

Tibetan Buddhist Leadership:  
Recent Developments in Historical Context

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In the study of religious politics, taking seriously the spiritual values and motivations of leaders is both important and problematic. On the one hand is the risk of neglecting or misunderstanding the spiritual infrastructure from which religious politics emerge. On the other hand is the risk of bias by taking too seriously the stated values and beliefs of religious actors. Against these alternatives, the present account accepts, as is basic in cultural anthropology, that subjective realities are one important dimension, among others, to consider in relation to the practical results of action. This paper hence complements rather than takes at face value the suggestion that Buddhist religious values are not particularly significant in the academic study of Tibetan Buddhist politics.

Ian Harris' six-fold typology (Introduction in this volume) is helpful in this regard. On the one hand, as he suggests, the institution of the Dalai Lama 'fuses' Buddhist religious and political influence. On a more refined view, however, many or all of his other categories unpack various dimensions of Tibetan Buddhist leadership and politics. *Ultimately*, Buddhist values are expected or at least desired to trump political concerns in Tibetan leadership—a domination of the religious over the political. This is the view of the present Dalai Lama himself.<sup>1</sup> Against this, the history of Tibet, particularly from the vantage point of Lhasa as the capital, arguably presented the de facto authority of political power over Buddhist values, including via the political control of the Dalai Lamas by various regents. The monastic response to such potentials has variously been what Harris described as antagonistic symbiosis—for instance between the powerful monasteries of Lhasa and the noble elite—or withdrawal, as when the renowned Pabongkha Rinpoche reportedly declined to become the regent of the young present Dalai

Lama because he didn't want to get embroiled and sullied in politics.<sup>2</sup> In the present paper, such different or competing strands are drawn out to show how, in the evolution and resulting condition of Tibetan Buddhist leadership, religious values appear not just to have informed but ultimately now recast the notion of political action itself.

In Western political analysis, it seems axiomatic that stated motives and values supply, at best, a pale or partial understanding of action. At least since Thucydides, it is taken for granted that political leaders are driven by strategic or personal interests that are legitimated or rationalized secondarily by stated motives. This counterposes the ideal that political action should be undertaken for the public good, as portrayed by Aristotle and in Plato's *Republic*. More generally, Western notions of the political have often been informed by a dualistic view in which hoped-for purity of motive, ethics, and morality are cast against the realities of strategic interest, rationalization, and dissimulation or subterfuge. Though Western social scientists generally emphasize politics as 'realpolitik,' at least since the work of Clifford Geertz (and its earlier precursor in the interpretive sociology of Max Weber),<sup>3</sup> qualitative social scientists have emphasized the complementary import of values and motivations in political action.

### **Tibetan Buddhist Leadership**

This paper considers selected dynamics of historical and contemporary Tibetan Buddhist political leadership, including with respect to the office of the Dalai Lama. Alongside and against this deeper context, I consider the compromised attempt in 2010-12 to establish a new organization of Tibetan Buddhism that was intended to provide a representative

body of Buddhists across the Himalaya-Altai region—encompassing the interests of Mahāyāna Buddhists in northern India, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, and the Russian Republics of Buryatia and Kalmykia.

By almost any standard, reverence for and devotion to the Dalai Lama by Tibetan Buddhists has been very strong. Weber highlighted the general importance of devotion to high Tibetan clergy in his influential (and also criticized) description of Buddhist ‘Lamaism’.<sup>4</sup> To cite a single concrete example, from Tsering Shakya’s detailed account of the Tibetan uprising and violent Chinese response in Lhasa in 1959, it is striking how strongly motivated both the populace of Lhasa and the ruling elites were to protect the Dalai Lama from harm or abduction, seemingly above almost all other concerns.

Reciprocally, the Dalai Lama’s own primary concern—perhaps to a political fault—seems to have been to minimize the prospect of violent confrontation that any action on his own part (and ultimately his very presence in Lhasa) might have had.<sup>5</sup> In the present, one can still see civilians in Chinese-occupied Tibet prostrating hundreds of miles to Lhasa, covering the entire length with their outstretched bodies while chanting mantras and carrying pictures of their lamas—or a carefully hidden forbidden picture of the Dalai Lama himself. Reciprocally, Chinese authorities are strikingly vigilant and draconian in enforcing the ban on Tibetans exhibiting pictures of ‘His Holiness.’<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, Tibetan Buddhist devotionality carries a political flipside of ambiguity and uncertainty that can dovetail with backstage suspicion or rivalry. That open or direct criticism of a Tibetan lama is largely out of the question—devotees should be questioning their own negativity—easily seeds intrigue concerning the social and political structure of influence, ‘protection,’ and implementation that surround him.

Opacity and intrigue can thus be integral to how devotional politics work in practice—what might be called the darker side of Tibetan devotionalism. In the present, these dynamics are often refractory to analysis both because details may be murky or hard to substantiate and because exposing them is easily seen as either religiously inappropriate or itself politically motivated.

Amid a strong context of devotionalism—be it deeply felt, formulaic, or both—longstanding evidence of rumor, suspicion, and rivalry in Tibetan politics is highly evident across a range of detailed historical accounts.<sup>7</sup> Practical uncertainty was often seeded in the process, since decisions seldom provided specifics, rationales, or evaluation of alternatives. In complementary fashion, pronouncements once made were rarely open to debate or disputed, much less refuted. Particularly with respect to the leadership of the Dalai Lama, considered to be the incarnation of Chenrezig and a direct emanation of Buddha's compassion, the religious values that underlay Tibetan Buddhism were hence often cross-cut by uncertainty and suspicion when decisions or pronouncements touched on matters that were more directly social or political in nature.

### **History and Antinomy**

As often noted, histories of Tibet have often polarized between religiously-informed hagiographic accounts from the perspective of Tibetan Buddhists adherents and realpolitik portrayals from a Western critical perspective. From *within* Mahāyāna Tibetan Buddhist traditions, one's motive is not secondary but primary to action. It is assumed that actions undertaken with virtuous motive produce good karmic effects—regardless of

their short-term results. In this sense, Tibetan Buddhist politics are not an ‘art’ much less a science or strategy, but an epiphenomenon of pure motivation by divine leaders.

Against this ideal, the fissiparous and rivalrous tendencies of Tibetan Buddhist clerics from different sects or lineages—and even lamas in adjacent valleys across the Himalayas—are well known if not legion.

