

From Simla to Rongbatsa: The British and the "Modern" Boundaries of Tibet¹

Carole McGranahan

dbyin ji ni rgya bod dbar gyi bar gyi mi dang mstams kyi rdo de yin pa red
Britain was a boundary stone, the mediator between Tibet and China.

In 1907, Lord Curzon delivered a lecture on "Frontiers" in the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford. One passage in his lecture would continue to haunt Tibet into the present-day: "Frontiers are indeed the razor's edge on which hang suspended the modern issues of war or peace, or life or death to nations. ... [T]he integrity of her borders is the condition of existence of the state."³ In many ways, Curzon was the chief architect of British policy towards Tibet, a policy that from 1913 on was focused on establishing the political status of Tibet vis-à-vis both India and China.⁴ For British agents of empire, determining the status of Tibet required determining the boundaries of Tibet. However, converting Tibetan frontiers into modern discrete boundaries was not an easy task. Persistent British efforts in 1913 and again in 1918 to realize a tripartite agreement regarding Tibet with the Tibetan and Chinese governments were ultimately unsuccessful.⁵ The one issue that consistently impeded the passing of any treaty was the delineation of the eastern border between Tibet and China.

In this article, I consider this inability to determine the boundaries of Tibet as a problem composed of cultural, historical, and political factors. Key to my inquiry is the recognition that state organization has never been consistent over time or place. Instead, around the world we find multiple and changing ways to organize peoples and places under the banner of an overarching community.⁶ The 20th century, therefore, is notable in its departure from this multiplicity of state forms. Since roughly the end of World War II and subsequent European decolonization, the world has been transformed into a system of nation-states prominently represented by the United Nations. This new system allows for different types of governments, but assesses them all as modern nation-states regardless of their actual composition. Although currently billed as universal and even natural, the modern nation-state was created out of European historical conditions, and interpreted and implemented differently around the world.⁷ At the time of the People's Republic of China's invasion of Tibet, neither the boundaries nor the political status of Tibet were settled in modern terms. This does not mean, however, that Tibet did not exist as a state; rather, like many territories outside of Europe, its means of state organization operated under different principles and organizational strategies.

Based in Lhasa, the Tibetan state functioned under a set of rules that combined religious and secular authority, centralized and decentralized administration, ritual and performative aspects of allegiance, and allowed for high degrees of autonomy for certain areas within its sphere of influence.⁸ Outside of Lhasa, the Tibetan Government was represented in a variety of manners. In most, but not all of Central Tibet, aristocratic and monastic leaders from Lhasa governed estates and the laborers attached to them. In other parts of Tibet, such as Kham, such an estate system did

not exist.⁹ Instead, affairs in Khan were mostly under the local control of hereditary kings, chiefs, and lamas, some of who belonged to lineages initially appointed by the Fifth Dalai Lama. Structures and dynamics of state-local relations were not consistent throughout Tibet, but varied in different areas as well as over time. In 1913, there was no modern boundary between Tibet and China; instead there were overlapping zones, open zones, and locally governed territories, both lay and monastic. Thus, the modern belief that hard boundaries were necessary to determine where one country ended and another began was not in operation on the Tibetan borderlands. As a result, politics and territory did not link the Tibetan nation and state together in the manner required by newly hegemonic 19th century European models of the nation-state.

Tibetan systems of state organization differed from modern European systems in five significant ways: first, boundaries were determined and sanctioned locally, rather than by central authorities; second, sovereignty and boundary were not coterminous; third, buffer zones and overlapping zones between polities were allowed; fourth, external ratification of rule was not required; and fifth, the sphere of a realm was defined not by territorial integrity, but by power relationships of allegiance between territory and center.¹⁰ Therefore, the "absence of definite boundaries" of pre-modern Tibet is not due to "some practical or technical reason," but is evidence of a different set of concepts of geopolitical space than those associated with the modern nation-state.¹¹ At present, however, the 20th century partitioning of Tibet has foreclosed on the possibility of recognizing such earlier systems of Tibetan state formations as either viable or legitimate in the present.

In order to better understand contemporary Tibetan politics and community, this article details British attempts in the early 20th century to bring Tibet into geopolitical alignment with the changing world. I first examine the boundary disputes in Simla during the 1913-1914 convention, present next the second round of negotiations in Chamdo (Chab mdo) and Rongbatsa (Rong pa tsha) in 1918, and then discuss the impact of these boundary disputes on how Tibet is understood in the present. The legacy of the disputes is evident in the predominant models of Tibet at present, the *colonial* and *united* models, both of which deal with the application of modern statemaking principles to pre-1950s Tibet in a different manner. In the last section of the article, I discuss these two models and suggest a third model, the *contested* model, that takes into account the continuing dispute over the status and boundaries of Tibet. While the era of the modern nation-state may have begun its decline, it nonetheless remains a prevailing influence in both internal and external views of and debates about Tibet.

LIKE SWALLOWING A LIVING PERSON: THE SIMLA TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE, 1913-1914

The entire proceedings of the Simla Conference were derailed by the question of the boundary between Tibet and China. Held in Simla and Delhi from October 1913 to July 1914, the Tripartite Conference was a British-orchestrated attempt to draft a treaty between Great Britain, China, and Tibet.¹² Delegates from each country participated as equals—for India, Sir Henry McMahon, Secretary in the British Government of India; for China, Mr. Ivan Chen (Chen Yi-fan), the Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs in Shanghai who had earlier been posted to London; and for Tibet, Lonchen Shatra Paljor Dorje (Blon chen bShad sgra dPal 'byor rdo rje), the Prime Minister of Tibet. These three plenipotentiaries discussed and

debated issues ranging from the political status of Tibet, trade, the posting of British and Chinese representatives of Tibet, and the borders of Tibet. After six months, a treaty draft was initiated by all three plenipotentiaries and sent to their respective governments for final approval. Great Britain and Tibet approved the draft agreement, but China did not. In protest over the boundary arrangement, the Chinese Government ordered Ivan Chen not to sign. Sir Henry McMahon and Lonchen Shatra signed the final agreement on July 3, 1914.

Chen's missing signature notwithstanding, the Simla Convention and Treaty are important for a number of reasons, including the fact that the negotiations were tripartite, with China, Tibet, and Britain participating as equals. Following the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911, the Tibetans re-established their independent government, having driven from the country the Chinese Amban, who was resident in Lhasa as representative of the Chinese Emperor.¹³ Tibetan participation in the conference was significant, especially since the discussions were originally to have been between just India and China. The impetus for the Simla Convention was the British discovery during the summer of 1912 that the Chinese were making plans to invade Tibet. The Tibetan Government had already dispatched troops to eastern Tibet to ward off Chinese attackers from Sichuan and Yunnan. In light of both the frontier situation and Yuan Shih-kai's Presidential Order of April 21, 1912 declaring Tibet to be considered and administered as a province of China, the British Government in India decided that the situation required action, and the Foreign Office in England agreed.

