IN RAPGA'S LIBRARY: THE TEXTS AND TIMES OF A REBEL TIBETAN INTELLECTUAL

Carole McGRANAHAN

Que signifie « être moderne » dans le Tibet des années 40 ? Dans cet article, j'analyse cette question à travers l'ethno-biographie de Rapga Pangdatsang (1902-1974). Rapga Pangdatsang était un intellectuel tibétain laïque qui désirait une réforme démocratique et moderne du Tibet. Intéressé par les projets nationalistes de la Chine et de l'Inde, il lut beaucoup et chercha des idées politiques applicables au Tibet. Une lecture attentive des textes qu'il a rassemblés et écrits nous permet de saisir de nouveaux aspects du Tibet des années 40, principalement (1) une critique de l'idée selon laquelle le Tibet est isolé des développements politiques mondiaux ; (2) un exemple d'idées progressistes et nationalistes tibétaines relatives à l'État moderne ; et (3) le regard sur le monde d'un intellectuel incompris et de sa famille considérés comme d'effrontés parvenus provinciaux par la société compassée de Lhasa. Associés à l'histoire sociale et à l'ethnologie historique de la famille Pangdatsang, révélés par les sources contemporaines et documentaires, les textes de la bibliothèque de Rapga offrent des traces tangibles d'un sentiment politique différent et engagé à cette période cruciale de l'histoire tibétaine.

In 1949, as Mao's Communist troops began their march west, Rapga Pangdatsang turned to his usual arsenal for intellectual ammunition against their advance.[1] In retrospect, the texts he chose were ironic. That summer, while riding through eastern Tibet on horseback, he read Stalin's *Problems of Leninism* followed by Marx's *Dialectical Materialism*. Interested in their philosophical arguments, their anti-imperialist politics, and their calls to wake the masses, he saw Chinese communism not as the fruition of these ideas, but as the antithesis of them, as an imperial movement destined to result in the extinction of Tibet. Inspired by the modern, yet distinctively Asian projects of Chinese and Indian nationalists, Rapga's dreams for a modern Tibet were crushed by the Communist victory in China and then Tibet. He escaped to India—from where he had been deported by the British in 1946—and spent much of the rest of his life quietly

[1] *Acknowledgements.* Many thanks to Pangdatsang family members in India, Switzerland, and the United States for sharing their stories, knowledge, and hospitality with me. My gratitude also to Tashi Tsering for invaluable advice and sources for this project, to Namgyal Tsering and Tenzin Bhagen for much appreciated research assistance, and to Fabienne Jagou for insightful comments on an earlier version. Research was funded by the Social Science Research Council and the American Institute of Indian Studies.

surrounded by his books, his family, and his group of intellectuals and dreamers in Kalimpong. Today, as with other Tibetan intellectuals of this period, his political foresight and intellectual legacy remain salient in the current period of occupation and exile. Salience, however, does not necessarily generate awareness, and thus, Pangda Rapga and contemporaries such as Manang Apho, the Reverend Tharchin, and even the relatively well-known Gedun Chophel, still remain low profile in the popular Tibetan historical consciousness.

Why are rebel intellectuals important to the history of Tibet? In terms of complementing established histories of modern Tibet, their off-center stories add to the richness and complexity of Tibetan history, deepening our understanding of an especially important period. As Heather Stoddard has so aptly demonstrated in the case of Gedun Chophel, the biographies of such intellectuals offer as much critical insight into past Tibetan politics as they do into the life of one individual.[2] Gedun Chophel's biography, for example, tells a parallel history of pre-1950s Tibet, involving alternative perspectives on Lhasa and the Tibetan government as well as the recognition that Tibetans were active on all sides of the Tibetan borders, engaging with their neighbors in diverse ways. In telling history from such experiences and sources, we are exposed to new views of Tibet, including different perspectives on the Lhasan worlds that dominate historical scholarship and consciousness. Such dominance is not accidental; since the 1950s Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet, histories of Tibet have been predominantly written as political histories committed to exploring and explaining state relations between Tibet and China, specifically how Tibet came under the rule of the People's Republic of China.[3] Attention to non-governmental and non-elite actors adds important new voices to the historical record, while a focus on unexamined sociopolitical spheres in and outside of Lhasa contributes different and valuable perspectives. This article, therefore, joins with recent scholarship that extends coverage of Tibet to broader geographic and conceptual domains.[4] At the same time, however, while realizing the value of assessing the center from the margins,[5] central categories and concerns continue to require our attention. What it was like to be a rebel intellectual in pre-1950s Tibet, for example, rested as much on internal cultural norms as on challenges to them, as well as on new ideas from India, China, and beyond.

In the 1940s, Tibet's relations with the world were on the verge of change. World War II had ended and a new global system of nation-States was being forged. Indian anti-imperialist forces grew and British colonization was replaced with Indian independence. In China, the raging civil war ended in victory for Mao's communist troops and the subsequent formation of the People's Republic of China. In the face of such changes, the Tibetan government steered a course of

---

[2] Stoddard 1985.

[3] Examples are Goldstein 1989; Grunfeld 1996; Shakabpa 1967, n.d., Shakya 1999; Smith 1996.

[4] Epstein 2002; Huber 2002.

[5] Foucault 1972a, 1972b.

great caution. In between Dalai Lamas, and ruled by two successive and weak regents, Tibet lacked a colonial overlay or education of liberalism through which to see western-directed modernity as enticing, rather than repelling. While the British did not colonize Tibet, they did attempt to draw the country within their imperial sphere.[6] Much to the dismay of British officials in India and in England, the Tibetan government rejected the majority of British efforts to introduce modernity in the forms, e.g., of Western-style education, sport, cinema, and, most resisted of all, religion.[7] Yet, it is not accurate to cast the history of this period in a binary framework of European (colonial) modernity versus Tibetan conservatism. In order to recognize other ways of being Tibetan and modern, I turn to the admittedly failed career of a renegade Tibetan intellectual on the move between Tibet, China, and British India—Rapga Pangdatsang.

Rapga Pangdatsang (1902-1974) desired for Tibet the changes he saw taking form in China and India. Fervent reader, writer, and political strategist, Rapga Pangdatsang was a Tibetan *secular* intellectual, a rare and uneasy breed in conservative Tibetan society. Finding intellectual affinity with Marx, Sun Yat-sen, and Indian nationalists, Rapga embarked on a number of projects designed to effect, or to at least suggest, democratic reform in Tibet. He specifically wanted to reform the government and the monastic system, desiring in their place a modern, representative government and a public education system to exist within or alongside the monasteries so as to create a literate public. Rapga's visions were drafted against a long established status quo, and were not popular with those holding national power. As with other progressive Tibetan thinkers, Rapga's story involves his travels through and residence in other parts of Asia. Crucial to his story as well, however, is his own family background. The Pangdatsang family was nouveau riche in a society with a well-established aristocracy, and this socioeconomic status both enabled and constrained Rapga's political activities in India and China, as well as in Tibet.

