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Chronology of Major Events

With Particular Attention to the Sino-Tibetan Borderlands

Stéphane Gros

This chronology provides a selection of major events of global and local significance: it foregrounds some key historical events to convey a sense of how eastern Tibet, and Kham in particular, has been shaped by various actors in conjunction with fluctuating political, economic, and cultural forces of different scales and intensity.¹ It focuses on the period from the mid-nineteenth century, during which Kham became a contentious zone, to the present. The first section of the chronology, however, starts in the seventeenth century because of the historical importance of this period and its relevance for later events.

The Unification of Tibet, and the Manchu Protectorate (c. 1642-1911)

In the early seventeenth century, the Fifth Dalai Lama with Mongolian military assistance unified a vast territory and institutionalized a political system forged from a union of temporal and spiritual powers. From 1642 until 1952 (or 1959, when the Dalai Lama left definitively for India), the central part of the Tibetan plateau and most of its western areas were ruled by the Dalai Lamas or their regents and an ecclesiastic-nobiliary government, the Ganden Phodrang, based in the city of Lhasa. Central Tibet's relative independence from external influence came to an end in the early eighteenth

¹ This chronology aims to supplement existing chronologies with a focus on eastern Tibet and draws on Blondeau and Buffetrille (2002); Snellgrove and Richardson (1986); Tuttle and Schaeffer (2013); Travers (2009). For a general survey of Kham over history and the sources for such a history, Alexander Gardner's (2003) substantial commentary on the volume edited by Lawrence Epstein (2002) is a vital contribution. The realization of this chronology would not have been possible without Yudru Tsomu's collaboration and the many critical and constructive suggestions offered by David Atwill, Rémi Chaix, Carole McGranahan, and Scott Relyea. I alone am responsible for all remaining approximations, errors, and shortcomings.

century with the rise of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) which in 1720 established a protectorate. Qing influence on the Tibetan plateau peaked under the reign of the Qianlong emperor and gradually dwindled over the nineteenth century. Amdo and much of Kham were not consistently ruled by Lhasa during this period. In fact, starting in the eighteenth century, most of the multiple polities (kingdoms, chiefdoms) and localities within Kham and Amdo, though often claimed by both Beijing and Lhasa governments, paid only loose and sometimes shifting allegiance to these centres of power.

In 1720, Qing forces first entered and garrisoned troops on the Tibetan plateau in response to Zunghar Mongol invasion and occupation of Lhasa. Soon afterwards, in 1727, a simple stone stele was erected at Bumla mountain pass along the main official road from China proper into Tibet. Geographically, the stele marked the watershed between the Driчу (Upper Yangtze) and Dzachu (Mekong) Rivers, and politically marked the divide between Central Tibet and China proper, with much of Kham falling on the Sichuan side of the border (see Map 1). The erection of the stele signalled the Qing's political dominance with the establishment of a loose protectorate over Tibet manifested by the imperial envoys (*ambans*) in Lhasa.

The delimitation of the border by no means signified full territorial integration of the ethnically Tibetan lands to the east under direct Qing political rule. In 1729, only the border town of Dartsedo (Dajianlu) was accorded the administrative status of a sub-prefecture and with it nominal jurisdiction over some fifty local rulers. Most of Kham remained a complex patchwork of relatively independent polities in the hands of local kings, princes, monasteries, and other lay rulers. Even when they had been granted *tusi* (indigenous chieftain) titles that implied a form of allegiance to the emperor, they remained beyond the direct administrative reach of Qing officials in either Chengdu or Beijing, and equally beyond Lhasa's direct control.

In Kham, the Gyelrong (Ch. Jiarong) region in northwestern Sichuan province became the theatre of major military intervention. Local Qing officials in Sichuan fuelled a local conflict between some of the eighteen Gyelrong chieftains to such an extent that it turned into a major frontier war. The two so-called Jinchuan campaigns (1747-1749 and 1771-1776) became the most costly of all Qing military campaigns. In their aftermath the policy of 'substituting chieftains with state-appointed civilian officials' (*gaitu guiliu*, often glossed as 'bureaucratization') was introduced in the area. These Qing interventions, combined with infrastructure work such as road building, brought about limited Qing authority in certain parts of Kham. During this period the religious influence of Central Tibet over the eastern region led to a large number of monasteries being built or converted to the Geluk school.