On August 17, 1912 the British Legation in Peking presented a Memorandum to the Chinese Government, stating that while His Majesty's Government recognized China's "suzerain rights" in Tibet, they did not and would not recognize China's right to interfere in Tibet's internal administration or to keep an unlimited number of troops there.¹⁴ Several months of letters and meetings later, in January 1913, the Chinese Government agreed to negotiate with the British on the subject of Tibet. They proposed, however, to settle things first with the Tibetans, and then negotiate with the British. They repeatedly objected to tripartite negotiations on the ground that the Chinese and Tibetans were not equal, and that the Chinese delegate needed to be saved from "the indignity of having to sit at the Conference table as the mere equal of a Tibetan."¹⁵

The 1912 Presidential Order regarding Tibet was finally revoked on June 30, 1913 and the Chinese Government consented to tripartite negotiations. With this Sino-Indian agreement in hand, official plans for the conference began. Each side began to prepare their proposals and participants began their long journeys to Simla. In England, British goals for the conference was explicitly stated as two-fold—first, to secure the maintenance of peace and order on the Indo-Tibetan border, and second, to ensure that the controlling influence at Lhasa was not overtly hostile to India or the frontier states.¹⁶ The plan for reaching these goals was simple: the British would entertain the proposals from both the Tibetans and Chinese, until a "suitable opportunity [arose] to produce our own proposals as offering a reasonable compromise between the two extreme views."¹⁷

In Simla, the question of where Tibet ended and where China began became the most debated issue of the conference. The Chinese claimed a large portion of Tibet as being part of China—from the town of Gyamda (Gya mda), close to Lhasa, and all the territory east of it. The Tibetans, on the other hand, claimed Tibetan-inhabited

territories, including several controlled by the Chinese up to and including the border town of Dartsendo (Dar rise mdo). Thirty-six territories were in dispute, mostly in the eastern Tibetan province of Kham. From October to December 1913, no progress was made on the issue of the disputed territories. On December 19, it was decided that both the Tibetan and Chinese representatives should prepare cases supporting their territorial claims. They would present these cases to the British representative, who would consider each and come to a conclusion regarding the border. On January 12, 1914, the conference resumed with Lonchen Shatra and Ivan Chen presenting two very different cases.¹⁸

The Tibetan case was enormous—hundreds of pages of original Tibetan documents, along with a general statement about the boundary. In comparison, the Chinese case consisted of their general statement and one lone appendix. Whereas the Tibetans' case was built on historical evidence, the Chinese case rested on the claim of "effective occupation." It was the claimed reality of the past versus the claimed reality of the present, and both sides were relying on the British to decide in their favor. The British, however, had other plans. They were not merely judging the two cases before them, but preparing their own eastern Tibet boundary proposal. In true Great Game fashion, the British Government was not only concerned with establishing the border between India and Tibet, but in quelling the interests and influences of others in Tibet. Russia was no longer a vital threat, and with the demise of the Qing Dynasty, the British jumped at the opportunity to prevent the new Chinese regime from gaining influence in Tibet.¹⁹ They were not satisfied with retaining Tibet as a buffer state between India and China, but wanted to create a second buffer zone between Tibet and China.

The Tibetan Government's claims to the disputed territories consisted of three parts: first, historical evidence demonstrating that these territories were Tibetan territories; second, evidence showing that a 1000-year-old boundary between Tibet and China already existed; and third, a refutation of the Chinese claims. The Chinese Government's case, on the other hand, made the simple claim that the territories under dispute were Chinese ones. In support of its case, the Chinese Government submitted one document: a bill passed by the House of Senators in the Chinese National Assembly which stated that several of the disputed Tibetan territories had been given Chinese names and converted into the Eighth Division of the Sichuan Parliamentary election districts. In stark contrast to this *one* Chinese document were the *ninety* documents submitted by the Tibetan Government in support of their case. The Tibetan documents included inscriptions of boundary pillars, census reports, tax and revenue records, extracts from written histories, registers of legal cases, lists of official appointments, monastic records, bonds of allegiance between territories and the Tibetan Government, and correspondence between the Chinese and Tibetan Governments regarding certain territories.

Tibetan Government claims dated back to the seventh century with King Songtsen Gampo, but really began with the erection of the first boundary markers between Tibet and China during the ninth century in the reign of King Khri Ral pa can. The eastern boundary was marked by mChod ren dkar po, a white stupa, near Yachao in Sichuan.²⁰ The inscriptions on the pillars clearly stated that west of the boundary markers was Tibet and east was China, reading that "Tibetans shall rest secure in Tibet, [and] Chinese shall rest secure in China."²¹ Their claim next jumps 700 years to the 17th century. Following the suppression of an internal revolt, the

Fifth Dalai Lama reconsolidated the Tibetan territory, sending officers to the eastern territories right up to Dartsendo. These officers conducted censuses, collected all sorts of financial information from households and monasteries, and facilitated the appointing of leaders from Lhasa to the various eastern territories. These appointees were later made into hereditary chiefs, who had an allegiance to the Tibetan Government, but autonomy in their local affairs. This status quo held for two hundred years until one of the ruling families of Nyarong (Nyang rong) attacked and brutally conquered its neighboring territories.²² In 1865, at the request of local chieftains, the Tibetan Army intervened, defeated the rebel group of Nyarongbas, and restored peace all the way east to Dartsendo. As a punishment, the territory of Nyarong was placed under the direct authority of Lhasa. Neighboring provinces were restored to their former status, but with a new set of obligations binding them to the Tibetan Government. Thirty years later, in 1895, troops from Sichuan attacked Nyarong. The Tibetan Government sent a mission to Peking to protest to the Emperor. Their protest was successful—in 1898, the Emperor ordered that Nyarong be restored to Tibet. The original sealed letter with the Emperor's order was included in the Tibetan's roster of evidence.

The bulk of the Tibetan claims up to 1904 were composed of evidence-backed narrative. The remainder of their case is a response to the Chinese claims. In contrast to the Tibetan claims, the Chinese claims were based entirely on narrative arguments, as follows: first, that the disputed territories had a "historic connection" with China, and, second, that the Chinese currently had "effective occupation" of these territories. The Chinese stated that the Qianlong Emperor formally annexed Tibet in 1720, and that since then "Tibet has been under Chinese sovereignty and the whole of Tibet cannot be otherwise considered than Chinese territory."²³ The border between China and Tibet is marked by a boundary stone in Bathang ('Ba' thang) at the Ningqing Shan mountain range [Tib. Bum La (pass)]. The Chinese case then proceeds to divide the disputed territories into two groups—those that are "Chinese" and those that were brought under China by Zhao Erfeng (Chao Erh-feng). In 1905, while en route to Lhasa, the Chinese Amban was murdered in Bathang. Zhao Erfeng, the Viceroy of Sichuan and later Imperial Commissioner for the Border, led a retributive mission to Bathang.²⁴ By 1909, the native chiefs tendered their submission to him, and in 1910 he signed an agreement with the Tibetan Government that the boundary between China and Tibet would now be Gyamda, just east of Lhasa. This settlement was sanctioned by Imperial rescript by Emperor Hsuan Tung, and the current Chinese Government held that the frontier of Sichuan was still Gyamda. Thus, in addition to the claim of "effective occupation," the Chinese claim was based on Qing Dynasty relations with Tibet reclaimed by the new Chinese Republic.