In providing an "ethno-biography" of Rapga Pangdatsang, this article moves between anthropology and history. While historians have long studied intellectuals in making sense of the past, the topic is much newer for anthropologists.[8] Anthropology, of course, has long relied on local intellectuals as informants, but has not paid the same sort of attention to intellectuals as subjects. A focus on intellectuals as well as on elites—who are not necessarily one and the same as we will see with Pangda Rapga—is now filling an important gap between anthropology and history, and enabling recognition of the complexity of subject positions across social spectrums. An ethnographic look at intellectuals, i.e., specific attention to cultural context, will contribute to our understanding of intellectuals across cultures as well as across time, underscoring the particular constellation of cultural, political and social worlds in which individuals such as Rapga and his contemporaries thought, acted, and lived.

---

[6] McKay 1997.

[7] McKay 1997; Goldstein 1989.

[8] Boyer 2001a, 2001b; Grimshaw and Hart 1993; Lomnitz 2001.

Modern Tibetan: Reading and Writing a New Cosmopolitanism

What were Tibetan intellectuals reading and writing in the 1940s? What political and social information about this period do these texts provide? I argue that they offer commentary on three aspects of this crucial time in Tibetan history: first, a critique of the notion of Tibet as isolated from global political developments; second, an example of progressive and nationalist Tibetan ideas about the modern State; and third, a window into the world of a misunderstood intellectual and his extended family who were considered brash regional upstarts in socially constrained Lhasa society. Combined with a social history and historical ethnography of the Pangdatsang family culled from documentary and contemporary sources, the texts of Rapga's library offers tangible traces of alternative and engaged political sentiment during this crucial period. His progressive leanings were not singular, but shared by other Tibetans, and yet were ultimately unsuccessful for reasons both simple and complex: the disarray of the Tibetan government in this period between Dalai Lamas, the conservative collusion between the governments of Tibet and British India, and the decisive communist victory in the Chinese civil war, leading to the 1950s incorporation of Tibet into the People's Republic of China. It was against such a convoluted backdrop that Rapga devoured numerous texts looking for possible solutions to the problems in Tibet.

Alongside Stalin on Rapga's shelf were numerous political books in English and religious texts in Tibetan. *Gandhi and Stalin* by Louis Fischer; *San Min Chu I: The Three Principles of the People* by Sun Yat-sen, including pages of handwritten notes; *International Law* by George Grafton Wilson, with extensive underlining, especially in the section on "Recognition of States," and *Tibet: Past and Present* by Sir Charles Bell, former British official in Lhasa, were some of his political reference books. His Tibet-specific collection increased in the 1950s with *The Historical Status of Tibet* by Tieh-Tseng Li in which he underlines, comments on, and corrects statements in the text, for example, making particular note on page 190 of Chiang Kai-shek's 1945 statement that when Tibetans become politically and economically self-reliant, China would support independence for Tibet as it did in Inner Mongolia; *The Truth About McMahon Line* by J.P. Mitter; and numerous books by George Patterson, including *Tibet in Revolt*, *Tibetan Journey*, and *God's Fool* (all of which included the Pangdatsang family). Rapga also collected works on China—copies of *People's China* magazine, an *Introduction to Chinese History and Scientific Developments in China* published by the Sino-Cultural Society of India, and pamphlets distributed by the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi such as *Comrade Mao Tse-tung on "Imperialists and All Reactionaries are Paper Tigers."* His political sympathies were anti-communist and also anti-colonial, yet the English-language media was his favorite, and he faithfully listened to the BBC and subscribed to *Time*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Life* magazines. His mornings and evenings, however, were reserved for reading *dpe cha*, Buddhist scriptures. His religious texts were varied, all in the Tibetan language, including Sakya and

Nyingma histories and hagiographies, general meditation and philosophy texts, and even an instructional text on sand mandalas.

While politically Rapga read in English, he wrote in Tibetan. His writings range from his personal diary to articles for *The Tibet Mirror* newspaper in Kalimpong (*yul phyogs so so'i gsar gyur me long*), and from commentary on grammatical texts to a translation of Sun Yat-sen's *San Min Chu I: The Three Principles of the People*. To the best of my knowledge, this translation is not extant today, but examples of his other writings are available, and offer an invaluable glimpse into the mind of this rebel intellectual. One such sample is an introduction that Rapga wrote for his revised version of a Tibetan grammar text. While ostensibly apolitical on its own terms, the introduction to the grammar book is surprisingly revealing of personality as well as broader politics, and thus is the text I begin with to introduce the reader to Rapga Pangdatsang.

Explanatory Supplement for the Grammar Book *The Light of Speech* (dag yig ngag sgron la)

> As for this book, just like it is said in the author's title—some books use many words when only a few are necessary; some books use not as many words as are necessary; some books are not compatible with old documents; and some contradict the rules of grammar. Therefore, only this grammar book *The Light of Speech* is truly beneficial, just as I have indicated in the title.
>
> I think about how wonderful it would be if, by means of their religious and political practices, Tibetan people would receive greater recognition in the world. Therefore, I made all this effort to collect all of these resources. Arrogant people who do not let go of temporary desires will not agree with my work.[9]
>
> I, Rapga Tenzin Lhendrup, the middle son of the Markham Pangdatsang family, during the seventeen years I stayed far away in India and China, put together this handibook for my own use. I did not expect at all that writing this book would benefit other people. However, when many others with interests like mine saw this book, they said, "If you publish it, I want one." "I also want one!" Many people borrowed the book. Therefore, I spent three years at our family estate in Kham making corrections to the text. Regarding the corrections, if I separate the words as we do these days,[10] it seems that it is only so that we may find them more easily.
>
> However, as for the book *The Lamp of the Scholar's Speech*, which is very sacred and which previously benefited many people, the people who memorized the root words [are those who] only like stanzas. Also, some words are in the beginning and end of this text, but are not in the alphabetized chapters. And, some words that are in the chapters are repeated again and again. The author tried to put as many words as necessary into each chapter, and wrote without thinking about the mistakes, especially the repetition. Then again, in the above title, the translator

[9] That is, "arrogant" people who do not share his hope for the general Tibetan populace.

[10] That is, not writing stanzas—*tshig bcad*.

> implies that these faults are not a major problem when he quotes the following: "Of all ordinary people from the four castes of ancient India to those up to the ninth ground, who knows all the proper compositions?"
>
> Also, from this quote even I gained the confidence to write some compositions in the hope of benefiting others who like me are not well educated. In terms of politics, this was also written with the intention that the chief benefit would be to match contemporary meaning and language. I respectfully request scholars to give suitable advice and make corrections; to praise those parts of one's own culture's religion, language, living conditions, customs, and personality which are suitable as in the Tibetan saying "Eat one's own food, praise one's own people;"[11] and, they should mainly and voluntarily, from the bottom of their hearts, learn as much as they can from the goodness of this. From the merit I gained by requesting this, may all sentient beings even in the temporal state practice fearless freedom, and eventually immediately obtain the Buddhahood that is unique to us Buddhists.