At a high political level within Lhasa, Tibetan leadership was often rife with conflict and simmering strife, including especially during the Fifth, Seventh, and Thirteenth Dalai Lamas, during several conflictual regencies, and during the formative years of the present Fourteenth Dalai Lama prior to Chinese invasion—including the apparent execution while in prison of his regent, Reting Rinpoche. From a Tibetan Buddhist perspective, however, these realities of ‘samsara’ are secondary, derivative, and subordinate to stronger, deeper, and longer-lasting motives of compassion by the Dalai Lamas themselves.

Without attempting to resolve debates concerning Tibetan history, three points may be made, first concerning pacifism, second concerning the Western sociology of knowledge concerning Tibet, and third, at greater length, concerning the distinct historical position of the present Dalai Lama.

As discernible from a range of historic accounts and sources, the fourteen Dalai Lamas themselves were typically considered—and themselves tended to act—as spiritual figures outside the conflict and intrigues of secular and even religious politics. As opposed to the rough and often brutal actions of nobles, the aristocracy, and sometimes their regents or viceroys (*desi*), Dalai Lamas themselves were trained as religious scholastics and were reluctant if not loathe to engage in power politics and especially the

politics of violent conflict. They tended to intercede—and to be invoked—as peacemakers or mediators rather than instigators of conflict.<sup>8</sup>

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama (1876-1933) – the so-call Bodhisattva warrior – may be the greatest exception to this generalization.<sup>9</sup> However, his attempts at political assertion were more directed to outside powers, including China, than between Tibetan factions themselves. Even his greatest rivalries within Tibet, as with the Panchen Lama, were kept civil and with a sense of forbearance and face-saving decorum.<sup>10</sup> Amid his political engagements, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama absented himself, with no involvement in secular affairs for years, while in spiritual retreat. Jacob Dalton (2011) argues that the ‘Great Fifth’ Dalai Lama (1617-1682) was involved in violence against Sakya and especially Kagyu sects.<sup>11</sup> Close consideration strongly suggests this was a reluctant and ambivalent sanctioning via spiritual means such as war magic for political violence that was far beyond the Fifth Dalai Lama’s means, as a young ruler, to forestall or combat, including in the context of outside military intervention and direct threats against himself and the political system of which he was a part.

The extended period of regency during the youth of the Dalai Lamas, when they were removed from social life and underwent intensive religious and scholarly training, limited their engagement with as well as their interest in larger political issues.<sup>12</sup> For a number of the Dalai Lamas — including the Fourth, Sixth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth — a relatively short life span compromised or precluded political leadership or influence in any effective sense.<sup>13</sup>

In this broader context, the present Dalai Lama’s aversion to direct political confrontation – particularly any confrontation that risks violence and bloodshed –

continues a much longer tradition of pacifism while underscoring it under particularly trying conditions. As is well known, these have included the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet, along with its attendant killing and torture of hundreds of thousands of Tibetans;<sup>14</sup> wholesale destruction of some 6,000 Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and temples, leaving only a few standing in the entire country; and draconian bans, previously enforced by torture or execution, on Buddhist religious and associated cultural practices. This is not to suggest that the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's pacifism has necessarily been the most politically or culturally successful strategy, but merely to say that it has been, on the whole, a widely established social fact, including as documented in historical accounts.<sup>15</sup> This pacifism is consistent with the Dalai Lama's account of his own life and motives as described in his two autobiographies,<sup>16</sup> including his applied interpretation of Mahāyāna scriptures and principles, sometimes in significant opposition to close advisors, at key junctures of turmoil or crisis.

Second and more reflexively, a significant divide seems to have opened up between political and economic understandings of Tibetan history and those that are religious and humanistic in emphasis. The latter tend to supply more relatively appreciative 'internalist' considerations of Tibetan society, culture, and history—through the lens of religion, philosophy, or art—as opposed to more 'exogenous' and critical interpretations from perspectives drawn from history, sociology, or political science. It is in part to mediate these alternative orientations that complementary perspectives are interwoven in the present analysis.

### **Decimation and Diasporic Reconstruction**

A third point—which links the above two issues to that of religious leadership—is that during the long tenure of the present Fourteenth Dalai Lama, spiritual and religious dimensions of Tibetan Buddhist leadership have come to significantly exceed if not overshadow or outstrip their previous social and economic base. This issues merits unpacking, as it throws into relief how the current Dalai Lama’s leadership has changed, congealed, and intensified since his exile from Tibet in 1959. This period has seen wholesale politico-economic upheaval and reduction of both Tibetan aristocratic power and independent Tibetan clerical authority relative to the increased authority and influence of the Dalai Lama himself, even as he remains in exile.

During the 1950s and 60s, the Tibetan aristocracy was effectively severed from its agrarian base by the Chinese dispossession, imprisonment, and killing of nobles as well as Buddhist lamas and monks. These purges were instituted along with Chinese collectivization of land and the establishment of communes. Arduous and dangerous trans-Himalayan routes of exile reduced the number of nobles, among others, who could successfully flee, and also reduced the physical wealth they could bring with them. Apart from locations such as Sikkim and Kashmir where elite Tibetan communities had already been formed, the Tibetan exodus was a socio-economic leveler as well as a socio-cultural disaster. The increasing and then almost total sealing of Himalayan trade routes into Tibet from south and western Asia then cut off what had for centuries been a life-line of the regional Tibetan economy, making it difficult for nobles and others to re-establish commercial prospects in high altitude areas adjacent to Tibet. This fueled a socio-economic reorientation of Tibetans in exile. If the Chinese occupation of Tibet did not

produce its intended results of Communist class consciousness and socioeconomic communality, it did—as revolutionary programs often do—permanently destroy the previous political economy.<sup>17</sup>

Though elite Tibetan families have certainly taken positions of influence and relative wealth in exile,<sup>18</sup> including in the Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala (CTA),<sup>19</sup> status leveling has nonetheless been great. Based on a detailed ethnographic study of Tibetan refugees in Karnataka, India at Mundgod between 1976 and 1978, Arakeri documented that the influence and authority of the 4 per cent of 973 families who were considered lords or nobles had greatly declined<sup>20</sup>:

“While in Tibet only the nobles could become village heads and were respected and obeyed because of their high birth and financial status. Here in the Settlement all are almost equal in terms of financial status except a few who have either brought some movable property from Tibet or have been able to earn here through their hard efforts. The village leaders are elected . . . in the democratic manner. Now all are entitled for an equal quota of land and enjoy . . . financial freedom.”