The Tibetan story of Zhao Erfeng differs. Starting not with the murder of the Chinese Amban, but with Zhao's murder of three Tibetan Government officials in eastern Tibet, the Tibetan Government submits an indignant reply to the Chinese territorial claims. Zhao Erfeng, they claimed, was a bloodthirsty adventurer who destroyed monasteries and villages, and through terror and violence forced many Tibetan territories to submit to him. Fully expecting the Chinese Government to disavow Zhao's rampages in eastern Tibet, they sent a protest mission to Beijing, where, to their surprise, the Chinese Government supported Zhao. When the Qing Dynasty fell, the Tibetans in Kham, U, and Tsang provinces "rose as one man and

drove the Chinese out of Tibet back into their own country."²⁵ The invitation to the Simla negotiations came when Tibet was the stronger military power in the east, yet the Tibetan Government agreed to stop its advances and to rely on the strength of their case at the diplomatic table—"on the truth and justice of their cause."²⁶ From a Tibetan point of view, Zhao's acquisitions could not be considered legal or even plausible:

If unauthorized and unjustifiable acts of encroachment have to be accepted and recognized as conquest, it would be an instance of international encouragement to similar lawless acts. It would be like a murderer and a robber being allowed to enjoy his booty and remain unpunished, in a country which boasts of having law and justice. ... The Chinese Government are surely fully aware of the fact, that Chao Eih Feng had been guilty of such glaring misdeeds and that even if he had a hundred lives he should forfeit every one of them to the law. But instead of owning the truth they descend so low as to base their claim on his raids as conquests and call it incontrovertible proof of just claim. It is like trying to swallow a living person—an impossible feat—which no one can be asked to believe.²⁷

Thus, with the two cases and their respective passions and conceits before him, Sir Henry McMahon began his review of the claims. Retrospect has taught us that in many ways European empire was a project of knowledge as much as one of rule.²⁸ In this case beyond the reach of empire, this project failed.

IMPERIAL STATEMAKING AT SIMLA: BRITISH ASSESSMENTS OF THE TIBETAN-CHINESE BORDER

British colonial administrators had mapped, measured, counted, and studied lands and peoples throughout India,²⁹ and had even sent Bengalis dressed as Tibetan monks to map southern and central Tibet,³⁰ but they knew very little about Kham, Tibet's eastern province. British officers in India had primary responsibility for Tibet, and had been engaged in diplomatic and trade relations with Tibet since the late 18th century when Warren Hastings deputed George Bogle on the first British mission to Tibet. British officials in China, on the other hand, had little to no relations with Tibet until they sent intelligence officer Louis King to the Tibetan frontier to gather information and keep watch over the Chinese troops.³¹ King arrived in Dartsendo in late October 1913, just after the start of the Simla Conference. Handicapped by his late arrival, lack of prior British intelligence work in the area, and the fact that he spoke only Chinese, King was nonetheless able to gather some useful information.

Early in his stay on the frontier, King determined that official Chinese military reports about the frontier were conflicting and unreliable. A number of Chinese troops had mutinied, existing forces were split into three unfriendly factions, and although the Chinese troops were indeed present in certain territories, they were weak, penniless, and without government support. Were it not for Tibetan adherence to the Simla ceasefire, King asserted, the Tibetan Army would have easily occupied all of eastern Tibet up to Dartsendo. In effect, China's claim of "effective occupation" was practically null and void. King spent most of his time in Dartsendo, traveling to only two other Tibetan territories to gather information to send to Simla. Local Chinese magistrates facilitated his journeys to Kanze (dKar mdzes) and Nyarong and hosted him in each district. Through discussions with these officials he determined that Chinese control in these territories was fragile, and that the local Tibetans would prefer rule by their own leaders than direct control by

either Chinese officials or Tibetan governors. Despite his efforts, King was not able to fully penetrate the Lhasa-centric knowledge base of officials in British India. The Kanze and Nyarong reports that King submitted to Beijing via Chengdu in January 1914 did not arrive in India until two months later, on March 26th, a full five weeks after McMahon had presented the British boundary proposal.³²

The British were not relying solely on King or other British intelligence officers to provide information with which to evaluate the Tibetan and Chinese claims. They turned to an unexpected source, a Chinese book published in Chengdu in 1912. This book was *The History of the Creation of Hsikang Province* written by Fu Sung Mu, Imperial Commissioner for Sichuan and Yunnan Frontier Affairs under Zhao Erfeng. This was the main source the British used to check the claims for the border territories. British notes from the book reveal a different set of Chinese claims—that, first on passing Dartsendo, one speaks of "entering Tibet;" second, that Chinese travelers call the Ching-ning mountain range west of Bathang the boundary between China and Tibet; and third, of those territories east of Bathang, "some ... were really quite independent of China."³³ Fu also wrote that the territories of Bathang, Lithang (Li thang), Derge (sDe dge), and Chamdo (Chab mdo) were under their native chiefs or monastic leaders, that Nyarong, Dragyab (Brag gyab), and Dzayul (dZa yul) were under the Tibetan Government, and that Shobando, Riwoche (Ri bo che), and Markham (sMar khams) had been ceded to Tibet by the Manchu Emperor between 1724-27. He also stated—in direct contrast to the Chinese claims at Simla—that the Chinese "had no right of interference in the secular administration of these territories" as was introduced forcibly [by Zhao Erfeng] without the consent of the Tibetans.³⁴ Armed with such various sources of information, the British drafted their proposal.

Two months after Lonchen Shatra and Ivan Chen had presented their cases, Sir Henry McMahon presented the secret British plan, calling it a *non-negotiable compromise* between the Tibetan and Chinese proposals. The plan included a radical change, the division of Tibet into two zones, Inner Tibet and Outer Tibet. "Inner" Tibet was to serve as a buffer zone between China and Tibet, but was "not to be transformed into a Chinese province" nor was the "local autonomy of the Chiefs... to be interfered with."³⁵ This much the British established without difficulty; the question, however, of which territories were to be assigned to Inner Tibet was occasion for great debate between British officials in England, India, and China.

The British agreed with Lonchen Shatra about the historical limits of Tibet, but nonetheless wanted to make some overtures to the Chinese in the form of Tibetan territory. They were therefore disturbed that the Chinese claims did not include factual evidence to support their claims, including no information that would support Chinese claims to suzerainty in Tibet. For political reasons, they nonetheless decided to assign Markham, Dragyab, and Chamdo to Outer Tibet, and to place Jyekundo (sKye rgu mdo), Atunze (A tan tse), Bathang, Lithang and Dartsendo in Inner Tibet. Many of the British officials who participated in the Simla discussions from afar supported assigning Nyarong, Derge and the Hor States to Outer Tibet. Deaf however, a general British agreement that these territories should be within the sphere of the Lhasa Tibetan Government, a last minute decision was made to appease the Chinese, and Nyarong, Derge, and the Hor States were placed in Inner Tibet, rather than Outer Tibet. No territories were assigned to China proper. The divide between Inner and Outer Tibet was to be the boundary pillar at Bathang.

The boundary did not quite follow the Dri chu [Bri chu; Ch. Yangtze] but was close to it. The boundary settlement became Article Nine of the proposed treaty. It read:

Article 9. For the purpose of present convention the borders of Tibet and the boundary between Outer and Inner Tibet shall be as shown in red and blue, respectively on the map attached hereto. Nothing in the present convention shall be held to prejudice the existing rights of the Tibetan Government in Inner Tibet, which include the power to select and appoint the high priests of monasteries, and to retain full control in all manners affecting religious institutions.

On April 27, 1914, all three Plenipotentiaries initiated the Tripartite Convention. Neither the Tibetan nor the Chinese Government was happy with the terms of the treaty. The Tibetan Government, considering itself bound by Lonchen Shatra's initiating, authorized him to sign the final draft. The Chinese Government, however, ordered Ivan Chen not to sign the final draft. They explained this decision as expressly related to the boundary: "This Government has several times stated that it gives its support to the majority of the articles of the Convention. The part which it is unable to agree to is that dealing with the question of the boundary."³⁶ On July 3, 1914, Sir Henry McMahon and Lonchen Shatra signed the final treaty on behalf of the British and the Tibetan Governments. The tripartite agreement was now a bipartite agreement, one that the British and Tibetan Governments considered binding between themselves, and to which China forfeited all rights. The Chinese Government stated that they would not recognize the Simla Treaty.

