

When did Tibet come within the sovereignty of China?

by

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Tibet has always been an inseparable part of China: this is an indubitable historical fact. However, when did it all begin?

Many experts who studied Tibet's history have different views on this; some said that ever since the time of Sengzanganbu [Srongtsen Gampo] in the Tang dynasty, Tibet began to be united within Chinese territory. Some say that Tibet has only been included in the map of China since the Yuan dynasty. However, in the nineteenth century, the imperialist forces invaded China, and they also invaded Tibet. Some people with ulterior motives and who have designs on the lands in China, however, do not acknowledge this basic fact: they say 'Tibet is not part of China' and 'Tibet is an independent country.' Some people inside Tibet also constantly call for 'Tibetan Independence'. I feel it is necessary to speak of my own personal view on this question.

I have read a large amount of historical books on Tibet. I have read '*Sangjielinba*', '*Kaibaigadun*', '*Sanjiequqiong*' and later on the 'Red Chronicles' [*Hongshi*] as well as two books by the 5th Dalai Lama: '*The Biography of the Tibetan Kings and Officials*' [Xizang Wangcengi] and '*The Family History of Lang*' [Langshizhupu]. In particular there is that Dazhagong [Takdra Lukhong] stele which commemorates victory on the south side of the Potala Palace. It recorded the history of 1,200 years ago between the Tubuo king and the Tang kingdom. It clearly shows that Tibet at that time had not been incorporated into Chinese sovereignty. This rectangular stone stele, established between 736 AD and 775 AD, during the reign of the Tubuo King Trisong Detsen, was erected to acclaim the great success of the minister Dazhalugong [Takdra Lukhong] during the fighting against the Tang kingdom. There were literary inscriptions on the East, South and North sides of the stele.

Lines 41 to 63 on the South side read as follows: "Trisong Detsen was clever and thoughtful, his decrees were fair and far-sighted. He broke through many Tang fortresses. The Tang emperor Xiaogan and his subjects pleaded to be allowed to give [the Tibetan emperor] 50,000 pieces of silk as tribute. When Xiaogan, the Tang Emperor died, [his son] Prince Guangping became Emperor and he refused to pay the tribute; therefore Zanju [Emperor] (Trisong Detsen) became very angry and summoned his subjects to

meet with him. Anlamu Lugong [Nganlam Lukhong] asked to go and fight the Tang army in their capital Sangsheng. Jiexixuteng [Gyalzig Shultheng] and Dazalugong [Takdra Lukhong] were commanded to march to China where they met the Tang army and fought at Zouzhi ferry. They defeated the Tang army and Guangping, the Tang Emperor, left the capital to escape into Shanzhou."

We can see from this record that it cannot be said that Tibet had already become part of China in the Tang dynasty.

People who hold this view believe that because of the marriage to Princess Wencheng, Tibet became part of the Tang empire. However, the first wife of Sengzanganbu [Srongtsen Gampo] was the Princess of Nepal, and Wencheng was his second wife. Therefore if people think this kind of marriage relationship counted, then it could also be said that Tibet was united to Nepal. Therefore it cannot be said that Tibet became part of China from the time of Sengzanganbu [Srongtsen Gampo].

Many generations after Sengzanganbu [Songtsen Gampo], there comes Lang Darma, who had two sons called Ardawesong [O-song] and Ardayundian [Yumtan]. There are many stories and historical records about these two princes. It is said that the younger wife gave birth to Ardawesong, and on the evening on which he was born the ministers argued about whether Ardawesong was a real prince or a false one. In order to protect Ardawesong, many butter lamps were lit all around him that evening. The lamps were to prevent people from hurting him. That is why he was called 'Weisong' [O-Sung], meaning 'protected by light'. While the younger wife was pregnant, the older wife felt that her status might be lowered because she could not give birth. Therefore she used cloth to wrap around her belly, which got larger and larger. When the younger wife gave birth to Ardawesong, she [the older wife] asked for the son of a beggar. Nobody knows whether this is true or not.

