

**THE TIBET-CHINA QUESTION**  
**UNDER INVESTIGATION**  
*A MASTER THESIS*



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## **Abstract:**

### **Master Thesis in Development and International Studies**

**Title:** The Tibet – China Question under Investigation

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### **Background, Methods, Theories and Conclusions:**

This thesis is a problem based oriented one mainly within the field of international relations that explores the issue, and the problems it carries with it, or China and Tibet. It sets out to find possible answers, solutions and possible outcomes as to whether China and Tibet, as in the Exile Government of Tibet are able to reach a solution favourable to both parts. This is the essence of the problem formulation found in this report, and it is this question, of whether these two entities can agree on a solution, that guides the thesis throughout it and the purpose is to gain answers to this question. The case is that both entities have a different take on the history of Tibet and China. While Tibet claims that it does not belong to China, China claims that it does. This is the initial problem of the subject matter that the whole problem is grounded in. I have included in thesis what I argue is relevant background information that is meant to support the conclusions of the theoretical frameworks. I then make use of the international relations theory of social constructivism in order to assess the reasons for the different frames of thought and cultures and consequently their agreements. Furthermore, the theory of international relations, together with geopolitics, account for the power relations between the two state entities (I term the Exile Government of Tibet as a state entity in this matter for sake of simplicity and theoretical purpose. Realism investigates the reasons for why Tibet and China have done in relation to each other, the reasons for why they act as they do and both realism and social constructivism conclude on these finds. The theories, in support of the background information added, conclude that a solution is indeed possible, albeit perhaps not as likely as the Exile Government would hope. I explore the Middle Way Approach, a system in which Tibet would gain semi but not complete autonomy, put forth by the Dalai Lama and accepted by the

Exile Government, and thesis show why China would be inclined to accept this approach, but most likely will not.

**Key Words:** “China”, “Tibet”, “International Relations”, “Realism”, “Constructivism”, “Geopolitics”, “International Conflicts”, “National Conflicts”, “Development”,

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## 1. Abbreviation List

**CCP** - Chinese Communist Party

**CTA** – Central Tibetan Administration

**GDP** – Gross Domestic Product

**IGO** – Intergovernmental Organisation

**IR** – International Relations

**PRC** – People’s Republic of China

**MWA** – Middle Way Approach

**TAR** – Tibet Autonomous Region

**U.S.** – United States

## 2. Introduction

Whether it is to an intense degree or not so much a hot issue in the media, depending on different times of conflict and issues in recent years, the conflict between the CTA (CTA stands for the Central Tibetan Administration, which is the name for the Tibetan Government in Exile. I will for simplicity's sake write CTA throughout this thesis each time I am referring to the Tibetan Government in Exile) and the Chinese authorities has since 1950, been a difficult issue to solve. 1959 is the year where, according to the Chinese, the Dalai Lama fled to India “after his failed military attempt to restore the former slave regime in Tibet”<sup>1</sup>, and according to the CTA a Chinese invasion in 1950<sup>2</sup> occurred in Tibet. The difficult issue encircles around as to whom the region of Tibet belongs. In this issue, one that can be understood as geopolitical, social, economic, cultural and most definitely political in its nature, there are, as with many issues of these sorts, many sides of it and we will here look mainly at two of them. These sides are wants and preferences as to how the issue really is, which truth is the real truth, if any, and what shall be done to solve it. These two accounts are that of China, of the CTA, and because the Dalai Lama has a proposal slightly different now, than the CTA respectively; he will be highly regarded throughout this thesis. This view is called “the Middle Way Approach”, one that has largely been ignored by the PRC (People's Republic of China), and one we will also look into during the thesis, which will be discussed later, but one that we shall see has now been accepted by the CTA.

Let us first look at China and the arguments for China's case. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) argues “that Tibet has been part of China ever since the Yuan dynasty of the thirteenth century”<sup>3</sup>. They claim that the account of Tibet having been independent at several times in history is false and a downright lie. The CCP (Chinese Communist Party) further argue that Tibet would not be what it is now, if it was not for the development implemented by the CCP since to put the increasing development of the Chinese in the Tibet region to a halt would be devastating for Tibet. Tibet's

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<sup>1</sup> *Truth about Tibet is slowly coming to light*: <http://english.people.com.cn/90780/7754758.html>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>2</sup> Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June: “Introduction – the Tibet Question in Contemporary Perspective”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 11

<sup>3</sup> Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June: “Introduction – the Tibet Question in Contemporary Perspective”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 5 line 6-7.

people are now enjoying a development by China that they should be thankful for, would be the claim from China. See for example this quote: “Since 1950 Tibetan living standards and life expectancy have been transformed, with economic growth averaging 12 per cent over the last six years”<sup>4</sup> and how the Tibetans before 1950 was “struggling in severe poverty”<sup>5</sup>. In an extension to this claim, is the assertion of the CCP that before 1950, Tibet was a culture and region that can only be compared to the worst understanding of the Middle Ages. CCP therefore sees it as such, that it has saved Tibet from a horrible state of being, a “house of horrors”<sup>6</sup>. Basically, the view from China about reports on Tibet from the West is that they are misguided and misunderstood, which CCP thinks is “unfortunately” in terms of the west’ understanding of the situation.<sup>7</sup> On the other side of the scale of arguments are the views of the Dalai Lama, the CTA and supporters of opinion that Tibet ought to be free of Chinese control, as they would put it themselves. The most direct opposite, as opposed to the views of the CCP, view from the CTA<sup>8</sup>, is the fact that they disagree with the claim that Tibet has historically always belonged to China. The “Tibetan exiles maintain that for the past 2,000 years Tibet has always been an independent political entity”<sup>9</sup>. The claim, therefore, from the Chinese, that Tibet belongs to China due to historical reasons, is according to the Tibetans, not valid. The CTA see the presence of the Han Chinese more as an occupation, that from the opinion of the CTA, the Chinese ought to leave Tibet<sup>10</sup>. The CCP, in

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<sup>4</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 254 line 16-19

<sup>5</sup> *Truth about Tibet is slowly coming to light*: <http://english.people.com.cn/90780/7754758.html>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012. line 8

<sup>6</sup> Barnett, R: “Beyond the Collaborator- Martyr Model”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 8, line 37

<sup>7</sup> *The Tibet Issue*: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-16747814>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>8</sup> Despite the fact that Tibet is a de facto part of China, and you are arguably referring more to a region than a people of a particular political orientation, by writing “Tibetans”, I shall, out of simplicity, in future writing, write “Tibetans” when I refer to people in Tibet who want Tibet to be free of China.

<sup>9</sup> Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June: “Introduction – the Tibet Question in Contemporary Perspective”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 5 line 5-6

<sup>10</sup> Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June: “Introduction – the Tibet Question in Contemporary Perspective”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 5



this regard, argues that Tibet is not, and has not been recognized as an independent state<sup>11</sup>, and sees no reason why it should be now.

As the CCP has argued that China has made Tibet more civilized and that before 1950, Tibet was backward to a point that can be compared to that of the Middle Ages in Europe. However, according to the CTA, the situation was by far as bad as China make it seem like<sup>12</sup>, and that furthermore, the CTA see it as, to them, common knowledge, that there was little difference between rich and poor in Tibet before 1950. In extension to this line of thought, I will note the next point on the side of the CTA, which is, according to the CTA, the reported ruthless behaviour of the Chinese. In recent history, the CTA claims that the CCP has ruled Tibet with a fierce hand and China has abused the human rights of the Tibetans since they “took over” Tibet.<sup>13</sup> Some 80.000 Tibetans together with the Dalai Lama had been forced to flee to India in exile in 1959 during an uprising<sup>14</sup>. However, note the opposite view, that they fled after trying to restore a farmer slave regime in Tibet, beatings of Buddhist monks had even taken place. A recent example of this is incidents during the Tibetan New Year<sup>15</sup>. The language Tibetan along with other parts of Tibetan culture, have been suppressed as well, banned or made illegal<sup>16</sup>, and with some degree, has religion been suppressed, as for example when in 2011, a group of United Nations experts “voiced grave concern over reports of severe human rights restrictions on Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in China’s Sichuan province”<sup>17</sup>. It is furthermore relevant to mention that many monks have recently self-

<sup>11</sup> ‘Central Tibetan Administration’ illegitimate: [http://www.china.org.cn/wap/2012-03/30/content\\_25025761.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/wap/2012-03/30/content_25025761.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>12</sup> Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June: “Introduction – the Tibet Question in Contemporary Perspective”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 9

<sup>13</sup> Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June: “Introduction – the Tibet Question in Contemporary Perspective”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 6-7

<sup>14</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 253

<sup>15</sup> *An Unhappy Chinese New Year: Chinese Forces Shoot Tibetan Protesters, with At Least One Dead*: [http://globalspin.blogs.time.com/2012/01/24/an-unhappy-chinese-new-year-chinese-forces-shoot-tibetan-protesters-with-at-least-one-dead/?cid=nlc-dailybrief-daily\\_news\\_brief-link12-20120125&fb\\_source=message](http://globalspin.blogs.time.com/2012/01/24/an-unhappy-chinese-new-year-chinese-forces-shoot-tibetan-protesters-with-at-least-one-dead/?cid=nlc-dailybrief-daily_news_brief-link12-20120125&fb_source=message); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>16</sup> Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June: “Introduction – the Tibet Question in Contemporary Perspective”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 7

<sup>17</sup> *UN experts warn of severe restrictions on Tibetan monasteries in China*: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40269&Cr=China&Cr1=&Kw1=tibet&Kw2=&Kw3=>; line 1; last retrieved on 23.06.2012. line 1

immolated<sup>18</sup>. The CCP, however, states that in this case, it is the Dalai Lama that is encouraging monks of Tibet to self-immolate for their cause<sup>19</sup> and has also accused him of being “a wolf in monk’s robes”<sup>20</sup>. The CTA say that the political changes, the CCP have made in Tibet, are not welcome, and have not been so. Many of the uprisings, however, in the spirit of this may saying to Beijing’s reforms have been met with further violence. Consequently, any protest and unrest in Tibet due to reforms made by the CCP has been stomped down and silenced, according to the CTA. In the West, this issue seems to be somewhat touchy, and perhaps two sided. The U.S., for example, does not recognize the CTA, and are careful about supporting the CTA and the Dalai Lama publicly, or any other state for that matter, as this quote implies: “Foreign states acknowledge that Tibet is part of China and none formally recognizes the Tibet Government-in-exile (TGIE)”<sup>21</sup>. The U.S. current president, Barack Obama, did, however, receive the Dalai Lama on a visit last year<sup>22</sup>. At the same time they (the U.S.), also encourage dialogue between the CCP and the Dalai Lama. Nevertheless, it continues to be a complicated issue internationally for any state to form a public opinion on, due to the fact that China is such a large trading partner with many powerful states. This issue is indeed a complicated one. Both parties, the CCP and the CTA seem to be very firm in their demands and what they want. For many years human rights violations have been committed, according to the CTA, both parties are greatly unsatisfied with the opposition and its actions, and despite encouragement from the West to begin productive dialogs, there does not seem to be any plausible chance that this conflict will come to an end soon. It is conceivable that China does not want to lose face, decreasing the territory of their state, or give up land that belongs to the Middle Kingdom, while the CTA believes that the Tibetans truly want to become independent, as it claims they once was, and with more and more human rights being violated they are only becoming more hardened in their dream of complete authority. With all of this in mind, together with cases of

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<sup>18</sup> Tibetan monk dies in China after self-immolating: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-16469356>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>19</sup> China accuses Dalai Lama of encouraging suicide by fire: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-15372731>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>20</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 254 line 34

<sup>21</sup> Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June: “Introduction – the Tibet Question in Contemporary Perspective”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 3 line 16-18

<sup>22</sup> *Dalai Lama Visit: President Obama Meets Spiritual Leader, China Complains*: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/16/obamas-meets-with-dalai-l\\_n\\_900664.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/16/obamas-meets-with-dalai-l_n_900664.html); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

former or recent events in Tibet, development projects initiated by the CCP, and many other important factors to regard, it becomes evident and extremely interesting to investigate if a solution can actually be met – a solution that will be to the satisfaction of both parties. The following problem statement encircles the subject matter and problem I have formed here, and will throughout my thesis guide me towards one or more possible answers:

## 2.1. Problem Formulation

For China, as much as the CTA, it is increasingly becoming a political and social problem that the territorial conflict between these two entities in relation to Tibet, is a continuous issue.

*It therefore becomes evident to ask the question as to if it is even possible for the CTA, the Dalai Lama and China to reach an agreement?*

The following sub questions will be discussed in order to move towards a possible answer for the problem statement question. It should be noted, however, that while some of these sub questions will be discussed thoroughly, others will only be touched upon. This is primarily due to a space limitation, however, also by relevance. Some may also be answered implicitly, while others explicitly.

### **Sub questions:**

- *To ask, through the lenses of the theory of social Constructivism, what it is that lays to ground for their disagreement and how they understand themselves as a state entity and how they see, as it were, their significant other?*
- *Does the cultural differences between the CTA and the Chinese influence the ability, or inability for them to agree?*
- *How does it matter to China, in terms of Geopolitics and security, if Tibet is or is not part of China?*
- *Does it have any implications for Xinjiang and consequently China, if Tibet were to reach independence?*
- *Does it matter for Tibet and China internationally if they reach a solution?*
- *In what way does the notion of power politics play a significant factor in the Tibet question?*

- *Is the Dalai Lama's "middle way" solution a realistic option?*
- *If it was the case that Tibet became a full independent state, would it then be able to sustain itself economically?*
- *What would Tibet essentially gain from achieving a full or partial independence?*

### 3. Methodology

This chapter has the function of accounting for the theories used in this thesis, stating which type of theories they are and why they are relevant. The methodology chapter will in short go through the theories used and do this by the purpose of giving the reader a fair understanding as to why these theories have been chosen when attempting to answer the problem statement outlined earlier. The methodology chapter will furthermore contain an account on what can be found in the thesis and what the nature of it is, e.g. which data will be used and how the analysis is to be read. In terms of that, the methodology chapter will as well contain information on which type of data that will be used, why it is relevant data and how it will be used. Lastly, the methodology contain a critical perspective of the theories so that the reader will be aware of the weaknesses of the theoretical frameworks in order to understand the arguments better, when reading the analysis later on.

#### 3.1. Types of Data, Qualitative Data or Quantitative Data

It is primarily qualitative data that will be used throughout the thesis. This means data, such as academic books. It also means data such as articles, both news articles, but also, to a large degree, academic journal articles, and as well, official articles, both from the side of the CTA, and from the official side of the PRC. What is not going to be a prevalent type of data throughout this thesis is the quantitative sort, or in other words, numerical and statistical ones. I interpret the problem statement as the sort of theoretical one that is best answered with theoretical analyses and argumentative language, in comparison to for example statistical comparison. I will then note that a large part of my sources will by their very nature be biased towards one or the other view – this is, sometimes, to a large degree. There will be many official sources, for example, supporting strongly the Chinese view, where certain political interests may be at play. This is also the case on the opposite ballpark, where there will among the sources arguing for the CTA's view, be sources leaning towards having a political interest in supporting a certain view and truth value.

