The Sino-Indian border dispute is related to India’s border with Tibet. With the marching of people’s Liberation Army into Tibet on October 1950 the Chinese borders were extended till India. In the western sector the dispute is in Ladakh area of Kashmir, through which China built a 100 mile highway linking China’s Tibet Region with the Chinese province of Sinkiang. The middle sector is between the states of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Utter Pradesh of India and the Tibet region of China and the eastern sector is where the famous McMahon line lies. The study of Sino-Indian dispute would be incomplete without studying Tibet’s relations with China in the precolonial period and postcolonial period and the attitude of British India prior to 1947 and independent India towards Tibet. This is because geography has decided Tibet is and will be the major point of Sino-Indian entanglement.

Tibet originally was not a part of China. In the remote past, it was a piece of land populated by a number of nomadic tribes. Each had its own chieftain and its own jurisdiction. Over the years some tribes entered into an agreement to unite themselves into a nation with one among them as their leader. The other tribes which did not join this agreement were gradually brought under subjugation one by one by the common leader. It was during the period of Tang dynasty that the contact between China and Tibet took place in 618-907 AD. At that time Tibet was ruled by Song Tsan Gampo and he sent an envoy to the Chinese Emperor Tai Tsung founder of Tang dynasty and the Chinese emperor sent an envoy to Tibet to return the visit. The Sino-Tibetan rift also

3. Ibid
started during this period when the Chinese rejected the decree of Tibetan King to marry a prince from China. It is said the Tibetan King took it as an insult and attacked the Chinese. After initial setback the Chinese emperor was able to crush Tibetan forces. After the war when once again the Tibetan ruler expressed his desire to marry an imperial girl, this time the Chinese ruler accepted the proposal and gave princess Wenchen in 641.

Princess Wen Chen was a true believer in Buddhism and it was she who introduced Buddhism in Tibet by getting a temple built in the name of Sakyamuni. She visited the temple regularly to worship the God. The Tibetans were deeply moved by her religious devotion and they too began to follow her religious practices. As a result Buddhism became a religion of Tibet. Under the influence of princess Wen Chen Tibetans were sent to China to study classics and they were asked to adopt Chinese style of clothing. Regular interaction between Chinese and Tibetans started during this period.

In 650 Song Tsan Gampo the Tibetan ruler died and he was succeeded by his minor grandson. The new ruler being a minor, the power was in the hands of his Prime Minister Lee Tung Tsan. The Prime Minister was an ambitious man. Ignoring the Chinese Tibetan relation established by marriage he resorted to an aggressive policy against China. During his time Tibetans expanded their territory to parts of Sinkiang, Kansu, Szechuan, Yunuan provinces of China, parts of Nepal, Burma and India.

Even after the death of the ambitious Prime Minister Lu-Tung Tsan, Tibet

4. Ibid
5. Ibid, p. 12
7. Ibid
followed an aggressive policy towards China. To avoid further conflicts the Chinese princess Ching Chen married to Tibetan king Chilisu Tsan, suggested in 733 erection of boundary stones between the two countries. This proposal was accepted by both the Chinese and the Tibetans. 9 But very soon boundary violations were made by the Chinese officers resulting in Tibetan attack on China. 10 In 780 Te Tsing came to power and he tried to reestablish friendly relationship with the Tibetans. He took initiative to discuss the boundary dispute and a boundary between the two countries was finalised. 11 Thus friendly relations were restored between the two countries. In 786 the Chinese emperor had to face a revolt and Tibet sent its soldiers to help the Chinese soldiers put down the revolt and after the revolt was put down Tibet asked China to surrender Anchi and Peiting cities as reward for her assistance. 12 Tibetans angered at not being given the cities attacked the Chinese and pushed their boundary further east. Chinese reconquered these lost territories in 838 A.D. when Tibet became very weak. 13 Tibet never recovered from this weak position due to power struggle among the Tibetans 14 and in 960 the Sung dynasty was established which though weak was less interested in dealing with Tibet, because it was being attacked by the kings of other regions like Liao, Hsihsia. 15