In a second early study of Tibetan refugees, in 1974-75, Palakshappa states flatly that,<sup>21</sup> “there are no class divisions in the Mundgod settlement. . . . All of them are dependent on the patronage of the government and charity agencies.” Relative equality of Tibetan refugee resource allocation, including land, was similarly documented by Subba in Sikkim: “All the refugees in the Kunphenling Settlement own equal amount of land while outside only a few own landed property. Thus, the traditional institution of property has virtually broken down and is today characterized by individualism though every

earning Tibetan contributes some money to the Dharamsala administration. The new situation demanding a wide diversification of occupations has further weakened the role of the family head who drew his authority mainly from the inalienability or indivisibility of property.”<sup>22</sup>

Within Tibet itself, Tibetan hierarchy was completely superseded by Chinese control. In exile, some degree of hierarchical carry-over persisted, but this has been actively reduced by the Dalai Lama’s own policies and procedures. Keen like his predecessor to combat elitism and encourage reforms,<sup>23</sup> the Dalai Lama in 1960 quickly instituted democratizing policies and procedures. Drawing upon his earlier initiatives in Tibet itself, these included provisions for an openly elected parliament, distribution of scarce refugee resources to those who most needed them, meritocracy in education, and procedures for democratic impeachment or removal of the Dalai Lama himself.<sup>24</sup>

Though these initiatives were contested and resisted, all were ultimately adopted at the Dalai Lama’s insistence. In her 1976-77 research concerning Tibetan refugee schools across India, Nowak notes how the resented privilege of wealthier Tibetan families –who attempted to buy placement and scholarships for their children – was combatted by vigorous policies of meritocracy, by which “the sole criterion for awarding scholarships is the order of merit in the schools’ final [examination] result.”<sup>25</sup> This echoed the widely noted intellectual meritocracy among monks that emerged in Gelugpa monasteries,<sup>26</sup> of which the Dalai Lama (notwithstanding his own status) was both a participant and a champion. While elite privilege and its rivalries continued in the Tibetan diaspora, they were greatly compromised and undercut, including as commoners pursued upward mobility in a radically redefined and much more level playing field. The Fourteenth Dalai

Lama himself jokingly notes that during the early 1960s, “some people even suggested that the Government in Dharamsala was practising *true* Communism!”<sup>27</sup>

Given his social and moral as well as spiritual suasion in exile, the current Dalai Lama’s effective influence on the Tibetan exile community expanded over time. Back in Lhasa, either with or without Chinese occupation, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama’s purview would have been expansive but also subject to very powerful and deeply entrenched constraints, including from powerful Tibetan noble families and highly independent and historically separatist clerical orders and monasteries, both in Lhasa and in diverse parts of the Tibetan state. Instead, along with upheaval of the Tibetan population generally, the Tibetan nobility was shattered and the clerics in disarray, leaving in its wake the suppression and dislocation of the significant percentage of the Tibetan population who had been monks or nuns. In the final chapter of his Tibetan history, van Schaik remarks:

“Monastery heads in the years after 1959 lost their past. More than that, they lost their future too. Most of them had been recognized as *tulkus*, or reincarnate lamas, at an early age, which meant that they had entered a massive support system, been housed in monasteries and taught by scholar monks. Early in childhood they came to know what was expected of them: to teach the dharma, to be part of the monastery’s ritual life and to support the monastery financially through receiving religious offerings. Thus, having lost first their monasteries, and then Tibet itself, the lamas were now cast adrift.”<sup>28</sup>

Bringing together the remnants of the surviving high clergy who had escaped and survived, the Dalai Lama quickly established collaborative councils and worked to save valuable texts and the few artifacts that had been smuggled out of Tibet. In the process,

personal support of and commitment to the Dalai Lama greatly increased, not just from Buddhists at his own home monastery at Drepung, in Lhasa, or from Central Tibet, but from refugees across greater Tibet as a whole. Traditionally, the Dalai Lama was paid great symbolic and ritual honor and accorded great religious devotion, but his social and policy influence had been minimal, especially in outlying areas. As opposed to this, the entire physical and financial resuscitation of Tibetan refugees and the Tibetan nation in exile worked in tandem with the Indian State and international relief organizations through the Private Office of the Dalai Lama himself.

As the spiritual as well as political leader of Tibet, the Dalai Lama in exile was also ultimately in charge of identifying, adjudicating, and certifying a large number of *tulkus* to replace and carry on the specific religious traditions of high lamas who had not survived the Chinese genocide or been able to flee. In effect, he appointed and authorized a whole new generation of clerics recognized by him personally—and with many fewer layers of bureaucratic intervention and aristocratic influence than had previously been the case. Because Tibetan Buddhism is based on *living* lineage transmission from masters to students, it was highly important that as many as possible of the vast array of Buddhist esoteric tantric and other teachings be verbally passed on as expeditiously as possible: if the last lineage holder of the tradition passes away without verbally transmitting it, that tradition is considered lost forever. The Dalai Lama acted quickly so that surviving Buddhist lineage holders transmitted their empowerments to him personally, whereupon he retransmitted them to important ranges of relevant adepts. This procedure was widely appreciated. In addition to maintaining as many of Tibetan Buddhism's esoteric traditions

as possible, this had the effect of further centralizing the Dalai Lama amid the competing and otherwise rivalrous sects of Tibetan Buddhism.

A number of Dalai Lamas, including the Second, Fifth, and Seventh were ecumenical in cultivating the teachings and practices of diverse Buddhist schools. In exile, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama extended this tradition by writing works of global ecumenical appeal in addition to erudite scholarly works for advanced Buddhist practitioners.<sup>29</sup> In the process, the Dalai Lama has attracted exceptional global interest, influence, financial support during the past half-century. This includes his receipt of many prestigious accolades and prizes, including Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 and the Templeton Prize in 2012. Against the smashing of the Tibetan aristocracy and its contended reassertion, the leadership and authority of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama—at least in religious terms, in the Tibetan diaspora, and internationally— has been greatly consolidated vis-à-vis what would otherwise have been the vigorously compromising structures of political power and also religious authority within Tibet, not to mention China.

Tibet has a rich historical legacy and lore of ‘founder effects’ by influential Buddhist masters who disseminated, rejuvenated, and expanded Buddhism under trying and stressful conditions of dislocation and displacement. This includes the ‘bringing’ of Buddhism to Tibet in a powerful way by Padmasambava in the eighth century and the dissemination into Tibet of a new wave of purified and scholarly Buddhism (Kadam) from south and southeast Asia between 1042 and 1054 by Atisha.<sup>30</sup> In the present Dalai Lama’s case, as in that of Atisha one millennium previously, there is wide admiration for the spiritual leader’s rejuvenated commitment to Mahāyāna ideals amid the specter of

their degeneration. To the present, the Dalai Lama's daily schedule entails rising at about 4:00am and undertaking between four and five hours of devotional as well as advanced Mahāyāna practices and meditations.