The Simla negotiations did not end as planned. The British and Tibetans adhered to the terms of the convention in theory and practice, right up until the invasion and subsequent occupation of Tibet by the People's Republic of China in 1950. India's inheritance of British colonial treaties included the Simla Convention and China's protests against it; in 1962, disputes over the "McMahon Line," the disputed southern Tibetan boundary between India and China turned into full-fledged war, and persist today as a highly charged conflict between the two states. On Tibet's eastern border, however, not much changed at first. The terms of Article Nine were never implemented, for although the Tibetan Government accepted the Inner and Outer Tibet distinction, the Chinese did not. Frontier territories remained under a mix of Tibetan, Chinese, and local administration. Minor border skirmishes continued. Hopes for a second tripartite convention were derailed by unrest in China, by World War I, and by declining British power in Asia. And then, in 1918, in Chamdo, another opportunity to settle the boundary arose.

THE 1918 CHAMDO AND RONGBATSA AGREEMENTS

For several days in the summer of 1918, there was feasting and theatrical performances in Chamdo. Just west of the Dri chu river, the Tibetan town of Chamdo was the seat of the Tibetan Government's civil and military authority. Conditions in Kham were still mostly unsettled, but as in 1912, the Tibetan Army was the current strength in the region and was in the process of restoring lost territories to Lhasa. Fresh from British-sponsored training, and carrying weapons provided by the Government of India, the Tibetan Army now approximated a modern army. Seeking to back their military gains with a diplomatic agreement, the Tibetan Government agreed to negotiations for a provisional boundary settlement with China and Great Britain. Held in Chamdo, both the negotiations and the festivities preceding them were hosted by the Tibetan Government representative, the Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar.

The Chamdo meeting did not mark the first post-Simla attempt to settle the boundary. In consultation with both the Tibetan and Chinese Governments, the British Government continued to plan for a second round of tripartite negotiations. On June 28, 1915, Yuan Shi-kai submitted a 'Tibet proposal to the British Legation; the British rejected the proposal as well as subsequent Chinese amendments to it.³⁷ On the frontier itself, both the Tibetans and Chinese put forward plans for a boundary settlement, but neither ever came close to accepting the other's proposals.³⁸ The continuing gap between the territorial claims of each was in part a product of vastly different historical memories. The Chinese insisted on a return to the boundary established by Zhao Erfeng, and referred to this area as a "Special Territory of the Szechuan Frontier." The Tibetans reached back to pre-Zhao days and pressed for the implementation of the Simla boundary, specifically for a Chinese evacuation from the territories of Chamdo, Dragyab, Markham, Derge and Nyarong. Following the collapse of the Simla negotiations, hopes for a diplomatically reached boundary were replaced by faith in a militarily secured frontier. Local Khampa troops and Tibetan Army troops fought battles against mostly Sichuanese Chinese troops throughout the frontier. It was not until January 1918, however, that the stakes were raised. This was when Chinese General Peng Jih-sheng launched a strike against Chamdo.

At this time, China was in a period of upheaval. The new regime was still getting organized and Sichuan province was in a particularly disturbed state.³⁹ General Peng's troops had not received any supplies for two years. Seeking to rectify this situation and to perhaps simultaneously increase his own regional power, Peng launched his attack. His troops were defeated in a three month long battle against troops led by the Tibetan General Tsogo (mTsho sgo). Three hundred of Peng's 800 soldiers died, many deserted, and the remaining 300-400 soldiers were marched off to Central Tibet as prisoners of war.⁴⁰ The emboldened Tibetan Army continued to march east, approaching Bathang and Lithang, with hopes of advancing past these territories to Dartsendo itself. Following Louis King's initial excursion to the Tibetan borderlands, the British Legation appointed a permanent agent to the frontier in the position of "Vice-Consul at Tachienlu" (Dartsendo). In 1918, Eric Teichman, who would go on to a long and distinguished career in the Chinese Consular Service, held the post.⁴¹

While the Tibetan troops advanced east, General Liu Tsan-ting, the Chinese Magistrate at Bathang, asked Eric Teichman to mediate a ceasefire and settlement with the Tibetans.⁴² Traveling to Bathang, and employing the services of fast couriers who could travel to Chamdo in a mere ten days, Teichman arranged a plan for peaceful negotiations with the Kalon Lama. Just short of Bathang, the Tibetan Army halted their advance. Under the theory that the Chinese would be more conciliatory and likely to sign an agreement if they were in Tibet rather than in Chinese-controlled territory, Teichman decided that the negotiations were to be in Chamdo. Cease-fire established and negotiations planned, Teichman and Liu hastened to Chamdo. While awaiting permission from their respective governments to proceed with the negotiations, the trio began their own preparations. Teichman coordinated all communication between the Kalon Lama and General Liu, allowing only one official visit between the two at which General Liu presented the Kalon Lama with numerous presents, including five loads of tea, a pair of Chinese boots, and some pearls.⁴³ Despite the tripartite nature of the gathering, both General Liu and the

Kalon Lama expected that the negotiations were really between just two parties, themselves and Teichman:

General Liu's original idea of the course of our negotiations was that he should arrange the Kalon Lama into an agreement, which I [Teichman] should then be called into witness; and he was somewhat surprised to find that he was not to be allowed to see the Kalon Lama at all except in my presence, and even then was not to be permitted to discuss anything of importance until the negotiations had reached an advanced stage; the Kalon Lama's idea on the subject being that he and I should first discuss a satisfactory settlement and then present it to Liu for acceptance.⁴⁴

By the end of July, the Tibetan and British Governments had approved the negotiations, but General Liu never received permission from the Chinese Government.⁴⁵ Undeterred, the trio decided to proceed with the negotiations anyway.

On August 11, 1918, the negotiations commenced. Teichman opened by pointing out two things: first, that it was imperative that General Liu make it clear to the Chinese Government that if they did not ratify any agreement signed in Chamdo, that the Tibetans would have no recourse but to continue their advances on Bathang; and second, that these negotiations were for a provisional peace between the Chinese and Tibetans until the three governments could arrange a permanent settlement.⁴⁶ The Kalon Lama and General Liu then presented their statements. Both were concerned primarily with establishing the limits of their territory. The Kalon Lama said that considering the strength of the Tibetans, the provisional boundary should be drawn at Dartsendo. General Liu suggested the Bum La line, following the boundary marker in Bathang, and that in the north the boundary should be at the Dri chu. He added that China's current weakness was sure to be remedied soon, at which point the Chinese would probably drive the Tibetans all the way back to Lhasa. "Heated remarks" were then exchanged between Liu and the Kalon Lama, and Teichman stepped in to take control.