One might also expect that some sources, of the academic type, can have a tendency to be biased towards the CTA and the Dalai Lama's view, due to a Western sympathy towards the CTA. Because of these prevalent, and sometimes occasional biases, I will make it clear, that I am both aware, that they are there, and that I will try and support both claims and the sources fairly in the thesis, so as to promote the best objectivism possible. I will, however, note that because of the fact that two different parts of my sources have a tendency to be opinionated towards one particular view, it becomes more clear to compare the two views, and show how they differ, which will be an analytical advantage both to me and to the reader, in terms of understanding the subject matter, and the problematic issue in it. Furthermore, if it is to be expected, that the academic sources hold more objectivity, it implies that they have a different sort of status, than the official sources from for example China or the CTA. Due to the nature of an academic article, it being more analytical and objective, a stronger argument can be made using an academic article, as a premise. At the same time, when stating comparative views, it is, as mentioned, more reasonable to compare two radical opposing views. I will therefore, with this in mind, use my sources appropriately, according to what type of sources they are.

### **3.2. How the Theories and Sources will be used**

In extension to the last subchapter in the methodology, it will here be explained how the sources will be used in this thesis. The theoretical frameworks, which are Constructivism, Geopolitics and especially Realism, are the backbone in this thesis. They are how we will epistemologically reach more certain knowledge on the subject matter. They will be used to create an explanatory framework around the subject matter in which they can strengthen my arguments put forth in the analysis. In other words, the thesis may be hypothetical in its nature. However, it is the job of the theories and the sources they come from, to theoretically prove the validity of my hypotheses. In this matter, Constructivism is important, although throughout the thesis we will see that Realism hold stronger argumentative overall value. Realism is relevant when looking at the data I have on the CTA and China acting in certain ways, for example, regard to each other. Realism will then explain why they act as they do. Geopolitics will support Realism, and be relevant in the data I have on the importance of land power and especially the resources that Tibet has. Constructivism is important when regarding the cultural differences between the Chinese and the Tibetans and how it is relevant in the subject matter.

In terms of the other gathered data, such as official statements from the PRC, books on Tibet, articles on important events, academic articles on the Tibetan question; they are all going to be used as comparative data and background data to allow the reader to accept my premises. They are in other words the body of the paper, whereas the theories are the skeleton. The data will then be the evidence to support the arguments that the theoretical frameworks will hypothesize.

### **3.3. Realism – Power Politics**

Realism, the IR (International Relations) theory to emphasize on and explain power politics will be used to account for the power relational aspects between the various entities relevant in the subject matter and to explain possible outcomes. A short chapter will be devoted to explain the theory and its relevant parts, so that it can be used adequately in the analysis chapter later on. Due to the fact that we are dealing with state and state like entities, Realism is arguably a good way of explaining the factors at play and the causal reasons for why they act as they do, and why they have certain preferences and wishes, of which are difficult for the other parts to comply with. The preferences and wishes of entities such as China, the CTA, and the West, can, as we shall see, be explained, in part, as factors that are consequently controlled by power relations. It is evident here, to note that while some entities in its strict sense is not a state will still be treated as if they are “state like” entities, in the way that IR Realism is laid out, such as for example the CTA.

### **3.4. Geopolitics**

The perception that geopolitical factors play a role in international affairs is one that can be found to have certain philosophical similarities with the nature of IR Realism. This perception will therefore be used to support the theory of Realism throughout this thesis. It is factors such as land, resources, etc. that will be regarded to be of geopolitical importance to the various actors at play in this case. There will, however, also be instances where it will stand alone as an explanatory tool. In the presentation of the theories chapter, it will briefly be explained what is meant by Geopolitics and how we will define it here. The approach will then later be exemplified, when used upon the subject matter where it will become evident in shedding light on certain matters in relation to Tibet and China.

### **3.5.Social Constructivism**

Social Constructivism is an IR theory, increasingly more and more accepted in the IR community, and one on a somewhat equal footing with other well accepted IR theories, such as liberalism and Realism. Social Constructivism, however, will show to be a most enlightening explanation as to why the range of entities in this matter, have a hard time agreeing, due to its emphasis on cultural, social and norm differences. It will show the case brought forth in the subject matter, in a quite different light, than Realism, mentioned earlier. The reason for using this theory is both to give a credible explanation to the China – CTA puzzle, and as well, to give IR Realism a methodological opponent. As will be seen, this is exactly what it does.

### **3.6.Critique of Theories**

This chapter has the function of criticizing the theories that will be used throughout the thesis, and to explain the narrow use of some of them. The importance of this can be found in the premise that in making sure to point out flaws of a theory, and make clear the narrow and precise use of them, we ensure that the subject matter, the argument and its premises stays on a clear path. In so doing, the argument and conclusion should hold stronger in the end of the thesis.

### **3.7.Background Data on the Tibet Question**

This chapter is important, because it illustrates more thoroughly than the introduction, the views of both the CTA and China. It furthermore explains how the CTA and the Chinese view each other, and touches upon how the international society views both the CTA and the Chinese. These details are important, because they let the reader move into a framework, which will guide the rest of the thesis and especially the analysis of it. This chapter may be formed as a discussion, however, the nature of the chapter as such, is chosen in this manner, so as to best reflect a fair view of all-important sides and the chapter is in general meant as a necessary background information chapter. This chapter will furthermore contain additional information and aspects, I deem crucial to know, when analysing the subject matter.



### **3.8. On the Analysis**

It is at this point important to shortly outline and explain the nature of the analysis together with its purpose in this thesis. The analysis is meant to be the “meat” of the thesis at hand, while the theories, Realism, Geopolitics and Constructivism, are the backbone of it. This means, in other words, that the theories’ purpose is to provide a framework for the analysis. This framework will be used in the analysis part in order to determine the theoretical perspective that will be required when analysing the subject matter. The nature of the analysis is therefore to analyse and discuss the subject matter and the sub questions outlined in the problem formulation with the theoretical frameworks as tools to do so. As to how the analysis is structured, is that it has several subchapters titled in inspiration of the sub questions from the problem formulation and the theories are applied when fitting for the subject that the subchapter is treating. The purpose of the analysis is to shed light on the problem, explain the problem theoretically, and reach several sub conclusions, so that the possible answer to the problem formulation and therefore the conclusion will seem clear.

### **3.9. Delimitations and Limitations**

#### **3.9.1. Delimitations**

In terms of answering the sub questions, the thesis could have extended its perspective by looking at how the state of Xinjiang is in regard to separatist movements and Muslims in that area who want independence. It could furthermore have been interesting to look at the state of Taiwan and its relationship to China so as to compare it to Tibet versus China. Investigating these other aspects might add a broader perspective to the subject matter that would ultimately engage the author and reader in a hypothesis on what lays to ground for Beijing’s actions and a possible future for Tibet. This would move the subject matter into the theories of state building. However, it is in this author’s opinion that if these aspects were to be probed properly, the thesis at hand would extend the limit of pages allowed and mentioned aspects have therefore been chosen not to be considered.



### 3.9.2. Limitations

As argued earlier, the subject investigated is first and foremost of a theoretical manner, and it therefore only contains arguments from a theoretical framework mainly deprived of statistics and other quantitative data. However, when searching for data on the subject matter this author did not encounter much relevant statistical data. Perhaps, however, a longer data searching period could have meant that quantitative data would have been found. Even though it is argued that the theoretical frameworks made use of require qualitative data, as used in this thesis, there are admittedly some places where more quantitative data would work as strong premises. This would be within parts of the thesis for example treating the economy of Tibet. However, as it turns out, the thesis is limited somewhat from using this by the nature of the theories, but especially also by time by data available.

Another factor that has limited this thesis, which is noteworthy, is the fact that one of the main official sources from Beijing on Tibet, namely the official website of the TAR (Tibet Autonomous Region) was inaccessible to this author. It was inaccessible due to the fact that the TAR website was only to be found in Chinese Mandarin, and not in English. However, the thesis is supported by other official sources of Beijing, which are both state sources and sources from the media. Arguably, this fact counters the majority of that loss.

## 4. Presentation of Theories

### 4.1. Realism – Power Politics

Realism is historically, together with liberalism, the most recognized theory in IR<sup>23</sup> and the one that goes the furthest back in time. Taken in its broadest form, it goes all the way back to ancient Greece with Thucydides and on its way towards present time it stops at historically influential figures, such as Niccolo Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.<sup>24</sup> In contemporary literature, however, the main branch of Realism is structural Realism<sup>25</sup>, and within that, there are essentially

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<sup>23</sup> Mearsheimer, John J: *"The Tragedy of Great Power Politics"*; University of Chicago, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.; New York; 2001. p. 14

<sup>24</sup> Globalization of...p. 162

<sup>25</sup> Globalization of...p. 166

two branches of Realism; a defensive Realism and an offensive Realism. The following quote nicely illustrates the important distinctions between the two: “Structural Realism divides into two camps; those who argue that states are security maximizers (defensive Realism) and those who argue that states are power maximizers (offensive Realism).”<sup>26</sup> They both do still strive for power, though, but fundamentally, “offensive Realism differs with defensive Realism over the question of how much power states want”<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, “For defensive realists, the international structure provides states with little incentive to seek additional increments of power; instead it pushes them to maintain the existing balance of power.”<sup>28</sup> The offensive realists, though, believe it to be the case that due to the nature of the anarchic system between states (a core concept of Realism, which will be explained shortly); states will ultimately search out ways in which they can optimize their power in ways that will be at the cost of other states.<sup>29</sup> Both of these two branches of Realism share core essential characteristics, which will be treated next.

As the title of this chapter implies, Realism is the approach in IR that lays its emphasis on power politics. Power is in fact the most important factor of Realism, where “realists concur that international politics is essentially a struggle for power”<sup>30</sup>. Depending on whether it is defensive Realism or offensive, there is a limit as to how much power states would, according to Realism, seek to acquire. In offensive Realism, a state would theoretically not stop until it was, if possible, a hegemon. “Great powers behave aggressively not because they want to or because they possess some inner drive to dominate, but because they have to seek more power if they want to maximize their odds of survival”<sup>31</sup>. That is to say that according to Realism, power and the struggle for power is what embodies the essential behaviour of states in the international anarchic system. The anarchic system is what will be looked at next.

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<sup>26</sup> Globalization of...p. 172; p. 10-13

<sup>27</sup> Mearsheimer, John J: “*The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*”; University of Chicago, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.; New York; 2001. p. 21, line 7-8

<sup>28</sup> Mearsheimer, John J: “*The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*”; University of Chicago, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.; New York; 2001. p. 21, line 8-11

<sup>29</sup> Mearsheimer, John J: “*The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*”; University of Chicago, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.; New York; 2001. p. 21

<sup>30</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: “*The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations*”; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 169, line 50-51

<sup>31</sup> Mearsheimer, John J: “*The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*”; University of Chicago, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.; New York; 2001. p. 21, line 25-28

As referred to earlier, when explaining about the concept of power in the theory of Realism, there is an anarchic system that states find themselves in, and makes them behave as they do when competing for power, securing themselves out of fear, etc. This anarchic system is a fundamental bedrock assumption of Realism, and a concept that is crucial in order to understand how the theory works. According to Mearsheimer and his understanding of the anarchic system, he defines it the following way:

*The first assumption is that the international system is anarchic, which does not mean that it is chaotic or riven by disorder. It is easy to draw that conclusion, since Realism depicts a world characterized by security competition and war. By itself, however, the realist notion of anarchy has nothing to do with conflict; it is an ordering principle, which says that the system comprises independent states that have no central authority above them. Sovereignty, in other words, inheres in states because there is no higher ruling body in the international system. There is no “government over governments.”<sup>32</sup>*

To sum up, realists argue that there is a struggle for power and security within international relational, where in this theoretical context, the type of power can be understood in terms of capabilities, such as “size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence”<sup>33</sup>. Due to the anarchy between states, “states compete for security, markets, influence, and so on.”<sup>34</sup> This struggle is inherent due to the inclination to survive, that states have<sup>35</sup>, and with more power and more security states are more likely to survive. The emphasis here is, as put forth throughout this chapter, on states and the sovereign that states have internationally. Realists then argue that organisations, both NGOs, INGOs and IGOs are, together with other political actors that are not states, of lesser importance

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<sup>32</sup> Mearsheimer, John J: “*The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*”; University of Chicago, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.; New York; 2001. p. 30, line 18-26

<sup>33</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: “*The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations*”; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 173, line 57-59

<sup>34</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: “*The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations*”; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 172, line 73-75

<sup>35</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: “*The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations*”; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006.p. 164

when states interact and in general in the international political spectrum.<sup>36</sup> Some realists support the view that other non-state actors may have an influence, but still argue that essentially it is the rational competition between states in the anarchic system that is what determines their (states) behaviour. As to how Realism will be treated when later used as an analytical tool, in terms of the two main branches mentioned here, they will both be referred to. However, it is mainly through the simply term “Realism” that they will be referred to, due to the fact that I interpreted the examples given in the thesis as supporting both of these branches on the same and different occasions.

## 4.2. Geopolitics

This theoretical chapter about Geopolitics will, as will be shown why, mainly be a supportive theoretical perspective to that of Realism. The principles and understanding of Geopolitics will therefore only shortly be outlined here. There will, as it is worth mentioning, also be certain parts of the analysis and its arguments that will mainly refer to this chapter in establishing its premises and conclusions.

Even though it is a theoretical way of approaching a subject matter, Geopolitics is in many ways more of a methodological tool. It is a mind frame that one can make use of, when looking at important political matters. It is not without reason that I place it as a supplement to that of Realism, since it is arguably an approach close akin to Realism and power politics. A good sum up of the definition of geopolitical policies goes as follows: “Geopolitical policies seek to establish national or imperial control over space and the resources, routeways, industrial capacity and population the territory contains.”<sup>37</sup> It is this definition that I will use as my premise throughout my thesis when using Geopolitics as an analytical tool. As it is evident from the latter terminology, Geopolitics is in its nature not exactly the same as Realism. It does not, for example, beg the same worldview as Realism in the nature of its paradigm. However, Geopolitics arguably has to do with power politics, which is why this thesis both will combine it with Realism in strengthening an argument, and stand on its own when probing the underlying questions in this thesis.