Written in Tibet, most likely in the late 1940s or early 1950s, this "explanatory supplement" is reflective of the tensions felt in Tibet and the region at the time. While desiring a modern turn via language—e.g., the need for a vernacular language, or to "match contemporary meaning and language"—Rapga situates this as a *Tibetan* modern quest in which "one's own" cultural traits are to be respected rather than bypassed. Evident in his words are a strong Tibetan cultural nationalism, and in addition to a call for internal cultural pride, a wish for Tibetan culture to be known and appreciated outside of Tibet in places, perhaps, like "far away India and China." Rapga's travels provided him with a cosmopolitan view of the world, one influenced by other Asian thinkers and activists. While he did speak Chinese and English, and was literate in English (although not fluent), the audience for his writings was a Tibetan one and his style at times didactic, exhorting Tibetans to embrace aspects of their culture in order to move forward politically. Through his writings as well as archival materials and contemporary reminiscences about him, it is evident that Rapga embodied the persona of lay scholar. He reveled in language, politics, reading, debate, and did so under the class privilege accounted to him via his family status. The Pangdatsang family was not only chieftains in their district of Tibet, but also one of the wealthiest families in the entire country. In Tibet, however, economic power did not connote political or social power; such power was instead in the hands of the monasteries and the aristocracy. In the early twentieth century, the Pangdatsang family began a trajectory that was to disrupt this model by creating a new bourgeois class. In order to understand Rapga Pangdatsang's personal story as rebel intellectual, we must also explore the unique story of his family.

---

[11] In Tibetan: *rang zas rang gi bza' rang mi rang gis bstod.*

The New Tibetan Bourgeoisie: Power and the Pangdatsang Family

Rapga Tenzin Lhundrup was the middle of the Pangdatsang brothers of the eastern Tibetan province of Kham.[12] When young, Rapga was given to relatives living in the Markham area, and was raised by them as their son. Although raised separately, the three Pangdatsang brothers were very close. Yamphel, the eldest, was the Tibetan Trade Agent, a monopoly position that soon made him the richest man in Tibet (and garnered him that title in a 1955 *National Geographic* article by Heinrich Harrer). Tobgyal, the youngest brother, was chieftain of family lands in Kham, and best known for leading a 1934 rebellion against the Tibetan Government, yet in support of the recently deceased 13th Dalai Lama. Of the brothers, Rapga was the intellectual, the theorist and political schemer. Among historians, he is known primarily for his activities in Kalimpong in the mid-1940s. There he led a group of progressive-minded Tibetans in forming a political party aimed at reforming the Tibetan Government along the lines of Nationalist China. The (British) Government of India deported him for this endeavor in 1946. Yet, as with Tobgyal and the 1934 rebellion, Rapga's story neither begins nor ends with this one political venture. Much has been made of Rapga's association with the Kuomintang, but the relation between Eastern Tibetans such as Rapga and the Kuomintang cannot be reduced to a "pro-Chinese" position. In his own words, Rapga says that following the 1933 death of the 13th Dalai Lama and in the ensuing political chaos of Tibet, he was not sure where he belonged. The Tibetan political world had literally come crashing down around him.

At the same time that the political world collapsed, the socioeconomic landscape was also rapidly changing, and the Pangdatsang family were at the forefront of this change. Society in a Tibetan sense had long meant the Lhasa aristocracy combined with high-powered lamas. Chieftains and kings from other parts of Tibet—Kham, Amdo, Toe Ngari, and so on—might have had local or regional power, but not the pan-Tibetan social clout of Lhasa aristocrats, even if their economic worth was far greater. In addition, the aristocracy consisted of long-established families, and new entrants to aristocratic title were relatively rare. Yet, while social status was still overwhelmingly ascribed via birth rather than achieved via wealth, the formation of a new merchant class paralleled important early twentieth-century Tibetan experiments with various modern ideas, products, and institutions. National in category, this merchant class was dominated by trading families from Kham. As financial power—and the important patronage of powerful religious and/or social figures in Lhasa—began to earn these families social status, a modern bourgeois, a middle class, was formed. Of this group, two Khampa families were eventually granted aristocratic rank: the Sadhutsang family and the Pangdatsang family.

---

[12] The Pangdatsang family has two spellings and pronunciations of their name: *spang mda'* and *spom mda'* (i.e., Pangda and Pomda). While many Tibetans refer to the family as Pomda, family members themselves prefer Pangda, and thus I use this spelling here.

The Pangdatsangs began their national rise under Nyigyal, father to Yamphel, Rapga, and Tobgyal. Pangda Nyigyal was a very astute Khampa wool trader, who with the backing of the Sakya family moved to Lhasa to expand his business. He was wildly successful as a result of his own business acumen, including his cultivation of connections with the three monasteries (Sera, Drepung, and Ganden) and especially with the 13th Dalai Lama. This relationship resulted in a governmental wool purchasing privilege in 1909, and further privileges after providing assistance to the Dalai Lama in the chaos following the 1911 fall of the Qing Dynasty. By 1920, Pangda Nyigyal was the leading Tibetan trader, with representatives in China and India as well as different regions of Tibet. The following year, as his power continued to grow, he was murdered while celebrating Universal Smoke Offering Day *('dzam gling spyi bsangs)* in Lhasa's Twentieth Park *(nyi shu'i gling ga)*.[13] Although arrests were made, his murderer was never found.

At the time of Pangda Nyigyal's murder, his son Nyima became the head of the family. Nyima was in his late thirties, born approximately in 1883, a good seventeen years before the eldest of his three half-brothers, Lobsang Yamphel. Yamphel, Rapga, and Tobgyal were all roughly two years apart in age.[14] Following Nyigyal's assassination, the Dalai Lama had great sympathy for the family, and gave Nyima the title of *las tshan pa*, sixth rank, and continued to grant the family various trade concessions. During this period, Tibetan government ranks were also passes into Lhasa aristocratic society. The awarding of rank, which carried hereditary status, to the Pangdatsang family marked the first time that an "ordinary" Tibetan family was admitted to aristocratic ranks, albeit at a low level, for reasons other than the birth of a Dalai Lama in the family.[15]

Nyima was not a businessman at heart and in 1930, he asked the Dalai Lama for permission to retire, and to turn the business over to Yamphel. His Holiness said no, and instead raised the Pangdatsang status even higher by granting their trading firm full government agency to buy wool.[16] This was unprecedented. Monopolies previously had been for a portion of the trade, e.g., two-thirds to Pangda, and one-third to other traders. The new monopoly, granted in December 1929, to begin in the Iron Horse year, from March 1, 1930, meant people could now sell their wool *only* to Pangdatsang.[17] Tsarong was the only

[13] Pangda Nyigyal's story is told in McGranahan 2002.

[14] Approximate birth dates for the brothers are as follows: Nyima 1883; Yamphel 1900; Rapga 1902; and Tobgyal 1904. These dates are based on the 1999 recollection of Rapga's servant in Kalimpong that Rapga's birth year was a Tiger year, thus 1902, and the knowledge of family members that the brothers were all two years apart in age.

[15] Of other Khampas who belonged to the aristocracy, one was the younger brother of the Derge royal family (the Derge se, Ngag dbang 'jam dpal rin chen), and the others were families in which a Dalai Lama was discovered, an event that carried with it immediate entry into aristocratic society at the *yab gzhis*, or highest level.