- 1578 Sönam Gyatso (1543-1588) receives the title of Dalai Lama from Mongol leader Altan Khan.
- 1612 The king of Tsang, Karma Püntsok Namgyel reigns over Central Tibet.
- 1617 Death of the Fourth Dalai Lama, Yönten Gyatso (b. 1589), a Tümed Mongol.
- 1630s-1756 Zunghar Khanate rules over much of central Eurasia, embracing Tibetan Buddhism.
- 1636-1724 Qoshot Khanate, under Gushri Khan (1582-1655) and his sons, rules over most of Amdo.
- 1639-1641 Gushri Khan defeats the Beri king Dönyö Dörjé, and places parts of Kham, including the easternmost kingdom of Chakla, under his authority.
- 1642 Gushri Khan defeats the king of Tsang. Beginning of the Fifth Dalai Lama's rule, Ngawang Lobzang Gyatso, and the regency of Sönam Rapten. Beginning of the Ganden Phodrang regime which lasted until 1959.
The Tenth Karmapa, who was supported by the king of Tsang, flees the fighting. He finds shelter in Lijiang (Jang Satam) and Gyelthang (1647) and remains in Kham until 1672.
- 1644-1911 Qing (Manchu) dynasty rules over China.
- 1644-1661 Reign of Emperor Shunzhi (b. 1638).
- 1645 Construction of the Potala Palace begins.
- 1647 End of the domination of the Naxi King of Lijiang (Jang Satam) over the territory of Muli (Mili).
- 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. European powers increasingly rely on border treaties to define the territorial sovereignty of individual states.
- 1652-1653 Journey of the Fifth Dalai Lama to Beijing; meets Emperor Shunzhi.
- 1652 The Fifth Dalai Lama supports the expansion of the monastery of Bathang, renamed 'Ganden Pendeling'.
- 1656 Rapjampa Samten Zangpo patronizes the building of one of the three main monasteries in Muli, then Muli Gönchen, marking the early days of Geluk presence in Muli.
- 1661-1722 Reign of Qing Emperor Kangxi.
- 1666 The Qing Dynasty grants the title of *Xuanwei shisi* (Pacification commissioner) to the Chakla king (Mingzheng *tusi*), placing him under the jurisdiction of the Sichuan Imperial Government.
- 1667 The Qoshot Mongol forces make their way into Gyelthang, conquering the area on behalf of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Döndrupling monastery is built there and adherents of the Karmapa and Nyingmapa schools are forced to convert to the Gelukpa school.

- 1674 The Naxi king of Lijiang supports an armed revolt in reaction to Geluk influence; it is quelled by Mongolian forces and results in the handing over of Gyelthang to the Dalai Lama.
- 1679 Construction of the large monastery of Ganden Sumtseling in Gyelthang on the advice of the Fifth Dalai Lama.
- 1682 Death of the Fifth Dalai Lama, concealed by Regent Sanggyé Gyatso until 1696 to consolidate the Ganden Phodrang's rule.
- 1684 War with Ladakh.
- 1684-1692 Publication of the Kangxi edition of the Tibetan Buddhist canon (*kangyür*).
- 1697-1700 Lhazang Khan becomes chief of Mongol (Qoshot) forces in Tibet.
- 1699 Tsangsé Trinlé, the *garpön/dzongpön* (commissioner/magistrate) dispatched by the Tibetan government in Lhasa, kills the Chakla king and seizes areas to the east of Gyelrong Gyelmo Ngülchu (*Dadu he*).
- 1700 The Sichuan governor Tang Xishun leads troops on a punitive expedition against Tsangsé Trinlé and re-captures areas to the east of Gyelrong Gyelmo Ngülchu (*Dadu he*). Trokyap (one of the Gyelrong kingdoms) submits to the Qing.
- 1702 The Qing dispatches civil officials to supervise trade between China and Tibet, and establishes a customs office in Dartsedo.
- 1703 The Tibetan government in Lhasa sends two *depas* (governors) to rule Bathang.
- 1705 Lhazang Khan, with the approval of the Manchu Emperor Kangxi (r. 1662-1722), attacks Lhasa and kidnaps the Regent Sanggyé Gyatso (b. 1653) who dies in captivity. Lhazang rules Central Tibet until his death in 1717.
- 1706 Death of the Sixth Dalai Lama (b. 1683) following his dethronement by Lhazang Khan.
- 1706 The iron bridge in Chakzamkha (Luding) is completed.
- 1707 Capuchin missionaries in Lhasa.
- 1709 Foundation of Labrang monastery in Gansu by Jamyang Zhepa (1648-1721).
- 1716 Jesuit priest Ippolito Desideri in Lhasa.
- 1717 Invasion of Tibet by Zunghar Mongols and assassination of Lhazang.
- 1720 Tibetan and Manchu forces repel Zunghars; Seventh Dalai Lama, Kelzang Gyatso (1708-1757), settles at the Potala Palace.
- 1722-1735 Reign of Qing Emperor Yongzheng.
- 1722 Dechen and Lijiang areas fall under the jurisdiction of Yunnan Province but are still religiously led by the Dalai Lama. Most of the Kagyu and Nyingma school monasteries in those areas are forced to convert to the Geluk school.

