

A Brief History of Tibet

Tibet has a recorded history of statehood extending back to 127 B.C. In the seventh to ninth centuries, the Tibetans often bested the Chinese Tang dynasty in battle. Additionally, during this dynasty, the marriage of Princess Wen Cheng and King Gampo was viewed as a strategic move to achieve cooperation and peace between Tibet and China.

In 821, after centuries of periodic fighting, China and Tibet signed a treaty where boundaries were confirmed, and each country promised respect for the other's territorial sovereignty. During the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), the Mongol leader, Genghis Khan, conquered most of Eurasia including China. At this time in history, Mongolia could assert claim to both China and Tibet.

Despite the current claims of the People's Republic of China, there is no historic evidence to support the assumption that the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) ruled Tibet. In fact, the Qing Emperor in 1652 not only accepted The Fifth Dalai Lama as a leader of an independent state, the Emperor also treated Him as a Divinity on Earth. During this period, Tibet was known in Chinese as Wu-si Zang or Wu-si Guo (guo meaning country).

During the Manchu rule (1644-1911), the Qing army was asked by Tibetans to settle disputes. But, this does not support China's right to Tibet. If it did, then the U.S.A. should claim Kuwait and Haiti since it assisted these countries. In fact, on a number of occasions, Tibet exercised power over China, suggesting that perhaps Tibet should claim China!

At the time of China's invasion in 1949, Tibet possessed all the attributes of an independent country recognized by international law, including a defined territory, a government, tax system, unique currency, unique postal system and stamps, army, and the ability to carryout international relations. Two years later, the 17-point agreement was imposed on the Tibetan Government by the threat of arms after 40,000 PLA troops had already seized Tibet's eastern provincial capital, Chamdo. The Tibetan delegates were threatened. The seal of the Tibetan Government was forged by Peking. In Tibet, The 14th Dalai Lama could not freely express His disapproval. However, soon after arriving in India, He repudiated this Agreement stating it was "thrust upon the Tibetan Government and people by the threat of arms.

In 1959, the 14th Dalai Lama was forced to flee from Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, and escape into neighboring India. At that time, he was followed by more than 80,000 refugees. Refugees continue to stream out of Tibet to escape the harsh domination of the colonial rule imposed by the PRC. The Dalai Lama has established a government-in-exile in Dharamsala, India. The democratically elected Kashag (Cabinet) is chaired by Professor Samdhong Rinpoche