and Tibetans, see Kobayashi 2020: 311–340. Just after the return to Lhasa of the Dalai Lama, the latter sent a letter of protest against those reforms to the Qing Xuantong 宣統 Emperor (1906–1967; reign 1909–1912) in January 1910, see *The Times*, January 14, 1910.

¹⁵ The British National Archives (BNA), *Affairs of Thibet, Further Correspondence, Part XII, 1909*, Telegraph from Sir John Jordan to Sir Edward Grey (Received November 12) (no. 183. Secret.), dated Beijing, November 12, 1909.

return to Lhasa in December 1909.¹⁶ This is a factual report that can be complemented by a few others, written by Chinese people who witnessed his arrival and deliver their own feelings about it. The first is a witness account given by a Chinese soldier named Yen-Chen-Young (Yan Chenyong?), who was part of an escort provided by the Shanxi province governor to the Dalai Lama and noted by a *Times* journalist:

When the Dalai Lama reached Lhasa, he was received outside the city walls by a large body of Tibetan dignitaries and monks. They were lined up on one side of the road, while the other was crowded with Chinese officials and soldiers. The Dalai Lama exchanged friendly greetings with the Tibetans, but he walked past the Chinese as if he did not see them, his eyes staring blankly and his head cocked to one side. 'The Chinese', the soldier recalls, 'said nothing, but their hearts were black with rage.' For three days the Dalai Lama stayed in a temple the soldier called Chiang-Po, and there was great rejoicing among the Tibetans. On the fourth day he went up to the Potala and resumed residing in his palace on the hill [...].¹⁷

The behavior described above is confirmed within a correspondence sent by Mr. Max Müller (1867–1945), the British chargé d'affaires in Beijing, who met with the Manchu Grand Councillor Na-tong 那桐 (1857–1925) who exchanged with him about what happened in Lhasa. It said the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had ignored the amban since his arrival in Lhasa, persisting with his wish to be recognized as Tibet's temporal ruler (and not only her spiritual one):

Although, on the Lama's arrival, the amban had gone to meet him, yet the former, during the fifty days he was in Lhasa, had refused to see the amban again to discuss matters amicably; had prevented the amban and his escort from obtaining the usual supplies, and by refusing transport according to regulations had endeavored to cut communications with China.¹⁸

The second Chinese testimony gives the then Amban Lian-yu's opinion about the Dalai Lama's new way of displaying his temporal power:

The Dalai Lama returned to the Potala [from China] and the flag with a lion was hoisted on top. The Tibetans created their own currency (coins have lions on both sides) and their own police. Tibetan traders have been forbidden to do business with the Chinese. Food and firewood are

¹⁶ Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 706–707.

¹⁷ *L'Asie française*, April 1, 1910: 203–204.

¹⁸ Younghusband 1910: 400, see also Wangchen Gelek Surkhang, Tibet in the early 20th century: <https://case.edu/artsci/tibet/sites/default/files/2022-05/Tibet%20in%20the%20early%20th%20century%20-W.G.Surkhang.pdf>

rationed. Regarding administrative matters, they have started to question my decisions and power.¹⁹

According to him, "The Dalai Lama has long nurtured a different aspiration, namely to make his country independent."²⁰ As a matter of fact, the Dalai Lama was not the only one displaying his temporal power. He was supported by the Tibetan people who organized festivities to celebrate his return to the Tibetan capital and gave him a title directly, without referring to the Manchu emperor's. Moreover, the seal was deprived of the Chinese and Manchu scripts and instead the Lantsa script was added to the Tibetan's and Phakpa's ('Phags pa). The Tibetan reference mentioning this gift in the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's biography is very short and clear: "[...] offered to the Thirteenth Dalai Lama by the gods and people of Tibet."²¹ Despite the many unanswerable questions this sentence raises, its interpretation could be that "the gods" adds to the supernatural dimension of the Dalai Lama's powers, while "people of Tibet" implies recognition of the Dalai Lama's sovereignty by his people.²² Therefore, the Dalai Lama maintains the constitutive gemelity of the spiritual and temporal institution he represents, since he receives his spiritual legitimacy from his "bodhisattvic" origin, while at the same time being recognized as the temporal ruler of Tibet by the Tibetan people. According to sources, the Dalai Lama used the seal immediately or from 1913.²³

However, the threat of a Manchu army taking over central Tibet was there. The Dalai Lama sought to negotiate with the Manchu representative in Lhasa to not allow the Qing army invasion coming from Kham, where Zhao Erfeng's troops were stationed after attacking the Tibetan region and approaching the border of Kham with central Tibet to implement the Qing New policies (*xinzheng* 新政) there, and definitely colonized the region.²⁴

Back to Lhasa (December 25, 1909) and even before the Sichuan troops invaded central Tibet (February 10, 1910), the Dalai Lama and his government were informed by the Amban Lian-yu that a dispatch

¹⁹ *Lian-yu zhu Zang zougao* 联豫驻藏奏稿 (LYZG), Memorial from Lian-yu, March 30, 1910.

²⁰ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, October 27, 1909, and March 15, 1910.

²¹ Bell [1946] 1987: 171; Ishihama 2019: 91.

²² After a conversation with Prof. Yumiko Ishihama, from Waseda University, Tokyo, it seems that this notion comes from India where the royal power was considered as coming from gods.

²³ For a short discussion about this seal, Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 706; Ishihama 2019: 91–92; See Wangchen Gelek Surkhang who mentions that the seal was given to the Thirteenth Dalai Lama by the Tibetan National Assembly, "Tibet in the early 20th century," FN18.

²⁴ Sperling 1976.

of one thousand Manchu troops would arrive at Lhasa and they decided to resist the entry of the Qing troops inside central Tibet,

1,000 Thibetan troops have left for Lhasa from Shigatse and 700 from Gyantse, according to Thibetan trade agent at Yatung. It is estimated by the latter that 10,000 troops, stationed at different strategic points in order to stop Chinese troops' advance, have been mobilized by the Lhasa Government.²⁵

However, according to the British,

It appears that Thibetans sent considerable force to face Chinese troops to Chiamdo [Cha mdo] in order to intimidate them, but with orders not to fight. They accordingly retreated as Chinese troops advanced and at the same time the Lhasa amban promised the Dalai Lama that only 1,000 Chinese troops would be brought to Lhasa. Forty Chinese mounted infantry arrived suddenly in Lhasa.²⁶

As the Manchu and Chinese troops approached Lhasa, the Dalai Lama received Assistant-Amban Wen Zongyao 溫宗堯 (1876–1947)²⁷ after

²⁵ BNA, *Affairs of Thibet, Further Correspondence, Part XIII, 1910*, Inclosure 3 in no. 50 (India Office to Foreign Office-Received November 26). Telegraph from Major-General Maharaja Sir Chandra Shumshere Jang Bahadur Rana to Lieutenant-Colonel Manners-Smith, November 25, 1909 and Inclosure in no. 8 (India Office to Foreign Office. Received February 16), Telegraph from Government of India to Viscount Morley, February 15, 1910.

²⁶ Ibid., Inclosure in no. 29 (India Office to Foreign Office-Received March 2.), Telegraph from the Government of India to Viscount Morley, March 2, 1910. This Tibetan army mobilization and retreat before fighting under the order of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama is also quoted in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (FMFA), *Chine, Politique intérieure, Thibet*, vol. VI, 1910, P. Campon, ambassador at the French Embassy in England to S. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, March 18, 1910.

²⁷ Former professor at Queen's College, Hong Kong 香港, then director of the Guangdong 廣東 Foreign Affairs and Imperial Telegraph Office, Wen Zongyao was recommended to this post by Zhao Erfeng. He spoke very good English. He has a reputation of xenophobia which, according to the FMFA, accounts for why he has been named at this post that is to say to avoid that the British take more steps into Tibet through the opening of the trade marts, FMFA, *Chine, Politique intérieure, Thibet*, vol. V, 1907–1909, Letter from J. Beauvais, the French consul at Guangzhou to E. Ronssin, the consul-general of France in India, Calcutta, February 13, 1909. Appointed on July 23, 1908, he arrived in Lhasa in early 1909, Ibid., FMFA, Annex to the dépêche no. 48, dated March 12, 1909, Press review sent from J. Beauvais, the French consul at Guangzhou to E. Ronssin, the consul-general of France in India, Calcutta, Journal Ling-Hai-pao, July 30, 1908 and annex *Tibet, Renseignements politiques et économiques* to the dépêche from Beijing to the Asia Vice-Direction, no. 305, November 24, 1909. He is described as "a gentleman of liberal ideas and popular with the Tibetans," Teichman [1922] 2000: 22.

"the representatives of Nepal and Bhutan in Lhasa, together with some of the leading merchants and Muslim headmen in Lhasa approached them with a request that they would settle the dispute as to whether or not these troops should be allowed in Lhasa."²⁸ The meeting took place in the Potala and Nepalese representatives as well as some Tibetan traders were present (February 9, 1910).

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama's biography mentions that the amban informed the Dalai Lama of Zhao Erfeng troops' arrival, but the detailed content of this meeting is not specified.²⁹ A letter sent by Zhao Erfeng is also mentioned to provide proof of his army's arrival, so as to protect Tibet, thus taking up the argument used to justify the Qing Emperor's decisions as a matter pertaining to the priest-patron relationship.³⁰ A Chinese archive document records that Wen Zongyao and the Dalai Lama were planning to sign a seven-article treaty for the same reasons, namely to protect the Gelukpa (Dge lugs pa) School and to comfort the Tibetans.³¹

Besides declaring to the Dalai Lama that the troops coming from Sichuan would not exceed 1,000 soldiers, Wen Zongyao's proposals were:

Agreed that the distribution of the troops to guard the frontier would be considered on their arrival at Lhasa;
The Lamas would not be harmed or their monasteries destroyed;
There would be no diminution in the Dalai Lama's spiritual power;
Agreed that the Chinese troops would have no resistance offered to them;
The Tibetan troops then assembled would be dismissed to their homes;
The Dalai Lama would thank the Emperor, through the amban, for the great kindness shown him;
Great respect should, as usual, be paid by the Dalai Lama to the Chinese amban.³²

They were confirmed through a translation of the copies of correspondence that passed between the Dalai Lama and Wen Zongyao that have been given to Charles Bell (1870–1945) then the British political

²⁸ BNA, *Affairs of Thibet, Further Correspondence, Part XIII, 1910*, Inclosure 1 in no. 37 (India Office to Foreign Office, sent and received March 4, 1910), Government of India to Viscount Morley which communicate a message from Bell, March 3, 1910; Shakabpa specifies that the Nepalese representative, Captain Jit Bahadur was present at the meeting, see Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 720.

²⁹ Phur lcog 1981: vol. 6, f. 180, l. 5–6.

³⁰ Ibid., f. 181, l. 1.

³¹ *Qingmo shisan shi Dalai Lama dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 清末十三世達賴喇嘛檔案史料選編 (QMSL), Telegraphed order from the emperor to Lian-yu and Wen Zongyao, February 23, 1910.

³² LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, March 20, 1910.

officer in Sikkim (from 1908 to 1918) by Sidkeong Tulku Namgyal (*srid skyong* Sprul sku rnam rgyal, 1879–1914), the Maharaj Kumar of Sikkim on February 10, 1910.³³

The terms of the treaty involved several considerations: Manchu recognition of the Dalai Lama's spiritual power, Manchu respect for the Tibetan people and religious property, taking into account the Dalai Lama's subordination to the Manchu emperor and his obligation to communicate with the emperor through the latter representative in Lhasa. Finally, the Chinese army would henceforth ensure Tibet's defense and the Tibetan army was to be disbanded. Yet, though the amban stated that there would be no diminution of the Dalai Lama's spiritual power, he made no mention of temporal power, an omission to which the Dalai Lama drew the amban's attention.³⁴

We don't know about Wen Zongyao's response but we understand that, as soon as Wen Zongyao was named assistant-amban in Tibet on July 23, 1908 under Zhao Erfeng's recommendation,³⁵ his ambition was to meet the Dalai Lama, then in Beijing, to discuss with him Tibet's administrative reform.³⁶ While on his way to Lhasa, via Hong Kong

³³ BNA, *Affairs of Thibet, Further Correspondence, Part XIII, 1910*, India Office to Foreign Office, Inclosure 1 in no. 46 (India Office to Foreign Office, received March 14, 1910), March 12, 1910.