- 1723-1724 Civil war follows the withdrawal of Manchu forces in Lhasa. Mongols and Tibetans in Amdo rebel against Manchus but are harshly suppressed, and Amdo is integrated in the Manchu empire.
- 1727-1747 Polhané (1689-1747), a Tibetan aristocrat, rules Tibet with Manchu support.
- 1727-1735 The Seventh Dalai Lama is exiled to Kham.
- 1727 Erection of the Bumla (Ningjing *shan*) stele on the mountain pass marking the eastern territorial limit of Central Tibet.
- 1728 The Qing court establishes *amban* as a resident envoy in Lhasa; this posting lasts until 1911.
- 1729 Dajianlu (Dartsedo) sub-prefecture is created, and the Qing dispatches a sub-prefect in charge of transporting provisions and funds for troops stationed in Tibet, who is to be stationed in Dartsedo with a battalion of 200.
- 1729 Dergé king Tenpa Tsering builds the Dergé Printing House.
- 1736-1796 Reign of Qing Emperor Qianlong.
- 1744 Foundation of Yonghegong Gelukpa monastic university in Beijing.
- 1745 End of Christian mission in Lhasa.
- 1747-1749 First Jinchuan campaign in northwestern Sichuan's Tibetan region of Gyelrong to quell internal feuds.
- 1747 Death of Polhané, succeeded by his son Gyurmé Namgyel. Last lay ruler in Tibet.
- 1750 Gyurmé Namgyel is assassinated; murder of *ambans* and further Manchu military expedition. Seventh Dalai Lama becomes head of state.
- 1757-1777 Death of Seventh Dalai Lama (1757). An ecclesiastical regent is appointed to ensure interregnum until the next Dalai Lama's majority. First of an almost continuous series of monk regents until the 1950s.
- 1757-1858 British East India Company rule in India.
- 1771-1776 Second Jinchuan campaign; Manchu most costly military intervention on its borderlands.
- 1788-1791 Nepalese (Gurkha) invasion of Tibet; Tibetan army defeated. Nepalese are pushed back by Qing army.
- 1792 Qianlong emperor enacts reforms of Tibetan administration and sets rules for selecting the Dalai Lamas. The Qing administration implements the policy of 'substituting chieftains with state-appointed civilian officials' (*gaitu guiliu*) in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands. Beginning of a policy of excluding foreigners from Tibet.
- 1794 Publication of the Qianlong edition of the Manchu translation of Tibetan Kangyür.
- 1796-1820 Reign of Qing Emperor Jiaqing.

1804 Death of the eighth Dalai Lama, Jampel Gyatso (b. 1758) who reigned only briefly (1787-1790). Over the next seventy years, the following Dalai Lamas, Lungtok Gyatso (1805-1815), Tsültrim Gyatso (1816-1837), Khedrup Gyatso (1838-1857), up to the twelfth Dalai Lama, Trinlé Gyatso (1856-1875), never exercise power which remains in the hands of monk regents supported by the Manchu emperors.

1814-1816 Anglo-Nepal War.