Ardayundian took power. Ardawesong went to the Ali [Ngari] area and established the ancient Ge kingdom. The two brothers had an argument and a war broke out. By now the peasants started a rebellion in Sikang and Ardayundian was killed. From that time, a long period of chaos began in Tibet. Many warlords established themselves and called themselves kings. Thus there was no unification. This was the situation for about three hundred years until the Yuan dynasty.

During this chaotic period in Tibet, in around 1206 AD (the Fire Tiger year in the Tibetan Calendar), Duodanabu [Dorta Nagpo], a general in the command of Prince Kuoduan [Godan] of the Wuokuo [Ogodai] tribe of the Yuan Taizong emperor, led the army into Tibet. At that time there were no large wars, only resistance by the small factions of tribes. Some tribal leaders in Tibet therefore summoned officials from every level to decide to submit to Mongolia. Tibet was thus united quickly. General Duodanabu told Kuoduan of the many factions in Tibet and Kuoduan realized the important status of religious forces in political and economic life in Tibet, and that the local religious forces must be used in order to attain the unification of Tibet. The power of the Saga [Sakya] sect in the rear parts [?] of Tibet was increasing and Saban Gongga [Sakya Pandita

Kunga Gyaltzen, 1182-1251], the head of Saga [Sakya] monastery (the 4th Saga [Sakya-pa]), had a very strong influence in Tibet. Therefore Kuoduan invited Saban (Sagabanzhida) [Sakya Pandita] Gongga Jianzan [Kunga Gyaltzen] to meet in Liangchou (Wuwei in Gansu).

In 1247, at the invitation of Kuoduan, Saban Gongga took his nephews, twelve-year old Qujiejapa (the fifth Saga) [Phagpa Lodro Gyaltzen] and nine-year old Qiana [Chakna] to Liangzhou to meet Kuoduan. After discussion, the terms of Tibet's submission to Mongolia were settled. Officials were appointed jointly to manage the political and religious affairs of Tibet as well as issues concerning the quantity and kinds of tributes to give. Thus a political relationship was formed between the Saga [Sakya] power in Tibet and the Yuan dynasty. Kuoduan gave Saban Gonggajianzan power over 130,000 families [hu] in Weizang. Sagabanzhida wrote [to Tibet] the famous letters to Tibetan monks and lay people. In the letters, he listed the facts illustrating the fact that the submission of Tibet to Mongol rule was inevitable and that Tibet had formally been part of Mongolian sovereignty. Kuoduan decided to appoint officials and generals of the Saga [Sakya] sects to manage all affairs in Tibet; the existing officials would not be removed from their positions. He decreed that these contents be widely broadcast so that everybody would know about it. It was also ordained that the names, numbers of its people and the numbers of required tributes must be registered and three copies made, to Kuoduan and to the Saga as well as the local officials. These methods as put forward in the letters laid the foundation of the administration carried out by the Yuan central government within Tibet. From then on, Tibet formally became part of the administration of China and this also marked the beginning of the rule of the Saga [Sakya] in Tibet.

In 1251 the Saga [Sakya-pa] died in Liangchou. He himself was a monk [*biquou*] with no children. In 1253, Hubilie [Kublai] of Mongolia summoned his nephew Sagaqujiejapa [Sakya Choegye Phagpa] and appointed him as the imperial tutor. He made him a jade stamp of 'Teacher of the Kingdom' [guandingguoshi] and sent him back to Tibet with full powers.

While he was in power, Sagaqujiejapa appointed thirteen units [*wanhu* - myriarchies, or, literally, units of ten thousand families] and some small tribes. The tributes these units and tribes were liable for would all be collected by Saban to give to the Emperor. In 1260, Hubilie Shizhu [Kublai Khan] of Yuan dynasty became Emperor, and the central government of Yuan established the General Management Court [*zongzhiyuan*] to control national Buddhist affairs and local Tibetan administration. Qujiejapa was appointed State Teacher and general director of the court to assist the central government in managing Tibetan affairs. In 1269, Qujiejapa was appointed 'Great Buddhist King' [*Dabaofawang*] by Kublai because of his success in the establishment of the 'New Mongolian language'. He was also given the thirteen units for his own supply. Thereafter, the revenues from the land went directly to the Saga king. At each new year, the heads of the thirteen units all went to the Saga to discuss matters and then returned to administer. It must be said that from this time on, Tibet became an inseparable part of the motherland. This is a very clear piece of history.