³⁴ Younghusband 1910: 389. After the Thirteenth Dalai Lama was in exile in Darjeeling, a different version of the agreement, written after a meeting was organized by the Tibetans from Darjeeling under the patronage of the Raj Kumar of Sikkim, is kept within the FMFA archive. This version mentions another agreement signed between Lian-yu, Wen Zongyao, and the Dalai Lama: "Il en est résulté un accord écrit et revêtu du sceau, aux termes duquel les Thibétains devaient conserver leur pouvoir civil sur les treize provinces [?], et les Chinois occuper les deux principaux marchés du pays, c'est-à-dire Gyantsé et Gartok ; les Thibétains s'engageant en outre à reprendre le ravitaillement des troupes, qu'ils avaient cessé d'assurer depuis le commencement des troubles." The result was a written and sealed agreement, under whose terms the Tibetans were to retain their civil power over the thirteen provinces, and the Chinese were to occupy the country's two main markets, Gyantse and Gartok; the Tibetans also undertook to resume supplying the troops, which they had ceased to do since the beginning of the unrest. See FMFA, E. Ronssin, French consul-general in India, Calcutta to S. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, March 10, 1910. This last agreement is different as the amban recognized "Tibetans'" (not the Dalai Lama's) power and that the advance of the troops was intended for the protection of the trade marts only. The discrepancy between the two versions reveals the way the situation was understood before and after the Dalai Lama left Lhasa.

³⁵ BNA, FO535/E312, *Affairs of Thibet, Part XI, Further Correspondence, 1908*: Inclosure in no. 106 (Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey. Sent September 21, 1908 from Beijing and received October 14, 1908), Acting Consul-General Twyman to Sir J. Jordan, Chengdu, dated August 18, 1908.

³⁶ FMFA, *Chine, Politique intérieure, Thibet*, vol. V, 1907–1909, Annex to the dépêche no. 48, dated March 12, 1909, Press review sent from J. Beauvais, the French consul

(Ch. Xianggang 香港), Calcutta, and Darjeeling, he had met with diplomats and discussed with them his colonization plan for Tibet. Although we know nothing of the exchanges he then had with the Italian consul in Hong Kong, he had presented his plan to Dr. Walter Rössler (1871–1929), the German consul at Guangzhou 廣州:

Tibet must be bound closer to China and needs to be colonized in a systematic way. For this, new traffic connections—first of all, roads—need to be built which will make it easier to reach Tibet from China. At the same time, the further development of traffic and trade relations between Tibet and India needs to be prevented. Furthermore, Chinese farmers should be settled in Tibet and Chinese schools erected.

Wen said that he will reside in Lhasa. He does not consider this assignment as a short-term assignment only but as a lifetime task and, if it was up to him, he would stay in Tibet until China has attained sizeable achievements. This will require at least ten busy years.

The power of the Dalai Lama needs to be restricted if possible. First of all, it is important that the Dalai Lama will travel to Peking [Beijing]. It would be best, if he was made to stay there for a couple of years so that in the meantime, the reforms in Tibet could be carried out without interference.³⁷

On February 10, the Dalai Lama did not sign the treaty for two main reasons: the Manchu troops exceeded 1,000 soldiers and they killed Tibetans. Amban Lian-yu denied its terms, since he considered them as having been prepared at Wen Zongyao's own initiative. The treaty, which had been drafted and discussed locally, had been approved by the Qing Court, but Lian-yu had opposed signing it. Therefore, Lian-yu was accused by Beijing of pursuing personal interests at the expense of stabilizing the Tibetan situation, while at the same time Wen Zongyao was recalled "for showing Tibetan favors."³⁸ Obviously,

at Guangzhou to E. Ronssin, the consul-general of France in India, Calcutta, *Cheu min sin pao*, October 19, 1908.

³⁷ Political Archive of the German Foreign Office PA AA RZ 201/18055–213 to 215, Report of German Consul Rössler (to Canton), sent from Hong Kong on September 14, 1908, who met Wen Zongyao in Canton (Guangzhou). I thank Bianca Horlemann for the transmission and translation of this document. This meeting is not mentioned in the FMFA while the one with the Italian diplomat is, FMFA, *Chine, Politique intérieure, Thibet*, vol. V, 1907–1909, Annex to the dépêche no. 48, dated March 12, 1909, Press review sent from J. Beauvais, the French consul at Guangzhou to E. Ronssin, the consul-general of France in India, Calcutta, *Chang pao*, October 26, 1908.

³⁸ QMSL, Telegraphed order from the Emperor Xuantong 宣統 (1906–1907) to Lian-yu and Wen Zongyao, February 23, 1910; BNA, *Affairs of Thibet, Part XIII, Further Correspondence, 1910*, Government of India to Viscount Morley, March 22, 1910. Various sources insist on the importance of the role Wen Zongyao could have

Lian-yu was more influential at the Beijing Court than Wen Zongyao.³⁹

Anyway, the Dalai Lama has taken over his government's leadership from the regent and made it clear to everyone that he was Tibet's temporal and authoritative ruler. He reinforced his government and appointed three Prime ministers (*blon chen*) who would later follow him to India. They were Shatra Peljor Dorje (Bshad sgra Dpal 'byor rdo rje, d. 1919), Zholkhang Dondrub Puntsok (Zhol khang Don grub phun tshogs, d. 1926), and Changkhyim Khyenrab Jangchub Pelzang (Chang khyim Mkhyen rab byang chub dpal bzang, d. 1920), the same three ministers he had dismissed from their office at the time of the Younghusband's raid over Tibet a few years earlier. They gained direct access to the Dalai Lama. The latter continued to take advice from the Assembly (*tshogs 'du*), which had a consultative role only. At the time, according to historian Luciano Petech, the Tibetan army lacked a central command and was composed of local militia—as the Chinese military campaign accounts tend to demonstrate and show how active these Tibetan military units were on the fields to resist the Sichuan troops as well.⁴⁰ According to Russian travel accounts, the Tibetan troops included some 3,000 militia men and 200 men of the Dalai Lama bodyguard or 4,000 regular troops, while English testimonies counted 5,000 ill-trained troops. These figures are contradicted by the 10,000 troops the Tibetan sent to counter the advance of the New Army within central Tibet that the British mentioned.⁴¹

played later to resolve what the Chinese called "The Tibet question." For instance, the journalist David Fraser mentioned Wen Zongyao in a letter to George E. Morisson, *The Times* correspondent in China, dated March 13, 1912 "Yuan [Yuan Shikai] wants him to go to Tibet as special commissioner to re-install the Dalai Lama, Lo Hui-Min 1976: 767–768. According to Xu Guangzhi (2003: 255), Wen Zongyao would have been named "Tibet Pacificator" (*Xizang xuanfu shi* 西藏宣撫使), on December 18, 1912. Later, the Chinese government wanted to send Wen Zongyao to London as special envoy with full powers to negotiate an agreement regarding Tibet, BNA, FO228, January to March 1913, Telegram no. 76, D. 93, March 27, 1913.

³⁹ According to Wu Fengpei (1988: 283) and Dahpon (2008: 230), Wen Zongyao's relationship with Lian-yu was tense and he was dismissed from his post. However, while sources agreed about the tense relationship between the two amban, according to the FMFA archives, Wen Zongyao was clearly dismissed from his post in Tibet by the Beijing government, FMFA, *Dépêche* from E. Ronssin, French consul-general in India at Calcutta to S. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, March 10, 1910.

⁴⁰ Petech, 1973: 11. For instance, Chen Quzhen [1937] 1999.

⁴¹ Andreyev 2003, who quoted "A special memo on Tibet and its armed forces which was drawn up by the Main Staff on November 24, 1901 (RGVIA, Kuropatkin Collection, II. 53–54)", 173, FN 11; Andreyev 2013 who translated a text written by G. Ts. Tsybikov, "Lhasa and Central Tibet" from *Izvestia* of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, St. Petersburg, vol. 39, 1903, pt. III, pp. 187–218: 86; Clarke 1997 who quoted the caption David Macdonald wrote for one of his photographs taken before 1910, 19 and FN 20. Melvyn Goldstein (1991: 66) and Alice Travers (2015:

The Dalai Lama's Departure to British India (1910–1912)

While Zhao Erfeng turned down his appointment as amban in Lhasa (1908), after acting as frontier commissioner for Sichuan and Yunnan (*chuandian bianwu dachen* 川滇邊務大臣), and preferred to strengthen his position in Kham, he sent Zhong-ying 鍾穎 (1887–1915), the commander of the Sichuan army's 33rd division of the New Army which was temporarily stationed in Sichuan (*Sichuan zanjian lujun di san shi san hun chengxie: zhu Sichuan Chengdu, xietong Zhong-ying* : 四川暫編陸軍第三十三混成協：駐四川成都協統鍾穎), to lead the offensive to Lhasa.⁴² At first, the plan was for this 2,000-strong army to join the Dalai Lama, while he was on his way back to Lhasa to escort him to central Tibet, in order to avoid any resistance from the Tibetans and appear as honoring the Dalai Lama.⁴³

Zhong-ying would become one of the most important Manchu protagonists alongside Lian-yu in Lhasa at that time. He was a member of the Yellow Banner and the Aisin-Gioro clan (his mother being the Xianfeng 咸豐 Emperor (1831–1861)'s younger sister and his father, Pu-chang 溥昌 (born in 1881), a direct descendant of the Qianlong 乾隆 Emperor (1711–1799). Chinese sources considered him as being a young and inexperienced soldier within the Sichuan New Army in Chengdu, probably to justify the failure of its army occupation of central Tibet. Indeed, he was later blamed and sentenced to death by Yuan Shi-kai 袁世凱 (1859–1916, who was the Chinese president from 1912 to 1915), after being accused of causing the “loss of Tibet.” However, testimonies given by Pierre-Rémi Bons d'Anty, the French consul at Chengdu, who was very well informed, specify that Zhong-ying left the city with the best-trained soldiers, leaving only recruits in the Chengdu barracks, and equipped with mountain artillery from there and a few cannons from Nanjing 南京.⁴⁴ The New Army's different

256–257) noticed 3,000 Tibetan troops between the end of the eighteenth century to 1912.

⁴² LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, May 3, 1909 which recalls a telegram sent to the Grand Council on March 4, 1909. Zhao Erfeng returned to Kham and continued his conquests there. He was made viceroy of Sichuan in 1911 again and Fu Songmu 傅嵩沐 (1869–1929) was named frontier commissioner. A few months later, Zhao Erfeng left Kham and returned to Sichuan (July 17, 1911) where he was killed by revolutionaries (December 28, 1911) after Sichuan province declared its independence from the Qing (November 27, 1911).

⁴³ FMFA, Report from P.-R. Bons d'Anty, French consul at Chengdu to S. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, September 15, 1909.