### **Politics Redux, Politics as Samsāra**

Given the above, why is it that the Dalai Lama has given up the secular and political dimensions of his leadership and authority? His unilateral relinquishing of political power in 2011 severed the formal unity of spiritual and political power in the person of the Dalai Lama that was instituted under the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1642 and maintained for 369 years. All indications received during the author's numerous high-level meetings, conference, interviews, and travels across the Himalayas during the past several years suggest that this giving up of political authority is genuine and pervasive.<sup>31</sup> In terms of strategic interest, why has the Dalai Lama's political position become a liability rather than an asset to him?

In one respect, the Dalai Lama's relinquishing of political authority to the Tibetan Government in Exile (CTA, Central Tibetan Administration) has corresponded, at his own initiative, of handing leadership reins to the democratically elected new Prime Minister, Lobsang Sangay. On the other hand, it could be said, as the Chinese government does, that this is at most a cosmetic change; that in political terms the CTA is a sham or a myth that doesn't control much of anything politically much less having a chance of re-acceding to power in Tibet. In any event, it is unlikely that the CTA Prime Minister would or could make significant departures from the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's

own Middle Way policies or views. The Chinese government refuses to even meet with representatives of the current CTA.

My own experience interviewing several high level ministerial and institutional officials of the CTA at their offices in Dharamsala in 2012 suggests, notwithstanding a consistent and refreshing sense of progress and optimism, that, apart from a very few proficient, smart, and strategically savvy exceptions, a surface or veneer of CTA administrative competence is compromised by a dearth of qualified support staff, ramshackle and anachronistic infrastructure, tension between old guard senior and younger progressive professionals, and a dwindling effective control or mandate for administration over the Tibetan refugee diaspora in India, increasing numbers of whom are now willingly repatriating themselves back to Chinese Tibet given the dearth of opportunities for them in India. On the whole, the mission of the CTA at Dharamsala seems to be struggling to retain domestic significance and salience in the twenty-first century, notwithstanding the continuing importance of its gathering of information from inside Tibet, its websites, its public relations, and its media influence abroad.

On the other side of this coin is the great influence of the Dalai Lama's personal and spiritual initiatives and his ability to be politically astute through his very abdication of and aversion to politics per se. In the recent context of his more exclusively religious leadership, the implicational power of the Dalai Lama's moral guidance can be greater than it would be via direct orders and political management. This can be true even and especially if unintended by the Dalai Lama himself, since he is revered in part for being above and beyond politics.

Given the bias of the present – our awareness of Tibetan Buddhism through a post-1950s lens and the current influence of eminent lamas and especially the present Dalai Lama in international contexts – it is easy to underemphasize the harsh hierarchy of previous Tibetan politics and also of Tibetan monastic life in historical terms.<sup>32</sup> Explicit and in some cases even murderous rivalry between sects of Tibetan Buddhism has continued in various guises.<sup>33</sup>

### **The Trans-Himalayan Nalanda Initiative**

In the wake of his political divestiture, and presaged before it, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama voiced strong interest in developing a contemporary transnational Buddhist organization that could bring together and represent the various strains of Mahāyāna Buddhism that had been so carefully cultivated and refined at Nalanda University in India during the first millennium CE and then disseminated by Atisha and others to Tibet and other Himalayan regions.

The efforts to develop this organization in consultation with a range of Tibetan/Mahāyāna leaders across the Altai-Himalayas was spearheaded personally, if often behind the scenes, by the Dalai Lama's longstanding special envoy to the United States and effective 'Secretary of State,' Lodi Gyari Rinpoche. Gyari Rinpoche had also for several years been the CEO of The Conservancy of Tibetan Art and Culture (CTAC) based in Washington, D.C. This organization, in turn, became the primary international body for orchestrating and implementing the Nalanda initiative. A working group of high ranking Buddhist leaders and luminaries met formally on at least five occasions at international venues during three years to explore and develop the potentials of the

abovesaid new organization, including in Ulaanbaatar Mongolia at Gandan Monastery in spring 2010; in Atlanta, Georgia during the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's visit to Emory University in October 2010; in Washington, D.C. in July 2011 during the Dalai Lama's Kalachakra teachings there; in Lumbini, Nepal, the birthplace of Buddha, in November 2011; and, finally, in Delhi, India, in November 2012. Through my project work as well as via other networks and connections,<sup>34</sup> I was present as an observer at all except the first of these meetings. At the third meeting, in Washington, D.C., the Dalai Lama himself attended to champion the Nalanda project as integral to his own interests and initiatives.

At these gatherings, which ranged in numbers of participants from two dozen to 175, senior lamas, rinpoches, and tulkus from across the Tibetan Buddhist Himalayas and Altai region were present—including from northern India, Bhutan, Nepal, Mongolia, and Buddhist Republics within Russia such as Buryatia and Kalmykia.

As one senior participant suggested, the point of the new organization was to operate not as a political body but as a kind of 'cultural state' whereby leading figures and representatives of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the Nalanda tradition from across the region, both clerical and civil, could present, propound, and expand spiritual and social dimensions of Buddhist ethics, scholarly education, and lay practice. The ongoing destruction of Buddhist heritage not only in present-day Tibet, but across the Himalayas strongly informed the perceived need for an international organization to advocate for and help protect the traditions, rights, and historical legacy of Tibetan Buddhism across the region.

The repeated invocation of Nalanda by the Dalai Lama in reference to the newly planned organization was significant, including as an avoidance and end-run around the politicized question of whether a ‘Tibetan Buddhist’ organization would pertain to the current geographical area of Tibet within China, and, on the other hand, whether it could effectively incorporate Mahāyāna Buddhists from areas such as Bhutan, Mongolia, or selected Russian Republics. Circumventing these issues, ‘Nalanda’ evoked the ancestral home of scholarly Mahāyāna and Tibetan-affiliated Buddhism in *India*—the present democratic state which provides the Dalai Lama and tens of thousands of Tibetan refugees exile. India also allows and supports the existence of the CTA (the Tibetan government in exile), and it ceded land on which the large Tibetan monasteries of Drepung, Sera, and Ganden have been rebuilt in Mundgod, Karnataka, in southwest India. Nalanda evokes the erudite scholarly, philosophical, and monastic dissemination of Mahāyāna Buddhism within Asia itself as opposed to its more popular or superficial understanding either within the Himalayas, by Chinese authorities, or abroad.