From Gönpo Namgyel's Attempted Unification to Zhao Erfeng's Forceful Integration (1860-1911)

As the situation in Gyelrong had shown, the independence of most of the Kham polities from the two distant centres, in spite of continuous commercial, political, and religious ties, created a state of instability. The threat became even greater with the rise of Gönpo Namgyel in the 1860s. This local charismatic leader and fierce warrior attempted a forced political unification of Kham's polities from his stronghold in Nyarong, not far from Dartsedo. Because Gönpo Namgyel's expanding rule over neighbouring polities, including the powerful kingdom of Dergé, posed a challenge to both the Lhasa government and the Chinese provincial authority of Sichuan, they endeavoured to strengthen their grip on Kham. The Qing court's reluctance to make any military intervention during a period of financial crisis and of Western imperialist threats gave Tibetan central authorities the opportunity to send in troops who successfully defeated Gönpo Namgyel (1865) and allowed them to extend their administrative rule over parts of Kham by appointing a high commissioner (*chikhyap*).

Until the end of the nineteenth century, the presence of Manchu civil servants and soldiers in the border zone, especially along the main communication arteries, was intended to provide logistical support to representatives of the Qing government stationed in Tibet. These Manchu officials did not exercise authority over local rulers. However, Qing bureaucracy or military colonies were progressively taking over the frontier territories to be in a position to administer them directly. Not only were political structures and local hierarchies being dismantled but religious institutions were also challenged at times if not abolished, with the Qing often supporting the Geluk school of Buddhism (that of the Dalai Lama) and favouring it over other schools. Concurrently, the beginning of the twentieth century saw the growing interests of various Western powers in Tibet – notably the British in India who sent a military expedition into Lhasa (1903-1904) and forced a trading agreement.

While in Bathang, Fengquan (?-1905), who was appointed to the office of Assistant Amban residing in Tibet in 1904, took steps towards reducing the power of the local chiefs and reclaiming wastelands. Violent rioting broke out and Fengquan was killed with some of his troops, as well as two of the French missionaries residing in Bathang. A punitive expedition was then led by Ma Weiqi (1846-1910), the commander-in-chief of Sichuan's provincial troops. The Han Bannerman Zhao Erfeng (Chao Er-feng) completed the campaign against the city of Bathang, followed by a wave of military conquests and the destruction of monasteries. After his conquests, Zhao Erfeng became in late 1906 the first Sichuan-Yunnan Frontier Commissioner (*duban Chuan Dian bianwu dachen*). In the following months, Zhao took measures to train soldiers and to clear land; replacing local chiefs by appointed officials; opening mines; developing trade; and founding new schools.

1837-1865 Nyarong wars in Kham led by Gönpo Namgyel, ending with Manchu and Central Tibetan intervention.

1839-1842 Opium War (Nanking Treaty signed in 1842).

1844 The Qing emperor relaxes rules against the presence of Catholics. Western missionaries enter Tibetan areas.

1846 The Vatican establishes a parish centred around Lhasa and entrusts the 'Tibet Mission' to the Foreign Missions Society of Paris. It is renamed 'Dajianlu Mission' as missionaries settle primarily in Kham.

1849 The Qing court dispatches Qi Shan to lead the Qing troops and indigenous soldiers of fifteen indigenous leaders, including the Chakla king, Dergé king and others to fight against Gönpo Namgyel in Nyaké (Middle Nyarong).

1850-1864 Taiping Rebellion.

1850-1851 Gönpo Namgyel attacks Drango and Kandzé, and occupies both regions.

1855 Gönpo Namgyel attacks Lithang but is defeated.

1855 Nepal-Tibet War.

1856 Gönpo Namgyel occupies Lithang, and soon attacks Bathang. Defeated in Bathang, he begins to invade the territory under the jurisdiction of the Chakla king.

1861 The Chakla king recalls his subjects from postal stations and refuses to perform *ulag* (corvée labor) to transport Qing officials. Jing Wen, the newly appointed *amban*, is consequently unable to continue his journey through Chakla in the latter half of the year.