Consequently till the destruction of Sung dynasty in 1279 the two kingdoms co-existed as two sovereign states. This was a period when Tibet and

9. Hung Chi Tu, A Study of the Legal Status of Tibet (Taiwan 1966), p. 9
10. Ibid
11. Ibid
12. Ibid
15. Ibid
China had little contact with each other. During the Sung Dynasty one of the tribes of Tibet region, Tong Hsiang, emerged from today's Shensi, Kansu and Lingsha provinces as a great power and established Hsihsia as an independent nation in 1038. Hsihsia was so strong that it frequently waged war against the Tibet Kingdom or against the Sung Dynasty; neither country was able to launch any counter measure against Hsihsia. This Kingdom of Hsihsia was destroyed by Chengis Khan, founder of the empire of Yuan dynasty. Chengis Khan did not touch Tibet during his life time but his grandson emperor Hsien Tsung instructed his brother Kublai, to invade Tibet with Mongolian forces. After subduing Tibet Kublai asked Mongolian general Lu-Liang to remain in Tibet to keep the Tibetans under control. Kublai found the warlike Tibetans a difficult people to rule and when he became the emperor he decided to rule the Tibetans through the instrument of Buddhist religion because at that time Buddhism had great influence upon the Tibetans. Therefore Kublai invited Phagspa, Chief Lama of Sakya Monastery, to Peking to serve as his spiritual guide in an attempt to rule Tibet through him. Later in 1269 Kublai conferred the title of Ta Pao Fa Wang (Priest-King) on Phagspa and invested him with the power to rule Tibet. Kublai Khan also established a pacification agency in Central Government and used the office to control Tibet and he also granted the Priest-King the right to make the succession to his throne hereditary as a reward for his service and loyalty to the Yuan dynasty.

The Yuan dynasty was eventually overthrown by the Mings. The Ming ruler found the Yuan dynasty's way of ruling Tibet very practical and thus

16. Hung Chi Tu, n. 9, pp. 11 - 12
17. Ibid, p. 19
18. Tieh-tseng Li, n. 6, p. 19
19. Ibid, pp. 19 - 20
20. Ibid, p. 20
resolved to follow in the Yuan dynasty's steps to maintain control over Tibet. 

During this time the interaction between the Tibetans and the Chinese increased. The Tibetan Lamas frequented the court of Chinese emperor Tai Tsu (founder of Ming dynasty). The leading Lama of Tibet, Nan Chia Pal Tsang Po was given a jade seal and a new title Chih-Shen-Fu Pankuo Shih (the most revered national leader and mentor in Buddhism.) Afterwards many leading lamas frequently came to visit China and all were given a title. In return, they paid an annual tribute to the Ming court. The Ming government set up a pacification agency in Tibet along with the Priest King office to promote Sino-Tibetan relations. Generally thus, the political relationship between the Ming Dynasty and Tibet remained the same as that between the Yuan Dynasty and Tibet. Thus the two Chinese dynasties ruled Tibet only through Priest King, without attempting to rule Tibet directly.

The Manchus made Tibet an integral part of China. The Manchu dynasty originated in north eastern China with its capital in today's Mukden Inliao-Ning province. Prior to the downfall of the Ming dynasty, the Manchus had already had some contact with Tibet. In 1652, when Shih Tsu was the emperor of China, the 5th Dalai Lama from Tibet paid a visit to his court in Peking and the emperor conferred on him religious title and power over ecclesiastical affairs in Tibet. 