[16] IOR L/P+S/10/1088, Weir to Foreign Secretary, Government of India, 6 August 1930.

[17] IOR L/P+S/12/4163 Tibet. Trade.

Minister *(Shape)* to oppose the monopoly.[18] By this time, betting on Pangda was a sure thing, and the Tibetan Government was in a financial crisis. The market was flooded with copper *sho* coins, which were easy to counterfeit. The government wanted to withdraw the coins from circulation, but needed the backing of silver to keep the economy in motion. The Pangdatsang brothers were the richest of the Tibetan traders, and the only ones who were equal in stature to the Indian Marwaris, who controlled much of the India-Tibet trade. Through the Pangdatsangs, the Tibetan Government would have access to rupees and the silver they needed.

People everywhere—Tibetans, British, Indians—were upset by the awarding of the monopoly to Pangda and protested to the Tibetan Government. This full monopoly meant that only Pangda would have access to rupees, and would therefore make double profits on wool, Indian goods, and on the transport of Chinese goods such as tea through India to Tibet.[19] The British protested that the monopoly violated the anti-monopoly Article 6 of the Tibet Trade Treaty of 1914, but His Holiness the Dalai Lama himself denied that the monopoly to Pangda was in violation of the Tibet Trade Treaty, arguing that it was not to a private individual, but to a government official and thus legal.[20] The monopoly remained in effect for roughly three years, ending on February 25, 1933.[21] During this time, the Pangdatsang family gained even more wealth and power, and the Tibetan Government got their silver. Prices for wool and transport fell lower than ever before, eventually provoking the cancellation of the monopoly. Nyima, having provided the service the Dalai Lama required, now retired and became a monk.[22] Yamphel now became "Pangda," the head of the family, and under his leadership, the status of the family continued to grow. He appears to have been a fine student of his father Nyigyal, operating in much the same way—good business acumen combined with connections to important religious and political figures.[23] The first obstacle he faced followed the death of the Dalai Lama on December 17, 1933.

---

[18] IOR L/P+S/10/1088, Weir to Foreign Secretary, Government of India, 6 August 1930.

[19] The tea trade was split with the "Jangtse-tshang" family. IOR L/P+S/12/4166.

[20] IOR L/P+S/10/1088, Weir to Foreign Secretary, Government of India, 6 August 1930. Kumbela also sent a personal letter to the Political Officer in Sikkim requesting that the British not only honor the grant to Pangdatsang, but to provide all needed assistance to him.

[21] IOR L/P+S/12/4166.

[22] Information on Nyima is very spotty. After becoming a monk, he appears to have spent much of his time in religious practice. I believe that he passed away sometime in the early 1940s.

[23] Taklha Phuntsok Tashi (1995, Vol. 1, pp. 199-200) writes that Pangda Yamphel once told him: "You will benefit from making close contact with whoever is in power, but you will be destroyed if you make close contact with someone who is of no use." A British official later wrote of Yamphel: "His ideas regarding commerce are progressive, but not his methods [which], I believe I am right in saying, are not always above question: certainly has been known to evade Indian regulations and then play the role of "Ignorant Tibetan" for all it was worth. But he is a pleasant man to meet and exudes Tibetan charm." (IOR

The 13th Dalai Lama's premature death in 1933 was foreseen by the State Nechung Oracle.[24] In 1931, the Oracle announced that the Dalai Lama would soon be departing the earthly realm. At his recommendation, the Tibetan Government composed prayers requesting that the Dalai Lama remain in his current incarnation. The Dalai Lama answered their long life prayers with a nine-page response that he wrote in his own hand. In this extraordinary document, the 13th Dalai Lama validates his own rule, discusses recent history, and gives advice to his subjects on proper political behavior, and prophecies the dark days that lie ahead for Tibet. His testament was taken seriously and literally by many Tibetans at the time as well as in the present day. Despite this, however, much of the advice the "Great Thirteenth" gave to the Tibetan people was not followed, such as his encouragement to build up a strong army and to build stable relations with both India and China. His final testament provides a sense of the tenor of Tibetan politics at the time, highlights the connection between religion and politics in Tibet, and is widely believed to have come true. Historical explanations of what has happened in twentieth century Tibet often begin with or return to this final testimony of the 13th Dalai Lama. The most important thing, he wrote, was not for the Tibetan people to perform external rituals for his long life, but to perform the *internal* ritual of taking his advice to heart so that they may know peace and happiness, and so that the Tibetan nation would be able to survive the challenges of the future. The Pangdatsang family was especially devoted to the 13th Dalai Lama.

1934: Revolt in Kham

In Lhasa, Yamphel was Pangdatsang, but in Kham the name went to Tobgyal, the youngest brother. Tobgyal was head of the Pangdatsang territories in Markham, and in early 1934,[25] he and Rapga, the middle brother, were at the family home in Markham when they received word of troubling events in Lhasa. The Dalai Lama's prophecy appeared to be coming true: Kumbela, the late Dalai Lama's favorite, and their friend, had been arrested. Together with Rapga, Tobgyal, who was a *ru dpon* or captain in the Tibetan Government Army, gathered 500 of his private troops, and revolted against the Tibetan Government troops stationed in Markham, and marched on Chamdo where they were finally defeated.

This rebellion, often referred to as Tobgyal's revolt, is one of two Pangda events discussed by historians. Some accounts state that Tobgyal's intention was to set up a separate Khampa state, while others, including British colonial

---

L/P+S/12/4230, Tibet. Trade Mission. Letter, Leslie Fry, UK High Commission Office, Delhi to E.P. Donaldson, Esq., CMG, Commonwealth Relations Office, Whitehall, 11 November 1947.)

[24] Bell 1987(1946), p. 426.

[25] Correspondent to the eleventh month of the Tibetan Wood-Dog year, according to Gyaltsen 1971.

accounts, stress that the rebellion was part of their general dissatisfaction with the status quo in Lhasa as well as anger at Kumbela's arrest, and rumors that their brother Yamphel had also been arrested.[26] Tobgyal and Rapga managed to capture a 100-troop regiment, 100 rifles, and three mountain guns.[27] They then fled to Batang, to a valley called Pomi, and set up residence there, all the while maintaining the family home and powers in Markham.[28] From Lhasa, Yamphel sent them money, arms, and ammunition via Khampa traders. In Batang, Tobgyal and his troops fought several times with Chinese forces, both the Kuomintang and the Communists, as well as with Tibetan forces. Rapga fled to India in 1935, and was later joined by Tobgyal who returned to Tibet in the early 1940s. Eventually, he reconciled his differences with the Tibetan Government.

The repercussions of the Pangdatsang revolt were felt in Lhasa. The Tibetan Government sent a force to "seal"—quarantine and confiscate—Pangda Yamphel's house in the Barkhor. Yamphel evaded their efforts through several means: first, by simply locking the gate and not letting them in; second, through action on his behalf by several high lamas;[29] third, by bribing the appropriate officials (the subsequent subject of several street songs); and finally, by the threat of a horse stampede.[30] Yamphel's punishment was minimal; he was held financially responsible for damages caused by his brothers, and for the replacement of the guns and ammunition that Tobgyal had captured. Whether or not he agreed with his brothers' actions, as the family head, he was responsible for finances.