1861 British annexation of Sikkim.

1865 Tibetan military intervention to quell Gönpo Namgyel.

- During the second half of the nineteenth century, access to Central Tibet is forbidden to foreigners. European Christian missionaries, of whom there have been many in Tibetan areas since the beginning of the seventeenth century, are forced to settle in peripheral regions.
- 1866 To secure authority over the region, the Office of the Tibetan High Commissioner (*Nyarong chikhyap*) is established in Nyarong.
- 1866-1867 The imposition of Lhasa's authority directly over Nyarong soon leads to local discontent. Dagé Sepo, a local headman, incites several hundred local people to besiege the commissioner's house, arguing that the Tibetan commissioner is collecting exorbitant taxes and levies.
- 1875 The Tibetan commissioner's forceful seizure of local households in Lithang creates resistance. Sichuan provincial authorities dispatch officials to lead troops to attack the protestors. The Tibetan commissioner is dismissed from his post on the grounds that he has caused unrest in the region.
- 1889 Large-scale revolt against the Tibetan commissioner's rule in Nyarong led by the people of Nyarong, under the leadership of Sala Yungdrung, a minor headman.
- 1874-1908 reign of Qing Emperor Guangxu.
- 1876 Birth of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Tupten Gyatso.
- 1883 Anti-Nepalese riots in Lhasa.
- 1884-1908 Qing Empire governed by Empress Dowager Cixi (b. 1835).
- 1886-1895 Regency of Demo Khutughtu Lobzang Trinlé.
- 1888 Tension between Tibet and Britain in Sikkim, and first British invasion of Tibet.
- 1894-1895 First Sino-Japanese War.
- 1895 The Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Tupten Gyatso, becomes head of state. The regent attempts an assassination.
- 1896 Hostility escalates between the Lhasa government and Qing frontier officials. Qing troops take over Nyarong, and the Tibetan commissioner and his subordinates all flee to Central Tibet.
Sichuan Governor Lu Chuanlin proposes to introduce bureaucratization (*gailiu*) in Nyarong.
- 1904 Fengquan is appointed Assistant Amban to Tibet. Posted in Chamdo, he remains in Bathang.
The Younghusband Expedition invades Central Tibet. Military defeat of the Tibetans who sign an Anglo-Tibetan treaty and agree to concede commercial advantages to the British, and open three trade stations at Yatung (Tib. Dromo), Gyantsé and Gartok. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama flees to Mongolia.

- Tibet is increasingly forced to give in to pressure from competing British and Russian commercial and political interests.
- 1905 Assassination of Fengquan, the assistant *amban*, in Bathang.
- 1905 Ma Weiqi launches a punitive expedition, and Zhao Erfeng leads deadly military campaigns and the destruction of monasteries in southern Kham to bring Kham and neighbouring Tibetan regions under Qing control.
- 1906 Anglo-Chinese Convention excludes Tibet. Britain recognizes Qing suzerainty over Tibet.
- 1906 Zhao Erfeng becomes the first Sichuan-Yunnan Frontier Commissioner (*Chuan Dian bianwu dachen*) and proceeds to promote development programs.
- 1908 The Thirteenth Dalai Lama, still in exile, visits Beijing for an imperial audience.
- 1908-1911 Reign of infant Emperor Pu Yi (1906-1967).
- 1909 The Thirteenth Dalai Lama returns to Tibet.
- 1910 Zhao Erfeng's troops occupy Lhasa; the Thirteenth Dalai Lama flees to India.
- 1911 Frontier Commissioner Fu Songmu (1869-1929) prepares a memorial proposing the creation of Xikang Province.
- 1911 Republican revolution and end of the Manchu Qing Dynasty. The Manchu garrison of Lhasa surrenders.

The Simla Convention and Its Aftermath: The Birth of a Border (1912-1926)

The collapse of the Qing Empire in the early twentieth century signalled the end of China's imperial order and the advent of a republic. It also marked the loss of Outer Mongolia, which broke away in 1921 to become an independent political entity, and its geopolitical dislocation was accentuated further by Japanese military intervention in Manchuria. The first part of the twentieth century was clearly a dangerous moment of territorial dismemberment for China. Irreversible power struggles in the name of sovereignty, nationalism, and modernization took place with a direct impact on the becoming of the Sino-Tibetan frontier. In spite of some continuities with imperial practices, the advent of the nation-state introduced some irrevocable changes that affected territories and ethnic groupings in the way they are now conceived and lived. Since then these have led to competing narratives of belonging and to historicizing statecraft that supports claims of identity and sovereignty. It is not only that China at the time did not have a modern

concept of Westphalian sovereignty, but also that other indigenous notions of sovereignty intermingled with newer forms of governmentality – an intermingling that continues today.