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<sup>36</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: *“The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations”*; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 176

<sup>37</sup> Blouet, Brian W.: *“Geopolitics and Globalization in the Twentieth Century – Second Revised and Expanded Edition”*; Reaktion Books; London; 2010. p. 7, line 8-10

### 4.3.Social Constructivism

Constructivism has come to be, as mentioned in the methodology, a widely accepted theory in the field of international relations (IR) alongside Realism and liberalism. It “is a social theory and not a substantive theory of international politics. Social theory is broadly concerned with how to conceptualize the relationship between agents and structures and substantive theory offers specific claims and hypotheses about patterns in world politics.”<sup>38</sup>It, in other words, looks at many social factors when analysing and investigating a subject in a political or IR case. This could be factors such as gender, religion, customs; norms, values, the fact that people have different worldviews and ideas, and so forth. Put in other words, an element of Constructivism “is how knowledge, that is, symbols, rules, concepts, categories, and meanings, shapes how individuals construct and interpret their world.”<sup>39</sup> It is therefore, according to Wendt, idealism and holism, that is the core aspects of Constructivism.<sup>40</sup>Holism is here understood, in the manner, that this theoretical approach takes “the whole” into consideration, by looking at all the relevant aforementioned aspects in order to assess a clear understanding about the issues and why people act as they do in a politically relevant issue – be it global or national, or international in nature. It is to a large degree ideas and the fact that ideas differ among us, that is the core constructivist explanation as to why we act as we do. Individuals, societies, cultures, states, etc. have different ideas and different worldviews. The view is, in other words, that our perceived reality is a socially constructed world. Our world (at least our social world contrary to a psychical) is not something we can understand without already being in it and we are therefore biased due to our own cultural background. There is then no true social reality, but merely normative structures of which we are able to understand interactions and events in the world. It is then, when looking at events in history and politics, according to Constructivism, cultural ideas, and therefore culture in and of itself that “informs the meanings that people give to their actions”<sup>41</sup>. In Constructivism, when talking about power relations, the world is of a quite different nature, than for example how Realism sees the world to be. It says that power exists “when identities and interests

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<sup>38</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: *“The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations”*; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 258, line 14-18

<sup>39</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: *“The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations”*; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 259, line 33-36

<sup>40</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: *“The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations”*; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 258

<sup>41</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: *“The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations”*; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 260, line 32-33

are constructed in ways that benefit some to the disadvantage of others”.<sup>42</sup> This is then, as implied, a different way of looking at the concept of power. An understanding of power being something that can be traced back to the fact that our intentions drives us through ideas, and power is then those ideas being realized through politics, and therefore have real consequences for other people. In extension to this, it is worth mentioning that “actors can attempt to change the norms of that subsequently guide and constitute state identities and interests”<sup>43</sup>, and an occurrence in the world, according to Constructivism, something called strategic interaction, “exist when the ability of actors to achieve their goals is dependent on the behavior of others”<sup>44</sup>. This is part of the essential understanding of how power and political interactions have to do with the fact that people have different ideas and cultures, and how interconnected the world is due to the important significant play that these social relationships have. The latter also refer to how supporters of Constructivism believe that the world can in fact change, ideas and actors of these ideas, can influence each other and the world is then a very complex interaction of social relationships that to various degrees hold importance when understanding the world.

To conclude the presentation of social Constructivism, the following quote is arguably a good choice to do so with:

*As constructivists have examined world politics they have been broadly interested in how the structure constructs the actors’ identities and interests, how their interaction are organized and constrained by structure, and how their very interaction serves to either reproduce or transform that structure.*<sup>45</sup>

This, in many ways, seems to be the essence of social Constructivism in terms of the analytic tool which we are going to use it for, when applying it to the subject matter. We will then later examine, in an analytic manner, some of the questions underlying this thesis.

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<sup>42</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: “*The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations*”; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 260, line 75-77

<sup>43</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: “*The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations*”; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 263, line 12-14

<sup>44</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: “*The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations*”; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 263, 21-23

<sup>45</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: “*The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations*”; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 267, line 19-24

#### 4.4. Critique of Theories

When applying theoretical frameworks in support of an argument for why a case is as it is, it is fair to acknowledge that the theories being used are not without flaws or does not necessarily support all aspects equally well. We will therefore take a short look at social Constructivism and Realism from a critical perspective. We will avoid spending time on Geopolitics, which is because I deem Geopolitics to not be as an extensive theory and is especially not used as extensively in this thesis.

I have previously mentioned that social Constructivism is a theory in international relations that has gained precedence and is increasingly being equalled with the big theories of Realism and liberalism in social international politics. As we shall see in the following quote, this is perhaps a slight overstatement, where the quote explains how social Constructivism is much less than the other mentioned theories: “It is much less because it is not properly a theory that can be viewed as a rival to already existing theories. It offers no predictions about enduring regularities or tendencies in world politics. Instead, it suggests how to investigate them.”<sup>46</sup> This means that social Constructivism can attempt to explain the subject matter of the Tibet question; however, when it comes to making predictions such as whether or not Tibet and China can reach an agreement, it does a lesser good job. It is therefore only in some aspects of this thesis that social Constructivism is useful in answering the problem formulation, which makes it a good thing that a complementary theory; Realism, will be used as well.

I will give credit to Realism in the presentation of the theories, where I will emphasize the long history it had. Recently, however, it has lost some credibility. This happened after the cold war, where Realism failed to explain the increasing rise of international institutions, international actors and the significance of globalization in the form of increasing co-operation, communication and the global market. As Realism emphasize that these civil society institutions have less or no significance the problem arose for realist thinkers to account for this new increased trend.<sup>47</sup> The way that I will go about taking this factor into account is first and foremost that my thesis and the problem formulation encircling it mainly has to do with state actors and the majority of the entities

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<sup>46</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: *“The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations”*; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 268; line 63-68

<sup>47</sup> Baylis, John and Smith, Steve: *“The Globalization of World Politics – an Introduction to International Relations”*; Oxford University Press; New York; 2006. p. 164



affecting this question causally are state actors. I will acknowledge, though, that non-state actors will be taken into account. Two things has to be said to this; social Constructivism will compliment Realism in this matter and furthermore, I will in fact use some non-state actor behaviour with the realist line of thought in a way that gives account to the principles of Realism such as will be argued.

## 5. Background Data on the Tibet Question

### 5.1. China's View on the Issue

According to official Chinese sources, Tibet has been populated since before Christ. During the Tang Dynasty, Tibet was in many wars, and therefore it formed diplomatic relationships with China, to seek protection. Tibet's ties had been closer to China, and it was during the Yuan Dynasty, founded by Kublai Khan<sup>48</sup>, a grandson of Genghis Khan, that China was reunified, thus making Tibet and Yunnan officially part of China.<sup>49</sup> China is a civilisation that has gone through many a transformation. This seems to be indisputable. What China would argue, however, is that during these transformations, Tibet has never been separated China.

*After the founding of the Republic of China (1912-1949), Tibet remained one of China's provinces. The KMT (Kuomintang) Government established an administrative body in Tibet. Together with the Mongolian and Tibetan Committee's representative office in Tibet, it maintained direct communication with China's central Government. The National Assembly of China and both chambers of parliament included Tibetans whose names have been preserved all along on official documents.*<sup>50</sup>

As the quote clearly states, when the Republic of China was formed, Tibet remained part of China. Furthermore, it kept political control with Tibet, by establishing an office in Tibet, to represent and control the region of Tibet. However, during the period of the Republic of China, there was much

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<sup>48</sup> *Tibet in Chinese history*: <http://zt.tibet.cn/english/zt/history/200402004924105000.htm>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012

<sup>49</sup> *History of Tibet*: [http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content\\_13268563.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content_13268563.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>50</sup> *Republic of China (1912-1949)*: <http://zt.tibet.cn/english/zt/history/200402004525163643.htm>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012. line 1-5;



confusion from the West, and from Tibet, as to whether Tibet was a complete autonomous state, or belonged to China. In consequence, Tibet was running the state, as if it was an independent one.<sup>51</sup> The People's Republic of China was formed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October in 1949 with Mao Zedong as a leader. At this time, the Tibetan Question was still under scrutiny.<sup>52</sup> In extension to the new state of China, the People's Republic of China, and in the spirit of the old, how Tibet belonged to China, the (Chinese) government announced, "that a major goal for 1950 was the liberation of Tibet".<sup>53</sup> The Peaceful Liberation of Tibet, did not, however, go as smoothly, as hoped, because:

*the local government of Tibet led by Regent Dagzha and the forces of pro-imperialist separatists rejected all positive approaches from the Central Government for the peaceful liberation of Tibet, and obstructed the people dispatched by the Central Government for this purpose. They also assembled 8,000 Tibetan troops and militia...*<sup>54</sup>

On the October 24, 1950, China did succeed in chasing the separatists away, and liberating Qamdo. China was helped by local Tibetans in that area when liberating Qamdo.<sup>55</sup> After Qamdo was reunited with China, Beijing withheld forces in order to continue negotiations with the Tibetan government, so as to have the liberation be as peaceful, as possible. Eventually, it became to be so, when "the 14th Dalai Lama and the local government of Tibet eventually expressed their desire to seek a peaceful solution in January 1951"<sup>56, 57</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: *"The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"*; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 37

<sup>52</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: *"The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"*; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 37

<sup>53</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: *"The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"*; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 43; line 28-29

<sup>54</sup> *History of Tibet*: [http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content\\_13268563\\_5.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content_13268563_5.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>55</sup> *History of Tibet*: [http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content\\_13268563\\_5.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content_13268563_5.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>56</sup> *History of Tibet*: [http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content\\_13268563\\_5.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content_13268563_5.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.; line 27-29

<sup>57</sup> *History of Tibet*: [http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content\\_13268563\\_5.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/2008-03/21/content_13268563_5.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

## 5.2. The CTA's View on the Issue

The origins of the Tibetan peoples may go back to an ethnic tribe “originating on the Sino-Tibetan border known to the Chinese as Qiang (Ch’iang)”. This ethnic group was supposedly pushed towards the Tibetan plateau by the peoples of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220).<sup>58</sup> Official CTA sources state, however, that the history of Tibet goes back to “127 BC., with the establishment of the Yarlung dynasty”<sup>59</sup>, but it was not unified until the 7<sup>th</sup> century by King Songtsen Gampo. The website then goes on to note that a “formal peace treaty concluded between China and Tibet in 821/823 demarcated the borders between the two countries and ensured that, “Tibetans shall be happy in Tibet and Chinese shall be happy in China.””<sup>60</sup> According to this version of history, the Yarlung king expanded the territory of Tibet, and in fact succeeded in moving into Chinese territory in between several conflicts with the Chinese, where the Tibetan Empire in fact got to choose which official, albeit shortly, was to sit on the throne in China.<sup>61</sup> In 842, however, the Tibetan Empire collapsed. “For the next four hundred years, Tibet knew no central authority.”<sup>62</sup> This state of affairs continued until 1247, where the Mongol Empire had conquered China, and Sakya Pandita yielded to Godan Khan, on behalf of the Tibetan people, as he knew a Mongol conquering of Tibet and war would be the alternative.<sup>63</sup> It is in this context, that the official view of the CTA is that the Mongol Empire was a world empire, not merely a Chinese one. The Mongol officials never stated, furthermore, that Tibet was under China per se, or that China and Tibet belonged together or was part of a unit.<sup>64</sup> What happened then was that when the Mongol Yuan dynasty fell in 1368, the Ming would continue to rule China in Yuan’s place. The Ming’s perception was that Tibet now was part of China, and they continue to rule over Tibet, as if it was exactly that. The Ming slowly lost the interest of Tibet, and consequently its grip over it, when the threat of the Mongols passed

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<sup>58</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China’s Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> *Historical Overview*: <http://tibetoffice.org/tibet-info/historical-overview>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>60</sup> *Historical Overview*: <http://tibetoffice.org/tibet-info/historical-overview>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>61</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China’s Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China’s Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 5; 26

<sup>63</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China’s Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 5

<sup>64</sup> *Historical Overview*: <http://tibetoffice.org/tibet-info/historical-overview>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

away.<sup>65</sup> It is therefore by wrong analogy, they argue, when the Chinese argue, of historical reasons, that Tibet belongs to China, since they claim that Tibet was conquered and taken.

According to the account of history that the pro-CTA Tibetans will tell, Tibet was then independent up until what they would call another misunderstanding. What happened was that the Chinese of the Manchu Qing dynasty (1644-1912) invaded Tibet in order to expel the Mongols. The misunderstanding lies in that the Manchu understood that the Dalai Lama subjugated himself and Tibet to be under Manchu rule, whereas he in fact only opted for the same sort of relationship, as Tibet had before with the Mongol Yuan. Following the next line of years, the Manchu had established political control over Tibet and did not lose that control until foreign imperialism had caused the ties to be loosened between China and Tibet. However, at that time, the Chinese Manchu's had already adopted a strong mind-set, that Tibet belonged to the territory of China.<sup>66</sup> In the spirit of this, the following quote is enlightening: “

*Whatever ties existed between the Dalai Lamas and the Manchu emperors of the Qing Dynasty were extinguished with the fall of that empire and dynasty. From 1911 to 1950, Tibet successfully avoided undue foreign influence and behaved in every respect as a fully independent state.”<sup>67</sup>*

This clearly illustrates how pro-CTA Tibet does not accept the claim that Tibet belongs to China. My source, one that is biased towards supporting the position of the CTA states the following: “Since its annexation of Tibet in 1950-1951, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has denied the validity of Tibet's right to national self-determination by construing the issue of Tibet as one entirely about class rather than nationhood”<sup>68</sup>. Now, it is noteworthy at this point, to say a few words on the language in use in this phrase. According to the definition of the word “annexation” by the Encyclopaedia Britannica, annexation is:”

*A formal act whereby a state proclaims its sovereignty over territory hitherto outside its domain. Unlike cession, whereby territory is given or sold through treaty, annexation is a unilateral act*

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<sup>65</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 7

<sup>66</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 7-8.

<sup>67</sup> *Historical Overview*: <http://tibetoffice.org/tibet-info/historical-overview>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>68</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 13; line 25-27

*made effective by actual possession and legitimized by general recognition. Annexation is frequently preceded by conquest and military occupation of the conquered territory.*”<sup>69</sup>

This language strongly implies that the author is pro the views of the CTA, sharing the attitude, that Tibet was recently independent, but then taken by China. Accepting this loaded language, however, it was at that time, that China began the invasions that would have it overtake Tibet, where the Tibetan government because of the peaceful liberation, decided to relocate the Dalai Lama to the Indian border. This was for the safety of the Dalai Lama.<sup>70</sup> During this invasion, it is the case that China did not perceive it as an invasion, as some Tibetans did. The Tibetans claim that any former influence that China had had over Tibet had ceased after 1912, and in the end of the peaceful liberation, felt as if they were forced to sign the Seventeen-Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet.<sup>71</sup> However, because “the Seventeen-Point Agreement had not been approved by the Tibetan government, it required that government’s ratification”.<sup>72</sup> It was then possible for China to announce to the world, not only that Tibet already belonged to China, but also that an agreement had been made; a peaceful one, that is.

### 5.3. The International Society

There are essentially three international (aka. not China or the CTA) actors of significant importance in the regard of the Tibet question – at least to the extent that we will be working with in this thesis. These three actors are the U.S., the UN and that of India.