At the same time, there was internal strife in Tibet caused by a split in Buddhist thought between the Red sect and Yellow sect. During the Tang dynasty and the early years of Ming dynasty, there was only Red sect and it was

21. Hung Chi Tu, n. 9, p. 13
22. Ibid
23. Chih. H Lu, n. 2, p. 15
24. Ibid
25. Hung Chi Tu, n. 9, pp. 16 - 17
Red sect which controlled the religious as well as political affairs. However as the time went by the Red sect became more and more corrupt and the lamas no longer devoted themselves to the cause of Buddhism but tried to enjoy their life as non-Buddhists did resulting in great dissatisfaction among many Buddhists. In 1417, a Lama named Tsong Ka Pa and his supporters insisted that Buddhists must lead a life of celibacy and devote their time to learning Buddhism wholeheartedly. This group was later known as Yellow sect attracting more followers. At the time of Manchus, the yellow sect under the leadership of Dalai Lama with its headquarters at Lhasa had spread its sphere of influence to all important pockets of Tibet and had become strong enough to challenge the Red sect. The Red sect was still dominated by the influential ruling class and had its power in outer Tibet. The Priest King was from the Red sect and he was supposed to be the sole ruler of all Tibet but his authority was being challenged by the Yellow sect. The 5th Dalai lama was an ambitious man and a devout Buddhist who refused to co-exist with the Red sect. Instead he was determined to destroy it. The Red sect to counter Tsang Pa Khan sought the help of Gushikhan, head of Qosot tribe in today's Chingai province. In the ensuing battle the Red sect was throughly defeated and Tsand Pa Khan was killed and the Priest-King of Tibet belonging to Red sect was dethroned. The Panchan Lama was asked to take over the ecclesiastical affairs in outer Tibet. Thus Tibet was now unified under the banner of Yellow sect with Dalai Lama as its paramount leader. But Gushikhan had left his eldest son to command the Qosot forces in Lhasa. Consequently Tibet was virtually ruled by Qosot tribe. This was disliked by Dalai Lama's administrative assistant Sangye. He sought the help of Dzungar tribe, located in today's Singkiang to attack the

27. Ibid
28. Hung Chi Tu, n. 2, p.16.
29. Ibid, p. 18
Qosot to weaken their power position in Tibet. He succeeded in this plan and thus became the most powerful man in Tibet and made Dalai Lama his puppet. Songye exercised his power effectively using the name of Dalai Lama.  

Because of this, in 1682 after the death of 5th Dalai Lama Songye immediately chose Tasang Yang Chia Tso to be the 6th Dalai Lama. In 1705 Songye was assassinated by the Grandson of Guthi Khan Latsang Khan, for his tyrannical conduct.  

After the elimination of Songye Latsyakhan removed 6th Dalai Lama and imposed his own nominee as 7th Dalai Lama. Thus Tibetans refused to accept the 7th Dalai Lama and selected a new Dalai Lama of their choice. When this confused situation was prevailing the Dzungsars of Sinkiang launched an attack killing Latsang Khan and looted Lhasa. The Chinese emperor on hearing this ordered his forces against the Dzungsars. In the first encounter at Kalanusu river, north of Lhasa the imperial army was defeated in 1718. The Chinese emperor did not accept this as a defeat and in 1720 his son led the attack against Dzungsars defeating them and driving them back to their home province in Sinkiang. Now the Manchu court ordered two of its representatives Kan-Chi-nai and Polo Nai to administer inner and outer Tibet, while stationing 2,000 Mongolian soldiers in Lhasa to protect Tibet, This was the beginning of Chinese occupation of Tibet. In 1724 the Tibetans raised the banner of revolt against Chinese representative Kang-Chinai. On learning about the revolt Manchus despatched a huge force to put down the revolt but even before the Manchu army had reached Tibet, the forces of Polo Nai from outer Tibet put down the revolt and captured its leader. Thus, as a reward Polo Nai

30. Chih. H Lu, n. 2, p.17
31. Hung Chi Tu, n.9, p. 18
32. Ibid, pp. 18 - 19
33. Ibid, p. 19
34. Ibid
35. Chih. H Lu, n. 2, p. 17
was made the ruler of whole Tibet. At same time, the Manchu Court appointed an Amban and a deputy Amban with 2000 Chinese soldiers to Tibet to supervise the work of Tibetan officials. Thus under the Manchus China brought Tibet under its firm control. 