The wave of local uprisings followed by territorial conquests and reforms led by the Frontier Commissioner Zhao Erfeng at the end of the Qing dynasty, and the geopolitical tension that led to the Simla Convention (1913-1914) between Republican China, British India, and Tibet supposedly to settle the status of Tibet and border issues, all constituted a decisive turning point for the future of the Sino-Tibetan frontier.

1912 Return of Thirteenth Dalai Lama.

1912 Foundation of the Chinese Republic.

1913 Declaration of independence by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. Tibeto-Mongol Treaty that asserts the independence of both nations. Tibet acquires a flag, a currency, and national stamps.

1914 Creation of the Sichuan Frontier Special Administrative Region (*Chuanbian tebie xingzheng quyu*).

1914 Tripartite Convention in Simla. Agreement reached but China refuses to sign the final document.

1916 Creation of the *Chuanbian dao* (The Circuit of the Sichuan Border).

1918 Tibetan troops progress eastwards and approach Nyarong and Bathang. British consul Teichman helps to negotiate a ceasefire. The Chamdo and Rongpatsa agreements divide Kham along the Jinsha River (Dri chu).

1920-1921 Sir Charles Bell's mission to Lhasa to foster better relations between Tibet and Britain. British active aid in terms of equipment and training of the Tibetan army.

1924 Ninth Panchen Lama (1883-1937) goes into exile in China.

1924 Foundation of the Mongolian People's Republic.

1924 The Sichuan Frontier Special Administrative Region becomes the 'Xikang Special Administrative Region' (*Xikang tebie xingzhengqu*).

1927 No. 24 army commander Liu Wenhui is appointed Chief Commander of Chuankang Frontier Defence and concurrently Chairman of Sichuan Provincial Government.

Kham as Xikang Province (1928-1955)

Following the failure of the Simla Convention, each of the protagonists sought to increase its control of the eastern regions of Kham. The Lhasa government created new civil and military positions and placed governors

in each of the major border towns, such as Chamdo and Dergé. Nationalist China developed its project to create Xikang province, which built on the early proposal made by Zhao Erfeng following his efforts to administratively incorporate the territory he had ‘pacified’. In September 1928, warlord Liu Wenhui established an administrative committee for the ‘Special region of Xikang’. A government was set up and the western Sichuan highlands finally became Xikang Province in 1939, still under the control of the militarist Liu Wenhui and his supporters in Sichuan. The Xikang regional administration relied heavily on outside subsidies and the export of opium. Finally, the idea of a separate province was abandoned in 1955 by the government of the People’s Republic of China, and Xikang’s territory was divided up between the Tibet Autonomous Region (T.A.R., created in 1965), Sichuan, and Yunnan. The shifting boundary between Sichuan and Lhasa-controlled Tibet during the Qing dating back to the early seventeenth century became fixed, and the Driчу (Jinsha River) became the border between the T.A.R. and Sichuan on the new administrative map.

- 1928-1937 The Guomindang government of Chiang Kai-shek takes power. Establishment of the Nanjing Government (the first centralized government since 1911 in China) and the Tibetan and Mongolian Affairs Commission.
- 1928 Chinese warlord Liu Wenhui sets up the ‘Administrative Committee of the Special Region of Xikang’ (*Xikang tequ zhengwu weiyuanhui*) in Kangding. He occupies the Kham borderlands and his troops are pushed back into Sichuan.
- 1928 Qinghai province is created by the Guomindang and ruled by Chinese Muslim warlords (Ma family).
- 1930s Start of the ‘Khampa rule for Kham’ self-rule movement by Kelzang Tsering.
- 1932 Warlord Liu Wenhui again invades the Kham borderlands, breaking the armistice agreed to by Nationalists. Within five months Chinese troops push Tibetans back to the Jinsha river (Driчу) and threaten Chamdo.
- 1933 Death of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Tupton Gyatso.
- 1934 Radreng (Reting) Rinpoché (1911-1947) is made regent.
- 1934 Chinese Communist Long March enters parts of eastern Tibet.
- 1935 Creation of the ‘Xikang Administrative Inspection District’ (*Xikang xingzheng ducha qu*); Liu Wenhui heads the ‘Committee for the Edification of Xikang Province’ (*Xikang jiansheng weiyuanhui*).
- 1935 The Gara Lama (Nörla Hutuktu) launches the second ‘Khampa rule of Kham’ movement.
- 1935 Chinese and British missions in Lhasa.