His arbitration was swift and binding. As drafted by Teichman, the Chamdo Agreement included provisions for troop withdrawals and allowances, prisoner exchange, amnesty for Chinese and Tibetan expatriates, and laid down strict guidelines for the operations of armed troops and police units along the frontier. Additionally, the Chinese were not to abuse the monks of Dargye monastery for their aid to the Tibetan Army. Tibetan monasteries under China would be administered by Tibet without Chinese interference, and Tibetan lamas there were not to interfere with "the territorial authority of Chinese officials." Article Three delineated the provisional boundary. Teichman proposed that both sides keep the territories they currently occupied. The Tibetans received Chamdo, Dragyab, Markham, Derge, Riwoche, Ngenpa (Ngan mda'), Gonjo (Go'jo), Sangan (Sangan), Tungpu (Thang phug), Tengko (Dan khog), Seshu (Ser shud) and Beyu (Pal yul). The Chinese received Tsakalo (Tsha kha lho), Bathang, Lithang, Chatreng (Chaphreng), Kanze, the Hor States, Nyarong, Dasha (Ta sho), Derong (SDe rong), Drango (Brag go), Tawu (Ta'u), Nyachuka (Nyang chu kha), Chagsam (Cags zam kha), Jezerong (Gyal rse rong) and Tandrin (Ta'u phrin). This formulation was argued about for a while, but then accepted with "fairly good grace by both sides; for," as Teichman wrote to Sir John Jordan, head of the British Legation in Beijing, "I had already spent weeks in arguing the matter out with each party separately."⁴⁷ However, as in Simla, there was one issue that almost held up the negotiations.

Teichman had pushed for a Dri chu boundary line, but conceded this issue to the "tenacious" Kalon Lama under the belief that as a representative of His Majesty's Government it was his duty "to support the claims of the Tibetans as far as I am able to with any prospect of success."⁴⁸ The Kalon Lama was not interested in the Dri chu, but in Derge and Nyarong, and wanted both to be given to Tibet. Teichman refused to turn over Nyarong; and, in the end, the Kalon Lama was persuaded to sign the Chamdo agreement only after both Teichman and Liu wrote official letters stating that this was a temporary settlement, and that Nyarong would be an issue of discussion at the next tripartite conference. The Kalon Lama's insistence that Nyarong fall to Tibet was not an instance of political posturing. The Tibetan Government believed that under the Simla Agreement they had jurisdiction in Derge and Nyarong via Article Nine's allowance for their "existing rights" in Inner Tibetan territories. The British, confused by Tibetan claims to Derge and Nyarong, attributed this belief to a problem with translation: the English phrase "which include" in Article Nine was translated into Tibetan as *Mag don* whose closer English rendition, a British officer suggested, was "moreover."⁴⁹

This is not, however, a simple case of mistranslation, but one of historical interpretation. The Tibetan Government believed that Derge and Nyarong were civilly, militarily, and religiously under their stewardship, and more importantly, believed that they had proved this to be true in Simla. Substituting "moreover" for "which includes," or vice versa, has no effect on the Tibetan interpretation of their rights in Inner Tibet. In contrast, the British separated the Tibetan Government's political and religious relations with eastern Tibetan territories. The British were confused by political relations between Lhasa and many of the Khampa territories, whereas religious relations proved easier to understand and less controversial to accept. Thus, counter to much of the information in front of them, the British chose to view the Tibetan Government's "existing rights" in Inner Tibet as solely religious, related to monastery administration and appointments. This allowed for what they saw as a compromise: Inner Tibet would be affiliated religiously with Tibet and politically with China. They backed this political decision with a clause in the Simla Convention that stated in the case of a dispute, the English-language version would be considered the correct version. However, the British interpretation is neither included nor implied in the text of Article Nine. The Tibetan Government interpretation of Article Nine—which by no means limited Tibetan Government authority to religious affairs—is therefore just as valid as the British interpretation. Using the cultural and political logic of the Tibetan system, Nyarong would fall in Outer Tibet, not Inner Tibet.

The ambiguity of Simla's Article Nine thus allowed the Tibetans and British their own interpretation of Tibetan rights in Inner Tibet. Inner Tibet, however, was not a reality as the terms of the Simla Agreement had not been implemented in eastern Tibet, and Teichman complained to Jordan that General Liu and other Chinese frontier officials knew "little or nothing" about the Simla negotiations.⁵⁰ The Chamdo Agreement did not mention the Inner and Outer Tibet divide, nor did Eric Teichman seek to adhere to the territorial assignments made in Simla. Anticipating a second tripartite conference, Teichman saw the Chamdo negotiations as an opportunity to set the frontier boundary to the Tibetans' advantage thus compelling the Chinese to either adhere to the 1914 Convention or to negotiate a new treaty from a weaker position.⁵¹ As with McMahon in Simla, Teichman viewed his role as a delicately

political one, in which he must orchestrate things so that the Tibetans and Chinese feel that they—and not he—had directed the negotiations.⁵² On August 19, 1918, after eight days of negotiations, a thirteen point agreement was completed and signed by all three representatives. The agreement was to be effective upon acceptance by all three governments, and temporary until a "final and permanent" tripartite agreement could be reached. Future disputes were to be mediated by the British Consul.

Hostilities in Kham were soon resumed, and on October 10, 1918, a supplementary agreement was signed in Rongbatsa. The signatories were the Khenchung (mkhan chung) Lama, Khyungram (Khyung ram) Dapon, and Tethong (bkra mthong) Dapon on behalf of the Kalon Lama, and Han Kuang-chun and the King of Chagla for the Szechuan Frontier Commissioner. This four-article agreement was designed to end all hostilities and begin the process of troop withdrawal. As of October 17, Tibetan troops were to withdraw to Derge, and Chinese troops to Kanze. Troop withdrawal was to be completed by October 3. All fighting was to be halted for one year pending government approval of the Chamdo negotiations. Even with the Chamdo and Rongbatsa Agreements in hand, Teichman was not optimistic about the future of the borderlands. In his opinion, differences between the Tibetans and Chinese were not soon to be reconciled: "The Chinese profess to look down on the Tibetans and to treat them as naughty children; while the Tibetans have nowadays the most intense dislike and mistrust of the Chinese."⁵³ As with Chamdo, the Chinese Government did not respond to their agent's signing of the Rongbatsa Agreement, and would later disavow both agreements.

The Chinese refusal to accept the terms of the Chamdo Agreement and their continuing unwillingness to acknowledge Tibetan participation in these debates, was reminiscent of Simla. However, the Chamdo/Rongbatsa negotiations differed from the Simla meetings in important ways. For example, while Teichman played a mediation role similar to that played by McMahon in Simla, the entire negotiations were conducted without the benefit of any supporting staff or documentation. The negotiations instead represented restraint on behalf of the advancing Tibetan army and the desire of the Tibetans and the British to settle the border. Attempts by Teichman, Liu, and the Kalon Lama to involve their superiors in the discussions were mostly in vain; this does not, however, void the fact that these men were acting as representatives of their governments. Not all British officials agreed with Teichman's position, and strong opinions were offered as to whether the treaty settlement was too pro-Tibetan or too pro-Chinese. Unlike the Chinese government, however, the British and Tibetan governments accepted the Chamdo Agreement as they had the Simla Agreement. His Majesty's Government christened the new boundary the "Teichman Line." The Tibetan government also recognized the agreement which brought Derge and other territories under their rule, and also included the provision that the Nyarong settlement was temporary. Upon accepting the Chamdo Agreement, the Tibetans pressed British officials for a permanent and tripartite boundary settlement that was never to be realized.