Further strengthening its hold over Tibet the Chinese Emperor raised the Amban to a position above Dalai Lama and Panchan Lama. All appointments were to be reported to the Chinese court through Amban for confirmation and all Tibetan Government decisions had to be approved by Amban. By this time Chinese had strengthened their hold over Tibet and the process if integrating Tibet with China was finally completed.

By the end of 18th century the Chinese had integrated Tibet to their empire. When China under the Manchus was consolidating the hold over Tibet, in the neighbourhood the Britishers were consolidating their colonial grip in India. In 1774 Warren Hastings, the Governor General of British India received an unexpected letter from Logsang Paldan Yeshe, the Panchan Lama of Tibet requesting him to cease hostilities with Bhuttan and this was the beginning of contact between Tibet and Britain.

Hastings responded to Panchan Lama’s letter by suggesting a treaty of friendship and commerce between Bengal and Tibet. He entrusted the mission to one of the company’s officials George Bogle. Bogle went to Tibet in May 1774. The talks between Panchan Lama and Bogle were mainly confined to commerce. Bogle convinced the Tibetans that Bengal was under the control of English and it would look after the interests of Tibetan traders. This assurance

36. Ibid, p. 18
37. The Bhutanese Army kidnapped the King of a small state Cooch Bihar in India. Cooch Bihar was a vassal state of Tibet and was located between Tohutan and Bengal. The King of cooch Behar sought the help of English and Hastings responded to rajah’s request by attacking Bhutan. Bhutan sought Panchan Lama’s help who in turn wrote to Hastings.
38. H.E. Richardson, n. 1, p. 64
made Panchan Lama agree to open the Tibetan borders for trade between Tibet and Bengal. But it later became clear that the Panchan Lama did not have the authority in this matter and the Chinese emperor alone had the power to make a decision in this regard. The Chinese Amban sent two officials to meet Bogle and their talks remained inconclusive and no treaty could be signed as the officials made it very clear to Bogle that without the Chinese emperor’s authorization they were helpless. The Chinese emperor refused to permit Tibet to open its door to the British and thus the mission of George Bogle to Tibet was a failure. Hastings was not discouraged by this failure and in 1783 once again he attempted to reach an agreement with the Panchan Lama. He nominated this time Lieutenant Samuel Turner. The Panchan Lama who met Bogle was no more and the new Panchan Lama was still a child, and his regent discouraged Turner on the matter. Thus Turner’s mission also ended in a failure. Soon Hastings resigned his position as Governor General and the British for the time being gave up their plan of extending their sphere of influence to Tibet. 

For nearly a century after Hastings left the British were following a “leave Tibet alone policy.” In 1875 a British exploratory expedition led by Colonel Horace A. Browne made its way from Burma into Yunnan in an attempt to discover a new overland trade route to the south western provinces of China by way of Burma. The British Minister in Peking Thomas F.Wade assigned Augustus R. Margary to serve the group as an interpreter. This group was accompanied by six Chinese, Margary travelled overland and arrived at Bhamo.

40. Ibid
41. Tieh-tsong Li, n. 6, p. 9
42. John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer and Albert N. Craig, East Asia (Boston, 1965), p. 371
on January 1875. In February of the same year, the Browne party left Bhamo for Yunnan with his interpreter Margary and six Chinese associates as their spearhead. After they entered Yunnan, Margary and 5 of his 6 Chinese companions were killed by some armed Chinese. This gave the British minister in Peking an opportunity to push open the doors of Tibet. In 1876 the British Minister in Peking Wade and Li Hung-Chang, a high ranking official of Chinese court, negotiated at the port of Chefoo in Shantung province of China and produced a treaty called the Anglo-Chinese Chefoo Convention. The British took this opportunity to insert a separate article on Tibet in the convention and forced the Chinese to accept it. According to this:

Her majesty’s government having it in contemplation to send a mission of exploration next year, by way of Peking through Kansu and Kouonor or by way of Szechuan to Tibet and thence to India, the Tsanguli Yemen, having due regard to the circumstances, will, when the time arrives, issue the necessary passports and will address letters to the higher provincial authorities and Residents in Tibet. If the mission should be proceeding across India frontier to Tibet, the Tsanguli Yemen on receipt of a communication to that effect from the British Prime Minister will write to the Chinese Resident in Tibet, and the Resident in Tibet with due regard to the circumstances, will send officials to take care of the mission and passport for the mission will be issued by the Tsangli Yemen, that its passage be not obstructed.

Thus nearly after 100 years the British were able to open the doors of Tibet.

**Anglo-Chinese Treaty of 1890**

In order to extend their influence to Tibet, Britian needed first to put Sikkim under its control because Sikkim was in between the route from India to Tibet. In 1839 Britain had received from Sikkim a piece of land stretching

44. H.E. Richardson, n. 1, pp. 75 - 76
45. Ibid, p. 249
from Silguri to Darjeeling as a reward for mediating between Nepal and Sikkim.\textsuperscript{46} Then in 1849 Britain had occupied the southern part of Sikkim by force when Sikkim arrested an English envoy.\textsuperscript{47} In 1861, claiming that Sikkim was unco-operative, the British occupied all of Sikkim and brought it under British protectorate.\textsuperscript{48} Sikkim disliked British domination and in 1887 they sought the help of Tibetans. In response to the request Tibetans sent troops to Ling-Tu about 18 miles within Sikkim frontier to assist Sikkim in its struggle against the British. The British Government asked the Tibetans to withdraw, but they refused to do so. British also appealed to the Chinese but it was of no use. In March 1888 the British Government instructed General Gerald Graham to attack Tibet. The British defeated the joint forces of Sikkim and Tibet but also advanced 12 miiled across the Tibetan border in the Chumbi valley.\textsuperscript{49}

The Chinese fearing that Britain would stay in Tibet sought an agreement on Tibetan-Sikkim border in order to avoid Tibet-British clash.\textsuperscript{50} The British Government responded favourably, and a treaty was concluded by the Chinese and British representatives in March 1890. According to this treaty the boundary of Sikkim and Tibet shall be the crest of the mountain range separating the waters which flow into Sikkim Teesta and its affluents from the waters flowing into Tibetan Mochu and northwards into other rivers of Tibet. The line starts at Mount Gipmochi on the Bhutan frontier and follows the above mentioned water parting to the point where it meets Nepal's territory. But the Tibetans refused to accept it because they were not consulted on the matter.\textsuperscript{51} Thus,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{46} Chic. H. Lu, n. 2, p. 22
  \item \textsuperscript{47} Ibid
  \item \textsuperscript{48} Ibid
  \item \textsuperscript{49} Charles Bell, \textit{Tibet: Past and Present} (London, 1942), p. 60
  \item \textsuperscript{50} Chic. H. Lu, n. 2, p. 23
  \item \textsuperscript{51} Tieh - Tseng Li, n. 6, P 81.
\end{itemize}
when the boundary pillars were erected the Tibetans destroyed them. The Chinese were not able to compel the Tibetans to accept the terms of the treaty.

As per the Article 7 of the Anglo-Chinese Treaty of 1890, the Chinese and British Governments were to appoint a commissioner within six months of the exchange of the ratification of the treaty to discuss the questions of trade between Tibet and Sikkim, pasturage by the Tibetans on the Sikkim side, and official communication between the British authorities in India and the Chinese authorities in Tibet. The exchange of the ratifications of the treaty was performed in July, 1980.