One of the world’s first major universities, Nalanda persisted from at least the fifth to the twelfth century CE. An interdisciplinary residential university that emphasized Buddhist philosophy following Nargajuna, mindfulness training, and debate, Nalanda is said to have had more than 2,000 teachers and 10,000 students. At its peak, it attracted scholars and students from China, Korea, and Central Asia as well as Tibet and India. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama has frequently referred to the Nalanda tradition and the impact of its greatest *panditas* (scholars). Accordingly, the new twenty-first century organization of Trans-Himalayan Mahāyāna Buddhism would one way or another bear the name of Nalanda in its title.

Unsurprisingly, the Dalai Lama was not alone in evoking Nalanda as an historical institution with contemporary relevance. The Indian government itself made plans for constructing a new, large, state-of-the-art Nalanda University near its original site in the present Indian state of Bihar. However, this development, overseen by the Indian Nobel Laureate in Economics, Armatya Sen, is predictably awash in Indian and larger East Asian financial politics. In the mix, the university is slated to be overwhelmingly secular and scientific rather than Tibetan Buddhist or Mahāyāna in emphasis. It has thus developed at a far remove from Mahāyānan historical emphasis or current florescence. By contrast, the Nalanda organization envisaged by the Dalai Lama, Lodi Gyari, and other senior tulkus took on a more practical, civic, and rights-based focus. A bellwether here was the adoption at the fourth of the five international planning meetings of the so-called ‘Lumbini Declaration.’ This declaration was unanimously accepted by approximately 175 persons present, including some eleven Tulkus and Rinpoches, among them Rizong Rinpoche as the current Gaden Tripa—the Gelugpa spiritual leader—and senior Buddhist leaders from across northern India, Nepal, Mongolia, Bhutan, and Russia. The conference was also attended by seventeen members of the Nepalese parliament and significant government and civil society leaders from both India and Nepal.<sup>35</sup>

The first three articles of the declaration emphasized the following points:

- The rights of Tibetan Buddhists to equal and full participation in civil society without distinction based on religion, ethnicity, race, birth status, or gender within their countries of residence

- The inherent rights of Tibetan Buddhist stakeholders to participate fully and proportionately in decisions affecting their communities and cultural heritage
- Inherent rights to equitable and proportional resource allocation to ensure education, healthcare, housing, infrastructure development, and other benefits of civil society in Tibetan Buddhist communities

Various articles of the Declaration specified and applied these principles to issues of Buddhist monastic education, Tibetan language and its training, environmental protection, and cultural heritage sites such as Buddha's birthplace in Lumbini, where the conference was held. Lumbini has been subject to Chinese proposals to the Nepalese government for massive development as a tourist site, including a contributing Chinese budget of several billion dollars. Consistent with the Dalai Lama's 'middle way' policy and his formal divestiture of political authority, this new organization-in-the-making was explicitly *not* concerned with establishing political control or even locally autonomous self-government either in Tibet or other countries or regions with significant Tibetan Buddhist or Mahāyāna Buddhist populations. Rather, it applied a Buddhist notion of universal civil and human rights to these diverse countries and contexts. As such, the Declaration claimed no more but also no less for Tibetan and associated Mahāyāna Buddhist peoples than it did for non-Buddhists within these countries. This included rights of disposition and control over their own cultural heritage, government resources due them as national citizens, and their fair share of education, health care, and infrastructural development.

In alternative ways, this pattern both extended and departed from Tibetan Buddhist 'politics' as evident from the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama and before. On the one hand,

the coercive hand of political governance was formally ceded to external agents. For several centuries and indeed intermittently since the time of the Mongol Empire some eight hundred years ago, the social and cultural if not political integrity of Tibet was often linked to acceptance, patronage by, or dependence on rulers from elsewhere in Asia. A strong case for the significance of Mongol rulers in vouchsafing and influencing the development of Tibetan Buddhism was recently forwarded by Richard Taupier.<sup>36</sup> Baldly put, it is arguable that, before the Manchus acceded to power in China, Mongolia supplied the political muscle that ultimately sustained Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy as a priestly as well as a political enterprise.

Later, the Chinese protectorate or ‘suzerainty’ – whereby Tibet was afforded internal autonomy while acknowledging nominal political oversight by Manchu – began in the 1720s and lasted amid permutations until the fall of the Qing dynasty in early 1912.<sup>37</sup> During this long period, Tibet was effectively autonomous in terms of political economy as well as in matters of culture, religion, and spiritual heritage. As Schaik mentions,<sup>38</sup> no taxes were paid to China, and the few Chinese officials in Lhasa played a very small role in Tibetan politics, functioning largely as observers who reported, or misreported, to the Chinese emperor.<sup>39</sup>

Since the mid-twentieth century, however, the spiritual relationship between the Tibetan center and its erstwhile periphery has been turned upside down. Tibet in general, the Tibet Autonomous Region specifically, Central Tibet quite forcefully, and Lhasa and the Potala Palace and Jokhang Temple in its center most stringently, have been controlled in progressively intensified rings of surveillance by the Chinese government. In effect, the previous center of Tibetan Buddhism has been swept bare of influential leadership by

Tibetan Buddhist leaders, lamas, or teachers. By contrast, erstwhile peripheral areas of greater Tibet—in selected parts of northern India, Nepal, Bhutan, and other centers such as Mongolia (and also, it should be noted, in Amdo and Kham, in eastern Tibet within China) have become centers of Tibetan and Mahāyāna Buddhist dissemination, training, and influence, including at the more advanced and tantric levels that are now suppressed within central Tibet itself.

Against this background, the new Nalanda-associated organization, approved of by the current Dalai Lama, was intended to acknowledge and foreground both the diversity and the importance of areas that were previously somewhat peripheral, but now central for the thriving continuation of Mahāyāna Buddhism across the Altai-Himalayan region. An organization linking the archipelago of Tibetan-associated Buddhist enclaves across this region would ideally make it a newly collective network, including vis-à-vis the region's respective nation states, and, not coincidentally, China. From the perspective of Mahāyāna Buddhists, this was a signal and potentially major development in the region.

One thousand years ago, as Buddhist influence was being suppressed and wiped out in its Indian homeland, it spread out rhizomatically, including via Nalanda, to Tibet and other areas. Analogously, the current Chinese stamping out of the Buddhism that had flourished in Tibet for more than a thousand years was hoped to be complemented by its diasporic rejuvenation in previously marginal parts of the region in addition to its international spread.