LEGACIES OF THE BORDER DISPUTES: COLONIAL, UNITED, AND CONTESTED MODELS OF TIBET Throughout the rest of the 1920s into the 1940s, the borderlands east of the Dri Chu remained unsettled. Following the departure of Mao's long marchers from the Kanze area in 1936, the Tibetan Army crossed the Dri Chu and temporarily occupied Derge and other territories.⁵⁴ This reclamation was short-lived, and the

troops soon returned to Chamdo. At the time, Tibet was struggling through the difficulties of successive regents and a junior Dalai Lama, and was not in a position to militarily or diplomatically secure the eastern border. Nor, however, was Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang Government, which was engaged in—and was losing—its own civil war. 1949 brought a new regime to China, one that did not hesitate to directly address the problem of Tibetan-Chinese relations. In the same year, the People's Liberation Army of the new People's Republic of China entered Dartsendo, the symbolic boundary between the two countries. In 1950, they crossed the Dri Chu and entered Chamdo. In 1951, the Chinese and Tibetans signed a Seventeen Point Agreement that brought Tibet under China. 1956 saw the demise of Xikang province, and the incorporation of Tibetan areas east of the Dri Chu, such as Derge, Nyarong, Bathang, and Dartsendo, into Sichuan province, some directly and some within the newly-formed Garze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Aba (rNgaba) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. In 1965, the boundaries of Tibet were established with the founding of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. The eastern frontier was Tibet's Dri Chu, the Yangtze River. The border was finally—and unilaterally—settled.

The inability of the Tibetans, Chinese, and British to settle the boundary issue in Simla proved to be a catalyst for a long series of subsequent disputes in and about the border. To the British, the boundary settlement was a matter of drawing a line on a map and from that inferring sovereignty. For the Chinese and Tibetans, the territory-sovereignty equation was both powerful and dangerous. While both were willing to compromise on issues of suzerainty and sovereignty, they were not as flexible when it came to territory. In this respect, the boundary was much more than a line on a map for the Tibetans and Chinese. It was an area saturated with cultural and historical significance. For China, the Tibetan frontier was a symbol of China's long-standing project of empire building; for Tibet, the eastern frontier was a key component of the multiregional nation and a crucial extension of the politico-religious state. The association of land and national sentiment (be it imperial or foundational) was immensely powerful for both China and Tibet. Eventually, the lack of a border settlement would leave the People's Republic of China with an all-but-blank map upon which to fix the boundary of Tibet. This same lack of a defined border leaves the Tibetan Government-in-Exile with a series of political and historical claims to territories in eastern Tibet, but without any one document that clearly establishes the pre-1950s borders of Tibet.

These early 20th century attempts to delineate the eastern border between Tibet and China show that the question of what constitutes Tibet is not easily answered. At present, there are two dominant models of Tibet which I call the "colonial" and "united" models, and one latent model that I refer to as the "contested" model. Set in place by the British and implemented by the Chinese, the *colonial model* of Tibet privileges modern principles of statehood in its view of the Tibetan polity. In contrast, the *united model* retains premodern Tibetan views of community, overlaying them on modern forms of the state. Conceptual differences between these models are not just disagreements about content or over where lines should be drawn on a map, but are more deeply rooted differences in ways of imagining, living, and staking claim to community, in this case to the modern nation-state. Considering both the disparity and the stalemate between the colonial and united models, I offer a third model that attempts to bring together Tibetan and Western statemaking

principles—the *contested model*. The contested model calls attention to the cultural and political bases of both the colonial and united models, as well as to the contested and unsettled nature of the boundaries of the Tibetan state during the first half of the twentieth century, and thus at the time of the Chinese invasion.

1. THE COLONIAL MODEL

Throughout its empire and beyond, the British often sought to fit or at times merge local concepts of sociopolitical organization with modern models of nation-state.⁵⁵ In the case of Tibet, the fit was not a good one. Following from McMahon and Teichman's efforts to delineate the borders of Tibet, the next British official to take on the task was Sir Charles Bell, Political Officer in Sikkim from 1904-1921. Bell's attempt to affix territorial boundaries to the Tibetan nation and state remains one of the predominant explanatory models for Tibetan political organization. Building on McMahon's concepts of "Inner" and "Outer" Tibet, Bell proposed two new terms, "political" and "ethnographic" Tibet, and also allowed for a third in-between zone. "Political" Tibet referred to those areas administered directly by Lhasa. In eastern Tibet, Bell included the territories of Derge, Chamdo, Dragyab, and Mar-kham in "political" Tibet; Golok (mGo log), Nyarong, Bahang, and Lihang were placed in the in-between zone as being under dispute between Tibet and China; and, all other territories were considered "ethnographic" Tibet.⁵⁶ In Bell's model, only areas of eastern Tibet were listed as being under contention.⁵⁷ Tibetan areas that had been incorporated into British India were not included, although the Tibetan government did contest British claims to several of these territories.

A fourth British official made a final adjustment to McMahon's original model. In a 1962 scholarly publication, Hugh Richardson, the former Head of the British and later the Indian Mission in Lhasa, reinterpreted Bell's "political" and "ethnographic" model. His reinterpretation eliminated the in-between zone of contention that was an important part of both the McMahon and Bell models. All Tibetan territories were now either part of "political" Tibet or part of "ethnographic" Tibet. Richardson's revision of the earlier colonial models coincided with Chinese rule in the country, and reflected the political reality of the time—the Dri Chu was now the border of the Tibet Autonomous Region and was also Richardson's boundary between "political" Tibet and "ethnographic" Tibet. Thus, only those territories within the TAR were counted as "political" Tibet. This final version of the model matches the Chinese boundaries of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, and is the model frequently used by scholars of Tibet.⁵⁸

Overall, the colonial model represents attempts to combine a European model of statehood with Lhasa models of local governance. Initial British attempts to account for the complexity of political relations in eastern Tibet eventually fell out of the model in its final version, such that territories that had significant political relations with Lhasa are now glossed as being "ethnographically" Tibetan. The ensuing dilemma is two-fold: first, the general inadequacy of the political/ethnographic divide in the Tibetan case, and second, the particular difficulty of accounting for and accepting Tibetan forms of sociopolitical organization that look different than those of the dominant nation-state model. While the advent of Chinese rule in Tibet has resulted in a definitive demarcation and labeling of Tibetan territories (as Tibetan Autonomous Region, Prefectures, and Counties), these boundaries are as arbitrary as they are political or historic.

2. THE UNITED MODEL

The statement "Bod chöl kha gsum red" or "Tibet is three regions" is often used to describe Tibet. Deceptively simple, this view of Tibet as the three regions of U-Tsang, Amdo, and Kham is one in use among Tibetans both in exile and within current-day Tibet.⁵⁹ While numerous scholars argue for the long-standing existence of Tibet as a nation and as a state, the two have not always been coterminous.⁶⁰ Although the Tibetan state was decentralized in many areas and periods, the current invocation of the united model fuses together nation and state. The regions included in the model cover all of the Tibetan-designated territories in the People's Republic of China, but Tibetan territories outside of China such as Ladakh or former portions of southeast Tibet ceded to India during the Simla Convention occupy an uneasy place within the model consonant with the current political situation. In sum, the united view of Tibet is a cultural, historical, and political one, aligned with modern understandings of a country as accomplished by mapping politics onto geography.

The united model of Tibet is used by the Tibetan Government-in-Exile in their administration of the refugee community. Tibetans from all regions of Tibet fall under their domain, yet in terms of the political boundaries of Tibet, the Government-in-Exile is not always as clear. The lack of a definitive governmental statement is not merely a strategy of reticence, but is a product of the confused status of Tibet at both local and global levels. This confusion, certainly encouraged by Tibetan conservatism and internal problems in the 1920s-1940s, was and is also a product of pre-1947 British muddling of and waffling on the status of the Tibetan state, by U.S. decisions in the 1950s and 1960s that the issue of Tibet was to be about human rights and not statehood, and of the sometimes clumsy and always delicate Tibetan negotiations with the People's Republic of China since 1951. With this in mind, in a 1996 interview the Dalai Lama explained his position as dual—that culturally all Tibetan areas constitute Tibet, but that in terms of an "occupied" state, the situation is different and must be analyzed in terms of not just international expectations but the complexity of Tibetan sociopolitical forms.⁶¹ He refuses a strictly political definition of the Tibetan state, and also rejects the notion that because an area was not "directly" under Lhasa it meant that they were under China.