Later on the Saga kingdom was overthrown by the Naidong [Nedong] king and his power was usurped. The main reason for this was that there were strong internal power struggles inside the Saga kingdom. Fighting broke out and it was divided into eight forces. They fought amongst each other and gradually declined. In order to dissolve this divided situation, local forces were invited to arbitrate. The Naidong king took this opportunity to take the army into Saga and drove away the Saga [Sakya] king to become king himself. At the very beginning, the Naidong king gave a puppet position to the Saga [Sakya] king, but eventually even this form disappeared and he gained absolute power.

The first king of Naidong was Qiangqujianzan [Changchub Gyaltzen, 1302- 1364]]. He felt that his power would not be stable if not recognised by the Emperor of what was by now the Ming dynasty. After careful planning, he finally sent people to the mainland to ask the Emperor to recognize his power. However, nobody wanted to go for fear of catching smallpox which was supposed to be circulating in the mainland. At last a twenty-year old low-status layman was sent to the Emperor with many gifts. After much persuasion the Emperor agreed.

Although no formal officials were appointed to Tibet during the Ming dynasty, it was still necessary for the authority of Tibet to be officially approved by the Emperor as the Naidong kingdom was part of China. This was written very specifically in the history books.

The Ming emperor once invited Lama Zongkaba [Tsongkapa] to the mainland. He did not go but sent Qiangqianquji [Jamchen Choegye], who built Sera monastery. He was appointed by the Emperor as 'The Great Merciful Buddhist King' [Dachifawang]. He went to the mainland twice and eventually died there.

In the period when the Naidong king held power, all ten kings were lamas. The twelfth king married the daughter of Renbangba [Rinpung-ba] (sometimes called Renbangqujearwang [Rinpung Choegye Ngawang]). After the Naidong king died, Renbangba came to the throne on the basis of kinship and held power on behalf of the Naidong king. By now the young Naidong king had no real power although he was still king. Before long, Renbangba had all the power. The young king's minister Xiexiaba Cidanduoji [Tseten Dorje] killed Renbangba and took the throne [in 1565] and called himself Zangbajiebao (namely the Zangba [Tsangpa] Gyalpo or king) or Zangbadisi [Tsangpa Desi]. By the end of the Ming dynasty and the beginning of the Qing, the Emperor sent Gushi Han [Gushri Khan] to Tibet and overthrew Zangbajiebao and restored the throne to the Fifth Dalai Lama. This remained until the reign of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama by the end of Qing dynasty. The Zunger [Dzunggars] once invaded Tibet during this period and the Emperor sent an army to repel the invasion [1718]. The Kuorga (Nepal) [Gurkhas] also once invaded Tibet and the Emperor also sent an army to drive them out [1792]. These events all prove that Tibet was an inseparable part of the sovereignty of the Motherland. Therefore the reason for saying Tibet has been part of China since the Yuan Dynasty is undeniable.

The Distortion of History by the Dalai, and so on.

The Dalai Lama and his followers who defected abroad said that Tibet did not come within Chinese sovereignty. They said that the relationship between Songzanganbu [Songtsen Gampo] and the Tang kingdom was that of a brotherly one rather than any other relationship. This is a fact. They also acknowledged the fact that during the Yuan Dynasty, the Mongolian Prince Kuoduan united Tibet and handed power to the Saga [Sakya]. However, they said that by the time of Hu Bilie [Kublai] the Emperor gave power completely to Qujiepaba [Choegyul Phagpa] and did not demand more taxes from Tibet, thus proving that the Emperor handed power back to Tibet and Tibet became again 'an independent state'. By the time of the Ming dynasty, the ties between the Han and Tibetans were very loose (they said so and the fact was so); by the Qing Dynasty, Gushi Han drove away the Zunger (this is also an irrefutable fact). However, they also said that the relationship between the Han and the Tibetans died during the forty years after the end of the Qing dynasty; that is, from 1911 to 1951. The purpose of saying this is very clear.