In the Lumbini Declaration, Tibetan Buddhism was asserted politically only to the extent of affirming the rights of Buddhists as citizens within larger democratic nation states. Apart from Bhutan (population of 700,000) and Mongolia (three million),

Buddhist populations form a small minority in the major countries of the region, including Nepal and especially India and China. Even in contemporary areas of what used to be Tibet proper, the indigenous Tibetan population is increasingly dwarfed by a tidal influx of Chinese, many of whom are also Muslim. In some ways, then, Buddhist politics in the Altai-Himalayan region may be harkening back to its period in Tibet during the ninth to the eleventh centuries, when Buddhism was suppressed and declined at its center while expanding and fluorescing at its periphery. In contrast to the earlier period, however, current politics now directly engage the modern superpowers of China and India, with Nepal and tiny Bhutan locked in between, and Mongolia, with a small population of three million people, sandwiched between China and Russia.

Notwithstanding these geopolitics, the hope and wish of the Lumbini Declaration was that human and civil rights discourse within countries would encourage and ideally safeguard the traditions and the development Mahāyāna Buddhism across the Altai-Himalayan region. At risk was the continuing possibility that majoritarian non-Buddhist politics would ultimately undercut rather than facilitate this process.

### **Decline and Fall: The Politics of Self-destruction? Or the Destruction of Politics?**

Ultimately, the new Nalanda initiative, intended to represent and promote the religious and cultural rights of millions of Tibetan / Mahāyāna Buddhists across the Himalayas and Mongolia, was aborted, in effect, by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama himself.

By September 2012, plans had been made for a well-publicized and highly funded international summit to launch the Nalanda organization in Varanasi later that fall. A

Convener and Steering Committee had been identified, a launch date and venue chosen, invitations circulated, letterhead printed, and donors lined up. The centerpiece was to be the presence, mandate, and personal initiative for the new organization by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

Initial problems had already emerged from the devotional/competitive nature of high-level Tibetan Buddhist leadership. The Lumbini proposal had been ratified by voice vote without discussion – on the assumption that the Dalai Lama was behind it. This assumption itself made open discussion or debate almost impossible, since no one would publicly deliberate what the Dalai Lama was thought to favor. At the same time, democratic principles were supposed to be enshrined in the new organization—and were championed by the Dalai Lama himself. It proved impossible even over the course of four sequential international gatherings to bring about informed dialogue concerning the key principles and logistics for the new organization—including methods of representation and financial structure, or even agreement concerning its name.

By itself, none of this would have been fatal to the initiative—as long as the Dalai Lama stayed firm in his support. At one level, the critical impasse stemmed from a simple failure of communication between the intended Convener of the summit and the Home Office Staff of the Dalai Lama. At another and more damaging level, it stemmed from the apparent perception by the Dalai Lama himself that the lama who was to be the Convener of the new organization was tainted by financial malfeasance in his homeland, including suspicions of financial ties with government officials who had already been charged with serious wrongdoing. As one insider said, “The Dalai Lama has no tolerance for corruption.” It seemed that this assessment was meant to underscore the Dalai Lama’s

primary emphasis on virtuous conduct – and the primacy of this virtue over and against the potential benefit of the Nalanda organization-in-the-making. Even for insiders, however, it was difficult or impossible to know the exact allegations or perceptions, much less if they were accurate as opposed to being speculation or rumor. There had been no indication that others associated with the Nalanda initiative had been sewing seeds of discontent. But questions remained. Did the Dalai Lama, as some suggested, know some kind of special information that was kept from general knowledge for the sake of propriety? Or had he been influenced by false information or biased advice from his Home Office advisors? Had the Dalai Lama's divestiture of political power created schisms or suspicion between his staff and that of his erstwhile trusted spokesman, the venerable and renowned Lodi Gyari?

Rather than trying to ferret out the likelihoods of these and other alternatives, the larger point is that an ethos of palace politics—uncertainty, innuendo, suspicion, and devotional loyalty to a leader with supreme moral authority and great prestige—made a reasonable assessment of alternatives not just difficult or impossible but inappropriate, including to many who had been in the initiative's inner circle. As such, nothing could be done to investigate much less to remedy the situation. In a sense, this is how the social politics of high prestige operate, sometimes despite the best intentions of the person at the top. As the result of the Dalai Lama's withdrawal of support, the oversight organization that had been working, planning, and fund-raising for years to launch the new organization quickly foundered, including financially, and their dedicated lead employee summarily lost her job when funds previously committed by international donors were withdrawn in the wake of the Dalai Lama's withdrawing his own presence and support.

In another respect and at a different level, however, the incident suggests the refusal or transcendence of ‘politics’ in the received sense of the term. Having divested himself finally and fully from political policies and decision-making, the Dalai Lama could be understandably reluctant to become enmeshed in the swirling politics of a national-level financial scandal that could potentially ensnare the convener and presumptive first leader of the new organization. In the bargain, and equally unsettling for many insiders, one of the Dalai Lama’s principal former political advisors was suspected—on grounds which many believed to be false—of financial malfeasance.

More generally, the new organization, notwithstanding its potential benefits for Tibetan Buddhists, could hardly have been effective without becoming political in the Western sense of the term. Bylaws; procedures for representation and deliberation; establishment of committees; the assessment and paying of dues; financial reporting procedures; and staff management: all of these seemed necessary. But for the large organization envisaged, these could not be established except by discussions and deliberations that seemed, by their very nature, to be at odds with unquestioned devotion to the Dalai Lama himself.

In this sense, the denouement of the Nalanda initiative reflects the larger fractionalized history of Tibetan Buddhism, in which great devotion attends to direct spiritual leaders, but with little connection or coordination across monasteries, sects, or larger regions. This may seem a backhanded complement: success as the practical ineffectuality of a politics that doesn’t do much because it avoids open discord and maintains devotion. Snellgrove and Richardson suggest that,<sup>40</sup> “it would be a mistake to think that the great [Tibetan Buddhist] prelates were primarily concerned with political

matters, manipulating them with Machiavellian subtlety. ... [I]t would be fairer to regard them as ignorant and rather naïve.”

And yet, in a broader comparative and world historical perspective, this has made, and arguably continues to make, its own contribution. In the wake of political excesses and their associated human carnage ancient and modern—from the violence of kingdoms, states, and empires, to that of modern nationalisms, world wars, and postcolonial politics of terrorism and banality—the political art of not doing too much too badly may be as significant as it is commonly overlooked. Amid all its conflicts, the political bloodshed directly associated with the tenure of the Dalai Lamas has been relatively small, especially when compared with religious and secular wars in Europe and in other parts of Asia during this same period, from the mid-sixteenth through the twentieth century.