⁴⁴ FMFA, Report from P.-R. Bons d'Anty, French consul at Chengdu to S. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, December 20, 1909.

garrisons he led were brought successively to Lhasa in early 1910.⁴⁵ They gathered two thousand men, who first coexisted in Lhasa with the 500 Green Banner soldiers (*ying bing* 營兵; previously known as the Army stationed in Tibet *zhu Zang jun* 駐藏軍).⁴⁶ They were then deployed to the strategic places of central Tibet.⁴⁷

The treaty prepared with Wen Zongyao signed or not, the New Army continued to push forward and the first soldiers entered Lhasa on February 12, 1910, when the celebration of the Tibetan New Year, the Monlam (*smon lam*) Festival, was being held.⁴⁸ Direct Chinese and Tibetan testimonies differ considerably. They come from the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, for Tibet and the Amban Lian-yu, for China.

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama letter, quoted by T.W. Shakabpa, mentions the offensive behavior of the Manchu and Chinese soldiers:

The Eleventh Dalai Lama's nephew, Teiji Phunkhang [*Tha'i ji* Phunkhang Bkra shis rdo rje, b. 1888], and Tsedron Jamyang Gyaltsen [*Rtse mgron* 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan (n.d.)], were Tibetan government officials assigned to administer the Monlam festival. On their way to the Jokhang temple, they were met by the troops, who fired on them. Tsedron Jamyang and Teiji Phunkhang's servant and horse were killed. Teiji Phunkhang was then beaten and taken away to the military camp. The people of Lhasa were so outraged that they wanted to take revenge; but I restrained them from doing so. I still hoped we could negotiate with China and avoid unnecessary bloodshed.⁴⁹

Lian-yu's memoir intends to show the Tibetan authorities were opposed to the Sichuan army's arrival, while the civilian population was more welcoming towards it:

The army was regularly attacked along the way and the Tibetans destroyed supply stations and houses held and occupied by Manchus as

⁴⁵ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, March 5, 1910: in chronological order, on February 12, the garrison of Zhang Hongsheng 張鴻升; on February 15 and 16, the Chen-qing 陳慶 garrison, then the Zhang Baochu 張葆初 garrison, before Zhong-ying 鍾穎 garrison entered Lhasa.

⁴⁶ Shang Binghe [1913] 1983; Ma Lin 1988.

⁴⁷ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu entitled "Reinforcing the army by sending Luo Changyi 洛長禱 (1865–1911)," March 5, 1910.

⁴⁸ At that time, the Lhasa population was around 15 to 20,000 inhabitants, swelled to four or five times this number during the Monlam Festival, see Van Spengen 1995: 122. I thank Mathilde Girard et Jean-Baptiste Georges-Picot for providing this information.

⁴⁹ Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 730 who quoted the information as coming from a message the Dalai Lama sent to Luo Changyi, the Chinese emissary to India to negotiate his return, a correspondence that is also mentioned in Phur Icoog 1981: vol. 6, f. 182, l. 4–6.

well as refused to provide the *corvée* ('u lags). Besides, the Potala [Tibetan government] gathered thousands of soldiers who were ordered to cordon off the *yamen* and eliminate the Han. On the contrary, the Tibetan population, lay people and clerics together, welcomed the troops with food and drink and formed welcoming lines in Lhasa city's streets.⁵⁰

Foreign observers including Agvan Dorzhiev, a Buryat who was the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's friend, confidant and envoy to the Russian authorities and David Macdonald (1870–1962), the British trade agent at Gyantse (and Dromo from July 1909 to October 1924) later wrote these testimonies:

At that time the Chinese capital was taken. The cruel one, Yuan Shi-kai, sent many soldiers to Tibet in order to seize the Dalai Lama, disperse the sangha and destroy the Dharma. The soldiers, once arrived in Tibet, behaved cruelly, like dogs and ferocious beasts. They were worse than the cruelest criminal Tibet had ever known and extremely violent. In Lhasa, during the fighting with the Chinese soldiers, the Tibetans were unarmed. They had not studied the art of arms. The Chinese took power. They tortured the secular and religious people who did not rise up.⁵¹

For David Macdonald:

The advance party of these troops arrived in Lhasa at the end of January 1909 [in fact, February 12, 1910], marking their entry into the city by firing on the crowd of Tibetan onlookers gathered to witness their arrival.

Whether, as the Chinese alleged later, the Tibetans interfered with their progress, or whether the trouble was deliberately brought about by the Chinese themselves, cannot now be definitively ascertained. Each party blamed the other. Among others, a certain Tibetan official was wounded. The crowd ran for cover, offering no resistance, while the Chinese marched on the *yamen* of their Ambans. These officers, as soon as they heard of the incident, made it the excuse for the immediate arrest of the Tibetan chief ministers, and sent troops to seize their persons. These latter, however, somehow found out what was afoot, and gathered at the Potala to consult with their ruler. A hasty council decided that the Dalai Lama, with his ministers, should take immediate flight to India.⁵²

From afar, the arrival of the Sichuan army in Tibet was also observed by the French colonial presence in Southeast Asia with people

⁵⁰ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, March 5, 1911, and December 23, 1911. About the *corvée* that was denied to Chinese soldiers, Chen Quzhen [1937] 1999: 11.

⁵¹ Ngag dbang blo bzang འགྲུབ་པོ་བཟང་། [Agvan Dorzhiev] 1924: f. 49–50. On Agvan Dorzhiev, see online: <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Agvan-Dorzhiev/13510>.

⁵² Macdonald 1932: 61.

translating a press article from *The Times*:

[...] As to what followed, the soldier knew and understood little; but one evening, very late, the Chinese army approached Lhasa, beating drums and raising a great ruckus to show its power, as is customarily done by all Chinese armies. They also lit large fires, which illuminated the whole country, as if it had been daylight. At this point, the Dalai Lama betrayed great fear, came out of his room and looked at those bright fires, which shone like daylight. At that instant he was unable to think or act, and was at a loss as what to do. He could not get round to fighting against the Chinese army, and none of the Tibetan officers and dignitaries dared venture out for fear of having to fight with the Chinese soldiers. All the Dalai Lama could think of was to flee, and he asked his ministers to gather about 200 horsemen and pack up as fast as possible, so they could escape that very night from the army that had arrived from China. This was done as instructed and the Dalai Lama fled with his ministers [...].⁵³

The reasons put forward by the Manchus for their occupation of Tibet are of several kinds. The main argument, taken up both in the archives and in various travel diaries, was to send troops to Tibet as an aid to law and order, a reinforcement of the Manchu garrisons already stationed in Tibet and a protection of the trade marts open on the border with British India.⁵⁴ Protecting the Gelukpa School and bringing comfort to the Tibetans is also referenced.⁵⁵ From the ground, Chen Quzhen 陳渠珍 (1882–1952), commanding officer of the Third Battalion of the First Regiment of the Sichuan army sent to Tibet, mentioned that the Dalai Lama himself had requested a Manchu garrison in Lhasa and that his appeal had been prompted by the presence of British invaders in Tibet who had to be repelled.⁵⁶

The Tibetans responded to these arguments by asserting that their government had enough soldiers to defend Tibet if necessary, and that they wished to get rid of the amban.

A rumor that the Manchus intended to capture the Dalai Lama to bring him back to Beijing as a hostage had spread in Lhasa. For their part, the Dalai Lama and his government feared the Dalai Lama would

⁵³ This testimony is given by a Chinese soldier named Yen-Chen-Young, who was part of an escort provided by the Shanxi province governor to the Dalai Lama, *L'Asie française*, April 1, 1910, 203–204.

⁵⁴ QMSL, Transmission by the Beijing Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Zhao Erxun 趙爾巽, the Sichuan governor-general and Lian-yu of the correspondence exchanged with J. N. Jordan, the British minister at Beijing, February 28, 1910.

⁵⁵ QMSL, Telegraphed order from the emperor to Lian-yu and Wen Zongyao, February 23, 1910.

⁵⁶ Chen Quzhen wrote about his military experience in Tibet and the rout of his battalion, Chen Quzhen [1937] 1999: 19; 45.

be held prisoner in the Potala and stripped of his temporal power.⁵⁷ The Dalai Lama therefore convened the National Assembly and the decision was taken that he should take refuge in Dromo with members of his government considering that, from there, it would be easier to negotiate with the Manchus.⁵⁸

The Dalai Lama appointed Ngawang Lobzang Tenpe Gyeltsen, Third Tsemonling Rinpoche (Ngag dbang blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan Tshe smon gling, 1864–1919) to the position of regent and an assistant named Khenche Neushak Kyenrap Phuntsok (*mkhan che Sne'u shag Mkhyen rab phun tshogs*, n.d.). He then once again fled from Lhasa (February 13, 1910).⁵⁹ The three prime ministers and at least two ministers left with him to Dromo, then to India. The three prime ministers who followed the Dalai Lama to India were Shatra Peljor Dorje, Zholkhang Dondrub Puntsok, Changkhyim Khyenrab Jangchub Pelzang, then the Minister Sarbyung Tseten Wangchuk (Gsar byung Tshe brtan dbang phyug, 1857–1914) and the two Vice-Ministers Samdrub Podrang Kunga Tendzin (Bsam grub pho brang Kun dga' bstan 'dzin, n.d.), besides Lama Gungtang Tendzin Wangpo (*bla ma Gung thang Bstan 'dzin dbang po*, n.d.).⁶⁰ Shrugging off the regent's appointment, Lian-yu dismissed the Tibetan officials who remained in Lhasa and appointed new ones.⁶¹ He removed from their office Lobzang Trinle (Blo bzang 'phrin las, born 1860), Deki Lingpa (Bde skyid gling pa, died 1914) and Parkang Gyeltsen Phuntsok (Parkhang Rgyal mtshan phun tshogs, n.d.), and instead appointed Tenzin Chodrak (Bstan 'dzin chos grags, n.d.), Rampa Sonam Gonkyab (Rampa Bsod nams mgon skyabs, born in 1875) and Lang Tongpa (Glang mthong pa, n.d.).⁶²

From the moment the Dalai Lama left Lhasa and fled first to the Indo-

⁵⁷ Younghusband 1910: 391.

⁵⁸ Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 25.

⁵⁹ Tsemonling Rinpoche was the 87th successor of Tsongkapa (Tshong kha pa) to the Ganden (Dga' ldan) throne (1908–1914), Phur lcog 1981: vol. 6, f. 183, l. 2–3; f. 186, l. 2–6.

⁶⁰ See a photograph of the party that followed the Thirteenth Dalai Lama into exile and the Dalai Lama himself in Bell [1946] 1987: 150. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama's biography only specifies that Tsemonling Rinpoche was made regent and did not mention the ministers who followed him during his exile, Phur lcog 1981: vol. 6, f. 180, l. 6.

⁶¹ Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 739; Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 39; LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, March 30, 1910.

⁶² The ministers named by the Manchu amban were imprisoned upon the Dalai Lama's return in early 1913 while other members of the government, such as Tsarong Wangchuk Gyelpo (Tsha rong Dbang phyug rgyal po, 1866–1912), his son Samdrub Tsering (Bsam grub tshe ring, c. 1887–1912), Khendrung Punrap (*mkhan drung Phun rap*, n. d.), Lachak Khenchung Samkhar (*mkhan chung Bsam mkhar*, n. d.), and Tseprung Lobzang Dorje (*tse drung Blo bzang rdo rje*, n. d.), were killed.