- 1937 The Fourteenth Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso is discovered by a search party, in Qinghai. A Muslim warlord demands a ransom to allow the party to return to Lhasa.
- 1937-1945 Second Sino-Japanese War.
- 1937 Chinese central government moves to Chongqing (Sichuan) to escape Japanese invasion.
- 1939 Creation of Xikang province, to be dismantled in 1955.
- 1939 Foundation of the Tibetan Communist Party in Sichuan by students originally from annexed Kham, under the aegis of Bapa Püntsook Wangyel. This nationalist party aims to set up an independent and revolutionary Tibet. Bapa Püntsook Wangyel is banished from Tibet in 1949. The Khangsar family, together with the Panchen Lama's camp, launches the third 'Khampa rule of Kham' movement, also known as the 'Kandzé Incident'.
Foundation in Kalimpong (India) of a party inspired by the republican ideal, the Tibetan Progressive Party, dismantled in 1946.
- 1940 Enthronement of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.
- 1941 End of the Reting Regency, forced to resign in favour of the conservative monk Taktra (1874-1952).
- 1942 The Tibetan government establishes a Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 1945 The government of Xikang issues an ordinance against opium.
- 1947 The Tibetan government represses a revolt in Lhasa led by Reting and his supporters.
- 1947 15 August, India becomes independent, marking the end of the British Indian Empire. End of British interests in Tibet, the British mission becomes an Indian mission.
- 1948 Tibetan trade mission visits China, the United States, and the United Kingdom.
- 1949 Fall of the Guomindang, closure of the Chinese mission in Lhasa and expulsion of all the Chinese from Tibet.
- 1949 1 October, Establishment of the People's Republic of China.
- 1950 The Fourteenth Dalai Lama is made head of state at the age of fifteen.

China's Tibet (1951-2018)

Tibet's incorporation into P.R.C. took place gradually in the 1950s. The 'Seventeen-Point Agreement' granted Tibet internal autonomy but the radical intervention of communists in eastern Kham (1956) and Amdo (1958) highlighted their desire to impose their policies and reforms on Central

Tibet as well. The repression of the Lhasa uprising in March 1959 and the flight of the Dalai Lama to India marked the end of the traditional Tibetan government. Tibetan territories became autonomous administrative units, such as the Tibet Autonomous Region, and several prefecture- or county-level units in Sichuan and Yunnan. The policy of liberalization and openness launched by Deng Xiaoping in 1978 allowed a cultural and religious renewal in Tibet. However, the demonstrations and pro-independence protests that took place in Lhasa between 1987 and 1989 reflected the persistence of a cultural divide and strong identity claims in spite of continuous efforts from the Chinese government regarding economic development in the Tibet Autonomous Region. The wave of demonstrations that occurred in spring 2008 in all regions of Tibetan culture in P.R.C. seemed to call into question the politics of differential inclusion implemented in Tibetan regions.

- 1951 24 October, Central Tibet is incorporated into the People's Republic of China by the 'Seventeen-Point Agreement', in which representatives of the Tibetan government accept integration in exchange for internal autonomy.
- 1952 Beginning of the creation of Tibetan autonomous administrative units in eastern areas of the Tibetan plateau.
- 1954 The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama go to Beijing to meet Mao Zedong.
- 1955 Dissolution of Xikang province and incorporation of the region under its jurisdiction into Sichuan province. Uprisings following forced collectivization, bombing of monasteries in Kham (1956). An influx of refugees from eastern Kham and from Amdo to Lhasa begins. Creation of the Voluntary National Army, a Khampa resistance organization.
Eastern Kham becomes Ganzi (Kandzé) autonomous prefecture.
- 1956 The Chinese government sets up the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region to replace the Tibetan government.
Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama travel to India for the Buddha Jayanti celebrations (2,500th anniversary of the birth of Buddha).
- 1956 Beginning of Khampa resistance and coordinated fighting. Start of C.I.A. aid to the resistance fighters.
- 1957 Southernmost Tibetan region of Kham becomes Diqing (Dechen) Tibetan Autonomous prefecture which is integrated in Yunnan province.
- 1958 16 June, Creation of the resistance movement *chushi gangdruk* ('four rivers, six mountains') by Khampa of various fringes of society.
- 1958 Great Leap Forward and creation of the people's communes. Massive rebellion in Amdo, strongly repressed.