For Tobgyal and Rapga, this rebellion was not an isolated incident, but one representative of their sentiment on the restrictions of Tibetan sociopolitics. They each had different views on how to go about effecting change, as well as what sort of change they were striving for. One important source of information about the Pangdatsang brothers is Scotsman George Patterson, a Plymouth Brethren missionary who traveled to Tibet in the 1940s, and was taken in by the Pangdatsangs. Patterson met Tobgyal in 1947, and describes him as "the charismatic one, the horseman, the Braveheart. He was a gem."[31] According to Patterson, whereas Rapga got excited about political theory, Tobgyal was excited

---

[26] See Stoddard 1985 for a discussion of varying accounts of this rebellion.

[27] *Who's Who in Tibet*, 1938.

[28] See Bull 1967 and Gyaltsen 1971 on Pangda's fiefdom in Pomi (also known as Porkog).

[29] Goldstein 1989, p. 183.

[30] Two versions of what happened circulate: first, when the Tibetan government representatives arrived to seal the house, the horses inside the Pangda compound became frightened. Starting to stampede about in a nervous frenzy, it sounded to those outside the house as if they were preparing to come out in a rampage. Now frightened themselves, the government officials fled. The second version is visual rather than aural. Arriving at the Pangda compound, the government representatives peeked through a hole in the compound door. Many horses were running about wildly, and the government officials became frightened and ran away. The horses were illusions created by the family deities to protect the family.

[31] George Patterson, Interview, May 23, 2000.

by people as individuals.[32] Their nephew, Manang Sonam Tobgyal agrees, remembering Tobgyal as a simple, honest man who disliked aristocratic protocol, and whose happy-go-lucky nature was not adverse to political protest.[33] In one of his many books on Tibet, Patterson relates a conversation in which Tobgyal outlines his political sentiments:

> I do not want power like Rapga wants it, to change the politics of Tibet, because I am as skeptical of politicians as you are. I want power here in my country to help my people to a better life than most of them have at present under the Lhasa and Chinese regimes. So do you. But, for me, it means war, and bloody battles, and scheming, and compromises with politicians and priests [sic] who I despise.[34]

Patterson's Plymouth Brethren colleague Geoffrey Bull also spent a good deal of time with the Pangdatsang brothers, and distinguishes between them as follows:

> Of diverse temperament, [the two brothers] were nonetheless united in their aspirations for the Tibetan people. Dopgyay [Tobgyal], humorous, buoyant, candid and mischievous, besides having an almost frightening ability to penetrate and understand character, was, for all his great mansions and fabulous wealth, a man in close touch with the people. He was a gifted military leader and was never more in his element than when out riding in the mountains on his magnificent mule, with a crowd of trusty warriors around him. Rapga, ponderous but whimsical, was a philosopher gifted with astute judgment. In decision, I felt, he would be upheld by principle; whereas [Tobgyal] was more open to expediency.[35]

A third missionary provides us with further access to explanations of the Pangda revolt. Reverend G. Tharchin, a Ladakhi Tibetan converted to Christianity, established the first-ever Tibetan language newspaper, *Yul chog [phyogs] so so'i gsar gyur me long*, or *The Tibet Mirror* in Kalimpong in 1925. On December 24, 1936, he published his friend Rapga's explanation of his political activities. As told to Tharchin, Rapga details the governmental disarray in Lhasa following the 13th Dalai Lama's death. In his opinion, ministers in Lhasa and officials in Kham were acting selfishly, "disregarding the welfare of the country," and also, "the advice of the Dalai Lama." Rapga and Tobgyal, devoted to the 13th Dalai Lama and his vision for Tibet, he writes, thus staged their armed strike with the support of the majority of the monasteries in Kham.

Following the revolt, Tobgyal explored new political ideas and formed bonds with other Khampa leaders. He was closely associated with progressive Khampas such as Baba Kesang Tsering, who was connected to the Kuomintang, Jagod Thobden, the powerful Derge chieftain, and other Khampa chieftains and religious leaders, especially the more well-educated of the local lamas. In addition, he was one of the leaders of a political group formed to work towards

---

[32] George Patterson, Interview, January 5, 1999.
[33] Manang Sonam Tobgyal, Interview, July 2, 2000.
[34] Patterson 1998, p. 201.
[35] Bull 1963, p. 24.

Khampa unification by settling internal differences among Khampas.[36] During the period from 1935 through the mid-1940s, Kham was the site for numerous political and military battles, most small-scale involving some combination of local Tibetan troops, Communist troops, Kuomintang troops, and the troops of Liu Wen-hui, governor of Xikang.[37] Tobgyal, Rapga, and other Khampa leaders, some of whom had been educated in China, were truly in between China and Tibet, and each had their own perspective on what Kham was, could be, and where it fit into both China and Tibet. It is important to realize that the unsettled border disputes between Tibet, China, and British India served to reinforce the autonomous status and sentiment of many Khampa districts.[38] In the years following the death of the 13th Dalai Lama during which politics in Lhasa were in an especially confused and ugly state, and the Chinese Kuomintang was pontificating the rights of all nationalities, some Khampa leaders were more aligned with Chinese than Tibetan political ideology.[39] Among the Pangdatsang family, the division of labor was such that Lhasa social and financial politics were Yamphel's domain, everyday politics were Tobgyal's realm, and political theory was assigned to Rapga.

After the revolt, Rapga felt that things were continuing to disintegrate, and so he went to Sichuan to talk with Chinese leaders there about the Tibetan state of affairs. Although Chinese officials made promises to him, he did not trust them, and secretly left for Nanking where it is believed that he had an interview with Chiang Kai-shek in 1935. While little is known about the specifics of this meeting (including if it did indeed take place), it was most likely facilitated by the socioeconomic status of the Pangdatsang family and certainly inspired by Rapga's frustrations with the conservative and disordered interim Tibetan government.[40] One result of Rapga's trip to China, and possibly of the meeting with Chiang Kai-shek, was Rapga's employment by the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Office in Nanking. Upon leaving China, Rapga traveled next to Kalimpong where he met with Indian nationalists, went back to China in 1938 via Tibet,[41] and then

---

[36] This group would gather in different parts of Kham and have parties with all sorts of activities, horse riding, dancing, and picnicking. The symbol of their group was the *mthun pa spun bzhi*, the "four harmonious brothers"—the elephant, monkey, rabbit, and bird—a symbol of friendship and unity. Interviews with Jagod Se Dhonyod (Bir), Gyari Nyima (Delhi), and Juchen Thubten (Dharamsala), 1998 and 1999.

[37] On this period in Kham, see Peng 2002.

[38] McGranahan 2003.

[39] Peng 2002.

[40] One Tibetan who was both supportive of and supported by Chiang Kai-shek during this period was the Sixth Panchen Lama; see Jagou 2002.