Tibetan border and then to British India, the Manchus reacted violently in Tibet, while the Dalai Lama became their number one public enemy. On the ground, the Manchu soldiers tried to capture him, dead or alive. They were successfully thwarted by a Tibetan battalion commanded by Namgang (Gnam gang), the future new Tsarong, Tsarong Dasang Damdul (Tsha rong Zla bzang dgra 'dul, 1888–1959), whose memory of the event was registered. As such, this victory marked the first act of armed resistance on behalf of the Tibetans, officially.⁶³ Indeed, it is said the Manchu troops succeeded in coming to Lhasa because the Dalai Lama would have ordered his army to not fight against them, as already mentioned. From Beijing, the Dalai Lama was stripped of his title of “Dalai Lama” and his property seized. It was the proclamation of the Dalai Lama’s dismissal that later first sparked trouble, which Lian-yu himself acknowledged.⁶⁴

The Dalai Lama’s personal effects, which were still on their way back from China, were confiscated at Nakchukha (Nag chu kha);⁶⁵ his property in his palaces, the Potala and the Norbulinka (Nor bu gling kha), as well as the Tibetan government’s vast treasury, were removed by the Manchu. The Lhasa armory and magazines were emptied, the mint and ammunition factory seized, and the houses of those ministers who had fled with the Dalai Lama systematically pillaged.⁶⁶ And, exactly twelve days after his departure from Lhasa, the Qing Grand Council (*junji chu* 軍機處) decided to strip the Dalai Lama of his Manchu titles (February 25, 1910) as had already been done in 1904 when he left Tibet to go to Mongolia, after the British raid on Lhasa.⁶⁷

The imperial decree of dismissal was as follows:

The Dalai Lama of Tibet Tubten Gyatso Jikdrel Chokyi Namgyel (Ngag

⁶³ Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 26–28; Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 722. The event is also mentioned in Phur lcog 1981: vol. 6, f. 184 and the FMFA, Dépêche from P.-R. Bons d’Anty, French consul at Chengdu to S. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, June 15, 1910.

⁶⁴ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu entitled “Tibet in critical situation: in accordance with regulations, send annual pay to troops stationed in Tibet,” March 20, 1910.

⁶⁵ Nakchukha is located in Nakchu district, in the north of the today’s Tibet Autonomous Region, about 250 km northeast of Lhasa.

⁶⁶ Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 731 who quoted a message the Dalai Lama sent to Luo Changyi (729–732); Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 31.

⁶⁷ QMSL, Document issued by the Grand Council and signed by the four Councilors Yi-kuang 奕勳 (1838–1917), Shi-xu 世續 (1852–1921), Lu Zhuanlin 鹿傳霖 (1836–1910) and Na-tong, copy kept in the archives of the Grand Secretariat, “Order of Removal of the Title of the Dalai Lama,” February 25, 1910; Phur lcog 1981: vol. 6, f. 186, l. 1. On the Chinese deposition of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in 1904, see, for instance, Candler 1905: 302.

dbang blo bzang thub bstan rgya mtsho 'jigs bral chos kyi rnam rgyal) has received abundant favors from our predecessors. If the Dalai was aware of it, it was his duty to devote himself to the study of Buddhist texts and to abide by the rules, in order to extend the transmission of the yellow religion. Yet, ever since he assumed the administrative affairs, he is extravagant and dissipated, cruel and despotic as never before. He knowingly manipulated the Tibetan people to gradually provoke discord, even to the point of insubordination, reckless behavior and disobedience to imperial orders. In July 1904, he fled, taking advantage of the turmoil. The amban denounced the Dalai to the Throne, as he had become infamous for his confused behavior. It was then ordered that the Dalai be temporarily stripped of his titles. The Dalai then went to Urga and returned to Xining. The court, considering he had travelled so far and would repent, ordered local officials to give him a proper welcome. Last year, he visited Beijing, where We conferred a new title on him and offered to unite Our efforts to preserve Our unity. He was also given an escort on his way back to Tibet. But the Dalai lingered on, committing exactions and causing trouble. We treated him with indulgence as an expression of Our concern. Magnanimous about the past and open to the future, Our intention was to forge solid ties. This time, the Sichuan army entered Tibet to maintain order and protect trade agencies. The Tibetans had no reason to doubt this. However, it took the Dalai to spread rumors after his return to Tibet, to be defiant, to slander the amban, to stop providing the *corvée*. Clearly, he was following a different path and turning a deaf ear. Then a telegram from Lian-yu informed Us that when the Sichuan army reached Lhasa, the Dalai secretly left on the night of February 12 for an unknown destination, without informing Us. We then ordered the amban to use all means available to catch up with him and bring him back to ensure his safety. To date, We have received no information. How dare he, as spiritual leader, once again leave his post without authorization? We also note that the Dalai is repeating his tricks and posing as an adversary. While enjoying Imperial benevolence, he has betrayed the hopes of the people. He does not deserve to be the leader of reincarnated beings. As a punishment, Tubten Gyatso Jikdrel Chokyi Namgyel is stripped of his title as Dalai Lama. From now on, no matter where he flees to or whether he returns to Tibet, let Us all treat him as an ordinary person. Let the amban in Tibet immediately seek out male children bearing divine signs, write their names on ivory sticks and place them in a golden urn in accordance with the law. The Dalai Lama's true incarnation of the previous one will then be designated. A memorial will be addressed to Us, and Imperial grace will be transmitted from generation to generation, with a view to ensuring responsibility for Buddhist affairs. The Throne exalts good and abhors evil. It observes impartial justice. Tibetan monks and laypeople are all Our children. Following the publication of this Order, let everyone respect the law, let everyone preserve public order, so that Our desire to pacify the borders and preserve

the yellow religion will be realized.⁶⁸

The Manchu analysis of the Dalai Lama's behavior is complex. The Qing Emperor seemed to assume that the Dalai Lama, as a reincarnated master of the most prestigious Gelukpa School lineage, would have complied with the Manchu imperial orders, had he followed the Buddhist precepts and been grateful for the many benefits received from the imperial lineage. Accordingly, it is likely the emperor would have expected the Dalai Lama to behave as a Buddhist master and keep to his sole religious duties. Again, from the Manchu emperor's point of view, the Dalai Lama would have placed his actions within the framework of a relationship of spiritual master (the Dalai Lama) to lay protector (the emperor). We know however that even within the priest-patron framework, the relationship was not so simple, and that it did not only include subordination of one to the other, as the protagonists' adopted a spiritual or temporal posture according to circumstances. When a Dalai Lama, as bodhisattva king, entered into a relationship with a foreign ruler, the link was said to be personal and religious, not official and institutional. It was then called a "relationship between a spiritual master and a lay protector (*mchod yon*).⁶⁹ Actually, it was an extension of the power dyarchy. Tibetans have claimed this relationship since the thirteenth century in the strict sense: the spiritual master (*mchod gnas*) transmitted teachings to his lay protector (*yon bdag*), who, in exchange, provided protection for him as well as for his monastery and school. The relationship between the Dalai Lamas and Manchu emperors was articulated on several bicephalous levels: an encounter between two political chiefs, between two bodhisattvas, and between a bodhisattva and a political chief, who was considered as the universal monarch (*cakravartin*). On the other hand, the Manchus took up this concept by highlighting the protector's superiority. From a philological point of view, the Tibetan expression *mchod yon* includes both members of the relationship, while the Chinese qualifications (*shizhu* 施主 or *futian shizhu* 福田施主 in the Qing records) apply only to the protector, hence the emperor. No Chinese translation seems to depict the Tibetan terms *mchod* and *mchod yon* at that time.

⁶⁸ My translation from *Da Qing shilu Zangzu shiliao* 大清實錄 藏族史料 (QSLZZSL), Order of the Grand Council, with copy to the Grand Secretariat, to dismiss the Dalai Lama, February 25, 1910. Some translations are available, in English by Teichman [1922] 2000: 16–17 from the *Chinese Government Gazette*, Imperial decree of February 25, 1910, reproduced in Goldstein 1999: 52–53. For French translations, see *L'Asie française*, April 1, 1910: 202–204 without the name of the translator being specified, and FMFA, Annex "Décret du 27 février 1910 déposant le Dalai-lama" to the report from M. de Margerie, minister of the French Republic in China, Beijing to M. Cruppi, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, February 28, 1911.

Obviously, the emperor and the amban were confronted with a new situation (by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's seizure of power) and chose a solution identical to that which had prevailed at the time of the Sixth Dalai Lama Tsangyang Gyatso (Tshang dbyang rgya mtsho, 1683–1706): to remove the present Dalai Lama and resume the selection and recognition process.⁶⁹ Clearly, however, the Sixth and Thirteenth Dalai Lamas' life choices were different: the Sixth Dalai Lama was not interested in representing his institution either spiritually or temporally, whereas the Thirteenth Dalai Lama fully assumed his one-headed double office.

It should also be noted that the last ritual for selecting Dalai Lamas, namely by drawing lots in the golden urn imposed by the Manchus at the end of the eighteenth century as a matter pertaining to the relationship of spiritual master to secular protector, had been deemed unnecessary when the Twelfth Dalai Lama Trinle Gyatso ('Phrin las rgya mtsho, 1856–1875)'s reincarnation was selected.⁷⁰ Moreover, the emperor had accepted it, as a result the Tibetans' and the amban's conviction that this child was the "right" Thirteenth Dalai Lama.⁷¹ It seems the emperor indirectly underlined this non-observance of the rule by obliging the possible replacement of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama to take the golden urn test. He thereby also put forward this idea: if this test had been practiced during the selection of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, the "right" Dalai Lama would have been chosen and the latter would have confined his power to the spiritual sphere and to the strict observance of his subordination to the Manchu emperor. Furthermore, it seems it was the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's person who was under attack, not the institution he represented.⁷²

The issue of the Dalai Lama's maturity, his interest in politics and his desire to exercise his spiritual and temporal privileges were also new phenomena for Tibetans, Mongols, and Manchus at the late Qing.

Faced with this situation, reactions from within varied. Among the Tibetans, the Dalai Lama himself believed the Manchus had no power over him anymore and the role he was to play. In his biography, very harsh terms, such as "black power" (*nag po'i rtsal ba*), "Chinese ministers' diabolic inspiration" (*rgya blon log smon*), "evil" (*nyes*) qualify the then Manchu actions.⁷³ Thanks to journalists who shared their

⁶⁹ Kapstein 2015: 232–236.

⁷⁰ About the drawing lots in the golden urn, see Jagou 2007; Sperling 2012; Oidtmann 2018; Hui Nan 2021.

⁷¹ Kapstein 2015: 263.

⁷² The Fourteenth Dalai Lama mentions: "To me, 'Dalai Lama' is a title that signifies the office I hold. I myself am just a human being, and incidentally a Tibetan, who chooses to be a Buddhist monk.", Dalai Lama 1998: xiii. For a discussion on the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's titles, see Ishihama 2019: 83–106.

⁷³ Phur lcog 1981: vol. 6, f. 180, l. 1–2; 4.

experience, we know that Tibetan people and others continue to show their devotion to the Dalai Lama. For instance, when the Dalai Lama arrived at Darjeeling,

une foule énorme se pressait sur le parcours, brûlant de petites baguettes de parfum, faisant de très profondes révérences et jetant des grains de riz [...]. À son arrivée à Jhor [...] des fleurs jonchaient la route jusqu'à l'hôtel où l'illustre personnage doit être logé.⁷⁴

French diplomats were equally impressed,

Le Dalai Lama a fait son entrée à Darjeeling le 1^{er} Mars, à 4 heures de l'après-midi, au milieu de démonstrations extraordinaires de respect & d'enthousiasme de la part des communautés bouddhistes de la région & même de la population hindoue locale.⁷⁵

In addition to the spiritual devotion shown by the devotees, the Tibetan involvement in the battles against the Sichuan troops that followed the Dalai Lama forced exile clearly indicated their recognition of his temporal power.

Among the Mongols, the Eighth Jebtsundampa Khutagt, Agwaan luwsan choiji nyima danzan wangchug (Tib. Ngag dbang blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma bstan 'dzin dbang phyug, 1870–1924) —also often referred to as the Bogd Khan—dislike of the Dalai Lama was well-known, and it would be interesting to measure the Mongolian (or Bogd Khan's) opinion on Manchu actions in Tibet and on the Dalai Lama's person.⁷⁶ Today, we still know very little about the Mongol's reactions to the Dalai Lama's flight from Tibet and his removal from office by Beijing. However—as demonstrated by Wang Yanjia's article, which lists the Mongols and their number who visited the Dalai Lama during his stay in Beijing in 1908—it is plain that the Mongols, whether they were simple monks, reincarnated masters or civil society members, were devoted to him. The author even considers the Qing used the Mongols' influence to incite the Dalai Lama to go to Beijing in 1908.⁷⁷ Others also noted the Mongol's devotion towards the Dalai Lama when he was at Mount Wutai (Wutaishan 五臺山): “Wutai-shan is now a holy place of pilgrimage for the faithful from all parts of Mongolia. Never has the sacred mountain witnessed such throngs of devotees.