However, this does not mean that Tibet is 'an independent state'. During this time, there were still connections between Tibetans and the Hans. For example, during the Qing dynasty, Tibet had an office in Beijing and it also sent Kanbuzuoniluoza (Kanzuoluosong) to Yonghe palace. This connection never ended. They continued to live in Yonghe Palace when the Qing kingdom declined and during the Republican period. I have a relative called Karexianggeqiong, one of those living in Beijing. He told me that although there was great instability during the reign of Yuan Shikai, Kanzuoluosong still went to the Palace to perform ceremonies [*daochang*] regularly on the eighth, fifteenth, and thirtieth of each month. By then Yuan Shikai was responsible and he gave tens of dollars for each performance. In general, this relationship never ceased until the formal establishment of the Tibet office in Nanking when Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kaishek]reigned. These connections are all historical facts.

The relationship between Tibet and the Yuan and Qing dynasties was that of a central government and local government, not like that between two minority nationalities.

Dalai said that the relationship between Tibet and the motherland was like that of nationalities in relation to Mongolia and Manchuria, but not like that existing between inferior and superior powers. This [argument] does not stand have a solid base. Although both Mongolia and Manchuria were minority nationalities they both appeared as the possessor of the power of the central government of China when they dealt with the local Tibet [administration], not with their status of minority nationality. Therefore it is a relationship between the Tibetan local and the central government, not that pertaining to minority nationalities, not the least with the Han government, as it was not only Hans that comprised the central government. The central government was organised so as to represent every nationality.

It is utterly unreasonable for the Dalai Lama and his followers to hold forth about 'Tibetan Independence'. The Tibet local government was in the hand of the Saga during the Yuan dynasty, the Naidong king during the Ming dynasty and the Fifth Dalai Lama

during the Qing dynasty. These all were appointed by each central government. These historical facts all prove that Tibet is part of China. It is indubitable, and talking of 'Tibetan Independence' is absolute nonsense. However, speaking from another angle, this is not merely to say that Tibet is part of the motherland. The special aspect of Tibet must be noted. That is: Tibet has its special situation which differentiates it from any other minority nationality in the great family of nationalities of the motherland. Since the Yuan dynasty, all through the Ming and Qing dynasties, the central government has never sent administrators to control the Tibet local government. The practice was for the central government to appoint the Saga [Sakya], the Naidong king and the Dalai Lama to control power. This method of rule by command of the central government was different from the situation of the other national autonomous regions. The latter were all directly ruled by the local government established by the state. By comparison Tibet has a special status.

It is because of the special situation in Tibet that in 1951 the Seventeen Point Agreement on the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet, between the central people's government and the local Tibetan government, came about. Such an agreement has never existed between the central government and any other minority regions. We have to consider the special situation in Tibetan history while drafting policies for Tibet in order to realise its long-term stability. We must give Tibet more autonomous power than other minority regions. In my view, at present, Tibet Autonomous Region has relatively less power of autonomy compared with other autonomous regions, let alone compared with provinces. Therefore Tibet must have some special treatment and have more autonomy like those special economic zones. We must employ special policies to resolve the special characteristics which have pertained throughout history.

In the past, when talking about the relationship between Tibet and the motherland, we only talked about the issue of Tibet as an inseparable part of the motherland. This is not enough. Our specific and historical patriotic propaganda education of the Tibetan people was too narrow. In history there was no problem in the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties. The problem started when the Xinhai revolution overthrew the Qing kingdom. In the forty years between 1912, when the Qing troops withdrew from Tibet, and 1951, when the agreement for its peaceful liberation was signed, there were always calls for 'Tibetan Independence' inside Tibet. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama had made some efforts to get help but without success. There has never been a country in the world that recognised 'Tibetan independence'. However, the idea of 'independence' did exist among some upper class Tibetans for quite a long time. This clamouring has influenced some people. Therefore when the PLA marched into Tibet, those who were greatly influenced by the idea of 'Independence' believed that they were being oppressed and humiliated. The same influence exists there still to the present day. Therefore whenever the Dalai has shouted outside, people respond inside Tibet. I think we must strengthen the propaganda education work to make the Tibetan people understand the history of the relationship with the motherland. They must know not only the aspect of historical fact - namely that Tibet has been part of the motherland since the Yuan dynasty - but also the fact of the forty years of history since the Xinhai revolution and the peaceful liberation.