The role of the U.S. toward Tibet and China is somewhat complex. The reason for this is that Tibet has seen the U.S. as a saviour that will eventually come and save them from the oppression of China. This has been the frame of mind of many people in Tibet accepting the view of the CTA.<sup>73</sup> Many lobbyists in the U.S., together with a fraction in the U.S. congress, have focused on human

<sup>69</sup> Annexation: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/26334/annexation>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>70</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “China’s Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 19

<sup>71</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “China’s Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 20

<sup>72</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “China’s Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008.p. 20; line 21-22

<sup>73</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: “The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama”; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 122-123

rights in Tibet and spoken out on account of this.<sup>74</sup> At the same time, the partnership and good relations between the U.S. and China has been and is increasingly of great importance.<sup>75</sup> Despite lobbyists and philosophical views, the official view of the U.S. is that they support China in that Tibet is part of China, as illustrated in the following quote taken from a 1994 report clearly stating the U.S. position, as well as the rest of the international community:

*Historically, the United States has acknowledged Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. Since at least 1966, U.S. policy has explicitly recognized the Tibetan Autonomous Region... as part of the People's Republic of China. This long-standing policy is consistent with the view of the entire international community, including all China's neighbors: no country recognizes Tibet as an independent state. Because we do not recognize Tibet as an independent state, the United States does not conduct diplomatic relations with the self-styled "Tibetan Government-in-exile." [emphasis added]*<sup>76</sup>

To add further to the complexity of the U.S.-China relations, in this regard, the U.S. has dealt with the Dalai Lama, in terms of for example having conversations together, one in which occurred only recently.<sup>77</sup> This sends confusing diplomatic signals to the international community, and especially China, and did in fact disturb the officials of China to a degree.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, the U.S. has on several occasions, when dealing with China on diplomatic meetings, expressed concerns about human rights issues being committed in Tibet allegedly by Chinese authorities.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: *"The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"*; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 117

<sup>75</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: *"The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"*; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997.p. 120

Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. p. 156

<sup>76</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: *"The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"*; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 121; line 8-18

<sup>77</sup> *Dalai Lama Visit: President Obama Meets Spiritual Leader, China Complains*: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/16/obamas-meets-with-dalai-l\\_n\\_900664.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/16/obamas-meets-with-dalai-l_n_900664.html); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>78</sup> *Dalai Lama Visit: President Obama Meets Spiritual Leader, China Complains*: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/16/obamas-meets-with-dalai-l\\_n\\_900664.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/16/obamas-meets-with-dalai-l_n_900664.html); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>79</sup> *President Obama hosts China Vice-President Xi Jinping*: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-17008639>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

Another state being severely crucial in this issue is India. This has to do with several important factors. Factors such as how India is a neighbour to China, making it geopolitically important, and making it important in terms of realpolitik, and factors, also, as how India is becoming more and more powerful in the political sphere; it being part of the BRICS countries for example<sup>80</sup>. However, the most important fact as to why India is a major player in this issue is of course because Dharamsala is in India, the place that the Dalai Lama currently resides. Despite the fact that India holds the Dalai Lama and the CTA, it is then noteworthy to state that India's official attitude is in fact that they support China, in that Tibet is not an independent state, as stated in the following quote:

*In early 1954, an agreement was reached with India, known in India as the Panchshila or "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence," that regulated and restricted Tibetan trade with India. The actual title of the treaty was "Agreement between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India." By this agreement, India recognized China's complete control over Tibet. This treaty ended any hope that Tibet might have had that India would support Tibet in its attempt to maintain its autonomy from China.*<sup>81</sup>

With the knowledge in mind, as seen from the latter information, that not a single country support Tibet officially as being an independent state, it becomes self-revealing that the UN does also support China in this matter. Before moving over to the UN, however, it is out of fairness noteworthy to mention an opposite view. According to a source, India has supported Tibet as being independent throughout recent times. The article from the mentioned source lists several examples, as evidence of how India has supported Tibet in being autonomous throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It for example starts out with noting that India officially called the liberation of Tibet by China an invasion, and says that this very wording implies that India supports Tibet in being autonomous. It furthermore exemplifies several instances of diplomatic and trading relations between India and Tibet, where China was not included in the relations, or that China did not show disagreement with Tibet being referred to as a state. The article uses these examples as indication, that at least in this

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<sup>80</sup> *The BRIC Countries: Brazil, Russia, India, China:* <http://www.economywatch.com/international-organizations/bric.html>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>81</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: *"China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation"*; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 29; line 28-35

period, which the article is treating, Tibet is in fact autonomous.<sup>82</sup> This is, of course, an interesting view, and one that will be considered in analysing the subject matter of this thesis, but the main view of India's attitude towards Tibet to be considered during this thesis, will primarily be the first mentioned one. This is due to the fact that the nature of that account is more official in political matters.

Moving then over to the attitude of the UN, there is a “but”, contrary to their view of supporting China. It has happened that the UN has on several occasions, as a collective IGO (Intergovernmental Organisation) body, expressed concerns about human rights issues. It is not clear, though, as to how much effect these concerns have when expressed in the somewhat subtle matter, that has been expressed in, which means through for example an official UN news agency<sup>83</sup>. On another account, on the subject of the international society in this matter, there is also China's opinion on the international society's interference in the issue to be noted. As mentioned, for example the U.S. has noted worries on the treatment of the Tibetans from Beijing. The Chinese attitude to this is clear. China does not want the U.S., or any other state, for that matter, to interfere in what China regards as domestic issues<sup>84</sup>. This is the official policy of China, and is on the same regard Beijing's political approach to the international community, that they do not interfere in other states' domestic issues. China does put out statements, however, meant to inform the international community on what is China's take on the issue at hand. An example of such a statement is that Beijing claims that the Dalai Lama is a deceitful liar and should not be trusted<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>82</sup> L.L. Mehrotra: “India's Tibet Policy – an Appraisal and Options”, Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre, Third edition, New Delhi-110024, 2000.

<sup>83</sup> *China: UN rights chief voices concern over tensions in Tibet Autonomous Region:*

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=25980&Cr=arbour&Cr1;> last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

*UN experts warn of severe restrictions on Tibetan monasteries in China:*

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40269&Cr=China&Cr1=&Kw1=tibet&Kw2=&Kw3=;](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40269&Cr=China&Cr1=&Kw1=tibet&Kw2=&Kw3=) last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

*UN rights group asks China to report on missing monks and stop 'disappearances':*

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38654&Cr=China&Cr1=&Kw1=tibet&Kw2=&Kw3=;](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38654&Cr=China&Cr1=&Kw1=tibet&Kw2=&Kw3=) last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>84</sup> *US urged to stop meddling over Tibet:* <http://english.people.com.cn/90883/7772622.html>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>85</sup> *The Dalai Lama's 'retirement' is only a lie:* <http://chinatibet.people.com.cn/7710570.html>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.



#### 5.4. The Financial Situation in Tibet and the Development of Tibet as a Region

According to official sources of Beijing, Tibet was in a grave economical state before the peaceful liberation. It was a state with great poverty and hunger<sup>86</sup>. This has changed throughout the years, having a lot to do with the development programs that China is conducting in Tibet<sup>87</sup>. China is investing severely in Tibet, as the following states:

*The cornerstone of the central government's new policy was (and is) economic growth and modernization-accelerating economic development in Tibet by providing large subsidies for development projects aimed at building infrastructure and productive capacity. This strategy seeks to modernize Tibet's economy and people, increasing their income and reducing their isolation by inextricably linking Tibet's economy with the rest of China. To do this effectively, Beijing has decided that Tibet must be rapidly developed.*<sup>88</sup>

Beijing has initiated several means of advantages incentives for the Chinese to go work in Tibet<sup>89</sup>. By all these means, Tibet has seen a large increase of its GDP throughout the recent years: "Tibet's gross domestic product climbed to 60.6 billion Yuan (9.6 billion U.S. dollars) in 2011, 94 times more than the level in 1959"<sup>90</sup>. On the contrary, however, it is notable to add that many Tibetans complain that the Han Chinese moving to Tibet to work, are in fact stealing jobs from the Tibetans in a manner that makes it seem as if it is mostly the Chinese that is benefitting from the development.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, according to the Global Times, China has recently announced that it

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<sup>86</sup> Truth about Tibet is slowly coming to light: <http://english.people.com.cn/90780/7754758.html>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>87</sup> Tibet slams Dalai clique's separatist attempt: [http://www.china.org.cn/wap/2012-03/28/content\\_25008590.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/wap/2012-03/28/content_25008590.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>88</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: "The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 93 line 13-22

<sup>89</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: "The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 94

<sup>90</sup> Tibet slams Dalai clique's separatist attempt: [http://www.china.org.cn/wap/2012-03/28/content\\_25008590.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/wap/2012-03/28/content_25008590.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>91</sup> Norbu, Dawa: "Economic Policy and Practice in Contemporary Tibet", in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. p. 161.



will provide social benefits in the form of welfare and pensions to Tibetan monks at monasteries.<sup>92</sup> A hypothesis from Goldstein, as to why China is investing in Tibet to such a large degree states as following: “important to China’s leaders is the expectation that these Chinese will provide a powerful model of modern thinking and behavior that Tibetans will see and gradually emulate.”<sup>93</sup> The idea of this is then that an acculturation is taking place, where the Han Chinese would influence the Tibetans in such a way, that the mainstream and official ideas of China will be adopted by the Tibetans, and cultural aspects such as religion and lamas will be reminisced. In other words, to develop Tibet and in general the western region of China, and intermingle Han Chinese (as well as the economy) with the other races and cultures of China, so the Tibet question will ultimately disappear<sup>94</sup>, as also indicated earlier in this chapter. With this modernization in mind, the question is begged, as to whether Tibet would be able to sustain itself economically if it essentially received total independence. In light of this, it seems appropriate to mention, that despite the development of Tibet by the hands of China, Tibet is still lowest on any relevant indicator, in China, which is “total revenue, taxes remitted, per capita income, joint ventures, literacy, and even life expectancy at birth”<sup>95</sup>. However, Tibet is not without any resources. Disregarding the obvious industry of tourism, Tibet has “gold-bearing sands”<sup>96</sup> and other “rare metals, including lithium, lead, antimony, and, it is rumored, uranium. There are also coal deposits and an abundance of salt.”<sup>97</sup> These resources, together with another resource, that of oil and natural gas, seem to be quite important for China as well, as this quote illustrates:

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<sup>92</sup> *Tibet monks to receive universal benefits*: <http://www.globaltimes.cn/DesktopModules/DnnForge%20-%20NewsArticles/Print.aspx?tabid=99&tabmoduleid=94&articleid=683726&moduleid=405&PortalID=0>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>93</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: “*The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama*”; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 96 line 4-6

<sup>94</sup> Norbu, Dawa: “Economic Policy and Practice in Contemporary Tibet”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. p. 158-159.

<sup>95</sup> Teufel Dreyer, June: “Economic Development in Tibet Under the People’s Republic of China”, in Sautman, Barry in Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. p. 129 line 23-p. 130 line 1.

<sup>96</sup> Teufel Dreyer, June: “Economic Development in Tibet Under the People’s Republic of China”, in Sautman, Barry in Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006.p. 130, line 3.

<sup>97</sup> Teufel Dreyer, June: “Economic Development in Tibet Under the People’s Republic of China”, in Sautman, Barry in Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. p. 130, line 4-6.

*Of particular urgency to China's current and future economic needs are oil and natural gas to be transferred from the resource-rich western region to the power-hungry industries in the Han hinterland and the eastern region. China imported 40 million tons of oil in 1999 60 million in 2000. Experts believe that China's energy needs will further escalate in the years to come. Therefore, the PRC places a high priority on the development of oil fields in the Tarim Basin in southern Xinjiang, the Tsaidam Basin in northeastern Tibet, and the Ordos Basin in Inner Mongolia.*<sup>98</sup>

## 5.5.Recent Events

In terms of recent events, there are two events worth mentioning. The first is that the Dalai Lama proposed in 1987 what he calls a middle way<sup>99</sup>. This middle way is a change of goal for the Dalai Lama, where he proposes that Tibet receives, instead of complete authority, a status somewhat like the system Taiwan has in relation to China, the “two systems, one government” type of system. The “Tibetan government would comprise a popularly elected chief executive, a bicameral legislature, and an independent legal system”<sup>100</sup>; this would in essence be how it would work. The Dalai Lama sees this system as one being in fact in accordance with Deng Xiaoping's former approach, as to how the relationship between Tibet and Beijing should be. He (the Dalai Lama) therefore believes that, with this proposal, the fundamental differences are in theory now solved.<sup>101</sup> It was mainly the Dalai Lama that suggested this system now, while the CTA for a long time continued to stay with the original approach of a complete autonomy. The CTA has recently, however, taken the middle way approach as well, calling it the MWA (Middle Way Approach). This change of paradigm might have something to do with the fact that the MWA has gained international, or rather Western, popularity. Besides the Western popularity, it seems to be the case that the majority of the Tibetans,

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<sup>98</sup>Norbu, Dawa: “Economic Policy and Practice in Contemporary Tibet”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. p. 159, line 23 - 29

<sup>99</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. xx

<sup>100</sup> He, Baogang: “The Dalai Lama's Autonomy Proposal – A one-Sided Wish?” “”, in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 69, line 22-24

<sup>101</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: “*China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation*”; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 237

both inside and outside of Tibet support the MWA.<sup>102</sup> Beijing has been reluctant to be open to discuss this new change of approach from the Dalai Lama; however, the proposal is supposedly still on the table. The reason why Beijing has declined this proposal so far is that it (Beijing) says that middle way would eventually lead to full independence, which it does not want. In other words; that the MWA is only the first step, where the second step, China fears, would be complete and full independence. China also feels that the MWA is an approach that is unambiguous, and lacks definition.<sup>103</sup> This middle way is not without complications, though, since it could potentially complicate the issue between Beijing and Xinjiang, where separatist groups are also at play<sup>104</sup>, due to the fact that if the CTA won its case, the latter regions might also want to achieve the same as Tibet. The hypothetical consequences and implications will for that reason be discussed further in the analysis. I will note as a last remark on this subject, though, that the Dalai Lama's MWA is seen as one being antinationalist. In other words, the Dalai Lama emphasizes that in a global world, borders might not be that important. He is furthermore admitting that it could be the case that Tibet might benefit from China's economy.<sup>105</sup>

The second event that has happened recently, is the case of the self-immolations. There have been many cases of Tibetan monks self-immolating, consequently hurting themselves severely or in fact, dying<sup>106</sup>. According to reports, the monks did this in the name of freedom and to oppose the

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<sup>102</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: *"China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation"*; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. xx

Smith Jr., Warren W.: *"China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation"*; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 296

Smith Jr., Warren W.: *"China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation"*; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 254

Smith Jr., Warren W.: *"China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation"*; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 230

<sup>103</sup> He, Baogang: "The Dalai Lama's Autonomy Proposal – A one-Sided Wish?" ", in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 69

Smith Jr., Warren W.: *"China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation"*; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 291

<sup>104</sup> Q&A: *China and the Tibetans*: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-14533879>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 251

<sup>105</sup> Smith Jr., Warren W.: *"China's Tibet? – Autonomy or Assimilation"*; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; United States of America; 2008. p. 289

<sup>106</sup> *Tibetan men in 'first self-immolations in Lhasa'*: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18231550>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

allegedly oppression from the Chinese; or in other words: “They were a continuation of the self-immolations in other Tibetan areas and these acts were all aimed at separating Tibet from China,”<sup>107</sup> as stated by Hao Peng, head of the Communist Party's Commission for Political and Legal Affairs in the Tibet Autonomous Region. There have been reports that the Dalai Lama has applauded the self-immolations, and according to Chinese state media, the Dalai Lama had even encouraged the Tibetans to do this<sup>108</sup>. While at the same time, China claims that the Dalai is to blame for the recent events in Tibet, which fits well with China's accord on how they view the Dalai Lama. China see him, not as a liberator, such as some in Tibet do, and the CTA do, but as a separatist bent on splitting the country<sup>109</sup>. Regardless of who encouraged them, or if they came up with the idea themselves without any larger political entities being to blame, such as the CTA, the fact remains that it has been up in the media and has again put more focus on the Tibet question, on the degree of human rights in Tibet, and the matter of if Tibet should have full or partly independence. The events therefore have significant implications in the international arena and influence the Tibet question in itself.