⁷⁴ Anon., “Le Dalai-Lama à Darjiling”, *L'écho de Paris*, March 3, 1910.

⁷⁵ FMFA, Dépêche no. 49 de E. Ronssin, French consul-general in India at Calcutta to M. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, March 9, 1910.

⁷⁶ See Irina Garri and Yumiko Ishihama articles in this RET issue.

⁷⁷ Wang Yanjia 2020. I thank Irina Garri for transmitting this article.

The Dalai Lama is an object of great veneration."⁷⁸

For the Manchus, the Dalai Lama's insubordination was so intolerable that they removed him from office in 1910 and, at Lian-yu's request, reinstated the ex-regent, the Tenth Demo Ngawang Lobzang Trinle Rabgye (De mo Ngag dbang blo bzang 'phrin las rab rgyas, 1855–1899), who had attempted to assassinate the Dalai Lama in 1899 and whose lineage had been therefore disowned and dispossessed by the Tibetan pontiff.⁷⁹ It is therefore likely that the Manchus deplored that the Dalai Lama had passed the age of maturity and fully exercised his authority! At the same time, while Wen Zongyao, the assistant-amban, had been recalled to Sichuan, Lian-yu was appointed to be in charge of all Tibetan affairs.

As for Inner Asia as a whole, the Manchus, smarting from the signing of treaties with the British on Tibet in the late 19th century and as ever aware of their southwestern border's vulnerability, had remained vigilant and intended to keep the balance of power in Inner Asia. They had observed the Dalai Lama's movements in Mongolia and in Amdo. They had been informed of the Dalai Lama's resumption of his religious influence in the Kumbum (Sku 'bum) Monastery where he attempted to restore discipline. By this way, he undermined the local religious authorities' position, which the Manchus could interpret as a reaffirmation of his spiritual powers though his religious authority was questioned by many influential Amdo elites.⁸⁰ The Dalai Lama thereby asserted himself as a spiritual authority over territories that were not Tibetan—such as Mongolia—and over Amdo where it is questionable how far his authority actually extended. However, the Dalai Lama's removal from power by the Manchu may also have been intended to ward off the risk of an alliance of Inner Asian peoples on religious or political grounds, and to weaken his influence with the Mongols and Tibetans, in order to preserve a balance—albeit precarious—in Inner Asia.

From Beijing, the Manchu Grand Council, for its part, urged Lian-yu and Zhao Erxun 趙爾巽 (1844–1927), the Sichuan governor-general (*Sichuan zongdu* 四川總督 from 1908 to 1911) to remain on their guard, for they feared the Nepalese (Kuo'erka 廓爾喀)—who were present in Lhasa following the signing of the 1856 treaty with the

⁷⁸ Anon., "The Dalai Lama. American Minister's Visit," *The Times*, June 30, 1908.

⁷⁹ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, May 5, 1910. On August 31, 1910, his property was returned to Demo. The Demo monks thanked the emperor for pardoning their spiritual master, LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, February 17, 1911.

⁸⁰ See the article by Bianca Horlemann in this RET issue.

Tibetans—might interfere in Tibetan affairs.⁸¹

The Manchus then tried to get the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet on several occasions and through a variety of stratagems. For example, Lian-yu sent Luo Changyi 洛長綺 (1865–1911), one of his advisors, as an emissary to Darjeeling assuring the Dalai Lama that, while he would not be punished on his return, his position as Dalai Lama would not be restored. The latter declined the proposal.⁸²

The British moves were mainly preventing any Manchu from interfering with Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim as well as protecting their trade marts in Tibet and respecting the treaty signed with Russia in 1907. These were carefully watched by the Manchus who were anxious to prevent an insurgency in Tibet that would harm their interests.⁸³ The British did not respond to the Dalai Lama's numerous appeals for political and diplomatic support.⁸⁴ Instead they sent soldiers to protect the open trade marts on the Tibetan border adding that they would not intervene between the Tibetans and the Manchus.⁸⁵ The Tibetan people hoped they would help them return the Dalai Lama to Tibetan soil, but the Manchus forbade the British from escorting the Dalai Lama with an army to Tibet, as they feared the British army would

⁸¹ QMSL, Telegram of the Grand Council enjoining Zhao Erxun, the Sichuan governor-general and Lian-yu, the amban in Tibet to comply with the treaty signed with the British concerning Tibet, March 2, 1910.

⁸² Lamb 1966: 217–218; LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, August 6, 1910. Luo Changyi became a doctor (*jìnshì* 進士) in 1895. He then got into the military school at Chengdu, Sichuan and was named border army's Fifth squadron General. In 1909, he arrived in Tibet with his squadron. Then he became the Amban Lian-yu advisor in 1910 or 1911.

The issue remained topical at least until late 1912: several dispatches sent by Zhong-ying, the commander who led the New Army to Lhasa, begged Yuan Shikai, the new Republic of China's president, to grant the Dalai Lama a title, without it being clear which one, though. This did occur in late 1912, but the Dalai Lama then refused to recognize any authority from China regarding his investiture. See, for example, Academia Sinica 032802302.1, Telegram from Shi Youming 史悠明, the Gyantse Chinese frontier officer (*Xizang Jiangzi guanjian* 西藏江孜關監) that recalls Zhong-ying's telegrams sent in the spring of the same year, November 24, 1911; Bell [1946] 1987: 155; Ishihama 2019: 91.

⁸³ QMSL, Letter from the Grand Council to the Sichuan governor-general about the fact that the policies implemented in Tibet call for a reinforcement of the border defense, May 2, 1910.

⁸⁴ Letters from the Dalai Lama to the King Emperor (whom he proposed to visit personally), and to Sir Edward Grey, the Earl of Crewe (Sec. of the State for India), December 15, 1910; Telegram from Bell to Foreign Department, Simla, June 17, 1910, in L/P&S/10/147, both quoted by van Walt van Praag 1985: 216.

⁸⁵ QMSL, Telegram from the Beijing minister of Foreign Affairs to Zhao Erxun, Sichuan governor-general, November 23, 1910; FMFA, Dépêche from P. Cambon, French consul in England at London to S. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, August 5, 1910.

eventually settle there.⁸⁶

Moreover, the attempts to get help from the Russians through the mediation of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama adviser, Buryat monk Agvan Dorzhiev proved to be a dead end as Russia was bound by the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907.⁸⁷ The French diplomats analyzed the situation as follows:

Le délégué envoyé par le Dalai Lama est arrivé à Pékin avec des lettres de ce dernier adressées aux Ministres d'Angleterre, de France, d'Allemagne, du Japon, de Russie et d'Amérique en les priant d'intercéder pour lui dans le règlement de son affaire.

Seul le Ministre du Japon a déclaré que la Chine a eu parfaitement tort d'avoir retiré le titre de souverain du Thibet au Dalai Lama sans en avoir fait part aux nations Etrangères intéressées dans le Thibet.⁸⁸

In other words, the Dalai Lama's hope for foreign help was in jeopardy, and the British themselves refused to give him a military escort on grounds they would not interfere between the Tibetans and the Chinese and that the Dalai Lama should be deterred from entering Tibet.⁸⁹ Actually, from the very start, namely a few days after his departure from Lhasa, the British government had accepted the Manchu declaration that called for the Dalai Lama to lose his title and be removed from his position.⁹⁰ Moreover, a few months later, Lord Minto (1845–1914) the Viceroy of India (in office from November 1905 to November 1910) had refused to communicate directly with the Dalai Lama, whose letters were henceforth to be routed through the office of the political officer in Sikkim.⁹¹ On March 14, 1910, however, he met him while he was in Calcutta, with great pomp and circumstance, for a ten-minute meeting.⁹²

China's action was, however, frowned upon by the British because it violated the 1906 treaty that recognized that country as suzerain and not sovereign.

For many Chinese and foreigners alike, China was all the more able to reinforce its authority in Tibet as the Dalai Lama was not in the

⁸⁶ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, August 6, 1910.

⁸⁷ See Irina Garri and Bianca Horlemann papers, in this RET issue.

⁸⁸ FMFA, Telegram, Extract from the Chinese Press, Shanghai, March 3, 1910.

⁸⁹ Telegram from C. Bell, the British political officer in Sikkim to Government of India's Foreign Secretary, July 23, 1910, L/P&S/10/147 quoted by van Walt van Praag 1985: 216.

⁹⁰ Jampa Samten 2009–2010: 361 indicates the date: February 25, 1910.

⁹¹ Jampa Samten 2009–2010: 362, who cites Foreign Department Secret, External Proceedings, no. 532 (Secretary of State to Viceroy, May 4, 1910).

⁹² FMFA, Dépêche no. 54 from E. Ronssin, French consul-general in India at Calcutta to S. Pichon, minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, March 15, 1910.

country. Although Zhong-ying's troops were scattered throughout the Tibetan territory, his army's presence in Tibet exacerbated the already ongoing tensions between Beijing and Lhasa. Tibetan resistance, the Battle of Pome (Spo mes), lack of funding, and the fact the 1911 Chinese Revolution was favorably perceived by both Chinese and Manchu soldiers, all these factors led to the army's mutiny in Tibet, culminating in what Tibetans call "the Water-Rat Year Chinese War."⁹³

The Tibetan Resistance, from India to Tibet (1911–1912)

The average Tibetans who remained in Tibet carried out resistance actions such as refusing to pay 'u lags or sell food to the Chinese. There were many scuffles and battles.⁹⁴ As for the Zhong-ying army's soldiers, they were sent to the Pome front, which they had the greatest difficulty in quashing (from April to September 1911). There, nobody knows how, they learned that a mutiny had broken out in Lhasa and they rushed to the Tibetan capital.⁹⁵ The Gyantse garrison did the same. Back in Lhasa, they found their pay had not arrived. A recurring problem since 1905, the cash that was to be sent from Sichuan was repeatedly delayed. Lian-yu had regularly called for this from Zhao Erxun, the then governor-general of Sichuan, whose province was struggling financially.⁹⁶ The Lhasa amban had put forward new arguments, pointing out the Sichuan army had been added to the existing garrison and that the opening of trade marts in Gyantse and Dromo required additional investment. Earlier, he had pointed out that the troops based in Tibet were also mandated to open schools, clear land, dig mines, and so on. Lian-yu was concerned the army might mutiny.⁹⁷ He had asked for an emergency payment, which had been approved by the emperor.⁹⁸ The sum amounted to 400,000 taels (one tael equal around 40g. of silver) per year. A few months later, the pay was sent from Sichuan to Dartsedo (Dar rtse mdo) in Kham, where the money was exchanged. Once this had been done, it had to be transported to Lhasa. Lian-yu was worried about the limits of the corvée service, the journey's length and difficulty, the likelihood of getting lost and being attacked by Tibetans.⁹⁹ A few months later, when the cash had still not arrived in Lhasa, Lian-yu's appeal had become more and more

⁹³ Trijang Rinpoche 2018: 50.

⁹⁴ Chen Quzhen [1937] 1999.

⁹⁵ The news would have reached Lhasa after it was published in the *Times* or other newspapers, Chen Quzhen [1937] 1999: 165; Anon. *Youhuan yusheng* [1913] 1983: 121.