The relationship between Tibet and the central government was that of the relationship between Tibet local and the Central government, but not that of one between a monastery and its patron - *tang-yue*, the Dalai clique like to call it when they are shouting out [slogans].

Those who called for 'Tibetan Independence' have all emphasised the *tang-yue* [patron-priest] point. As an example, they asserted that in the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, the relationship between Tibet and the central government was that of *tang-yue* - there was no affiliating relationship of power. This was not new. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama had once used this as an excuse to promote 'Tibetan Independence'.

They all said that there was only a *tang-yue* relationship between Tibet and central government, that there was no political relationship. This was not true. Both Chinese and Tibetan historical documents record that since the Yuan dynasty, there were not only close spiritual connections between Tibet and the Central government, but that the more important one was that of an affiliating relationship of [political] power. During the Yuan dynasty, Hu Bilie [Kublai] once invited the Saga [Sakya] king to the mainland: this was a religious relationship. However, Hu Bilie [Kublai] also established thirteen units [wanhu, or ten thousand families] and gave power to Saga Qujiepaba (Sakya Choegyal Phagpa). This was a political affiliating relationship. By the time of the Ming dynasty, the religious relation had become very weak and only Qiangqinque and Gemaba [Karmapa] had connections with the mainland. The Naidong king who was in power in Tibet had no religious relationship with the Ming dynasty; it was a completely political affiliating relationship. By the Qing dynasty, of course there was a religious relationship; for example, the Fifth Dalai was invited to the mainland, but it was a mainly political relationship, for example, sending administrators to Tibet and sending troops to defeat the Kuorga [Gurkha] invasion and the 1904 English invasion. The Qing minister for Tibet did not have direct control of Tibet authority but he was involved with politics. The Dalai Lama was ascertained to be the reincarnated child. The Emperor gave the gold vase and established the rule of drawing lots from it [in order to select the Dalai Lama]. Since the tenth Dalai Lama, the method of drawing lots from the gold vase has been established. The four *gelun* [Kalon, or Tibetan officials], *peben* and six *daiban* [Ministers, Generals] were all appointed by the Emperor.

'There is only a *tang-yue* relationship between Tibet and the mainland' - such talk is just empty words. For it cannot be denied that there existed a long-term political relationship. During the reign of the Saga [Sakya] in the Yuan dynasty, he once made three requests to Emperor Hu Bilie [Kublai]: First he asked Hu Bilie [Kublai] to give him the power to control and administer the thirteen units [wanhu, ten thousand families], secondly he asked the Emperor to give the Tibetan regions in Sichuan, Qinghai and Gansu to him. When he came to his third request, the Emperor asked: 'What else do you want?' Saga said, "Nothing else. Now I ask the Emperor to stop killing Hans and destroying the Han religion." The Emperor gave his promise. This example shows that the political relationship was very close.

Although the Saga king and the Emperor had a religious relationship, however, Sagabanzhida [Sakya Pandita] held the real power in Tibet. His authority and orders had to be approved by the Emperor. Even Sagabanzhida was appointed by the Emperor. During the Ming dynasty, when the Naidong king seized the Tibet authority, each king of Naidong was appointed by the Emperor, and it was the same in the Qing dynasty. From the Fifth to the Ninth Dalai Lama, each was appointed by the Emperor. When the Fifth Dalai Lama died, Disisangjiejiacuo [*Desi Sangye Gyatso*] who was in power hid the news for ten years from the outside world. The reason for hiding the news of the death of the Dalai Lama was because the building of the pagoda for the spirit was not finished, and the Red Palace of the Potala was not completed. Later on, when the Sixth Dalai was born in Mendawang, Sanjiejiacuo had to report to the Emperor. The Emperor then asked him when the Fifth Dalai died, and why he did not report the death. He took Sangjiejiacuo to court and wanted to dismiss him from his position. Sangjiejiacuo told the Emperor, 'It was not that I wanted to lie to the Emperor: there were several reasons. First of all, when the Dalai Lama dies, the situation in Tibet is unstable, secondly the Red Palace was not completed, thirdly the pagoda for the spirit of the Fifth Dalai was not completed. Even so, I still sent the message to the Emperor. Upon the death of the Fifth Dalai, '*gusongtusong*' was sent to the Emperor (it is a form of announcing the death of people in Tibet). It included a small statue of the Dalai Lama, a book of Buddhist doctrines, a small Buddhist pagoda. This was the message to the emperor. Therefore there was no secret. The fact is that you did not understand and you wronged me and said I did not report it; in fact I did report it. Thus the emperor appointed Lunyangjiacuo [Longyang (Tsangyang?) Gyatso] as the sixth Dalai Lama.