In extension to the self-immolations, a recent event has come to my attention while writing this thesis. According to the source used, it seems to be the case that China is radically closing down tourism in Tibet for everyone, except for Chinese. This is not the first time that China has issued a tourism ban, but it did seem to come as a chock to tourism agencies. This is a consequence of the self-immolations. As to how this will affect the international society, the economy of Tibet, and other factors, is yet to be seen.<sup>110</sup>

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Tibetan monk burns himself to death in China: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-14531538>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

Tibetan monk dies in China after self-immolating: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-16469356>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>107</sup> Tibetan men in 'first self-immolations in Lhasa': <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18231550>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

China accuses Dalai Lama of encouraging suicide by fire: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-15372731>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>108</sup> Investigations show political motive behind self-immolations in Tibetan-populated regions: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-03/07/c\\_131452109.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-03/07/c_131452109.htm); last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>109</sup> The Dalai Lama's 'retirement' is only a lie: <http://chinatibet.people.com.cn/7710570.html>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>110</sup> China Forbids International Tourism to Tibet Indefinitely: <http://news.yahoo.com/china-forbids-international-tourism-tibet-indefinitely-121550685--abc-news-topstories.html>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

## 5.6. Current & Relevant Factors

### 5.6.1. How the Chinese and Tibetans See Themselves

When dealing with political and diplomatic issues, and in this regard, also cultural matters, it is also very important to assess how the people see themselves, and how they see the significant other, in the relevant context. In this matter, how the Chinese regard themselves, how they see the Tibetans and how the Tibetans see themselves and how they see the Chinese. I will try to answer this question with the sources at hand. The most relevant people to know about how they see themselves, and how they see the ‘others’ is the Chinese. This is because it is the Chinese that hold the power. It is arguable that China has the upper hand, since they have the territory that the Tibetans from the CTA want.

The Chinese still, as in earlier lore, believe that they are at the core of things, as the name the Middle Kingdom implies.<sup>111</sup> They are a proud people; proud of the past achievements and contributions to the world.<sup>112</sup> They see their culture and their history as being one that is ancient and superior to many other countries<sup>113</sup>. This statement seems evident in the light of the fact that the Chinese call their country for “the Middle Kingdom”. It is not only their culture, but just as well their race, the major race in China, the Han, that they regard as being superior - superior to for example black people that they view as being lesser worth<sup>114</sup>. This is, in fact also the case with Tibetans. The Chinese view the Tibetans as filthy, dirty, and lazy. They say, for example, that the Tibetans do not shower as often, as they should.<sup>115</sup> The Tibetans, however, view the Chinese as being selfish and only in Tibet for their own sake. The Tibetans have a great mistrust towards the Chinese, and regard the newly established businesses in Tibet, as ones being placed there mainly for

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<sup>111</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 276

<sup>112</sup> Zhu, Song: *“Xenophobe’s guide to the Chinese”*; Oval Books; London; 2010. P. 8-9

<sup>113</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 267-269

<sup>114</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 234, p. 248 & 258-259

<sup>115</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 254-255

the Chinese and for the benefit of the Chinese.<sup>116</sup> At the same time, the Tibetans view their own culture as highly valuable to them, which seems like a fair deduction to make, knowing how the Tibetans (Tibetans as in the CTA, the Dalai Lama, and the opposition to Tibet situated in China) claim that for example events such as self-immolations are forms of demonstrations because they say the Chinese are committing “cultural genocide”<sup>117</sup>. They are therefore very protective towards their own culture, both in terms of their religion and also for example in terms of their traditions and language, as indicated earlier, the CTA claims that the Chinese has tried to suppress the Tibetan language. It is then noteworthy to mention the fact that China is posting large sums of money in preserving the Tibetan culture, where it has for example recently promised welfare benefits, and promised to provide more books and news in the Tibetan language. They will also make sure that things such as electricity, water, etc. will be available in the monasteries.<sup>118</sup> Many Tibetans are afraid that the Chinese will change Tibet in a way, so that their culture will gradually disappear. They often feel as if the Chinese are suppressing their culture, and yearn for liberation. It has for example been reported recently that the Dalai Lama claim that the self-immolations are a consequence of the Chinese committing cultural genocide, by diminishing the Tibetan culture.<sup>119</sup> These are of course all generalizations, albeit noteworthy ones in the light of cultural differences.

### 5.6.2.A deadline for agreement and bargaining leeway

It might also be implied that it is crucial for the Chinese that they reach an agreement with the Dalai Lama and the CTA before the Dalai Lama dies. This has to do with the fact that while China does not recognize the CTA as a legitimate government, it does see the Dalai Lama as an authority figure in a spiritual sense, and therefore an important actor in possible negotiations. This means, in other words, that in terms of how Beijing sees the matter, it has been and might continue to be reluctant to negotiate with other individuals, than the Dalai Lama. Possibly, a problem could then arise when

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<sup>116</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 254-255

<sup>117</sup> Tibetan monk dies in China after self-immolating: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-16469356>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>118</sup> China ‘to give Tibetan monks welfare benefits’: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-15716778>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

<sup>119</sup> Dalai Lama: ‘Cultural genocide’ behind self-immolations: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-15617026>; last retrieved on 23.06.2012.

Goldstein, Melvyn C.: *“The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama”*; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 111

the Dalai Lama dies and an agreement has not been reached, because for China to negotiate with the CTA in any official serious matter would consequently mean that China would have to change its official statement as to how they view the historical context and the legitimacy of the various characters as such. China would in other words be forced to acknowledge the CTA as official. A factor, however, for why China has been reluctant to look for any entities to negotiate with, seems to be that China appears to be somewhat content with the status quo at the moment. The latter speculation is more of an analytical nature, however, so this will be treated further in the later analysis. There is also the fact that the CTA has not officially stated what its plans are for if it gains autonomy, and have neglected to bring forth a statement for where the borders for example should be, except to say partly in an abstract way, that parts of China, outside of Tibet, belongs to Tibet and ought to be part of Tibet again (as will be mentioned later in this text). In extension to this, it is China's view, that the Tibetans have high demands, and has little room for compromise<sup>120</sup>, while at the same time; Tibet also has a weak negotiating positing. However, in regard to China's view that Tibet has little room for compromise, it is important to mention the Middle Way solution recently proposed by the Dalai, where Tibet would have autonomy, but not complete independence. There is, however, one thing that is clear in terms of what the CTA have as a negotiating demand. The CTA does not merely want Tibet to have complete autonomy, but it also want the whole Tibetan region round Tibet, which, according to the Dalai Lama, also means parts of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Ningxia. The Dalai Lama claims these regions to historically be part of the old Tibet, and therefore rightfully belongs to Tibet.<sup>121</sup>

### 5.6.3.China's Tributary System

China has in latter times, as it is reckoned, been a powerful state. It had a high, if not the highest, cultural recognition among its neighbouring states, being acknowledged as the most superior state, and was thus engaged in a relationship with the surrounding states in what is known as a tributary system.<sup>122</sup> The neighbouring states would then pay tribute to China "in return for benevolence and

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<sup>120</sup> Goldstein, Melvyn C.: *"The Snow Lion and the Dragon – China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama"*; University of California Press; United States of America; 1997. p. 100

<sup>121</sup> He, Baogang: "The Dalai Lama's Autonomy Proposal – A one-Sided Wish?" ", in Sautman, Barry and Teufel Dreyer, June; *Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development, and Society in a Disputed Region*; An East Gate Book; United States of America; 2006. P. 70

<sup>122</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 14



protection”<sup>123</sup>. “The tributary system was by far universal, but Korea, part of Japan, Vietnam and Myanmar all paid tributes to China, while a large number of South-East Asian states, including Malacca and Thailand, either paid Tribute or acknowledged Chinese suzerainty.”<sup>124</sup> It would even be the case that China would occasionally conquer and invade other states for the reason of establishing a tributary system, or sustain the status quo of one.<sup>125</sup>

The tributary system was a tangible one, where differences lay between which state was vis-à-vis China, but the regard of China as being superior was one thing they all had in common. This relationship furthermore holds an age close to 2500 years, and can therefore be understood as something very much as a core part of a historical description of China.<sup>126</sup>

According to the cited source, the tributary system as it was in earlier times is gone now. However, it seems clear to the author of mentioned source that traces of the tributary system can still be found in East Asia today. He argues that a new form of tribute system might be on its way and that many states are becoming dependent on China.<sup>127</sup> For example, “Taiwan have consciously sought to move closer to China during the course of its rise rather than hedge with the United States against it”<sup>128</sup>. It is then the case that due to this and the long history of a tributary system, that this sort of relationship is still in many ways part of the mind frame of Chinese mentality.<sup>129</sup> The question then arises, what this tributary system means when thinking in relation to China and Tibet. Such an important matter will be looked further at in the analysis.

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<sup>123</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 14, line 23-24

<sup>124</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 274, line 32-66

<sup>125</sup> John K. Fairbank: “China’s Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 47, No. 3, (Apr., 1969), pp. 449-463.

<sup>126</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 275

<sup>127</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 374-376

<sup>128</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 419, line 34-36

<sup>129</sup> Jacques, Martin: *When China Rules the World – the Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*; Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books; England; 2009. P. 275-276



## 6. Analysis

### 6.1. Seeing each other with Different Glasses

Moving to the theory of Constructivism, it says, as the name implies, that there are different structures in this world, many of which are incompatible. These are essentially different ways of looking at the world, or different paradigms so to say. These paradigms depend on your cultural context, its history, ideas, etc. and it is these paradigms that will determine how you view the world of which you live in.<sup>130</sup> From the introduction to the background data chapter, we pointed out that China and Tibet essentially disagree on facts. We will be investigating the cultural differences and how their worldviews are different, later, but first we will be looking at how they see each other. There appears to be a great mistrust from both sides (The Tibetans and the Chinese), where they overall see each other negatively. The Tibetans believe that the Chinese are only there to further their own financial agenda, which is to increase the revenue of the Han Chinese. The Tibetans feel that the Han Chinese are taking all the jobs in Tibet and are in fact stealing jobs from the Tibetans themselves.<sup>131</sup> An increase of Chinese have moved to Tibet, which is something that Beijing have initiated in order to, officially stated, improve the economy of Tibet. The official view of Beijing then, is to increase the GDP of the Tibetan region; this is, however, not the way that many Tibetans see it. Constructivism will here explain this attitude in the way, that the Tibetans' culture, religious views (or lack thereof), ideas, ways of life, and so forth, are different than the Chinese. The difference here means that the two parties have two different ideas of what truth constitutes and how their social reality is. The Tibetans interpret their worldview as the correct one. This means that something or someone strictly opposing what that worldview consists of, are inherently wrong (in the theory's rough sense that is). Now, this does not necessarily mean that when someone has a different worldview than you, with different customs, that they have an evil intent when acting in such a way that affects your culture. It does mean, however, that you believe that they are in essence wrong. What this leads up to is hostility where you believe that your culture and ideas, the true ones, will be endangered by, in this case, the Chinese moving into your territory. It seems to be the case that a reason why the Tibetans mistrust the Chinese, is in fact because they are so different; different in terms of worldviews, ideas and methods. This is one hypothesis that one can state as to

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<sup>130</sup> See p. 12-14 of this Thesis

<sup>131</sup> See p. 21-22 of this thesis

why Tibetans mistrust the Chinese, where there are of course others, and as we shall see later, Realism will give a completely different account of it.

The Chinese, on the other hand, see the Tibetans as lazy, backward and somewhat primitive. We know for a fact that the Chinese and their country, the Middle Kingdom, have a long history where it goes far back in history. That it has made several great inventions and contributions to the world. We know that the Han are a proud people, and that there are a great many of them. China also has a long history of receiving tribute from other surrounding states.<sup>132</sup> With all this in mind, and when adding this data on the theory of Constructivism, it makes us accept the premise that the Chinese believe that their ideas together with their ways of living, is the right way of seeing the world. This in other words means that the Chinese see the Tibetan way of living as a backward and unfavourable way of living, which has to do with how the Tibetans are so much different than the Chinese. Even if it was the case that China was trying to change Tibet, so they for example would be less religious, speak Mandarin, and so forth, which has been implied as a common conception of some Tibetans, it would indeed not seem that surprising, when looking at it with the eyes of the Constructivism. The Chinese simply feel superior, and would evidently want to implement their views unto others. Until such is the case, the indication is that they feel that the Tibetans are of a lesser sort than they themselves are. The closing remarks here are fair when interpreting the theory on the facts put forth.