## **Conclusions**

In ideology and to some extent in practice, an anti-politics of humility has been integral to the influence of prominent Tibetan Buddhist lamas, including their relative non-involvement if not incompetence in formal politics itself. Given the aging of the current Dalai Lama, the power of China, the declining stream of refugees from Tibet, the thinning ranks of new monks in monasteries across the Himalayas, and the relentless attraction of modern commodities and lifestyle, it could be suggested that Tibetan Buddhism is declining or even dying in its heartlands, at least in organizational and political terms. In its own world region, Tibetan Buddhism seems weak if not uncompetitive amid forces and pressures of geopolitics, capitalism, and the assiduous and

often well-orchestrated nationalist and religious expansions of Chinese, Indians, Muslims, and Christians. This seems true across a range of Himalayan countries and contexts, both rural and urban, notwithstanding a few continuing great monasteries and centers of learning, and a few internationally known, erudite, and charismatic lamas.

But this politically-framed perspective may not be the point. To go back to Max Weber,<sup>41</sup> Tibetan Buddhism may at its core be a religion of charisma. Its growing presence, including in the West, seems based more on an anti-politics, or at least a cross-purpose to politics-as-usual, than on success in a political sphere. When the organized strength of nationalized Buddhism is considered in other countries of Asia, including Sri Lanka and now increasingly Myanmar/Burma, Buddhist success in the political arena may not, in the long run, be as attractive as it may initially seem from the perspective of subaltern resistance.

Arguably, then, the deeper influence of Tibetan Buddhist leadership needs to be assessed outside the lens of politics as normally viewed. Now in exile for 56 years, the Dalai Lama's reluctance to pursue or endorse aggressive, confrontational, or physically resistant actions does not appear to have resulted in any significant concessions, loosening of control, or meaningful negotiations on the part of the Chinese. They have increasingly solidified and intensified their grip on Tibet. The seemingly endless 'non-meeting meetings' that Lodi Gyari held with the Chinese for decades appear to have born no result—and have, in the bargain, alienated younger Tibetans and those wanting to 'Free Tibet.' As suggested by Tim Johnson in *Tragedy in Crimson* (2011), is the Middle Way policy not an abject political failure?

On the other hand, the Middle Way policy has had remarkable impact across the world as an exemplar of Tibetan Buddhist values. In this regard, the Dalai Lama appears to be a ‘non-political’ politician who, despite and even because of his patent political weakness and lack of objective political success, continues after more than half a century to seize control of the discourse, galvanize the ethical issues at stake, and engage the moral—and now increasingly the scientific—attention of the world. In contrast to his adversaries, he does so humbly and with easy self-effacement. He continues to draw crowds of tens and sometimes hundreds of thousands of adepts, devotees, and well-wishers. In the process, he is virtually the only one of the internationally famous ethical leaders of the twentieth century—including Mohandas Gandhi, Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Nelson Mandela—to have retained a global spotlight for decades, avoided martyrdom, and accelerate rock star status in a digital age even as he now moves into his eighties. This drives the Chinese juggernaut to distraction, reflected in its continually pretzeled attempts to demonize the Dalai Lama and make Tibetan Buddhism a Communist Party project.

Given the cards that the Dalai Lama was dealt—the powerless exile of an historically closed and then conquered and disenfranchised kingdom nestled between superpowers—could he have done better in strategic political terms? Military or political opposition to Mao and the battle-hardened Red Army was futile. Guerrilla resistance would have increased the misery of Tibetan people and would have legitimized for Chinese their further oppression. The Dalai Lama would in the process have ceded his trump card: the moral compass of himself and his people as followers of Chenrezig.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the Chinese invasion, in 2009, the specter of armed Tibetan resistance was again strongly present. Many Tibetans agitated or at least hoped that the Dalai Lama would sanction some form of resistance. But he did not. With only minor exceptions, Tibetans complied. At the time, according to one eyewitness, guns and whatever old and new armaments available had been amassed by Tibetans for revolt, especially in outlying areas. But with the placid passage of the occasion, the unused arms were left piled in monasteries for Chinese authorities to eventually take and discard. According to some seasoned observers, the avoidance of bloodshed was not just a moral but a strategic accomplishment for the Dalai Lama, since it deprived the Chinese from using Tibetan violence as a pretext to unleash what many think was a fully-prepared counter-campaign of yet much more virulent oppression.

More recently, rather than armed resistance, more than one hundred and forty Tibetans have individually expressed opposition to Chinese occupation—often including final proclamations of support for the Dalai Lama—by lighting themselves on fire and burning themselves to death in self-immolation. This is hardly organized political assertion or resistance. Rather, it is powerful, physical self-sacrifice. Is self-immolation the ultimate expression of political failure? Or the ultimate political act—the refusal of politics itself?

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Gyatso, Tenzin (1962) *My Land and My People* (New York: Warner Books), p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> Mullin, G. (2001) *The Fourteen Dalai Lamas* (Ithaca: Snow Lion), p. 475; Goldstein, M. (1991) pp. 362-3.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Geertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books); Weber, M. (1978) *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 3-62.

<sup>4</sup> Weber, M. (2007), Part 3.

<sup>5</sup> See Shakya, T. (1999) *The Dragon in the Land of Snows* (New York: Penguin), pp. 185-211; Shakabpa, T. W. D. (1967), pp. 316-22; Schaik, S. v. (2011) *Tibet* (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 231-7. This is consistent with the Dalai Lama's own account: Tenzin Gyatso, *My Land and My People*, p. 156; (1990) *Freedom in Exile* (New York: Harper), pp. 135-7.

<sup>6</sup> As personally experienced in 2011, even foreigners entering Tibet country are carefully screened for material that may have photos or writings of the Dalai Lama, including copies of the *Lonely Planet Guide to Tibet*, which are confiscated insofar as an introduction signed by the Dalai Lama is included in one edition.

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<sup>7</sup> See Goldstein, M. (1991) *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951* (Berkeley: University of California Press); (1999) *The Snow Lion and the Dragon*; (2007) *A History of Modern Tibet, Vol. II: The Calm Before the Storm, 1951-1955*; (2013) *A History of Modern History, Vol. III: The Storm Clouds Descend, 1955-1957*; Shakya, T., *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*; Shakabpa, T. W. D. (1967) *Tibet: A Political History*; (2010) *One Hundred Thousand Moons*; Schaik, S. v., *Tibet*; Tuttle, G. and K. Schaefer (2013) *A Tibetan History Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press); Snellgrove, D. and H. Richardson (1995) *A Cultural History of Tibet* (Boston: Shambala); Norbu, J. T. and C. Turnbull (1968) *Tibet* (New York: Simon and Schuster). Compare more generally with Erving Goffman's (1963) *Stigma* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall); (1967) *Interaction Ritual* (New York: Penguin), on his insightful analysis of competitive deference and demeanor, including the attribution and management of stigma.