In a variation on the united model, anthropologist Geoffrey Samuel argues that Lhasa (as in the colonial model) is not representative of all of Tibet. In his monumental 1993 study *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*, Samuel contends that premodern Tibet is best thought of as not a centralized or even a decentralized state, but a series of *societies* existing in a continuous social field.⁶² Despite the popular view of Tibet as a theocratic state with Lhasa at the center, there were in fact a wide variety of political and social formations across Tibetan societies—large agricultural states, smaller agricultural states, agricultural populations on the edges of states, and nomadic pastoralists.⁶³ Some of these groups were subordinate to others, and some were self-governing; many, but not all of these groups, were subordinate to the Dalai Lama's administration in Lhasa. The administrative aspects of rule did not outrank the ritual or performative aspects, and the control of people was considered more important than the control of land. Overall, the united model rests on the same sort of logic as the colonial model—the application of modern statemaking principles to Tibet. The difference is in the interpretation of pre-1950s Tibet, and the weight of history and self-determination versus current political realities.

3. THE CONTESTED MODEL

Attention to the differences between European models and Tibetan sociopolitical arrangements in and beyond Lhasa reveals the limitations of both the colonial and the united models, specifically the inflexibility of both models in allowing for border districts to be ruled in or out of Tibet. For example, while the colonial model currently exempts contested zones, the united model recognizes only those parts of Tibet ruled outside the Tibet Autonomous Region, and turning a mostly blind eye to territories incorporated into India or Nepal. Contradictions between the historical aspect and the self-determination aspect of the united model remain undressed in much the same way that the imperial aspects of the colonial model are presented as objective truths. Thus, in order to navigate a middle ground between these two models, I suggest a third model—the "contested" model.

The contested model of Tibet adds historical contingency to the political and geographical elements of the colonial and united models. It has three parts: (1) the current boundaries of Tibet (the Tibet Autonomous Region, as well as Tibetan Autonomous Counties and Prefectures) as defined by the People's Republic of China, (2) areas under contention between Tibet and China, and between Tibet and India, and (3) the historic boundaries of the Tibetan politics as understood in the same way as Samuel's Tibetan societies, i.e., a series of politics existing in a continuous and linked field. Were this model to be represented as a map, it would have to be a series of maps demonstrating change over time, and including the "hard" lines of modern nation-states, graphical indication of contested territories, and gradual shading to designate areas of stronger and weaker connections to Lhasa, as well as the historically expansive borders of Tibet.⁶⁴ This model pairs the reality of Tibet's current colonization with a pre-1950 version of Tibetan geopolitics and post-1950 Tibetan sentiment about what constitutes Tibet. It recognizes that the blank spots and overlapping zones that modern international politics will not tolerate on a map represent other, similarly viable sociopolitical systems.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Tibetan Government efforts to settle their eastern border involved attempts to adapt to modern statemaking principles without giving up premodern religio-political arrangements. They fought vociferously for certain territories, and accepted compromises for others. Above all, the contested model acknowledges that at the time of the Chinese invasion of Tibet, the boundaries of Tibet were not settled. Instead, the borders remained unsettled, caught between modern and premodern concepts in a series of stalled negotiations between Tibet, republican China, and British India. By simultaneously depicting current Chinese political borders, historic Tibetan geopolitical zones, and areas under contention, the contested model accomplishes two goals: first, it avoids the implication that only certain areas are really Tibet (i.e., such as "political" Tibet, but not "ethnographic" Tibet), and second, it demonstrates the contingent and complicated nature of defining the nation-state by calling attention to sociopolitical features *as well as* to the multiple, interested parties involved in efforts to determine the boundaries of Tibet.

CONCLUSION

The British quit India in 1947. They were not involved in negotiations between the Tibetans and the Communist Chinese government in the 1950s. Their earlier participation, however, from Lord Curzon on down, was instrumental in fixing the

eventual boundaries and political status of Tibet. While the British managed to secure Tibetan dependence on British political support, this gain was at a cost. From the 1904 Younghusband political and military expedition to Tibet on through the 1950s, the Chinese national imagination was fixated on the threat of British imperialist designs on Tibet. Rumors abounded about the number of British in Tibet, about Indian and Gurkha troops accompanying British officers, and about imminent plans for a joint British-Tibetan invasion of China.⁶⁶ The power of rumor as social fact and historical source is evident in the Chinese Government's legitimization in part of their liberation of Tibet by referring to imperialist forces there. The British, for their part, mostly ignored these rumors and as a result missed the extent and depth of Chinese political emotion towards Tibet.⁶⁷ They also, however, missed the profound connections between the peoples and politics of Tibet that, if anything, have been strengthened over the course of the 20th century.

In the 14th Dalai Lama's complex answer to the question of what constitutes Tibet, echoes of earlier Tibetan boundary claims resound loudly. In Simla, eastern Tibetan territories were considered integral parts of Tibet, "just as a body would claim a limb as its portion."⁶⁸ Premodern political formations, however, do not always translate into modern political forms. Thus, while Tibet was both nation and state, it is not now and was not then a fully consolidated nation-state in a modern sense. Tibetan geopolitics continues with its own mode of organization, one determined more by local models of jurisdiction and allegiance than by modern concepts of treaties and boundaries. The political status of eastern Tibet remained under dispute until the 1950s. Settlements were never reached for any of the most highly disputed territories, including Derge and Nyarong. In the end, efforts by the British to resolve the boundaries of Tibet were not realized. Called upon to mediate to be the boundary stone between Tibet and China—their attempts to settle the boundary were compromised by their desire to assist Tibet and advance British interests in general without jeopardizing the British position in China. In the end, as Alastair Lamb wrote in 1960, "the long-term beneficiary of Lord Curzon's Tibetan policy was neither India nor Tibet but China."

Notes

1. *Acknowledgements*. A longer version of this article was published in *The History of Tibet*, Volume III, Alex McKay, ed., London: Routledge Curzon, 2003, pp.267-295. An earlier version of the Simla section was presented at Jawaharlal Nehru University, March 19, 1999. Thank you to Professor Dawa Norbu for this invitation. Research was funded by the American Institute of Indian Studies and the Program in Anthropology and History at the University of Michigan. I thank Nicholas Dirks, Lawrence Epstein, Donald Lopez, and Matthew Rudolph for their comments and suggestions.
2. My translation. From Naga 1994: 147.
3. Curzon 1907, p. 7.
4. For studies of British policy towards and relations with Tibet, see Addy 1984, Goldstein 1989, Hansen 1996, Lamb 1960, and McKay 1997 among others.
5. I use the term "British" to refer to both Great Britain and British India in accordance with their joint administration of Tibetan policy.
6. On this aspect of state sovereignty, see the collected essays in Biersteker and Weber 1996, and in Wilson and Donnan 1998.
7. On the global spread of the European nation-state, see Anderson 1983, Chatterjee 1986, 1993, and Hobsbawm 1993.
8. For studies of Tibetan sociopolitical organization, see Goldstein 1971, 1989 and Samuel 1993.