[41] His family and friends in Kalimpong contend that one reason why he left India at this time was that his meetings with Indian nationalists were disapproved of by the British government of India. He went to Tibet and his servants left India disguised as Chinese on a ship out of Calcutta. Sampho Tenzin Dhondup (1997) writes that in 1942, before Rapga returned to Kalimpong from China, the Political Officer in Sikkim asked his father about Rapga.

again returned to India in 1943. On his 1938 trip to China, he is said to have met with Chiang Kai-shek several times and was funded by him, both directly in cash and also with goods to sell, such as special silk brocades.[42] While Rapga traveled back and forth from Kham to Lhasa, China, and India, Tobgyal held down the fort in Kham, and Yamphel was busy in Lhasa securing the continued ascent of the family. In November 1940, he was given the rank of *rim bzhi*, fourth rank; this new rank carried further entry privileges into aristocratic society. Gossip in the streets and parlors of Lhasa held that Pangda obtained this rank through the *ltag sgo*, or the back door, with liberal donations of gold to members of the Kashag, the National Assembly, and the Foreign Ministers. His appointment to Rimshi included the post of Tibetan Trade Agent in Yatung, and the position of *gro mo spyi khyab*.[43] This post, equivalent to Governor of the Chumbi Valley, was one that Yamphel specifically requested, and which allowed him to fully control trade between India and Tibet, levying and collecting taxes, and creating and lifting various trade restrictions (such as the bans on cotton cloth and tobacco).[44] If British officials in India were not happy with Pangda Yamphel's trade dominance, they were equally unhappy with Rapga's political activities, considering him to be an "active Chinese agent."[45] While this was not a true characterization, Rapga was indeed politically active in India as an agent for a reformed and united Tibet.

---

[42] Anonymous Interview, Kalimpong, March 1998. "Rapga went to Chiang Kai-shek two or three times. He was paid by him. [...] Chiang Kai-shek sent twenty horseloads of silk brocade to Rapga. But he couldn't stay in Tibet because the Tibetan Government suspected him. So he brought the brocades through Sikkim to India."

[43] In this post, Pangda was the first Tibetan government official that foreigners would meet. Lowell Thomas Jr. writes about his meeting with "the Tromo Trochi of Dhomu" and states that he was an "impressive man" (Thomas 1950, p. 77). Ilya Tolstoy and Brooke Dolan, on an undercover U.S. Government mission to Tibet, also met with Pangda Yamphel in Dromo, and are said to have been "charmed" by him (Knaus 1999, p. 7).

[44] The British suspect that the cotton cloth ban imposed on Indian imports to Tibet in 1945 was the work of Rapga via Yamphel: "Needless to say the would-be revolutionaries [Rapga et al.] were inspired and financed by my mincing Chinese colleague (now in China), of this the diary [Rapga's diary confiscated on a raid at his home in Kalimpong] obligingly supplies written proof. We also know now whence the inspiration came that made things so difficult for me at first over the cotton cloth quota." IOR MSS EUR D 998/39, A.J. Hopkinson, letter home, 30 Sunday 1945, Gangtok. Pangda Yamphel was the first Tibetan Trade Agent posted to Yatung to undertake improvements in the area—building a proper house and office, and also undertaking the improvement of the road to Gyantse, a project in which he arranged for the local people to be paid for their labor rather than providing it for free. See Yatung annual trade reports, IOR L/P+S/12/4166, Tibet. Gyantse and Yatung Trade Reports.

[45] *Who's Who in Tibet*, 1949.

The Tibetan Improvement Party

Pangda Rapga's dreams for Tibet coalesced in his Tibetan Improvement Party. Based on the Kuomintang model, Rapga envisioned his party as a first step towards modernizing the Tibetan government and society. Conceived in Tibet, encouraged in China, and based in India, one of Rapga's first tasks was to secure the support of other Tibetan intellectuals for the party. Little is known about the actual membership of the party beyond its two secretaries, the aristocratic poet Changlochen and Kumbela, the former favorite of the 13th Dalai Lama. Gedun Chophel was associated with the party, although he did not officially join it, and Taklha Phuntsok Tashi wrote in his autobiography about Rapga's unsuccessful efforts to recruit him into the party.[46] When placed in the context of concurrent sociopolitical changes taking place in China and India, a modern-oriented, democratic-minded, nationalist-focused political party was not unusual in the least; yet, in the perspectives of a conservative Tibetan government and of British officials at the close of empire, such a progressive undertaking was decidedly unwelcome.

In important ways, the Tibet Improvement Party was an anomaly. For example, there were no political parties in Tibet. The Lhasa Tibetan Government consisted of monastic and aristocratic officials whose tenure was contingent on very localized and factionalized politics.[47] At the time, Tibetan sociopolitical organization was decentralized and stratified by region. Central Tibet, including the state government, was ruled by aristocrats, large-scale monastic complexes, and estates belonging to both of these groups; in other regions, however, while central State-appointed governors and other agents of the State were to be found, authority predominantly belonged to powerful local lamas and royal and chiefly families.[48] The idea, therefore, of an intellectual-led, popularly-subscribed party devoted to social and political reform was abhorrent to the Tibetan Government, and with good reason. It was also, however, objectionable to the British, but the reason why is not as transparent.

While Rapga had been devoted to the 13th Dalai Lama, and was also an ardent Tibetan nationalist, in British eyes this was overshadowed by his affinity for Sun Yat-Sen's liberatory philosophies, and especially by his political and financial links to Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang party. As a result, Rapga's political orientation, as well as various subject positions (Khampa, intellectual, bourgeois, etc.), were flattened by British colonial logic into the category of pro-Chinese Tibetan trying to overthrow the Tibetan State. One could be a pro-British Tibetan or a pro-Chinese Tibetan, but there was no categorical space for a *pro-Tibetan* Tibetan. In British terms, therefore, his character profile read not Tibetan intellectual, but enemy of the State. Although he had not been secretive

[46] Taklha 1995. See also Sampho 1987 and Stoddard 1985 for information on Rapga's relationship with Gedun Chophel.

[47] Goldstein 1989.

[48] Samuel 1993.

about his political party—for the British allowed Indian political parties at the time—colonial officials acted as if he had, and worked hard to find a reason to arrest him for his antagonistic efforts towards a "friendly government," Tibet. Eventually, they deported him to China on an immigration technicality, effectively disbanding the Tibetan Improvement Party before it was ever able to effect change in Tibet or leave anything but the most minimal of traces. We have few documents from the party at our disposal, only membership forms, and thus any history of the party must be written from other sources: British archival documents, Tibetan histories and memoirs, oral reminiscences by Rapga's contemporaries and family, and other writings by Rapga himself, his diary chief among them.[49]

Rapga's diary is full of the minutiae of life—accounts of what he did, ate, thought; financial records and prices of consumer goods; political information; news of global current affairs; small notes to himself; proverbs and other sayings, and word lists, often in English. His daily entries almost inevitably began with the line "Got up early, and read and wrote." What he "wrote" is not clear, but he did write frequently in the diary about what he was reading at the time. In the period following his deporting from India, Rapga resided in China, and closely followed the civil war there. As it became clear that the Communists were going to win, he grew more and more concerned with the repercussions for Tibet. The following excerpts detail his efforts to find solutions in a variety of texts and ideas:

31 August 1948 In the night, thought about work. Thought deeply about India.

19 September 1948 Got up early, and went to buy books about Chinese scholars who traveled the world, and read.

22 September 1948 After getting up in the morning, read travel guide. ... Studied important English words until late in the evening.