By early 1891, the two governments sent their representatives to Darjelling to negotiate. The result of the negotiations was the conclusion of a treaty titled Regulations Regarding Trade, Communication and Pasturage to Be Appended to the convention between Great Britain and China of 17th March, 1890, Relative to Sikkim and Tibet. These regulations were signed by both sides at Darjelling on 5th December, 1893.

The important points of these regulations were as follows:

1. Yatung of Tibet shall be opened to all British subjects for trade and the government of India shall be free to send officers to reside at Yatung.

2. British subjects, trading or residing at Yatung or travelling between the frontier and Yatung shall receive effective protection from China for their persons and property.

3. Goods other than arms, ammunitions, military stores, salt liquors and intoxicating or nacotic drugs, entering Tibet from British India or vice-versa, shall be exempt from duty for a period of 5 years, beginning with the date of opening of Yatung to trade.

4. Trade disputes arising between British and Chinese or Tibetan subjects in Tibet shall be dealt with in personal conference by the political officer for Sikkim and the Chinese frontier officer. If there is a divergence of view, the law of the country to which the defendant belongs shall guide.

52. Charles Bell, n. 49, p.61.
5. In the event of disagreement between the political officer for Sikkim and the Chinese frontier officer, each shall report the matter to his immediate superior. They in turn will try to settle the matter and if they cannot they will refer it to their governments.

6. After one year from the date of opening of Yatung, those Tibetans who continue to graze their cattle in Sikkim will be subject to such regulations as the British government sees fit to issue. 53

The signing of these treaties did not in anyway bind the Tibetans because they refused to acknowledge or recognize these regulations as a binding document and the Chinese were not able to compel Tibetan compliance with its provisions. 54

The fact that the Tibetans refused to accept the Anglo Chinese treaties of 1876, 1890 and 1893 and the inability of the Chinese Government to make the Tibetans respect it made the English very uneasy and then Viceroy of British India felt it necessary to establish direct link with Lhasa. 55 Lord Curzon in 1899 sought permission from London to establish direct contact with the Tibetans. He requested meanwhile the Dalai Lama to send a high Tibetan official to discuss the frontier and trade questions with the British. The Dalai Lama retuned the letter. 56 On being rejected by Dalai Lama, Lord Curzon requested London in January 1903 seeking permission to send a mission with an armed escort to Lhasa to talk with Dalai Lama about the trade problems between the British and the Tibetans and stationing of a permanent British representative at Lhasa. 57 However London did not approve Curzon’s plan lest this should provoke Russian intervention. 58 Not to be discouraged by London’s disapproval, Lord

54. Tieh-tseng Li, n. 6, p. 81
55. P.C. Chakravarti, India's China Policy (Bloomington, 1962), pp. 15 - 16
56. Charles Bell, n. 49, p. 62
57. Ibid, p. 65
58. Ibid, pp. 65 - 66
Curzon continued to press London seeking permission to send a mission to Lhasa. Finally the British gave him permission to send a mission with an armed escort of 200 soldiers to Kampa Dzong, a few miles across the Sikkim-Tibetan border. The mission, led by Colonel Francis Younghusband, an officer of the Indian service, arrived at Kampa Dzong in July 1903. They hoped to meet the high level representative of the Dalai Lama and work out an agreement on trade and boundary questions, but Younghusband's mission failed because Dalai Lama refused to negotiate. The Chinese government professed friendliness to the mission but pleaded that Tibet's uncooperative behaviour prevented it from negotiating with the mission. 59 The attitude of the Tibetans convinced Lord Curzon that Tibet could be brought to heel only by military action. Curzon was given permission from London to send a mission to Gyantze, but it was given permission by British Government only to negotiate a trade agreement. The British government was very particular that the mission return as soon as an agreement was reached and that no permanent representative should be stationed at Gyantze. 60