The Dalai Lama is a person seen by some in one way and others in a different way. It is interesting to see how the Tibetans see him as a liberator, but the Chinese see him essentially as a terrorist, a liar and someone who is out to obstruct the peace and order.<sup>133</sup> Constructivism tells us that the people in power have different worldviews and different cultural backgrounds, and according to Constructivism it is the cultural backgrounds that determine how things get played out in the international society.<sup>134</sup> It is therefore also these people, and the institutions that they run, that determine how people view each other in an international context. This means, in other words, that if the Chinese government, who has one perspective of the subject matter is in power, it is these ideas, of system of thought, perhaps, that will control how the truth comes out in that region. The Dalai Lama and the CTA, on the other hand, have a different agenda, and they will therefore impose their truth on whomever they can, which in this case is for example some parts of the West and some parts of Tibet. These conflicting ideas by the people in power consequently determine who

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<sup>132</sup> See p. 27-28 of this thesis

<sup>133</sup> See p. 20 of this thesis

<sup>134</sup> See p. 12-14 of this thesis

has the upper hand, and which views consequently gets (the most) accepted as a truth. Of convenience, we could as well add the Western perspective on the issue, which is somewhat two sided in that it both support China in that Tibet is part of it<sup>135</sup> and also continuously put pressure on China in terms of human rights and the likes<sup>136</sup>. All of these ideas and perceptions on how they view each other and how they view themselves depend on who is in power and where, are evidently not in agreement with each other. The question then arises, that if Constructivism explains the perceptions of state entities and organisations as grounded in and determined by, the people who hold those ideas and that these ideas are regarded as truths by the people who hold them; will they then be able to change their minds? In other words, is it possible for China or Tibet to look at each other's cultures as being positive or at least be regarded as equal? It shows that even though Constructivism is relativistic in terms of how people have different truths and how they see the world, people are not able to (according to Constructivism) see truth as relative, which ultimately has to do with the nature of the theory and how it explains the social world. However, China has increasingly done much to protect Tibetan culture, language, and even religion (by helping the monks, for example, financially).<sup>137</sup> This would indicate that China increasingly sees a value in the Tibetans and their culture. It might be plausible that the Tibetans would change their view of the Chinese and ultimately have a positive view of them and their presence in Tibet. This is of course, only speculation, albeit not an impossible hypothesis. Despite the reason for having negative views of each other, it might be the case that those views are changed into positive ones. There is another aspect to consider, though, which is the case of the self-immolations. As mentioned earlier, there have been several self-immolations in the region of Tibet. These self-immolations have increased dramatically, and it is said that it is Tibetans that want to be free of China, so to say, that are doing it. These cases might have a negative effect on how Tibet and the international society view China as a whole, and might counter against the promised positive view from China protecting the Tibetan culture. The outcome of this depends entirely on two things: if the self-immolations continue and how China handles them. On a last note, I will emphasize that according to Constructivism individuals are able to change a particular structure. This means that depending on how the Chinese President, the Dalai Lama and other important individuals act in a social world, the perceptions of each other might stay the same or they might change.

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<sup>135</sup> See p. 18-19 of this thesis

<sup>136</sup> See p. 19 of this thesis

<sup>137</sup> See p. 26 of this thesis

## 6.2. The Cultural Differences and How They Matter

In extension to the latter analysis chapter, we are now going to move further into the realm of cultural differences, still with the social Constructivism glasses on. We have seen how they view each other differently and disagree on intentions that they and the intentions they believe the Dalai Lama has, such as whether or not the Dalai Lama is a liberator or an instigator, and whether or not he supports the self-immolations. The disagreements, however, go deeper than merely how they perceive each other. As explained in the beginning of the background data chapter, the CTA and Beijing completely disagree on the history. Beijing claims that Tibet has always been part of China<sup>138</sup> and the CTA claims that this is quite recent, while going back earlier; you will find Tibet to be independent.<sup>139</sup> To the two different parties, reality simply looks utterly different. This is indeed a case, where you can see two different groups of state entities<sup>140</sup> having two different worldviews, which is something, that social Constructivism would call a clear example of evidence of validity for its theory. How one sees one's own history is inherently part of how one see one self and especially how one see one's own culture<sup>141</sup>. It is imaginably the case, that part of how the Tibetans see the structure of their own culture has to do with how they see their own history and how they identity themselves. At the same time, it would most likely be the same for the Chinese, both in how they view their own history, where they believe China and Tibet are linked together historically, and also how they view the Tibetans' culture, which would then be a subculture of China, and not an independent one. The two different worldview's hypotheses supports social Constructivism in that you act differently depending on your own worldview and the culture you live in, where it goes to show that the main cultural difference, their different perceptions of history, matter a great deal now. How it matters the most is in how the decision makers in both parties conclude what they think is right or wrong and how they will act accordingly. It is the view of Constructivism and this hypothesis that their cultural differences and the decisions being taken by the CTA, the Dalai Lama, the Communist Party, the monks self-immolating, etc. can be directly linked. It is the view of Constructivism that political power stem from different cultural ideas and

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<sup>138</sup> See p. 14 of this thesis

<sup>139</sup> See p. 15-18 of this thesis

<sup>140</sup> I will here remind the reader that we are treating the Exile Government as a state entity for sake of simplicity. This will also be the case, when looking at the subject matter through realism.

<sup>141</sup> rephrase

perspectives<sup>142</sup>, and this do indeed seem to be the case when looking at the difference between these two parties and how they act according to their own perspective of what the truth is.

Evidently, the general fact that their cultural differences are so magnificent matters a lot. Another aspect of that, besides the historical concepts they hold, is the extreme religiosity among the Tibetans and the, to a large degree, lack of (official) religion in China. This brings out two different sorts of worldviews and sets of ideas that are very much different from each other. The Tibetans have had their religion close to them for a long time and is most certainly part of their culture. This means, in other words, that it is very valuable to them. When the Chinese interact with the Tibetans it might be wise if they showed understanding towards the fact that the Tibetans are as religious, as they are, and likewise for the Tibetans, when they are communicating with the Chinese. According to social Constructivism, these two differences are of great matter in defining their cultures and how they think and understand the world. Social Constructivism looks at the state and its people, as a whole, and determine about their culture, languages, religion, ideas, and so forth, how they dress and in so doing, finds an explanation as to why the state' decision makers act as they do. The cultural differences therefore matter to a great degree. If we accept the premise of Constructivism, the most important the two states can do is to understand each other in all aspects. If an understanding of the other state entity would turn out positive, or if it would not have an effect at all, though, is ultimately not up to social Constructivism to conclude on. We can, however, speculate that an understanding is not sufficient. When looking at for example the different perceptions of history, and how decisions from the decision makers hold ground in their views of reality, an obstacle occurs. As stated earlier, powerful cultural ideas can change the mind of others and change cultures. This is essentially what needs to be done in order to reach an agreement. According to the thoughts of Constructivism, one of the historical perceptions needs to be changed by the ones who hold that position. They would in other words, need to disregard one of their versions and accept the other one to be true. This would either be China that accepts Tibet's version to be true, or Tibet that accepts China's version to be true. According to this theory, they will not reach an agreement if this is not done.

There is, however, another way of looking at the cultural differences as conflicting and this is through Realism. By accepting the premise of Realism you can explain the cultural conflicts as ways of the state entities to apply culture as tools to gain power over one another or ward off an unwelcome state actor on its territory. This is a completely different, albeit interesting way of

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<sup>142</sup> See p. 12-14 of this thesis

looking at it, and one that we will be looking more deeply into when analysing the subject matter in terms of power relations and realpolitik in the next discussion “Why the Issue is a Matter of Power”.

### 6.3. Why the Issue is a Matter of Power

Realism is the IR theory which says that it is mainly states and state like entities that determine the outcomes in the international system, which is because of an anarchical structure, that the states find themselves in. The anarchical system, due to a lack of overall authority among states, has states struggle for power and increase their security in order to survive. Survival is the clear key word, and the ultimate goal of a state, according to the theory of Realism. This is the essential part of Realism in IR, and as we shall see in the analysis of the subject matter and discussions thereof, there are clear indications that there are obvious power struggles at play and security issues to be regarded – Realism will then make a clear explanation of how power is an important explanatory factor.<sup>143</sup>

Going back to the aforementioned historical event of 1949-1951, Realism would tend to disregard the different historical accounts of Tibet and China as mere rhetoric and not something that in reality matters that much. The issue there, a realist would argue, had not much to do with a quest to regain what was rightfully theirs and China as a major power could care less about liberating a neighbouring state for ideal and altruistic reasons. Such ideas are of no relevance in international politics according to Realism. The realist would argue that the liberation of Tibet by China solely had to do with gaining power and increasing their security. We see here a clear instance of China making an offensive move in gaining (or regaining; it does not matter in making this point) a region that it had otherwise lost. By conquering Tibet, China would expand its population and it would increase its territory, which is beneficial when it finds itself in competition for power among other large states in the world system, and when it wants to regain its previous status as a hegemon in its region, a status it clearly had had during times of where the tributary system was well used. China had been weakened during the Great Britain’s colonial ages, and had lost the grip of Tibet. It therefore makes sense that it would cease the chance it had, and reclaim Tibet as its own in an attempt to be the only hegemon in the East. If it is the case, however, that Tibet (I am here speaking both of the mentality of the people in Tibet and of the CTA) regards itself as a state entity (regardless of it is free of China or not,) will by definition, according to Realism, act as such. This

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<sup>143</sup> See p. 9-11 of this thesis

means that it will ultimately act according to ways in which it is most likely to survive as a conscious state. To put it in different words, the survival of Tibet as a state depends on one premise more than any other and that premise is that it needs to be free of China and be independent. If it acknowledge that it is part of China it will ipso facto cease to be a state and simply be a region of China. Realism would claim that Tibet could be perceived as an independent state struggling for its own survival by a neighbouring hegemon, which is China. All of this leads up to the perception that everything that the opposition in Tibet has done, e.g. the CTA, the Dalai Lama and its Tibetan supporters, can be argued to be attempts of chasing away China in order to secure its own survival as a state per se. These attempts are everything from the opposition in 1950-51, the protests, the self-immolations and the continuous demands from the opposition to “free Tibet”. Now, Realism declares that when a small state is too small to defend itself against stronger states in the anarchical system, it will tend to bandwagon to a larger state.<sup>144</sup> A possible state to bandwagon is China, but as it turned out, the CTA of Tibet chose India instead and fled to Dharamsala. A reason why the CTA did not simply bandwagon to China, instead of India is because it seems evident that if they did so, they would invalidate their own argument and acknowledge that they are part of China. China would in other words not only take Tibet in under its cloak, but also claim it as its own, due to the nature of their history. In accordance with Realism, it makes sense for Tibet to lay itself up against another strong state, and a possible hegemon in that region, in this case namely India.

Taking the argument further, however, China acts out of the same premise when keeping Tibet in check during the years from 1950 to now. Everything that China did up till now in relation to Tibet is out of the purpose of making sure that Tibet stay part of China, which is of course in the interest of China. An example of a tendency from China the recent years that would point in this direction is how Beijing is having a lot of Han Chinese move into the Tibetan region. The more that Beijing can make China and Tibet merge, the better it would be in terms of informally unifying them as one single strong state. We have in fact seen earlier, in the background data chapter, that the merging might in fact be a strategy of China. If China loses Tibet; they lose a large geographical part of its own state. Doing so would be counterproductive to the rules of behaviour of states in the framework of Realism, because it would lose power and therefore be in a greater danger to other strong states in the area, which are states such as Russia, India and Japan. It is in China’s best interest to stay as strong as possible, dispose of any weaknesses and therein increase the likelihood of a hegemonic

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<sup>144</sup> Mearsheimer, John J: *“The Tragedy of Great Power Politics”*; University of Chicago, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.; New York; 2001. P. 139



presence in Asia. This is also the reason why China wants to hush down the riots and the outcry that can sometimes be found in the Tibet region. China needs to sustain the image of being a strong state, so it will decrease the risk of being in danger from some of the other states in the area.

One demand and one proposal from the CTA is the Dalai Lama's MWA and the demand that the CTA will not settle with Tibet as being autonomous, but also want the regions around it to be part of Tibet, which are parts of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Ningxia<sup>145</sup>. Looking at the MWA approach first, it is not far out to state that this solution is not one that Beijing favours, which is because Beijing would still lose overall relative power in the international system. However, I would go as far as saying that since the deal implies that Tibet would still be part of China, and Tibet would not be completely autonomous, would for example not have his own army, the solution is not completely out of the question. China would need, though, to have some sort of security that Tibet will not try to reach complete autonomy. It is this complete autonomy that China fears, due to the mistrust of the Dalai Lama and the CTA that the Chinese have, Tibet would want to try and get, as the next step in their search for completion of goals.<sup>146</sup> Accepting the premise, though, that China would be able to get that security, it does seem plausible, looking at the issue with the glasses of Realism, that China would accept the MWA. There are, however, two problems. One of which would be solvable and another that would not. The first problem that would not be solvable is the aforementioned demand of the CTA on how they need to reclaim the regions mentioned situated around Tibet, which they believe are rightfully theirs. This is basically a deal breaker for China. My theory is that is a deal breaker for China because the sacrifice would simply be too much for Beijing. I would not think that Beijing would regard that it would be worth it to declaim such a large geographical territory. Since Realism dictates that a state wants to increase its power and avoid decreasing it, declaiming a favourable large size of territory would according to Realism be out of the question for China. Therefore, if the CTA would agree to only have the territory that is now the Tibetan region in China as their own, it is imaginable that an agreement would be on the table. If not, it does not seem likely that an agreement would be reached. The solvable problem mentioned is one that takes us from Realism to the framework of Geopolitics. Earlier, I mentioned that the Tibetan region contains many valuable recourses and that China is gathering these and sending it eastward.<sup>147</sup> Common sense in conjunction with Geopolitics states the importance of these materials, and a geopolitical approach would furthermore hypothesize that this could even be

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<sup>145</sup> See p. 27 of this thesis

<sup>146</sup> See p. 23 of this thesis

<sup>147</sup> See p. 22 of this thesis



a sole reason as to why China would want to have Tibet to be part of it. Geopolitical approaches to state behaviour and why one state would want to wield power over another one clearly states that sufficient materials in the state that another state wields power over, is enough reason for the state in question to do so. In relation to the subject matter, the “occupation” of Tibet from China was and is simply a geopolitical policy with the intention of gaining access to the aforementioned materials. Connecting the importance of the materials with Realism, though, the materials mentioned would indeed benefit China in prospering as a nation state and empowering it. The problem with this idea of Geopolitics, though, lies in the fact that China throws large sums of money in developing Tibet.<sup>148</sup> This fact makes the idea of a geopolitical policy being the reason for China wanting Tibet, to be less credible. However, if you combine the idea of Geopolitics with Realism, and merely take the materials as a premise, a reason among many supporting an argument, with power and competition being the main, it is in conjunction a strong reason for the interest China has with Tibet. The interest in the materials residing in Tibet does not need to be an argument against a possible agreement being made, though. Hypothetically, it would be sufficient that China made sure that they had special agreements with Tibet upon Tibet gaining part autonomy. These special trading agreements in terms of the materials would be more accessible for China than other states. One could even hypothesize that a way of making the agreement favourable for the CTA would be if China’s part of the trade agreement is to continue supporting Tibet in terms of development in exchange for the materials. Something like this sort of outcome does not seem unlikely in a realist framework.