19 October 1948 Read a book titled *Pocket Book of World Politics.*

21 October 1948 Read *The Dream of the Little Red House.* Purchased a book titled *China's Fate* for seven gors, and read it. Observed in the book about Tibet and borders, and felt very upset that our Tibetan scholars—alas [*kyi hud*]—spent their time without having any plans and writing any useful literature. Thought about what could be done for the ignorant and powerless Tibetan brothers and sisters.

2 November 1948 We talked about the dangers of the communist army, and [said] that there is no difference for the general races of people. There is a great hope to prevent imperial power and so on.

4 April 1949 Read *International Law* and looked for points that would be helpful for Tibet

8 April 1949 Read *International Law.* Concentrated on what would be helpful for Tibet and looked for points.

22 May 1949 Read book about Lenin.

As a textual record of this period, Rapga's diary informs us of the myriad resources available to the multilingual reader, about the types of conversations

[49] This history is begun in McGranahan 2001, and refined in "Empire, Archive, Diary: A Renegade Tibetan Nationalist in India and China, 1946-1950," unpublished ms.

that took place about local and international events, and, as he travels from Nanking back towards Kham, is increasingly blunt about both Tibetan and Chinese political sentiment towards the Communist victory. Far from the Shangri-la version of either a solely spiritually-oriented vision or an isolated worldview that could not be in dialogue with global events and ideas, the Tibet that Rapga and others like him inhabited was complex in many ways, and it is key to note, was changing. Societal change takes place in different ways and at varied speeds, and pre-Communist Tibet was an example of a society undergoing gradual change in economic, social, and political domains. As Rapga's personal story and the Pangdatsang family story both reveal, the idea of an "isolated" Tibet is a partial one. As Tibetans such as the Pangdatsangs forged new paths in Tibetan society via networking outside as well as inside Tibet, new possibilities arose for conceptualizing their lives, their country, and the world. Such changes, often considered radical at any rate of introduction, were not welcome by all. To this day, the Pangdatsang family, Rapga included, occupy a very uneven place in Tibetan history, somewhere in the gray zone between absent from, criticized by, and appreciated in the Tibetan historical consciousness.

Conclusion: On Tibetan Intellectuals

Along with *International Law*, Pangda Rapga's 1949 copy of *Problems of Leninism* remains in his Kalimpong library today. Stepping into Rapga's library offers insight into his intellectual world and that of mid-twentieth century Tibet. While images of Tibet as isolated from the rest of the world circulate widely, this view obscures the connections of trade, religion, and political ideas that many Tibetans had with the outside world. Rapga and his Tibetan colleagues in Kalimpong were no exception, drawing on intellectual currents from a variety of sources in Asia and beyond. They were themselves a cosmopolitan group, including at various times exiled Tibetan officials and artists, Chinese-educated Khampa Tibetans, newspaper publisher Reverend Tharchin, European scholars and *avant-garde* missionaries, Himalayan intellectuals and royalty, Bengali nationalists, and itinerant and erudite monks such as Gedun Chophel. Their salon style and impromptu gatherings were not recorded, but traces of them remain in the literary and historical record, including in the texts collected and produced by Rapga.

Yet, from rebel intellectual to quiet intellectual, the story of Rapga Pangdatsang might provide more questions than answers as to the place of intellectuals in Tibetan society. What did it mean to be a secular intellectual in a modernizing Tibet? My attempt to answer this question is drawn from the work of Michel Foucault. In his *Remarx on Marx*, Foucault directly addresses intellectuals, asking what their job is. He answers that the job of an intellectual:

> does not consist in molding the political will of others, [but] is a matter of performing analyses in his or her own fields, of interrogating anew the evidence and the postulates, of shaking up habits, ways of acting and thinking, of dispelling commonplace beliefs, of taking a new measure of rules and institutions [...] it is a

> matter of participating in the formation of a political will, where [the intellectual] is called to perform a role as citizen.[50]

It is in the second half of this definition that we find Rapga—shaking up habits, ways of thinking and acting, dispelling commonplace beliefs, taking a new measure of rules and institutions, and trying to create identities for Tibetans as citizens not just as subjects. The scanty documentary remains of the Tibetan Improvement Party tell us in no uncertain terms that Rapga considered the current Tibetan government tyrannical (again, this was in between Dalai Lamas), and the Tibetan people in need of uplifting. His specific desire to create a national civil society in Tibet is evident in even a cursory scanning of the texts he wrote and translated, his margin notes in the books he read, and various entries in his diary from the period following his deportation from India.

Rapga's revolutionary dreams were social as well as political, and while focused squarely on Tibet were generated also out of global discourses about modernity, the nation, and the role of the intellectual.[51] His type of nomadic and modern intellectualism did not fit the expected *shes yon can* or Tibetan Buddhist and philosophical idea of scholar and thinker, but a new type of intellectual such as those found in neighboring China and India. As such, his message is one shared across intellectual and international circles, albeit tailored to the Tibetan situation (e.g., creating spaces for public education within monasteries). His ideas for reform were derived from the standard platform of the modern as interpreted in Asia with emphases on education and literacy, on public culture, on a desire for economic self-sufficiency, and for a modern, *independent* government beholden neither to European or regional overlords. For example, in a 1975 interview just prior to his death, Rapga explained why he had translated Sun Yat-sen's *Three Principles of the People* into Tibetan:

> The *Three Principles of the People* was written for all people under foreign domination, for all those who had no human rights. But above all it was conceived for Asians. These were my reasons for translating it. At the time, many new ideas were spreading through Tibet, but only among the elite, and educated people, who would only make use of it for themselves. The masses were too ignorant to be receptive and they had no rights whatsoever.[52]

In determining why both the British and Tibetan governments considered these ideas threatening, and hence Rapga a threat, I find the poststructuralist insistence—i.e., the work of such thinkers as Foucault, Edward Said, and Gayatri Spivak—that we need to pay attention to who is speaking as well as what they are saying a key proposition for making sense of intellectual subjectivity, imperial politics, and Tibetan society.

The handful of modern intellectuals found in mid-twentieth century Tibet were not only misunderstood, but also rejected by Tibetan society. Consecutively exiled, driven to suicide, and in the case of Rapga and his colleagues in India,

---

[50] Foucault 1991, pp. 11-12.

[51] Barlow 1991; Chatterjee 1986, 1993; Stoddard 1985; Suny and Kennedy 1999.