⁹⁶ LYZG, Reports from Lian-yu, May 3, 1909 and March 20, 1910.

⁹⁷ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, March 5, 1910.

⁹⁸ LYZG, *Ibid.*, March 20, 1910.

⁹⁹ LYZG, *Ibid.*, April 21, 1910.

pressing.¹⁰⁰ He had recalled the emperor himself had ordered prompt payment of the soldiers' wages.¹⁰¹ However, Sichuan had persisted in its reluctance to comply. The governor had suggested that Beijing reduce its spending on border defense in the Northeast, so that it could contribute to the funding of Tibet.¹⁰² Lian-yu was concerned that, if only half of the pay (200,000 taels) reached Tibet, "it would be easier to enforce order among soldiers with empty stomachs." He had argued the garrisons along the route had been enduring difficulties and that the soldiers had courageously defended the *yamen* against Tibetan attacks, which had lasted for more than three months. He did not understand why Sichuan did not finance this development and had failed to secure the public debt. For the first time, he also proposed that the distribution of military budgets should be better apportioned from Beijing. He noted, for example, that Xinjiang 新疆 was a new province that had already existed for more than twenty years and that Tibet's needs were more urgent. Nevertheless, the Sichuan government had refused to contribute half of the 400,000-tael budget needed to maintain a Manchu force and administration in Tibet. By early 1911, Lian-yu had reluctantly disbanded the Green Banner Army (*lii bing*), which "numbered five hundred soldiers who had forgotten the art of fighting"¹⁰³ and proposed a new organization for the army stationed in Tibet.¹⁰⁴ The most capable soldiers from the Green Banner Army had joined the New Army while a bonus was given to the others who had to leave. The *yamen* guard, about 100-soldier strong, was maintained.¹⁰⁵

Many testimonies agree that failure to pay was the cause of the soldiers' mutiny. They also reveal how the facts and orders were misunderstood by soldiers, evidence of the great disorder that prevailed.¹⁰⁶ The soldiers, informed of the revolution in China by an article in the *Times*, acted violently under cover of several slogans, whose meaning they did not master.¹⁰⁷ For example, the Elder Brothers Society's members (*Gelao hui* 哥老會, also called *Paoge* 袍哥), reportedly representing nearly 75 percent of the forces, claimed the barracks and the *yamen*

¹⁰⁰ LYZG, *Ibid.*, September 15, 1910.

¹⁰¹ LYZG, *Ibid.*, June 28, 1910.

¹⁰² LYZG, *Ibid.*, September 10, 1910.

¹⁰³ Shang Binghe [1913] 1983: 137.

¹⁰⁴ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, February 17, 1911. As early as 1904, he had already dismissed the soldiers stationed at Dartsedo, Chamdo and up to Tsang (Gtsang). He was thus able to redistribute these soldiers' salaries (which amounted to 100,000 taels) to the new army's soldiers.

¹⁰⁵ LYZG, Report from Lian-yu, February 17, 1911.

¹⁰⁶ Zhang Shaoyong and Xirao-Nima 2011.

¹⁰⁷ Chen Quzhen [1937] 1999.

should be looted in the name of the dynasty (*qinwang* 勤王).¹⁰⁸ The mutiny was therefore launched in the name of the empire but, at the same time, it attacked the headquarters and the people representing it: Lian-yu and Zhong-ying. The soldiers were totally baffled. Once the mutiny was unleashed, the garrisons, first scattered over the territory of central Tibet, that had been returned to Lhasa relayed information about the revolution and the soldiers demanded their pay under the slogan “The Great Han Revolution” (*Da Han geming* 大漢革命). The latter capitulated as soon as they received a share of it—since the wages had indeed reached Lhasa.¹⁰⁹ The soldiers were neither better fed nor better accommodated. The secret society’s actions became more and more violent.¹¹⁰ After the Republic of China was created, on January 1, 1912, and the last Qing emperor deposed on February 12, 1912, the soldiers, members of the secret society, founded an assembly (*gongyi ju* 公议会) in Lhasa, to which Lian-yu and Zhong-ying handed over the yamen’s seals.¹¹¹ Its existence was short-lived and the assembly dispersed. Its members were unable to resist the Tibetans and the soldiers blamed the assembly members for their misguided choice.

The war between the Tibetan and the Manchu and Chinese armies began in late 1911 and ended in December 1912, when the Manchu and Chinese soldiers and officials left Tibet (the latest was Zhong-ying, the commander who left Tibet in April 1913). The Dalai Lama began his return journey to Lhasa. He left Darjeeling on June 24, 1912 and arrived in Lhasa on January 17, 1913.

From Indian soil, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama demanded the dissolution of the Manchu army, the restoration of his position to that held by the Fifth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Lobzang Gyatso (Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mstho, 1617–1682), and the abolition of the 1890 and 1906 Anglo-Chinese Treaties the Tibetans had not participated in nor

¹⁰⁸ According to Xu Guangzhi (2003: 246), the secret society controls Tibet and 75% of the soldiers have joined its ranks.

¹⁰⁹ Two conflicting versions co-exist: Lian-yu would have embezzled them on the advice of Qian Xibao 錢錫寶 (n.d.), one of his assistants and chief of the Lhasa yamen guard, or the Elder Brothers Society would have extorted the wages under false pretenses.

¹¹⁰ *Youhuan yusheng* [1913] 1983: 127.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 125.

recognized.¹¹² Finally, he secretly organized a War Department.¹¹³ From Kalimpong, the Dalai Lama sought to strengthen the unity of the Tibetan regions and their inhabitants by sending several emissaries to convey his willingness to fight for safeguarding Buddhism and maintain his political power, while presenting himself as the “king of the religious land [Tibet].” He called on the Tibetans from Kham to take advantage of the chaos in China to act for the good of Tibet, by expelling the Sichuan army.¹¹⁴ One of these emissaries seems to have been Namgang Dasang Damdul (the future Tsarong) who organized the Tibetan resistance as the Tibetan army’s commander-in-chief (*spyi khyab chen po*) for central Tibet, before becoming the army’s commander-in-chief with the title of *jasak* in 1913, and minister (*bka’ blon*) in 1914.¹¹⁵ He had received military training by the Russians when following the Dalai Lama to Urga, and then by the British in India, while distinguishing himself during the Dalai Lama’s flight to Dromo.¹¹⁶ As soon as he arrived in central Tibet, he recruited soldiers in Tsang and they attacked the Manchu garrison stationed in Shigatse (Gshis ka rtse). From there, they won more and more victories and marched towards Lhasa.¹¹⁷ The future Tsarong is the one quoted in several documents. Except for him, our sources cannot identify the Tibetan figures who conducted the resistance movement against the Manchu and Chinese with such precision. The Chinese testimonies mention the Tibetan resistance but do not acknowledge the figures at the head of the movement. Indeed, no Tibetan name is quoted in the testimonies and even in the archive’s documents where “detachments of local militia men” are only mentioned. As I have already quoted, Tibetan testimonies about the Water-Rat Year Chinese War, such as Dorje Yudon Yuthok’s or Shakabpa’s historical narrative are the main sources I was able to get about the fighting that happened at Lhasa. Both sources point to some important Tibetan fighting figures but without much detail. Dorje Yudon Yuthok mentions the initiative taken by his uncle,

¹¹² According to the notes taken by Butler during the interview between Lord Minto and the Dalai Lama in Calcutta on March 14, 1910, the Dalai Lama “asked that he might be restored to the position of the Fifth Dalai Lama, who had negotiated with the Emperor of China as the ruler of a friendly state,” Shakabpa 1976: 231 (not in Maher 2010).

On the Fifth Dalai Lama, <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/The-Fifth-Dalai-Lama,-Ngawang-Lobzang-Gyatso/P37>.

¹¹³ Tsepon Norbu Wanggyel Trimon and the Secretary-General, Chamba Tendar, secretly communicated with the Dalai Lama directly.

¹¹⁴ Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 735.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 739; Petech 1973: 138.

¹¹⁶ Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 20; 34.

¹¹⁷ IOR/L/P&S/11/31/P3778, Letter from W.H. Wilkinson, British consul-general in Chengdu, to Lord Hardinge, viceroy of India, July 21, 1912, quoted the *Kuo-min Pao*, July 14, 1912, 7; Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 36.

Lhagyari Namgyel Wangchuk (Lha rgya ri Rnam rgyal dbang phyug, born in the late 19th century–1912,) to “raise a volunteer regiment of more than twelve hundred soldiers from the Kongpo [Kong po] and Dakpo [Dwags po] Tibetan regions” who was killed in a battle.¹¹⁸ Shakabpa mentions Dasang Damdul, i.e., Tsarong, who “was ordered to work with the two generals in Lhasa to eject the Chinese.”¹¹⁹ Another important figure, mentioned by Shakabpa among others, was Monk-Minister (*bka’ blon bla ma*) Chamba Jampa Tendar (Byams pa bstan dar, 1870–1923), who the Dalai Lama instructed to make secret preparations for the Tibetan revolt against the Chinese. He was a fourth grade monk official and a secretary to the Dalai Lama. In July 1912, he was promoted to the rank of minister in recognition of his involvement in the 1911–1912 fighting at Lhasa, and was appointed commander-in-chief of the Tibetan troops in Eastern Tibet in 1913.¹²⁰

However, nothing is said about their actions and the organization of the war in central Tibet. Finally, I undertook to understand who, among the ministers, were promoted in 1913. This would help draw an approximate portrait of the Tibetans involved in the late 1911 and 1912 turmoil. I looked at historian Luciano Petech work *Aristocracy and Government in Tibet, 1718–1959* (1973) who quoted the Thirteenth Dalai Lama’s biography among other sources, but I overlooked the British document *Chiefs and Leading Families in Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibet* (1915). However, no detail is given there either regarding the war strategy per se.

As it turns out, those among the officials who were promoted were very close to the Thirteenth Dalai Lama.

First, the Tibetans who either followed him during his first exile or/and were with him in India, during his second exile: for instance, Dasang Damdul, already quoted, Kyungtse Rampa (*kyung rtse* Ram pa, born in 1880) was with him before commanding the Yutok (G.yu thog) post at Lhasa during the fighting in 1912 when he was wounded. He then contributed to maintaining the Tibetan army by levying taxes in To (Stod) province (towards Ladakh).¹²¹ Trekhang Jampa Tubwang (Bkras khang Byams pa thub dbang, 1863?–1922) was the Dalai Lama’s medical and confidential adviser as well as private secretary, while he

¹¹⁸ Dorje Yudon Yuthok 1990: 19. On Lhagyari Namgyel Wangchuk, see https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Lhagyari-Namgyel-Wangchuk/TBRC_P8LS4350

¹¹⁹ Shakabpa (Maher) 2010: 739. Previous to 1912 there were only six Generals (*mda’ dpon*): two in Lhasa, two at Shigatse and one each at Gyantse and Tingri, see *Chiefs and Leading Families in Tibet* 1915: 15.

¹²⁰ Shakabpa (Maher) 2010; *Chiefs and Leading Families in Tibet* 1915: 16; for more about Chamba Jampa Tendar, see Travers 2018: 230–236.