<sup>8</sup> For a range of specific examples, see Mullin, G., *The Fourteen Dalai Lamas*.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Mullin, G. (1988) *Path of the Bodhisattva Warrior* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Press), pp. 55-86.

<sup>10</sup> Mullin, G., *Path of the Bodhisattva Warrior*, pp. 99-107.

<sup>11</sup> See also Maher, D. (2010) 'Sacralized Warfare', in M. Jerryson and M. Juergensmeyer (eds.) *Buddhist Warfare* (New York: Oxford University Press).

<sup>12</sup> See Snellgrove, D. and H. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, pp. 224-6.

<sup>13</sup> It is often suspected that some of these Dalai Lamas were poisoned or otherwise assassinated, including by outside powers, to preclude their coming of age and assuming a political role (for example, Snellgrove and Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 225). Rivalries within the Tibetan aristocracy could also be violent and dangerous. Mullin, *The Fourteen Dalai Lamas*, p. 144, suggests concerning the Ninth through to the Twelfth Dalai Lamas that, "the day-to-day handling of affairs was largely conducted by lay aristocrats and power brokers. Most of these had little spiritual training, and were loyal to no one but their own families. They would have had few qualms about murdering anyone to protect their own interests and to maintain the status quo." An alternative explanation,

which Mullin also suggests (p. 345) that heightened exposure to incoming illnesses from the thousands of pilgrims that a young Dalai Lama blessed through physical contact could render him especially vulnerable to communicable disease and premature death.

<sup>14</sup> The Chinese themselves documented their killing of 87,000 Tibetans from March 1959 through September 1960, during their initial occupation of Lhasa. See Tenzin Gyatso, *Freedom in Exile*, p. 192.

<sup>15</sup> See Shakya, T. *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, chapters 4 to 7.

<sup>16</sup> (1962) *My Land and My People*; (1990) *Freedom in Exile*.

<sup>17</sup> See Scott, J. (1998) *Seeing Like a State* (New Haven: Yale University Press).

<sup>18</sup> See Chen, S. (2009) *Living with 'Tibet.'* PhD Dissertation (Atlanta: Emory University).

<sup>19</sup> See Roemer, S. (2008) *The Tibetan Government-in-Exile* (New York: Routledge).

<sup>20</sup> Arakeri, A. V. (1998) *Tibetans in India* (New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House), p. 98.

<sup>21</sup> Palakshappa, T. C. (1987) *Tibetans in India* (Delhi: Sterling), p. 73.

<sup>22</sup> Subba, T. B. (2010) *Flight and Adaptation* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Words and Archives), p. 111.

<sup>23</sup> For example, Goldstein, M., *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951*, p. 51.

<sup>24</sup> Tenzin Gyatso, *My Land and My People*, pp. 42-6; *Freedom in Exile*, pp. 165-71.

<sup>25</sup> Nowak, M. (1984) *Tibetan Refugees* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press), p. 108.

<sup>26</sup> For example, Harris, C., and Shakya, T. (2003) *Seeing Lhasa* (Chicago: Serindia), p. 99.

<sup>27</sup> Tenzin Gyatso, *Freedom in Exile*, p. 166, emphasis and exclamation are original.

<sup>28</sup> Schaik, S. v., *Tibet*, p. 249.

<sup>29</sup> See Tenzin Gyatso (1997) *The Gelug/Kagyü Tradition of Mahamudra* (Ithaca: Snow Lion); (1999) *Ethics for a New Millennium* (New York: Penguin); (2000) *Dzogchen: The Heart Essence of the Great Perfection*. (Ithaca: NY: Snow Lion); (2003a) *The Compassionate Life* (Somerville: Wisdom Publications); (2003b) *Stages of Meditation* (Somerville: Wisdom Publications); (2005) *Practicing Wisdom* (Boston: Wisdom Publications); (2006) *How to See Yourself as You Really Are*

(New York: Atria); (2007) *Mind in Comfort and Ease* (Somerville: Wisdom Publications); (2011) *Beyond Religion: Ethics for the Whole World* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt).

<sup>30</sup> See Chattopadhyaya, A. (1981) *Atisa and Tibet* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass).

<sup>31</sup> In addition to work in and around Dharamsala, the basis of experience and observation upon which this and other current generalizations are made include thirteen professional project trips to a range of cities, towns, and rural locations in northern India, Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and Mongolia. The bulk of these trips have been undertaken in relation to two projects of which I have been the Principal Investigator that have been funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York: the States of Regional Risk Project (SARR) and the Comparative Post conflict Recovery Project (CPRP). See [www.sarr.emory.edu](http://www.sarr.emory.edu) and [www.cprp.emory.edu](http://www.cprp.emory.edu).

<sup>32</sup> See discussion by Michael Lempert in his *Discipline and Debate: The Language of Violence in a Tibetan Buddhist Monastery* (2012).

<sup>33</sup> See Bultrini,(2013), Curren, E. (2006) *Buddha's Not Smiling* (Staunton: Alaya Press); Lehnert, T. (1998) *Rogues in Robes* (Nevada City: Blue Dolphin Press); Brown, M. (2004) *The Dance of Seventeen Lives* (London: Bloomsbury Press).

<sup>34</sup> See note 7.

<sup>35</sup> For the text of the Lumbini Declaration, see <http://sarr.emory.edu/documents/Himalayas/LumbiniDeclaration.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> Taupier, R. (2012), 'Mongols and Oirats as Peacekeepers', in B. Knauff and R. Taupier (eds.) *Mongolians After Socialism* (Ulaanbaatar: Admon Press).

<sup>37</sup> Schaik, S. v., *Tibet*, chapters 6 to 8.

<sup>38</sup> Schaik, S. v., *Tibet*, p. 145.

<sup>39</sup> Chinese representatives typically considered a posting in Tibet to be tantamount to banishment or exile, as it was so distant from centers of Chinese power. Reciprocally, "emperors often complained of the poor quality of their representatives in Tibet." Snellgrove, D., and H. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 225.

<sup>40</sup> Snellgrove, D., and H. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 237.

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<sup>41</sup> Weber, M. (1958) *The Religion of India* (Glenroche: The Free Press).