[52] As recounted in Stoddard 1985.

hounded by colonial officials, these intellectuals were unsuccessful in effecting change in Tibet. With the exception of a brilliant and eccentric scholar-monk named Gedun Chophel, who in both play and philosophy crossed and challenged the sacred and the secular, the stories of these early modern Tibetan intellectuals remain unknown to most, unappreciated by others, and unrehabilitated in the present. Much in the same way that the interests of a weak Tibetan State and of the British Raj at the end of empire colluded to shut down intellectual activity in the 1940s, so too do present-day geopolitical configurations often attempt to stifle public intellectual activity (in exile), or try to force a *rdzus ma* or "false" intellectual climate (in occupied Tibet).[53]

In an essay on "effective" intellectuals, R. Radakrishnan compares the work and strategies of Foucault and Antonio Gramsci. He states:

> [T]here is great need to [...] cultivate and elaborate "postpolitical" practices but with reference to the reality of particular histories, and to thematize with increasing complexity the asymmetry of what it means to be global in these "our regional times."[54]

Radakrishnan's discussion is set in the context of debating intellectuals' autonomous needs and representational obligations, as well as the universal and specific characters of intellectuals.[55] What I have tried to briefly sketch here is the particular history and complexity of one intellectual, his political and post-political practices, and the various subject positions that he occupied in both global and regional terms. Rapga was not, in Radakrishnan's or anyone's terms, an "effective" intellectual. With the advent of the Chinese takeover of Tibet, he retreated to India, where his initial efforts at political action were rebuffed as his former Tibetan expatriate society in India became a new refugee society dominated by the same Lhasa status quo whose brute power had earlier trumped almost all intellectual initiatives. Rapga withdrew from public life, living out the rest of his life surrounded by books, friends, and family, surviving an assassination attempt on his life, and running a modest transportation business in the Himalayas. While he died in obscurity, and failed in his efforts to realize a self-ruled modern Tibet, Pangda Rapga's legacy of dreams and ideas for Tibet live on, as does a cultural discomfort with the often critical and often needed voices of intellectuals.

---

[53] On intellectuals in contemporary Tibet, see Upton 1995; for exile, see Venturino 2000.

[54] Radakrishnan 1990, p. 97.

[55] Radakrishnan 1990, p. 61.

Bibliography

Barlow, Tani
1991 "*Zhishifenzi* [Chinese Intellectuals] and Power," *Dialectical Anthropology* 16, pp. 209-232.

Bell, Sir Charles
1987[1946] *Portrait of a Dalai Lama: The Life and Times of the Great Thirteenth*. London: Wisdom Publications.

Boyer, Dominic C.
2001a "Foucault in the Bush: The Social Life of Post-Structuralist Theory in East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg," *Ethnos* 66(2): 207-236.
2001b "On the Sedimentation and Accreditation of Social Knowledges of Difference: Mass Media, Journalism, and the Reproduction of East/West Alterities in Unified Germany," *Cultural Anthropology* 15(4), pp. 459-491.

Bull, Geoffrey
1963 *When Iron Gates Yield*. Chicago: Moody Press.
1967 *Forbidden Land: A Saga of Tibet*. Chicago: Moody Press.

Chatterjee, Partha
1986 *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
1993 *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Epstein, Lawrence, ed.
2002 *Khams pa Histories: Visions of People, Place, and Authority*. Leiden: Brill.

Foucault, Michel
1972a *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon Books.
1972b "Two Lectures," in Colin Gordon, ed. and et al trans., *Power/Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 78-108.
1991 *Remarx on Marx: Conversations with Ducio Trombadori*. R. James Goldstein and James Cascait, tr. New York: Semiotext(e).

Goldstein, Melvyn C.
1989 *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Grimshaw, Anna and Keith Hart
1993 *Anthropology and the Crisis of the Intellectual*. Cambridge: Prickly Pear Press.

Grunfeld, A. Tom
1996 *The Making of Modern Tibet*. Armonk (NY): M.E. Sharpe.

Gyaltsen, Lobsang
1971 *'Ba' kyi lo rgyus (Story of Kham Bapa)*. Dehra Dun: Nyingmapa Lamah Press.

Huber, Toni, ed.
2002 *Amdo Tibetans in Transition: Society and Culture in the Post-Mao Era*. Leiden: Brill.

Jagou, Fabienne
2002 "The Sixth Panchen Lama's Chinese Titles," in Lawrence Epstein, ed., *Khams pa Histories: Visions of People, Place, and Authority*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 85-102.

Knaus, John Kenneth
1999 *Orphans of the Cold War: America and the Tibetan Struggle for Survival*. New York: Public Affairs.

Lomnitz, Claudio
2001 *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico: An Anthropology of Nationalism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

McGranahan, Carole
2001 *Arrested Histories: Between Empire and Exile in Twentieth-Century Tibet*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan.
2002 *"Sa spang mda' gnam spang mda'*: Murder, History, and Social Politics in 1920s Lhasa," in Lawrence Epstein, ed., *Khams pa Histories: Visions of People, Place, and* Authority. Leiden: Brill, pp. 103-126.
2003 "Empire and the Status of Tibet: British, Chinese, and Tibetan Negotiations, 1913-1934," in Alex McKay, ed., *The History of Tibet, Volume 3: The Tibetan Encounter with Modernity*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, pp. 267-295.
n.d. "Empire, Archive, Diary: A Renegade Tibetan Nationalist in India and China, 1946-1950."

McKay, Alex
1997 *Tibet and the British Raj: The Frontier Cadre, 1904-1947*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.

Patterson, George
1998 *Patterson of Tibet: Death Throes of a Nation*. San Diego: ProMotion Publishing.

Peng, Wenbin
2002 "Frontier Process, Provincial Politics and Movements for Khampa Autonomy During the Republican Period," in Lawrence Epstein, ed., *Khams pa Histories: Visions of People, Place, and Authority*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 57-84.

Radakrishnan, R.
1990 "Toward an Effective Intellectual: Foucault or Gramsci?," in *Intellectuals: Aesthetics, Politics, Academics*, Bruce Robbins, ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 57-100.

Sampho, Tenzin Dhondup
1987 *Mi tshe'i rba rlabs 'khrugs po*. Dehra Dun: Taring House.

Samuel, Geoffrey
1993 *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Shakabpa, Tsepon W.D.
1967 *Tibet: A Political History*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
nd. *Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs (Political History of Tibet)*. 2 vols. Kalimpong: Shakabpa House.

Shakya, Tsering
1999 *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet Since 1947.* London: Pimlico.

Smith, Warren
1996 *Tibetan Nation: A History of Tibetan Nationalism and Sino-Tibetan Relations.* Boulder: Westview Press.

Stoddard, Heather
1985 *Le Mendiant d'Amdo.* Paris: Société d'Ethnographie.

Suny, Ronald Grigor and Michael D. Kennedy, eds.
1999 *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Taklha, Phuntsok, Tashi (Stag lha phun tshogs bkra shis)
1995 *Mi tshe'i byung ba brjod pa.* 3 vols. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

Thomas, Lowell Jr.
1950 *Out of this World: Across the Himalayas to Forbidden Tibet.* New York: Greystone Books.

Upton, Janet
1995 "Home on the Grasslands? Tradition, Modernity and the Negotiation of Identity by Tibetan Intellectuals in the PRC," in Melissa Brown, ed., *Negotiating Ethnic Identities in China and Taiwan.* Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 98-124.

Venturino, Steven
2000 *Critical Baggage: Traveling Theory in China, Tibet, and the Transnational Academy.* Ph.D. dissertation, Loyola University.

Who's Who in Tibet. Calcutta: Government of India Press, 1938.

Who's Who in Tibet. Calcutta: Government of India Press, 1949.