During the reign of the sixth Dalai, the men in power in Tibet were the sons of Gushi Han, Lazanghan [Lhazang Khan] and Sangjiejiacuo. They disagreed between themselves and often argued. Later on, through the persuasion of some famous and prestigious lamas such as Banchan and Zaxijiangyangxie of the Zhebang [Drepung] monastery, it was decided that Sangjiejiacuo should continue to rule, and Lazanghan was given a huge fortune to take with his family to return to the mainland. When Lazanghan reached the black river, fighting began in Qinghai. Therefore, he stayed along the black river for about a year or so using the pretext that they would wait till the fighting stopped. Later on, Lazanghan collected some troops and fought his way back to Tibet. By this time, Sangjiejiacuo was no longer in power; his son was in power. He lived in Shannan [Lhokha] Gongga [Gongkar]. Lazanghan, with his troops, suddenly occupied Lhasa and then took soldiers to Shannan to arrest him. When the news reached Shannan, the son of Sangjiejiacuo went from Duilongdeqing [Toelung Dechen] through northern Tibet to the mainland to report to the Qing emperor. Lazanghan did not find anybody in Gongga, and sent troops in pursuit until they caught Sangjiejiacuo in the mountains in Duilongdeqing [Toelung Dechen]. The prestigious lamas in the three monasteries in Lhasa all went immediately to Duilongdeqing when they heard that Sangjiejiacuo was caught. However, by this time Sangjiejiacuo had already been killed. From then on [1705], Lazanghan controlled Tibet.

Later on, because the sixth Dalai Lama was not behaving well, Lazanghan reported to the Emperor that Lunyangjiacuo was not the real reincarnation of the Dalai Lama and asked

the Emperor to dismiss him. The Emperor sent orders asking him to send Lunyangjiacuo to Beijing so that the Emperor could ascertain whether or not he was a true reincarnation. The sixth Dalai Lunyangjiacuo died in Yushu in Qinghai on the way to the mainland. Consequently, Lazanghan made Baimagebao [Pema Karpo] Dalai Lama and said this was the real Sixth Dalai. Some said that Baimagabao was the son of Lazanghan, some said it was just a child from a poor family. Soon after, the Zunger [Dzungars] sent an army to Lhasa and killed Lazanghan and took over power in Tibet and handed over authority to Dazishaqiong [Desi Shabdrung]. In the midst of these events, the seventh Dalai was born in Lithang. [Emperor] Kangxi sent him to Tibet accompanied by the prince.

We can see from these historical facts that it could not be established that there was only tang-yue, and therefore no political relationship between Tibet and the central government. The phrase 'Tibetan Independence' was not used. Tibet was part of the motherland. This is a historical fact that nobody can contradict.

The Story Told To Luosangsandan [Lobsang Samten]

It was in about 1980 that the Dalai Lama sent the first delegation from abroad to Beijing. They once came to my house for a meal. Among them were Tudengdanda [Thupten Tendar], Pingcuozhaxi [Phuntsog Tashi] and the third brother of the Dalai Lama, Luosangsandan [Lobsang Samten], and others. I gave them supper and, after the meal, they wanted to stay up a while. Luosangsandan [Lobsang Samten] told me that recently Xiageba [Shakapba] had written a very complete book on the history of Tibet and asked whether or not I had seen it. I said yes.