When talking about power issues and relations between states, the security of China and so forth, it is just as well important to bring the international society into the playing field. Entering our metaphorical playing field first is India. India is a strong and large state close to China. Thinking in realist terms, this makes India a potential threat to China. As Realism dictates, strong states view each other with suspicion and fear and therefore take actions that comply with outcomes that make them feel more secure from other strong states. China and India are in other words competitors in the anarchical system and potential enemies of which appropriate security measures needs to be taken. By taking this view of the relations between China and India, we are hereby adding another reason as to why China needs to have control over the Tibetan region. Having a territory close to India and having the people residing in that territory under control, gives China an advantage in

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<sup>148</sup> See p. 21 of this thesis

comparison to the hypothetical outcome where India possibly had control over the same region. If China allowed India to gain the Tibetan territory it would consequently let India gain control over a territory that would increase the power of India and put the security of China in that area, under uncertainty and risk. This is obviously not in the interest of China and adds to the rationale to why China need to have some sort of control over Tibet, be it partly e.g. the MWA, or the complete official control it has at the moment. India, however, has acted in such a way that it has (e.g. its official position, allowing the CTA residence, etc.) done two significant things evidently counterintuitive to each other – in terms of the framework of Realism, that is. India increased its power over China, hypothetically at least, since the increase of power is arguably a small one, when it let the CTA bandwagon itself to India. The small state, again accepting that it is one, can be seen as an implicit strengthening of power in India in opposition to the hegemon that China is. India is therefore increasing its security by letting a smaller power reside within its borders. The counterintuitive part, however, is explicit when acknowledging that India has declared that it does not support the CTA politically, which indicates that India does not intend to threaten China by making use of its bandwagoning state and thereby playing it non-offensive. This furthermore seems to be the case in light of the fact that India has officially declared that it acknowledges Tibet as part of China. It becomes clear that India wants to continue with a status quo with China and not stir up any trouble in relation to Beijing. Tibet is merely a pawn between two strong nation states in Asia and their power play and tool for keeping one another in check. Tibet is therefore very much an important region in relation to China and India.

In extension to the latter part, where we indicated that India does not want to provoke a strong hegemon such as China, because it might be detrimental to her we can see the same sort of strategy among the other nations. The U.S., as an example, officially support China in that Tibet is part of China. As the U.S. is itself a strong hegemon in the West; one that does not want to lose any power unnecessarily, is wise in supporting China in this matter. Despite the fact that Tibetans think that the U.S. will “come and save them”, the U.S. does not have an explicit interest in Tibet that would be worth the risk of losing power and security in opposition to other strong states. The approach of the U.S. is one taken by all the other states that also support China – or so would Realism explain it. Since this is a matter of power, the game is a risky one and to oppose China, a strong hegemon in a matter that demands high proportions of sensitivity, would be dangerous. Any state doing so would therefore have to be sure that they would not jeopardize their own security in so doing. My hypothesis when understanding Realism as such is that no single state see it as worth the risk to

support the CTA, when they could, as they do, support the strong power and keep the status quo at bay. The argument is therefore that states in supporting China in this matter “play it safe” and this is the most favourable strategy if they want to survive in the anarchic system. As a last note, it is appropriate to mention a part of the international society that is not agreeing with how Tibet is a part of China, which is the civil society. These are actors such as NGOs and the lobbyist in for example the U.S.<sup>149</sup>. According to Realism, these actors do not have any significant influence in state affairs and consequently matter very little.<sup>150</sup> It is, however, fair to say, that with sufficient pressure on governments from the civil society, they are able to push Beijing in a certain direction and influencing it in terms of certain decisions. It is possible to see the affairs at hand through Realism in such a way, that even though the civil society might not have much influence in state affairs, they could, with enough pressure on China and in giving China enough bad reputation, diminish the image of China. China will consequently lose a small part of its power in relation to the rest of the international society and therefore have its security damaged slightly. Due to the fact that the influence is little, this is a small factor, but a factor nonetheless. It is therefore not surprising, according to Realism, when China listens to the civil society. Again, the influence, in the framework of Realism, of the civil society, is not to be overstated.

As a last note on this matter, I will mention the fact that some Western states, one mentioned earlier is the U.S.; have on occasion met with the Dalai Lama, such as I mentioned earlier that Barack Obama had done recently. Meeting with the Dalai Lama can be interpreted as entertaining the outlook of the CTA, even when it is not in correlation to the official attitude of states such as the U.S. A reasonable explanation for why the U.S. (taking the U.S. as an example) would want to act in such a way that is not in accordance with their official view, even when this has shown to provoke Beijing, by meeting with the Dalai Lama, is twofold. On the one hand, we can see this as a way for a hegemon to keep another one implicitly in check, on the other hand, a more likely explanation is that it is by pressure from the civil society. The hypothesis on why the governments are having meetings with the Dalai Lama seems the most plausible due to the fact that it is both large and small states, states that would otherwise be afraid of the size of China, that have meetings with the Dalai Lama. The small states would not have an incentive to keep China in check because China simply out power them. This conclusion implies that the civil society, even in Realism, is not completely without significance in this matter.

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<sup>149</sup> See p. 18 of this thesis

<sup>150</sup> See p. 11 of this thesis

#### 6.4. Realism and Cultural Ideas

After the emphasis on cultural ideas in introducing social Constructivism to the subject matter, it is fair to let Realism shed its light on cultural ideas, since I promised that I would explain an account from Realism on this matter different than that of social Constructivism. Social Constructivism point to cultural ideas to be the primus motor in a state affair and the prevalent idea stems from the people who have them, and that it is these ideas that is the background of state behaviour, not the overall anarchical power competition of states. In Realism, however, it is still the state entity that holds power, but you could argue that culture is not completely insignificant for a realist. Interpreting Realism in this manner, the emphasis of a state on culture will instead be seen as tools for the state to satisfy its goals. We have seen examples of culture being used as arguments and reasons for state behaviour and wishes, where for example, the fact that the issue for the Tibetans is often about culture, together with religion, tradition and so forth. They argue that they need to be an autonomous state in order to have their culture protected, because they see their culture as being in danger. There are, on the other hand, examples of the PRC recently trying to protect the Tibetan culture, their language or in fact give monks at monasteries health care benefits. Both of these moves and strategies on both the CTA and the PRC are examples of a state and in the case of the CTA, a state like entity, to use culture to their advantage in terms of achieving comparative power and increasing the value of their security. This argument goes to show that Realism can be interpreted in a form, so that culture matters to state entities, if the states in question acknowledge that it can achieve certain goals by using culture in its advantage. Culture does not have to be insignificant to a realist and can in fact explain certain state behaviour, such as in the case at hand.

#### 6.5. Why the Tibet region is Important for the Chinese

In the process of enlightening as to why the Tibet region is so important for the Chinese we will first move back into the framework of Geopolitics and Realism. We have previously seen how the resources in the Tibet region is of importance to any state and how it makes sense for a nation state such as China to therefore make sure it has control over them. This still, in light of geopolitical and realist thinking, holds true. However, this is not the complete picture. It should be clear by now that a nation state fears surrounding states in relation to security and power and that it is not in the best interest of any state to see another state gain power in the anarchical system; especially not if that

state could pose a potential threat later. It does indeed makes sense, by that analogy, that China, when it can, wants to diminish the power of any other state or prevent the state in question from gaining power and consequently becoming a threat. With this behavioural rationale in mind, it is clear that China does not want any other state to gain control of Tibet due to the recourses that it has. It seems like a likely event in world politics, that if China loosened its grip on a small state like Tibet, one of two things might happen. The first possible outcome is that Tibet would potentially bandwagon itself to another large state, such as for example India and thereby letting India gain control of the resources in Tibet in the same manner that China has at the moment. This would evidently strengthen India and diminish the availability of resources for China, which would hurt the security of China and also its overall power in comparative to the international system. The second possible outcome is that Tibet would not bandwagon itself to another state per se, but would in fact be conquered by one and would completely belong to that state. This would without question have the same consequences for China, as the first possible outcome outlined. With the latter analysis in mind it is clear that Tibet holds a great importance to China in relation to its resources.

There is another reason as to why Tibet is important; a reason that mainly apply for the presence, however. During the treatment of important background information we looked at how the Chinese are a proud people that do not want to lose face. Furthermore, it is the case, that Realism does not necessarily imply a hard offensive policy (here I am not referring to offensive Realism as a theory, but merely an aggressive policy versus a non-aggressive) when dealing with state matters. Some forms of Realism are more of a soft kind. This soft kind of Realism emphasize more on how states use for example trade and diplomatic agreements to purpose their goals of gaining power and increasing security. In being careful not to change the nature of this thesis, the marketing aspect is interesting to mention in terms of having a good image. Knowing that China want to do good trade with other nations to further their own realist goals and knowing how China does not want to lose face to the outside world of the international society; one would expect that a good image would be favourable in having good relations with other states and that China knows this. By common sense, it seems evident that a part of the good image is arguably that China will continually look as if it is credible and trustworthy. Where I am going with this, is the following; for China to completely change its policy and “let Tibet go”, and letting Tibet be completely autonomous, might seem like an altruistic kind of state behaviour, however, this might not be the case. It is entirely plausible that a move such as that might as well have a negative outcome in the relationship between China and

the international society. The reason for this is that if China let go of Tibet, it would implicitly declare that it was wrong in its interpretation of history and all actions done by and initiated by the Chinese state from 1950 onwards are all based on a false premise. A significant part of China's domestic policies are based on the premise that they are correct in their interpretation of history, some with damage to other people, but in the spirit of righteousness. However, if China were to conclude that they were wrong, what follows from that is that they would also have to be wrong in what they have done. The outcome of that means that China would lose some of its credibility in the international spectrum and that they would indeed lose face towards their international partners. I would conclude that this is not in China's interest and that this in itself would have China be inclined to stand by its historical interpretation despite pressure from the civil society to do otherwise. On the contrary, it is imaginable that China would be seen as showing good faith if they let go of Tibet, which can also strengthen their relations to other nations in a positive manner. However, I do see this outcome as a plausible one. It seems more likely that China would direct its good faith elsewhere, where it would not risk losing faith in the same degree. This belief of mine, stem from the investment that I know that China has made in Tibet. The investment is arguably too big for China to want to lose Tibet for a possible image outcome in their favour and this is also why Tibet is so important for China in the sense that China needs to be persistent with its outlook on the facts and its official statement on that Tibet is part of China, and ultimately why it would not be in China's favour to change the way of which it is regarding the case at hand.

The region of Xinjiang is yet another reason why the issue of Tibet matters a great deal to the domestic policy of China. We saw in the background data chapter earlier, that Xinjiang also, as Tibet, has separatists, in this case Muslim separatists, who are causing uproar in demand for independence. Needless to say, the independence of Xinjiang is just as little in the interest of Beijing, as the independence of Tibet is something that Beijing would welcome. The argument for this is exactly the same as the argument for why it is not in the interest of Beijing to lose Tibet, namely that of the loss of power and the decrease of security. Beijing will for the same reasons be of greater risk in the international system in relation to other states if it lost Xinjiang, as it would if it lost Tibet and the philosophical thinking is exactly the same. Losing a large part of its territory is ipso facto, from a realist point of view, not favourable for a hegemon. In other words, Beijing will from a realist line of thinking obviously want to make sure that Xinjiang as well as Tibet continue to be part of China. Now, this thesis is of course not about Xinjiang and we do not want to find

ourselves too far from the subject matter, however, it does seem relevant to quickly stray into a thought experiment of how the separatists in Xinjiang would react if Tibet became independent. It is highly imaginable that if Tibet were to be granted full autonomy, that this would be a gateway into a movement of other regions of China who be convinced that they themselves could in fact be granted full autonomy; a region such as Xinjiang with the separatists movement residing there. This is of course of great fear to China, that a domino effect would take place among other separatist movements. Therefore we must conclude that it is in China's interest to make a principle out of not granting Tibet permission to become completely autonomous, since China (disregarding how China feels about Tibet) does not want to lose the overall power by losing other states, or even to not have any events to occur there in the same line as has happened in Tibet. The Tibet region and the act of not granting Tibet full autonomy is therefore a highly important political principle to Beijing that in fact matters a great deal.

## **6.6. Why the International Society is Significant**

In treating the subject of this headline on why the international society is important, we will be looking both at points already pointed out, but be going more into depth with some, as well. We will also have some not touched upon points. These are points such as how China wants to appear strong, the significance of tourism, and another mentioned factor from a different angle namely the rise of China. Since the main focus is on reasons for the behaviour and wishes of China and Tibet, I will not for example spend time going into what the rise of China means or give thorough examples of tourism. In for example the rise of China, I am simply speaking of the rise of China as an economic and military power that has grown significantly and still is which I believe can safely be regarded as common fact. I will furthermore only look at how the international society is or could be important to China or Tibet, or both of them, but not how Tibet and China is important to the international society, unless it can be lead back to the benefit of China and Tibet (as in the CTA).

### **6.6.1. Good Trading Relations and the Rise of China**

As mentioned, this subject of trading relations has been discussed earlier; I do feel though, that it is worth going more into depth with it. China has grown magnificently during the last decades. It is now an enormous economic force and economically the second largest in the world after the U.S.



Trading with the international society and the other strong states in the world is an important part of the rise of China. The way we will go about treating the subject of trading now, is to look at positive images in promoting China. If we accept the premise that China is on the rise and has risen, and that this has to do with good trading and business on the part of China, and of course that this is favourable for China, in which the latter especially seems self-evident, and that furthermore accept the premise of the theories guiding this thesis we can begin to explain certain things. Doing this gives meaning to why China would not want to change its views on the history, as I previously pointed out, but also gives explanation to why China needs Tibet in terms of resources, and even why the power of words, so to say, is important. We will skip the point about the importance of China sticking to its interpretation of the history since I regard the argument earlier for that case, to have been laid forth sufficiently. Let us instead take a look at the resources. As we saw earlier<sup>151</sup>, Tibet and the Tibetan region holds many valuable commodities. Commodities that are of great value for China for two reasons; first of all, China has a large developing population and these people need jobs, infrastructure, housing, etc. Second of all, many of these resources can be used directly or indirectly to favour the business of China to later be exported. The resources found in Tibet are therefore of crucial importance to China. To see the rising and risen power of China as China having found its way to become a hegemon in the modern world, is, I would argue, to understand that that resources found in China, and therefore as well, Tibet, as decisive. In acceptance of Realism as a theory explaining the behaviour of states as a rationale for power in order to gain security and ensure its survival, Realism builds the framework to understand that in relation to other states and in a modern and globalized world, China simply need these resources found in Tibet. China understands that these resources are a factor among many for how China could develop, as it did, and can continue to develop in somewhat the same rate and manner. The resources do in other words contribute to the development of China, and therefore its hegemonic position. The international society arrives at the picture in two ways in this argument, in part indirectly, but not less important nevertheless. The first is the aforementioned one about competition, where China needs to make sure that it, instead of any other state, has full access to the resources in Tibet, so that it can benefit from them. The international society matters here in competition for the resources found in Tibet and are therefore to be regarded. The second way that the international society matters is the more obvious trading. For China to develop it does not only need the resources, but also good business relations. I will argue from this, that the international

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<sup>151</sup> See p. 22-23 of this thesis



society has a direct and indirect effect on the power position of China, and also that the possession that China has over Tibet is important in regard to the international society, because any other state of being for these power relations would be unfavourable for China.