¹²¹ *Chiefs and Leading Families in Tibet* 1915: 17.

was traveling back and forth from Darjeeling to central Tibet and became the Grand Chamberlain (*spyi khyab mkhan po*) in 1913.¹²² Shelkar Lingpa Mingyur Lhundrub (Shel dkar Gling pa mi 'gyur lhun grub, 1876–1913) was appointed vice-minister (*bka' tshab*) in 1912 before becoming a full minister (*bka' blon*) that same year.¹²³

Second, the Tibetans who invited him to come back to Lhasa on behalf of the Tibetan National Assembly were granted new titles: for example, Ngawang Lobzang (Ngag dbang blo bzang, b. 1862) was deputed by the National Assembly to urge the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet in 1910. He stayed in Darjeeling until February 1912, when he was sent back to Tibet as the Tibetan trade agent at Gyantse.¹²⁴

Third, the Tibetans who volunteered to greet and escort the Dalai Lama on his way back to Lhasa in 1912: for example, Tsogo Sonam Wangdu (Mtsho sgo Bsod nams dbang 'dus, b. 1891) who was later appointed acting general (*mda' dpon*) and sent to Dome (Mdo smad) in 1914.¹²⁵ Surkhang Wangchen Tseten (Zur khang Dbang chen tshe brtan, 1891–1953), late minister Surkhang's second son, was the officer in charge of the Dalai Lama's palanquin when he returned to Tibet. He became the chief secretary at the Tibetan Cabinet of Ministers (*bka' shag*) and in 1914 was promoted to Fourth rank by the Dalai Lama.¹²⁶

Fourth, the Tibetans who organized the resistance from within: for instance, Phunkhang Tashi Dorje, who was hurt by the Manchus in 1910, contributed money and men to the Tibetan national rising and he was upgraded to the Fourth rank in 1914.¹²⁷ Kheme Rinchen Wanggyel (Khe smad Rin chen dbang rgyal, 1874–1927), who became the co-head of the Foreign Bureau (created in 1909) and a minister in 1914 (to 1921).¹²⁸ Trimon Norbu Wanggyel (Khri smon Nor bu dbang rgyal, 1874–1945?) helped organize the Tibetan rising against the Manchus. He was appointed deputy commander-in-chief with the title of *taiji* and participated to the Simla conference (1913) to finally become a full minister (*bka' blon*) in 1914.¹²⁹

Fifth, the Tibetans who travelled back and forth between central Tibet and Darjeeling—where the Dalai Lama resided—and who fed him news from Tibet: for example, Sherchangpa Zompa pawo (Sher chang pa Dzom pa pa wo, b. 1875), who was Eastern district officer at

¹²² <https://treasuryoflives.org/bo/biographies/view/Khyenrab-Norbu/P227>; *Chiefs and Leading Families in Tibet* 1915: 17. On Lamden Khenpo, see also Bianca Horlemann article in this RET issue.

¹²³ Petech 1973: 159.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 139.

¹²⁶ *Chiefs and Leading Families in Tibet* 1915: 22.

¹²⁷ Petech 1973: 27.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

Gyantse until October 1912. He raised troops to expel the Manchus from Gyantse in the spring of 1912 and in October 1912 was promoted as the Private Residence Intendant (*Bla brang phyag mdzod*).¹³⁰

Sixth, the Tibetans who played a role in the negotiations with the Manchu and Chinese army officials for the evacuation of Lhasa. The first agreement between the Tibetans and the Chinese was signed by two Tibetans (August 1912): the Sera Me official Tsatrul Rinpoche Ngawang Lobzang (Tsha sprul rin po che Ngag dbang blo bzang, 1880–1957) and *Tsedrung* Tenzin Gyeltsen (*rtse drung* Bstan 'dzin rgyal mtshan).¹³¹ Both were sent by the Dalai Lama from Darjeeling to Lhasa.¹³² According to Shakabpa, the above-mentioned Changkhyim Khyenrab Jangchub Pelzang was with the first two.¹³³ The second Sichuan army surrender agreement (December 1912) was sealed by Trimon Norbu Wanggyel, among others that still need identifying.

Finally, we have information about fighting between Tibetans and Manchus and their success in establishing contact with the Tibetan National Assembly members but not with the Cabinet of Ministers whose members had been appointed by the Manchus after the Dalai Lama left Tibet for British India.¹³⁴ Communication was then established between the War Department and the Tibetan Assembly, sometimes in consultation with the Dalai Lama in India.¹³⁵

The attack on Sera (Se ra) Monastery sparked the war. The Tibetans entered into resistance and their Secret War Department declared war openly. Impoverished and in a desperate state, the Manchu and Chinese soldiers sold their weapons and ammunition to the Tibetans, which enabled them to carry out a deliberate action to disarm the Sichuan troops. According to testimonies written by Manchu and Chinese soldiers, the Sera monks openly provoked them and refused to pay the *corvée*.¹³⁶ Soldiers were also begging for food, so the Sera monastery's supposed wealth was envisaged as the means to make up for the Chinese government's negligence. Rumor also had it among the Sichuan soldiers that Sera had a great treasure, full of valuable goods, and that it could easily be seized.¹³⁷ Finally, some decided to raid the monastery. The date of the attack on Sera remains unclear.¹³⁸ The

¹³⁰ *Chiefs and Leading Families in Tibet* 1915: 19.

¹³¹ About Tsawa Titrul, see <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Tsatrul-Rinpoche-Ngawang-Lobzang/2418>.

¹³² Shakabpa (Maher, 2010): 749.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 744.

¹³⁴ Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 38.

¹³⁵ Shakabpa 1976: 242; Dorje Yudon Yuthok 1990: 22.

¹³⁶ *Youhuan yusheng* [1913] 1983:124.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ The attack occurred on November 2, 1911 or February 5, 1912 or March 23, 1912, see Zhang Shaoyong and Xirao-Nima 2011; Transmission of a telegram dated

soldiers plundered it, destroyed the nearby hermitages and laid siege to the monastery. The Sera monks and the Lhasa Khampas joined the fighting and raided the Sichuan army barracks at Trapchi (Grwa bzhi).¹³⁹ Lhasa became the scene of a merciless war. Shakabpa, Chinese soldiers, and the Japanese military instructor Yasujirō Yajima (1882–1963), who stayed in Tibet between 1912 and 1918, give detailed accounts of the war in Lhasa, waged in two zones, one Tibetan, the other Chinese.¹⁴⁰ The Sichuan army's mutiny exacerbated its weakness, which the Tibetans exploited. The latter besieged the regiments stationed in the Tibetan Tsang province and then bought their weapons and expelled the troops to India.¹⁴¹ In Beijing, the British, through Sir John N. Jordan (1852–1925), the Minister Plenipotentiary to China at that time, intervened with the Chinese government. Beijing was informed of the Tibetan siege by telegrams sent from India by Ma Shizhou 馬師周, the Gyantse Chinese frontier officer and by Lu Xingqi 陸興祺, a trader in Calcutta and representative of the overseas Chinese in India. He was thoroughly familiar with Tibetan affairs and close to the Dalai Lama and his entourage in India.

Meanwhile, the Manchu and Chinese soldiers stationed in Lhasa were still clueless about the national political issues underlying the mutiny and the regime change in China. For instance, during the surrender of their army in Tibet, the Nepalese representative in Lhasa, in charge of negotiations, proposed that peace flags be chosen by the parties: the Manchu and Chinese soldiers opted for a yellow flag with a painted dragon (in other words, the dynastic flag), while the Tibetans presented a yellow flag with a lion painted on it.¹⁴²

Diplomats all over the world were wondering: was the Rima border post between India and Tibet challenged by its Chinese occupation? Would the British follow the case of Mongolia, which had become independent thanks to Russian support, and would they help Tibet become independent? Although the British had no wish to let the Dalai Lama be instrumentalized by the Chinese, his continued presence in Darjeeling began to stir problems for the Indian government when he made it quite clear to them that he had no intention of returning to

November 24, 1911 and received from Shi Youming, the Gyantse Chinese frontier officer dated November 21, which refers to a telegram from Zhong-ying that informs of the attack on Sera.

¹³⁹ Dundul Namgyal Tsarong 2000: 38; *Youhuan yusheng* [1913] 1983: 119–136. See also, Dorje Yudon Yuthok 1990: 20–23. About Trapchi, see Lange 2020: 277.

¹⁴⁰ About Yasujirō Yajima, see Yasuko Komoto 2020.

¹⁴¹ MYZG, Telegram from Yin Changheng to Yuan Shikai, August 3, 1912.

¹⁴² IOR/L/P&S/11/31/P3778, Letter from W.H. Wilkinson, British consul-general in Chengdu, to Lord Hardinge, viceroy of India, July 21, 1912, cited the translation of a letter from Major Jit Bahadur, August 13, 1912.

Lhasa until his powers and titles were fully restored.

Faced with the Chinese army's surrender in Tibet, as of May 1912, the Yunnan army, led by Cai E 蔡鐸 (1882–1916) as the Yunnan military government's commander-in-chief, offered to assist the Sichuan army in Tibet, while Yin Changheng 尹昌衡 (1884–1953), the Sichuan governor, a member of the Elder Brothers Society, close to the Railway Protection League and executioner of Zhao Erfeng, demanded that Beijing pay his soldiers through Ma Shizhou and Lu Xingqi, the Chinese government representatives in India.¹⁴³ The two armies advanced up to the gates of Kham. In China, mounting fears of losing Tibet were openly expressed, together with concerns that Tibet might take its cue from Mongolia, which had declared its independence. China needed Tibet to go on functioning as a buffer zone (*pingbi* 屏蔽) and warrant the protection of the Yunnan and Sichuan provinces.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, the resistance was getting increasingly organized. By then, Tibetan soldiers were numerous and armed, and attacks on Sichuan battalions were successful.¹⁴⁵ The Beijing government approved of the Yunnan military providing assistance to the Sichuan army and was grateful of the loan coming from his compatriot settled in India. It asked Lu Xingqi to borrow the money needed to pay the soldiers and provide help from the Yunnan and Sichuan armies, who advanced as far as Litang. However, the soldiers gave up as soon as the first snow fell and because they were not receiving their stipends.¹⁴⁶ It intervened with the Chinese ministry of Foreign Affairs to put an end to British interference.

However, in September 1912, just after signing the first agreement regarding the surrender of the Sichuan army in Tibet in August the same year, the State Council telegraphed to Yin Changheng to order his army to stay in Chamdo and not to advance beyond the city, as had been agreed with the British.¹⁴⁷ He urged the Dalai Lama to go to Beijing and meet with Mongolian representatives, to convey his desire that Tibet remain united with China and to organize a conference fostering the union of Mongolia and Tibet.¹⁴⁸ It is not clear here whether reference is made to the Commission for the union of Mongolian

¹⁴³ MYZG, Telegram from the Grand Council to Yin Changheng, May 9, 1912.

¹⁴⁴ MYZG, Telegram from Yin Changheng to the Beijing government, May 21, 1912.

¹⁴⁵ After mentioning that the Tibetan army was swelling in numbers in May 1912, Yin Changheng spoke of tens of thousands of Tibetan soldiers gathering at Fort Galun in August 1912, MYZG, telegram from Yin Changheng to Yuan Shi-kai, May 12, 1912 and August 3, 1912; Shakabpa (Maher) 2010, 735.

¹⁴⁶ MYZG, Telegram from Cai E to the Beijing government, September 12, 1912.

¹⁴⁷ MYZG, Telegram from the Grand Council to Yin Changheng, September 12, 1912.

¹⁴⁸ MZD, Telegram from the Grand Council to Yin Changheng, May 18, 1912, and June 7, 1912.

dignitaries (*Menggu wang gong lianhehui* 蒙古王公联合会), created in October 1911 and whose members adhered in principle to the union of the five nationalities, while seeking to preserve their past prerogatives.¹⁴⁹ Simultaneously, the first Manchu and Chinese soldiers left Tibetan soil via India and the Yunnan and Sichuan armies reached the gates to central Tibet. The Yunnan army was asked to retreat to make way for the Sichuan army.¹⁵⁰ From then on, the two armies began to compete with each other and Kham became the stage of scuffles and incessant battles between the Tibetans and the Chinese; but also between the two Chinese armies, through memoirs sent to the Beijing government claiming a series of false victories on Kham soil.¹⁵¹ Indeed, in Kham, the situation had become chaotic again. The Tibetans' fierce resistance and the overthrow of the Tibetan Cabinet of Ministers, whose members had been appointed by Lian-yu, opened the way for the Dalai Lama's return to Lhasa. It took place only after the Chinese soldiers had been expelled from Tibetan soil.