'Political History of Tibet' by Xiageba [Shakapba] was published abroad and was very popular. In this book he completely adopted the method of distorting facts to prove his own point of view. He collected materials and looked for information which took liberties with history and only served his view of 'Tibetan Independence'. He turned a blind eye to the historical facts of developments between Tibet and the motherland and the fact that Tibet is under Chinese sovereignty. He pretended that this was historically inaccurate. For example, when he wrote about the Naidong authority, he based his facts on the book 'The Langs History' [langshizupu]. In fact, it was written very clearly. Qiangqujianza said that without the approval of the Emperor the balance of power in Tibet was not stable, therefore he sent people to the mainland to ask for the protection of the Emperor. Xiageba [Shakapba] completely dismissed this and he made up facts by himself and did not recognise the important historical fact of Tibet being part of China.

"How do you feel about this book?" asked Luosangsandan [Lobsang Samten].

I said, I could tell you a story about this book.

In 1911, 'the battle among the field army' broke out between Tibet and the Qing army. The Qing army defeated that of the Tibetans and they were forced to surrender. The rest of the army withdrew to Changdu [Chamdo]. Later on Tibet sent troops to attack

Changdu [Chamdo]. Abandoned by their dying kingdom, the Qing army were then defeated and had to surrender to the Tibetan army.

In Luwuqizong [Riwoche Dzong] there was a monastery called Yanggui. The famous Runran Lama from the monastery was among the Qing soldiers. When the Qing soldiers surrendered, he was also arrested, sent to Lhasa and kept in prison. Later on he was put into a prison box and placed on public show between two stones in front of the Potala Palace. By then I was only eight years old and in school. I had seen him on several occasions.

After the public show, Runran was exiled to Zuowenwang xika [shika, estate], in the Jiayu [Dzayul?] area, Longzi county. It was in the Yaoxi [Yabshi] manor of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. Soon after, the Runran Lama suddenly disappeared.

There was a complete story about the escape of the Runran Lama.

At that time Jiayu was a Zong [County]. There were two Zongbens [officials]. One was called Nielongwa, the other Chengdongqunze from Qushui Chengzong. (He was a lama who became non-religious; he was called Zizhong and usually dressed in Mongolian clothes. Chengdongqunze admired the Runran Lama very much. It was said that the Runran Lama had the ability of predicting the future and had given the Qing soldiers great help. Chengdongqunze *Zongben* was kind to the exiled Runran Lama who had settled in a small monastery in the mountains to live freely. He had many disciples and many people worshipped him. He did not live like an exile.

How did the Runran Lama escape? My friend Niekangwa told me in detail.

One day the Runran Lama said sadly to the *Zongben* and the people around him: "In one or two days I am going to die. Please tell all my disciples and benefactors to come over to my monastery, I want to see them for the last time."

Many disciples did come, along with some inquisitive people. They filled the small monastery. Runran told his benefactors and disciples with a mixed expression of gratitude and sadness: "I am going to leave you in a day or two. Hey, farewell, my devoted friends!" While saying that, he suddenly pointed to the foot of the mountain and said: "My future burial ground will be there! Look there, there is a small tree: under that tree will be my burial ground. Now you can go and have a look, and when I die, my body will be buried there."

The benefactors, disciples and inquisitive people all rushed to the foot of the mountain. Some inquisitive people dug in the ground underneath the little tree. The mud was mixed with bushes and suddenly there emerged a square stone cave. People were most surprised and admired the ability of Runran to predict the future.

Two days later, Lama Runran died as he had predicted. The disciples put his dead body into that stone cave, put the wooden cover on top of it and covered it with earth. The two

Zongben reported the news of the death of Runran Lama to the Gexia [Kashag] government.

A year and a half later, the Runran Lama suddenly appeared in Nanking. It so happened that when he was exiled to Jiayu, he had started to make preparations for his escape. He used to walk along the small monastery looking for a way to escape. One day he discovered this stone cave. He began to bury it with earth, planted grass on top of it and planted a small tree. After three years, it became the same colour as that of the mountain.