9. On Kham, see the collected essays in Epstein 2002. For a discussion of Kham within the greater sociopolitical Tibetan world, see McGranahan 2002.
10. This discussion is indebted to Thongchai Winichakul's 1994 study of how British and French modern geopolitics displaced premodern Thai systems of structuring the nation-state. The Thai situation discussed by Thongchai bears striking similarities to the situation in Tibet.
11. Thongchai 1994.
12. See Lamb 1964, 1966, Mehra 1974, Woodman 1969.
13. On Tibet-Qing relations see Petch 1972, Kolmas 1967, Ahmad 1970. For a comparative look at Tibetans at the Qing court, see Sperling 1998 and Hevia 1993.
14. Appendix 1: Extract from Memorandum communicated to Chinese Government by Sir J. Jordan, 17th August 1912, IOR L/P+S/18/B.201.
15. IOR L/P+S/10/432.
16. Appendix 2: Extract from Viscount Morley's speech in the House of Lords, 28 July 1913, IOR L/P+S/18/B.201.
17. Cabinet paper prepared by John Evelyn Shuckburgh, India Office, 17 October 1913, L/P+S/18/B.201.
18. I have examined three separate sets of the claims and found them to be consistent with each other (with several minor variations). The texts are, as follows: (1) original documents in the India Office Library, London, especially in MSS Eur F80/177, (2) the Tibetan text *shing stag rgya gar 'phags pa 'i yul da dbyin bod rgya gsum chings mol mdzad lugs kun gsal me long* (The Mirror of Clear Reflection about the Simla Treaty between Britain, China, and Tibet in the Wood Tiger Year), and (3) an English text published in China: *The Boundary Question between China and Tibet: A Valuable Record of the Tripartite Conference between China, Britain, and Tibet held in India, 1913-1914*. Peking, 1940. Thank you to Tashi Tsering for sharing a copy of the Tibetan text with me.
19. Dawu Norbu (1990) refers to the sun of British, Russian, and Chinese designs on Tibet as the "external sterilization" of Tibet in favor of imperial strategy in Asia.
20. Three stone pillars were also erected—one in each of the capitals, and one at Merugang (rMe ru sgang), north of Xining, for the northern boundary.
21. IOR Eur MSS F80/177.
22. See T. Tsering 1985.
23. IOR Eur MSS F80/177.
24. On Zhao's mission, see Sperling 1976, Lee 1979, Shakabpa 1967, nd., and Coleman 2002.
25. IOR Eur MSS F80/177.
26. *ibid.*
27. *ibid.*
28. Cohn 1996, Dirks 1992.
29. Edney 1990.
30. Hopkirk 1982.
31. Ordered by B. Alston, British Legation, Peking, 4 September 1913, IOR L/P+S/10/432.
32. King's frontier reports are in IOR L/P+S/10/432.
33. IOR Eur MSS F80/177.
34. *ibid.*
35. *ibid.*
36. Wai Chiao Pu to the British Minister, 29 June 1914, enclosure in Sir John Jordan's dispatch No. 250, 30 June 1914, IOR L/P+S/10/718.
37. Li 1956, p. 143.
38. See O.R. Coates, Vice-Consul at Tachienlu, letter to Bell by Alston Esq., His Majesty's Charge d'Affaires, Peking, March 31, 1917, IOR L/P+S/10/714, Part III.39. Kapp 973, Stapleton 1999.
40. Teichman letter to Sir John Jordan, May 28, 1918, Chamdo, IOR L/P+S/10/714, Part I.

41. In 1922, Teichman published a book about his experiences on the frontier—*Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet*.
42. In draft of newspaper article "The Recent Crisis in Sino-Tibetan Affairs," IOR L/P+S/10/714, Part I.
43. Teichman to Jordan, 16 July 1918, Chamdo, IOR L/P+S/10/714, Part II.
44. *ibid.*
45. Teichman letter to Jordan, 25 July 1918, Chamdo, IOR L/P+S/10/714, Part I.
46. Teichman letter to Jordan, 21 August 1918, Chamdo, *ibid.*
47. *ibid.*
48. Teichman to Jordan, 1 September 1918, and, 1 August 1918, Chamdo, *ibid.*
49. Campbell letter to Grant, Camp Pharijong, 17 September 1918, IOR L/P+S/10/714, Part I.
50. *ibid.*, my emphasis.
51. IOR L/P+S/10/714, Part I.
52. Teichman writes to Jordan: "I endeavored to keep myself as much as possible in the background, encouraging my Chinese and Tibetan colleagues to do all the necessary talking, and intervening only when it was necessary to decide a point; thus removing, I hope, any impression that I was dictating the agreement to them." 21 August 1918, *ibid.*
53. Teichman to Jordan, Camp Rongbatza, near Kantze, 23 October 1918, *ibid.*
54. Richardson 1998[1945]: 64.
55. For studies of colonial statemaking, see Leach 1960, Prescott 1987, Rudolph and Rudolph 1984, Strang 1996 and Thongchai 1994. With regard to British empire and statemaking in non-colonized Nepal, see Burghart 1984; Des Chene 1991; Michael 1999; Onta 1996.
56. Bell 1992[1924], p. 6.
57. Sir Charles Bell had another unique idea for settling the boundary issue. Intrigued by a suggestion from one of his Tibetan staff members, in 1924 Charles Bell proposed a plebiscite for the eastern Tibetan districts under dispute. Noting a democratic tradition in Tibet, he suggested putting the boundary dispute to a vote by the local people, with the ballots to be counted by a trio of British, Tibetan, and Chinese officials. Each territory would vote for an affiliation with either Tibet or China. Bell's proposal was the only suggestion for a boundary settlement that involved the participation of the peoples of the frontier. As far as I can tell, British officials never considered the plan. See Bell 1992[1924]: 249-250.
58. The most spirited and cogent advocate of this model is anthropologist Melvyn C. Goldstein (1991, 1994, 1997).
59. On the use of the "chol kha gsum" formation in contemporary political protest in Tibet, see Schwartz 1994 and Sperling 1994.
60. Recent studies of the Tibetan nation and nationalism include Dreyfus 1994, Karmay 1994, Klieger 1996, D. Norbu 1995, Stoddard 1994, and Smith 1996.
61. International Commission of Jurists 1997, pp. 349-354.
62. Samuel 1993, pp. 3, 586n1. See also Samuel 1982.
63. *ibid.*, pp. 39, 140-1.
64. I draw here on the historical maps of eastern Tibet produced by *Accademia Tibetica* that use gradual shading to demonstrate the substance and strength of local relations with Lhasa.
65. Lord Curzon describes this "expedition," which included the Anglo-Tibetan War in Grantse, to be a retaliatory mission—"Had the Tibetans respected our Frontiers, we should never have marched three years ago to Lhasa" (1907: 6).
66. An example from a Chinese newspaper reads as follows:
While the dwarf slaves are aggressive in the Northeast,
the English barbarians plot to seize Tibet.
English flags set up all over Kantze and Chantui [Nyarong].
The Tibetan aborigines bring up reinforcements and prepare for an invasion.

A collision has already taken place at San-tung Chi'iao. Let those who are mismanaging national affairs wake up.

Translation of article from the *Hsin Shu Pao*, Chungking, October 13, 1931, enclosed in Toller to Lampson, October 14, 1931, IOR L/P+S/10/1228.

67. Commenting on "the extraordinary tales that get into the local press regarding British activities in Tibet," the Consular Officer in Chongqing writes to the British Legation in Beijing that "I did think at first of asking the authorities to put a stop to the publication of such unfounded reports, but came to the conclusion that to do so would be giving this screed an importance which it does not merit." Toller to Lampson, April 1, 1931, *ibid.*
68. Tibetan claims presented at Simla, MSS Eur F 80/177.

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