Conclusion

The Dalai Lama returned to Tibet in January 1913. He had asserted himself as Tibet's ruler, assuming the dual role of protector of Buddhism and political leader during his first and second exiles. He had first tried to negotiate directly with one of the Manchu representatives in Lhasa, thus working out the first Tibetan-Chinese agreement at the very beginning of the 20th century and since the Imperial time. The initiative was crushed in the bud. Nevertheless, the Dalai Lama participated from India in the organization of the Tibetan resistance. He thereby entered Lhasa victorious. On the return road, Yuan Shi-kai had wanted to return his titles. However, the Dalai Lama had officially declared he was not expecting to receive titles or be recognized in his rank by the Chinese.¹⁵² He was therefore recognized as the Fifth Dalai Lama's successor and the Tibetans gave him the title of Great (*chen po*), like the Fifth of the lineage.¹⁵³

The Chinese occupation of Tibet and the Tibetan resistance were scrutinized by foreign observers who feared an imbalance of power in the Asian world that risked proving detrimental to their own interests. The French diplomats kept a watchful eye but guarded from becoming involved in supporting either party. The British, constrained by treaties signed with China and Russia, welcomed the Dalai Lama to India

¹⁴⁹ Wang Yanjia 2020: 47.

¹⁵⁰ MZD, Telegram from the Grand Council to Yin Changheng, September 16, 1912.

¹⁵¹ MZD, Telegram from the Grand Council to Yin Changheng, September 18, 1912.

¹⁵² Teichman [1922] 2000: 17–18.

¹⁵³ Mullin 1988: 17.

but failed to grant him political or military aid. They even deemed his return to Tibet to be an opportunity to turn the Dalai Lama into their agent. The Russians continued their diplomatic relations with the Dalai Lama but offered him no concrete assistance. The Dalai Lama himself tried to widen the spectrum of possible supporters by contacting ambassadors in Beijing, but to no avail. The Japanese diplomats were probably the only people to openly support the Dalai Lama. Japanese emissaries joined the Dalai Lama in India and the latter chose a Japanese instructor to train his army after 1913. To my knowledge, despite the mutual recognition of their independence (1913), no document refers to any Tibetan appeal for help to the Mongols.

English Translation of Excerpts from the *Pain of a Lifetime: Notes about Things Seen and Heard during the Tibetan Disorders* (Youhuan yusheng: Zangluan shimo jianwenji 忧患余生: 藏乱始末见闻记).¹⁵⁴

These excerpts are part of a testimony published in a book that brings together four accounts of the events that shook Tibet during the years 1911–1912. These accounts are of uneven value and contain details which show that their authors were either participants or witnesses. They are exceptional in that they are among the few known written accounts of the mutiny that happened in 1911 and conducted to the Water-Rat Year Chinese War. Their authors are unknown, and their texts give no information about them personally. The circumstances in which the accounts were written have also been forgotten. It seems clear, however, that the stories are not the result of interviews, although it is difficult to rule out the hypothesis that they may have been written at the request of a third party. The only information available and specified by Wu Fengpei in the introduction to the book, is that these accounts were written in Kalimpong in 1913, when the Manchu and Chinese soldiers were being evacuated.

¹⁵⁴ "Youhuan yusheng: Zang luan shi mo jian wen ji 忧患余生: 藏乱始末见闻记 [Notes about Things Seen and Heard during the Tibetan Disorders.]" In *Min yuan Zangshi diangao; Zang luan shimo jianwenji si zhong* 民元藏事电稿; 藏乱始末见闻记四种 [Telegrams about Tibetan Affairs Exchanged at the Early Time of the Republic; Four Accounts about Things Seen and Heard during the Tibetan Disorders]. 1913. Repr. in *Xizang yanjiu congkan* 西藏研究丛刊, edited by "Xizang yan jiu" bian ji bu 《西藏研究》编辑部, 5: 120–135. Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1983.

The troubles in Tibet indirect cause

[p. 120] After the Batang Chode [‘Ba’ thang chos sde] in Batang was destroyed, the Tibetans considered Zhao Erfeng 趙爾豐 [1845–1911] as their mortal enemy. Then Zhao Erfeng was appointed administrator of Tibet by the emperor. However, Tibetan officials and all monasteries firmly rebuffed this appointment and seriously threatened Lian-yu 聯豫 [born 1858, amban from December 1906 to December 1912], Tibet’s current administrator. The court dreaded border conflicts and went so far as to send Zhao Erfeng there, who set up the New Policies. The Tibetan Cabinet of Ministers [*bka’ shag*] insidiously thwarted this move and the Tibetans rejected Administrator Lian-yu and the court’s orders. In Tibet, it was no longer possible to do anything to bring peace. [At the beginning] it was not envisaged to order the New Army (*xinjian lujun* 新建陸軍) to enter Tibet, as it was impossible to separate the political from the religious. When the Tibetans heard the New Army had entered Tibet, they assembled their military units on all roads. On the one hand, they obstructed the army. On the other, they surrounded the administrative office. Most of the resources usually transported there were destroyed. Inside, the firewood and rice were almost exhausted. The Chinese were eradicated from the streets. The situation worsened. Up until 3 January this year (i.e., 1910), Zhang Hongsheng 張鴻升, who led the vanguard of the army, was aware of the crisis in Tibetan affairs. With thirty horsemen, he took a small road and entered Tibet the same night. The Tibetans were taken by surprise and surrendered the very next day. They were caught like rats and ran like swine. The police force the Tibetans had created no longer existed. Abandoned uniforms, rifles and cannons were piled up in great numbers on the road. The Dalai Lama left Tibet that very night. How could he have left alone? He was waiting for an opportunity to return to Tibet. He who harbors evil designs, hides them for a long time! Later, a police force was created; schools were opened; a telegraph line was set up; a newspaper in the Tibetan language was published; a pharmacy for traditional medicine was inaugurated; an exhibition gallery was opened; a court and a post office were set up in an effort to renovate everything that had fallen into disrepair. My country created the post of administrator, initially in order to control political power. However, the Tibetans did not respect the directives. What’s more, the Chinese were not allowed to change the Tibetan people’s clothing or the language and script of the courts, nor were they allowed to interfere in these areas. The Tibetan Cabinet of Ministers had established the religious power that was at the root of its political power. If the Cabinet of Ministers had not been dismissed, there would have been no point in creating the post of administrator, as the latter would not have had any more cases to deal with. Try to find out what happened to the matters handled by the administrator over the last hundred years! [...]

Unrest in Tibet: The immediate cause

When unrest broke out in Sichuan 四川, Tibet suffered the worst consequences. The New Army's soldiers were all natives of Sichuan [p. 121] and they were at the root of the unrest that led to Commander Zhong-ying 鍾穎 (1887–1915)' dismissal, in Dongjiu 冬九. In December 1910, as Pome [Spo smad] was repeatedly attacking the Tibetan border, Commander Zhong-ying was ordered to go to Kongpo [Kong po], station himself there and pressure Pome into surrendering in order to avoid a punitive expedition. Pome inhabitants are less numerous than the Tibetans. They are very brave and have no respect for anything. At this point, Luo Changyi 洛長綺 [1865–1911], advisor of the Lian-yu Amban and from the army training bureau, was given the task of leading the army to Pome, for some unknown reason. Zhong-ying set off from Dongjiu to inspect the situation. Unexpectedly, he saw the small roads were cut off by the Pome soldiers and he was therefore forced to return to Kongpo. After being promoted to Senior Councillor, Luo Changyi asked to replace him. At that moment, Zhang Hongsheng, the head of the cavalry, and Chen Quzhen 陳渠珍 [1882–1952], the head of the 3rd Battalion, were slowly advancing towards the seat of battle. They were mutually suspicious and envious. They were not joining forces. Damage and casualties were extremely high. What's more, the horsemen and soldiers refused to respond to Zhong-ying's orders and in the end accomplished nothing. Although he had been dismissed as commander of the army, Zhong-ying returned to Tibet and tried several times to return to Sichuan, but as he had been appointed to the mint, he could not withdraw. At that time, there were only eighty bodyguards, several dozen soldiers and several dozen gunners in Tibet. All the other soldiers had been sent to Pome. Zhang Baochu 張葆初, the deputy chief, was stationed at Gyantse [Rgyal rtse] in Outer Tibet [Gtsang] (at first relations between Zhong-ying and the soldiers were good, but then military power was seized and the administrator immediately arrested. The Tibetans rounded up their soldiers on all roads, considering that New Army soldiers were undisciplined and troublemakers), including the amban guard, and those traditionally known as the arrogant ones (the members of the Paoge 袍哥, as well as officials like Wang Jiuqing 王久敬, the accountant general. The whole New Army soldiers were members of the Paoge) [...]. They supported each other and passed on messages: they told the armies stationed in Tibet there was unrest in Sichuan and that they should not go home; that they could loot the amban's office and take soldiers' pay in order to save the empire and that not only was this not a crime, it was a deserving act. Who would have dared to disobey the Paoge's orders, even those involving murder. Their orders were followed even more than those issued by the imperial court. In fact, even the wretched did not argue, because it was impossible to get rich without the troubles. At this point, the situation was very tense, and Amban Lian-yu, from what I've heard, was at a loss as to what to do [...].

This led to unrest in Tibet. On reading in the newspapers about what was happening, Guo Yuanzhen 郭元珍, He Guangxie 何光燮, Fan-jin 范金, and Li Weixin 李维新 also began to hoist the empire's flag in Trapchi [Grwa bzhi]. They borrowed at least 80,000 taels from the intendant. Once the money had been collected, the situation degenerated into a revolution. But, feeling that they were only a minority, [p. 122] they appealed to the Paoge. Now, the Paoge's sole purpose was to plunder [...]. They then ordered the armies stationed in Tsang, including Gyantse's [Rgyal rtse], to raise the Great Han Revolution's flag and incited them to come to Lhasa to kill Lian-yu and Zhong-ying. The assembly [created by the soldiers in Lhasa] responded to the Paoge's orders. The soldiers arrived in Lhasa on November 29. They prevented Lian-yu from managing affairs for another day and handed the seal to the Commander Zhong-ying. They sent a telegram to the government, then took refuge in the Drepung Monastery [Bras spung dgon pa]. Commander Zhong-ying then replaced Lian-yu [...]. Revolutionary fever led to a bit of a massacre [...]. At first it was a matter of saving the empire, then of revolution [...].

Lian-yu's escape

On November 16, 1912, Amban Lian-yu sent several urgent calls for help to Gyantse in Tsang, because everyone claimed the soldiers were due to arrive the next day to plant the revolutionary flag and had come specifically to behead Lian-yu and Zhong-ying. There were plenty of agitators within the army. The New Army had been thinking about a way to start secret negotiations with Zhong-ying for a long time. But with the news that Zhong-ying had become both commander and amban, the soldiers knew they would show no mercy should the situation demand it [...].

The miserable conditions under which Lhasa was surrounded the first time

The Chinese were totally unprepared to go to war. They thought there was money to be grabbed. Little did they know that once they were surrounded, food would run short, fodder for oxen, horses and camels would be exhausted and hardship would ensue. They did not, however, become cannibals or dog-eaters. They attacked the monastery on the south bank of the Brahmaputra River because it was full of provisions. At night, the people went to dig up edible wild plants on the south bank, often amid gunfire, and they often ate poison; I've heard that every day they counted their dead. The stock of ammunition ran out. The soldiers had no choice but to surrender. Until ammunition was distributed to every location. At first, it was known that everyone had money hidden away, and the soldiers who weren't fighting would keep it. In the end, the most pitiful were the people and civilian officials [...].

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