### **6.6.2. The Power Relational Effect of Tourism in China**

Tourism is another economic factor. An important one, but not one I give credit for in terms of the rise of China. It is, however, still important to mention. There is a great deal of tourism in Tibet and it is in fact a large part of the GDP of Tibet. If tourism adds to the GDP of Tibet, it therefore also adds to the GDP of China, since Tibet belongs to China (at least at the moment). Still moving within the frameworks of Realism we can see that tourism in Tibet is an important factor in terms of the economic strength of Tibet and of China, and a source to power in the international anarchical system. It is arguably, however, more to the comparative benefit of Tibet than of China. This is because China is so much of a bigger state and therefore has many other ways of drawing financial power to it. The same case does not apply to Tibet, where Tibet is much smaller and despite the types of resources we mentioned in Tibet, Tibet does not have large industries, as China has, to make use of these resources. The point here is twofold. It is to show that the international society is important to Tibet as a customer in its tourism industry, and therefore important for Tibet in terms of the net power, so to say, that it has. Since Tibet is not independent per se, the power of Tibet financially and the financial power of China, as we have continuously implied, is very much interlinked. It is therefore interesting to look at how China recently closed down international tourism in Tibet as a consequence of the self-immolations in the Tibetan region, as we saw earlier in this thesis. What this indicates is that China is not afraid of, in being the larger state, to issue control over Tibet by putting a halt to the main source of power that Tibet has. This way of interpreting the events goes well in hand with the framework of Realism and shows well how the international society in the form of tourism in Tibet is important to the relative power of Tibet and also important to China in two different ways, both crucial to power relations.

### **6.6.3. The Importance of China to Show its Might**

As noted, China has risen to one of the largest economic powers in the world. According to Realism, this is what every state would hope to achieve. Following the realist thought, China's goal,

as a state, is to replace the U.S. and become the largest hegemon in the world. Whether or not it can do exactly that, or when it will happen, is out of the realm of this thesis to hypothesize on. There is, however, one important point in regards to the behaviour of China as such a great power, which is notable. Depending on a state's size, it will react to the international community around it in different ways. For example if a state is a small one, it might bandwagon to a larger state for security reasons. However, if a state is a large one, and especially the larger it gets, it will instead show its strength or at least imply its strength. I will argue that China has done both indirectly and directly by use of Tibet. Whether it is intentional or non-intentional, it does not matter, as Realism will still argue that the behaviour and tendency of a state is in fact the same. It can be argued that China shows its strength to the outer world when riots and trouble appear in Tibet and China makes it clear that it does not want the international society to interfere in it. China makes it clear that it is strong state and can take care of itself and deal with whatever problems may arise. At the same time; China has also made it clear that it does not want the U.S. or any other state to interfere in the matters of China and its region; Tibet. This could be seen as a way for China to communicating that it is a strong state that can take care of itself and is therefore not weak. In the international anarchy that exists among states, China would want to appear as a strong power, so it could potentially ward off any hostile powers in this way. My argument is that China implicitly used and is using Tibet to show this to the outside world. I realize that this argument is somewhat weak in its nature, however, put together with other accounts of China's behaviour explained by Realism, Realism becomes a strong explanatory tool for the subject matter. In this case, I have exemplified how Realism can explain how China is to a degree showing off to the international society and the importance of China doing so in terms of sustaining the gained power in the never ending competition for power.

#### **6.6.4. The U.S. as a Hero**

When dealing with our relevant state entities of China and Tibet, we need to have a short section attributed to the fact that many Tibetans see the U.S. as a hero that will come and "save them" from China, where in fact the U.S. does not appear to have any such interest at heart. It has earlier been made clear that a small state will often, when it feels threatened by a stronger and bigger state, bandwagon itself to another strong state in order to protect itself. Indications could show that it is in fact something of the sort that some Tibetans would want. The fact that many Tibetans have

expressed hope that the U.S. will “liberate” them from China and that they are sure that this day will come, goes to show that it is in the interest of a small state such as Tibet to come under the cloak of the U.S., the other great world power, instead of that of China. If nothing else, realist theory shows that in the interplay between China, Tibet and the U.S., the U.S. is not without importance to the Tibetans. Indications show that if Tibet had its way it would lend favour from the power of the U.S. as a strong military power. However, the evidence brought forth in this thesis does not show that this is a likely outcome.

### **6.7. The Dalai Lama’s Middle Way Solution**

Due to the fact that we have already touched upon the MWA solution of the Dalai Lama, this chapter will be fairly short. We will again look into the possible reality of it, looking at it with Realism, but also with Constructivism and, as well, bring the international society into the matter in investigating if this approach is a realistic one. We will be treating the MWA further because it is the official solution of the Dalai Lama and the CTA. Since it is their proposal as to how they and Beijing would potentially agree, it is indeed worth looking deeper into.

We have concluded from the relevant data and with the theory of Realism, that China would not accept any agreement with Tibet that implies that China were to give up all the territory that the CTA claims is part of Tibet, but which is outside of present Tibet, e.g. the parts in Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Ningxia. The reasons for these are many, but to name a few that we looked at; China would have to rewrite its history if it did that and especially, which is something that they, for previous mentioned reasons, would not want to do. In terms of power relations, China does not want to lose even more territory than they could feel is already at stake. There is simply no reason to believe from a realist point of view, that China would change their perspective on their history in such a significant manner. Even in terms of social Constructivism, it does not seem plausible that China would disregard their own version of truth, especially when China is such a large and powerful state, and their ideas are just as powerful. I do see the MWA solution, or a version of it, to be the most likely one to be accepted by both parties, hence the extra attention that this possible solution is getting in the thesis. Why the MWA is the most plausible is because it is the one suggested approach by the CTA and the Dalai Lama, where the PRC would give up less power, would still have influence over Tibet and would not lose much, if anything at all in terms of power.

Also, no other power would be able to take control over Tibet. The MWA is, in other words, the most plausible solution theoretically, but is it likely, though? As pointed out, the CTA would have to go on a compromise in terms of how much territory that it wants. If they could do that, together with stating formally something like “we are still part of China, but we would like to start handling our domestic issues ourselves”, the CTA has done their part, I would say. The question then arises, would that be enough for the PRC to engage in a dialog about the MWA and if ultimately concur to it. Arguing from our realist framework, I would say that for China, it is a matter of pros and cons. The question would then be if China would see much of value and benefit in giving in to the Dalai Lama and the CTA. The fact of the matter is, and this is something that we ought not to forget; China does not see the CTA as a state. We are merely treating the CTA as a state entity for theoretical purposes in order to understand the relative power relational interactions between relevant actors in the subject matter, but the CTA is not regarded by any other official state entity as a formal and acknowledged state. China does not feel that it is suppressing or undermining Tibet, so if China was to comply with the CTA and accept the MWA they would not do so because they are righteous, altruistic or in general “doing the right thing”, they would only do so “out of good faith”. It would be “in good faith” to people that China regard as terrorists and separatists, and not worth credible support. It is difficult to imagine, when speaking through the power relational idea of Realism that China would want to give up a part of its own state for these reasons. There would of course be other reasons, as to why China might want to give up Tibet and comply with the MWA, such as for example pressure from the international society and pressure from Tibet, e.g. the self-immolations. Taken the attitude of China into account, in terms of how they have stated that they do not want other states, such as the U.S. to interfere in the matter and how China has recently banned tourism in Tibet, China’s attitude to the matter is somewhat more aggressive in terms of putting a stop to what they call mingling of other states and separatist movements. Knowing how aggressive China has been, and how they have more relative power when having Tibet in their hands, China most definitely would need to have a very good reason, if it was to give in to the CTA. In comparing the reasons to why China would want to be in possession of Tibet to the opposition against China having Tibet and what they would gain from letting go of it and the relatively small danger it poses to China, my initial conclusion is that China simply lacks incentive to comply with the CTA and the MWA. The pros, in other words, outweigh the cons. However, I am certain that if China found a reason strong enough to let go of Tibet, the MWA is still the most plausible solution

for both parts, given, still, that the CTA changes the nature of the approach, so that it is only Tibet that the CTA is to have, and not any territory around it.

### **6.8.A Short Discussion on the Future of an Autonomous Tibet**

Since the question here is whether China and the CTA can actually agree on a deal, it is relevant to do a thought experiment and see how Tibet might look like in the future if for example the MWA got accepted and the CTA would end up being partly autonomous, as the MWA clearly states. It is very conceivable that if that was to happen, the PRC would no longer support Tibet financially in any meaningful manner or no longer finance development of Tibet. Knowing from especially the sources supporting the PRC, Tibet was previously a region with high poverty until China came and changed that. We also know that the GDP of Tibet was significantly smaller in Tibet earlier and have in fact changed much in the recent times after the liberation of Tibet. Tibet cannot have it both ways; both be independent of China and, as well, receive support from the PRC. Even if they did, there is no reason why the PRC would continue to support Tibet in as high a manner, as they are doing now while Tibet is under China. In other words, if Tibet was to become independent of China indications are that it would have a hard time financing itself, consequently being diminished to the state of poverty that it was in before. Of course this is a pessimistic picture drawn on the possible future scenario of Tibet, if it was to achieve the independence that the CTA and some of the Tibetans long for. The other side of it, a more positive scenario, is that Tibet would succeed in building industry around many of the resources that it currently has. If this was the case, Tibet might effectively be able to make use of many of its resources, export it efficiently and export it aptly. However, to reach that point from a lower state of poverty is a hard thing to do and it is something that Tibet need help in order to do. A positive outcome of the situation then, and as we have previously indicated, a likely one as well, would be with the help of China. I mentioned here that China would most likely not continue to develop Tibet, as it is doing currently. However, earlier in the thesis I also state that China would be interested in the resources found in the Tibetan region. Taking the obvious assumption that China need and want the resources of Tibet in order to continue on its own rise and in order to continue development and trade of its own state, it is highly imaginable that on the brink of China allowing the CTA to be the new Tibetan administration, it would make sure that it (China) had special agreements with the new administration in Tibet. In other words, if Tibet were to reach independence China would make sure to have special privileges

and special access to the resources of Tibet. Obviously a deal such as this has to go both ways and be mutually beneficial, and benefits to Tibet will in this scenario exist. These are benefits such as perhaps continuous support, help in building an efficient industry and perhaps business management. In an agreement such as this, China would indeed have incentives to support Tibet after a break up, since there would now be power relational benefits in it for China in the form of special trade agreements and special access to goods. Therefore, despite the previous state of poverty, it might in fact not be the case that Tibet would move directly straight back to poverty and the financial state that it allegedly was in before, if it was to achieve independence. Instead, this thought experiment leads us to the highly plausible scenario, where we have argued that in terms of Geopolitics and Realism, both China and Tibet would gain financially from accepting the MWA (if of course China had special privileges, which I have argued that China would indeed have). With the MWA, Tibet might in fact not look as grim as one at first would imagine.

The completely different scenario, and as I have argued, perhaps even more likely, is that Tibet continues to be part of China; that China would for reasons stated earlier, not let go of Tibet. A possible hypothesis in this outcome is that the statement from Goldstein<sup>152</sup>, that the acculturation of Tibet would be the case. I am not saying, though, that the traditional culture of Tibet would disappear completely, but more that the development of Tibet together with the massive movement of Han Chinese into Tibet would diminish it to a point where it would not pose a threat to the PRC in terms of an opposition to the PRC per se. Accepting that the hypothesis of Goldstein is in fact similar to the actual strategy of the PRC or that the consequence would be same as if it was, due to the movement of Han Chinese to Tibet in order to possess jobs, I believe it is plausible that the demonstrations and self-immolations in Tibet would diminish. In conjunction with this hypothesis, I have stated that the Dalai Lama is important for both state entities in reaching an agreement, because for the PRC he is the only legitimate authority figure. The CTA is not an authority in the eyes of the PRC because it is an illegitimate government and not one worth much attention when it does not go through the Dalai Lama first. It has been stated, however, that the Dalai Lama has retired. With this in mind, together with the obvious fact that the spiritual leader might not live forever, the CTA would lastly remain. The CTA nevertheless, does not hold much respect in the view of the PRC and the PRC would with great likelihood not be willing to negotiate with the CTA due to how it see the nature of the CTA to be, which is as a separatist pseudo government prone to

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<sup>152</sup> See p. 24 of this thesis

terrorism. I then believe that in this scenario, the power of the CTA is likely to diminish and the Tibet question would become less of a question.

## 7. Conclusion

I have throughout the thesis explained why the CTA and China do and did as they did and what reasons they may have had for it, their incentives and made several hypotheses out of the relevant data. I have overall answered the sub questions in the problem formulation by use of the theoretical frameworks, some more thoroughly than others, depending on their relevance and the evidence we have in the form of the data at hand. As I have attempted to answer the sub questions in the analysis, this leads us up to the problem formulation's main question; the question that guided this thesis in its investigation. The question of whether or not the CTA and China can reach an agreement is one that we can now attempt to answer.

The short answer is that they might be able to reach an agreement that they would both gain from, but that it is not that likely it will actually happen. According to the theoretical frameworks, China will not let go of the regions outside of Tibet, that Tibet wish to have as part of Tibet when/if they gained independence. I have concluded that if the CTA was to become the new administration in Tibet it would be through the MWA. In other words, it would be the MWA that the PRC would agree too. I argued that this approach to an agreement is the one in which China would lose the least power overall, but would still be able to have benefits from Tibet in the form of its resources and China would be able to still call Tibet part of China, and therefore not lose any integrity, due to the fact that nature of the MWA is such that Tibet does not gain complete, but only partial autonomy. I will therefore deduce that the MWA solution is the most likely solution to be realized. It is the most likely solution that both parties would agree to. However, there is an "if". The solution would only be accepted by the PRC, and by that be realized if and only if, the Dalai Lama and the CTA changed the nature of their proposal. They would have to change the MWA so that it does not include the parts outside of Tibet, e.g. Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Ningxia as parts that they claim to want. If they changed their mind in terms of gaining that territory, the MWA would be the most likely solution, but only if they did that.

However, China has been reluctant to negotiate with the CTA because it does not see it as any legitimate authority to be negotiated with. We have furthermore seen indications that China is quite satisfied with the status quo at the moment and what this implies for China. While, on the contrary, if China was to declaim Tibet to the extent that they would, China might lose more than it would



gain or want to. In other words, there does in fact not seem to be much incentive for China to negotiate with the CTA or especially, to lose the overall power that it would. There does, as well, not seem to be much incentive for China to accept the premise of the CTA or to humour them in accepting an agreement.

The overall conclusion is the following, that while the MWA is the most plausible solution if Beijing and the CTA were going to reach an agreement, considering the change of the nature of the agreement mentioned, it does not seem likely that China would be inclined to comply with any agreement. This is due to the fact that they do not gain enough out of doing so. Upon investigating the data at hand with the theoretical framework chosen to be adequate, China does not seem to have enough incentive in terms of accepting an agreement.



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