When he was taken into the stone cave, he escaped and ran away in the night. He ran to Nanking to talk to the administration of Jiang Jieshi. "Tibet was part of China", he said, "The Saga [Sakya] sect was in power in Tibet during the Yuan dynasty, in the Ming dynasty it was the Geju [Kagyü] sect which was in power, and the Gelu [Gelugpa] sect was in power through the Dalai Lama during the Qing dynasty. It is now the Republican period and power should be in the hands of the Geju [Kagyü] sect." The Runran Lama was from the Geju [Kagyü] sect. He asked, "Will you please help me? Will you please send the army to help me take back Tibet?" At that time, the Jiang Jieshi government did not have enough manpower to give him, but gave him a lot of weapons and equipment and allowed him to recruit troops in Xikang [Sikang]. Runran returned to Xikang and arrived in Kangding, Yarong [Nyarong?] and Ganzi and organised many troops. When the Red Army passed through Ganzi and announced the establishment of the Ganzi Beba [*Pod-pa* (Tibetan)] government, the Runran Lama became its vice-chairman.

At that time, the director in Cangdu [Chamdo] was the father of the present Suokang [Surkhang]. In the Yarong area there were always disturbances; it was not a very safe district. There was a big Tusi [headman] called Quguocang. He was very good friends with the Gexia [Kashag] government. The Cangdu [Chamdo] mayor used his power to have the Runran Lama killed.

In his book, Xiageba [Shakapba] wrote: 'In the Yuan dynasty Mongolia was in power, in the Qing dynasty Manchuria was in power; the two were both minority nationalities and have nothing to do with the Hans.' According to his theory then, the Dalai Lama should not be the possessor of power in Tibet and the legal successor should be Cubugemaba [Tsurphu Karmapa] of the Geju sect. Why? The Runran Lama said that during the Yuan dynasty Mongolia was in power, and that in Tibet the Saga sect [Sakya] was in control; during the Qing dynasty Manchuria was in control, and the Gelu sect [Gelugpa] was in control of Tibet; during the Ming dynasty, the Han were in power and in Tibet the Naidong king of the Geju sect ruled; now it is the Republic which is in power, and the Kuomintang were Hans, therefore the power should be in the hands of the Geju sect and have nothing to do with the Gelu sect (Dalai), who are therefore illegally in power in Tibet.

There is some reasonable historical justification behind the words of Runran. I believe however, that from the time of the Yuan dynasty, throughout the Ming and Qing dynasties and the Republican government, in spite of the dynastic changes, all was under central Chinese government control. No matter whether the Saga [Sakya], Geju [Kagyü]

or Gelu [Gelukpa] sect ruled in Tibet, each was a subordinate local government answerable to the central government. Each was a local power functioning at the command of the central government. But what was the significance of writing like Xiageba [Shakapba]? What do you want from 'Tibetan Independence'?

Luosangsandan [Lobsang Samten] said, "It is like this, you are right. We have many different views on this book by Xiageba [Shakapba]. Some said he wrote well, some said he wrote rubbish. Some said he distorted history!"

I say it was distortion of history! The relationship between Tibet and the motherland did not begin with the Dalai Lama. As the Dalai Lama himself has said, it started from the time of the Yuan dynasty. There would be no significance and no point in your 'independence movement'. Take the Tibetan government officials and aristocrats for example: many were appointed by the Emperor. Official written appointments were made in Chinese and Tibetan. I have seen both, and such documents are still to be seen these days. There are four *Gelun* [Kalons], two *puoben* [Ponpo?] and six *daiben* [Taipan] appointed by the Emperor among the Tibetan government officials. Among the officials above the level of third class were *Gong*, *Zasa* and *Taiji*. There was no difference between the dress of the officials in Tibet and that of those on the mainland in the old days, but there was a big difference with religious officials. The officials appointed by the Emperor wore a cap with a red ribbon on top, and have a Mongolian robe on. The material of their clothes was yellow silk produced from the inner court with dragon pattern. *Laqia*, *Ziqia*, the four *ziben* and some fourth level officials were appointed by the Tibetan government. They don't wear yellow clothes. All these were plain facts for Xiageba [Shakapba] to see. However, he turned a blind eye and distorted facts to support his own view. He was utterly unreasonable. His book was at best cheating people. Those who really understand history will not take any notice of him.

(Recorded and edited by Li Peisen and Ni Fuhan)