- 1959 10 March, Uprising in Lhasa and repression. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama flees to India, followed by about 80,000 Tibetans.
- Premier Zhou Enlai announces the abolition of the former Tibetan government.
- On the road to exile, the Dalai Lama founds a government and denounces the Seventeen-point Agreement.
- The United Nations adopts a first resolution on Tibet calling for respect for human rights and rights to cultural and religious specificity.
- 1962 War between China and India over the Sino-Indian border, the so-called 'McMahon Line' decided at the Simla Convention in 1914 but not recognized by China. The border issue is still not resolved in 2019.
- 1965 Creation of Tibetan Autonomous Region (T.A.R.) which includes western and Central Tibet and parts of western Kham.
- 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution leads to massive destruction of religious and civilian buildings. Prohibition of monastic life, re-education and imprisonment of a large number of lay and religious Tibetans.
- 1970 Creation of the Tibetan Youth Congress, the largest non-government political organization in exile, based in Dharamsala.
- 1971-1972 The visits to China by Kissinger and Nixon mark the Sino-American rapprochement and the shifting of U.S. C.I.A. and Department of State policy regarding aid to Tibetan resistance fighters.
- 1976 Death of Mao Zedong.
- 1978 Period of relative liberalization under Deng Xiaoping and the 'Four Modernizations' policy. Release of a large number of former public servants of the traditional Tibetan government who have been imprisoned since 1959 or during the Cultural Revolution.
- 1979 Visit of the first delegation of the Tibetan government in exile in Tibet.
- 1980 Hu Yaobang visits Tibet and initiates reforms.
- 1988 The Dalai Lama presents his 'Strasbourg Proposal' to the European Parliament: the three Tibetan regions (Central Tibet, Kham, and Amdo) would be united into a 'Greater Tibet', in exchange for which he would accept autonomy within P.R.C., renouncing independence. While this position alienates Tibetans, the first condition remains unacceptable to the Chinese government.
- 1987-1989 Uprising in Lhasa and Martial Law imposed.
- 1989 The Dalai Lama is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1989 Tiananmen Square events and repression.
- 1989 Death of the tenth Panchen Lama.
- 1991 Dalai Lama meets with U.S. President George H.W. Bush in Washington, D.C.

- 1993 The Chinese government breaks off official relations with Dharamsala.
- 1995 Dispute between the Dalai Lama and Chinese authorities over the choice of the eleventh Panchen Lama.
- 1996 Large-scale campaign of patriotic re-education and denunciation of the Dalai Lama in T.A.R. Uprisings in Lhasa.
- 1997 Death of Deng Xiaoping.
- 2001 Zhongdian (Gyelthang) County in Yunnan officially renamed Shangri-La (Xianggelila) County.
- 2001 Start of construction of the Golmud-Lhasa (Qinghai-Tibet) railroad (1142 km).
- 2002 P.R.C. and the exiled government of Dharamsala resume relations interrupted since 1993.
- 2006 Official opening of the Golmud-Lhasa railroad.
- 2008 Tibetan riots against Chinese civilians in Lhasa.
- 2008 March-May Manifestations and riots of unprecedented scale in all regions of Tibetan culture in P.R.C. Sporadic demonstrations continue, as well as arrests and intensive political re-education sessions.
- 8 May, the Olympic flame is carried to the top of Everest.
- 12 May, a violent earthquake strikes Sichuan's Wenchuan County, in Aba (Ngawa) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture.
- 21 June, the Olympic flame passes through Lhasa.
- 2009 Beginning of a long series of self-immolation protests in Kham and Amdo (153 as of December 2018).

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