The Younghusband mission originally had an escort of only 200 men but now was backed up by an additional 3000 armed men and 7000 supporting personnel. 61 The expedition started for Gyantze in November 1903 and reached Gyantze early in April 1904. The mission on its way was frequently attacked by the Tibetans and by the time the mission entered Gyantze it had killed about 500 Tibetans and wounded many more. 62

Tibetans not only refused to negotiate with the mission but also started moving troops into the area between Gyantze and Lhasa. It became very clear

59. H.E. Richardson, n. 1, p. 85
60. Ibid, pp. 85 - 86
61. Ibid, p. 86
62. Ibid
that the Tibetans would not negotiate with the mission and the British government ordered the mission to advance to Lhasa. On the way to Lhasa fighting broke out between the mission escort and the Tibetans and after suffering heavy casualties the Tibetan resistance came to an end.  

On 2nd August 1904 the mission entered Lhasa only to learn that the Dalai Lama had fled northward to Mongolia. The Chinese Amban met the mission in the absence of Dalai Lama but made it clear to the mission that he has no power to negotiate.

In the absence of Dalai Lama the mission forced Tri Rimponche, Grand Lama of Ganden monastery to negotiate, since he had been appointed regent by the Dalai Lama when he left Lhasa. Assisted by the head Lamas of several other sects, Tri Rimpoche held talks with the British and on 7th September 1904, the British and the Tibetans produced a treaty known as the Convention Between Great Britain and Tibet. The major provisions of the convention were as follows:

1. The Tibetans shall recognize the frontier between Sikkim and Tibet as defined in the Anglo-Chinese treaty of 1890.
2. The Tibetan government shall open Gyantse and Gartok to British subjects for trade.
3. The Tibetan government shall levy no dues of any kind other than on articles mutually agreed upon.
4. The Tibetan government shall pay an indemnity of 500,000 pounds to the British government.
5. The British government shall continue to occupy the Chumbi Valley until the indemnity has been paid, or until the trade marts have been effectively open for 3 years, whichever date is later.
6. The Tibetan government shall raze all forts and remove all armaments between the British frontier and towns of Gyantze and Lhasa.

63. Ibid, p. 87
64. Chih. H Lu, n. 2, p. 25
65. Ibid
7. Without the previous consent of the British government the Tibetan government shall not cede, sell, lease or mortgage any portion of the Tibetan territory to any foreign power; admit representatives of any foreign power to Tibet, grant concessions for railways, roads, telegraphs, mining or other rights to any foreign power or pledge or assign Tibetan revenues to any foreign power.  

For the first time a treaty was directly concluded between Tibet and Britain. The signing of the treaty exposed China’s weak hold over Tibet and this enabled the British government to make Tibet a semicolonony and at the same time Tibet was being given separate entity but without completely removing her from the Chinese “Sovereignty”.

**Anglo-Chinese Treaty of 1906**

When Younghusband forced the Tibetans to conclude the Lhasa convention of 1904, he was aware that Tibet was part of China. He began to put pressure on the Chinese Amban to Lhasa Yu Tai, to put his signature on the convention in an attempt to make it binding upon the Chinese government. The Amban sought the advice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Peking for their reaction. The Ministry believed that the terms of Lhasa convention were in violation of Chinese rights in Tibet, and if the Chinese Government approved the convention it would mean that it recognized the Tibetan power to make treaties with foreign nations thus negating Chinese “Sovereignty” over Tibet. Therefore the Chinese government instructed the Amban not to sign the convention and the Amban acted accordingly.


In the meantime, while insisting that the Tibetan problem had to be settled by the governments of Britain and China, the Chinese government suggested that the British and the Chinese meet at Peking or Calcutta to discuss the issue. The British government, aware that establishing direct relations with Tibet would harm the peaceful relation between Russia and Britain, therefore accepted the Chinese proposal and agreed to meet at Calcutta. In late 1904 Chinese sent Tsang Shao-Yi there to meet the British representative S.M. Fraser.

The Chinese representative reached Calcutta in February 1905. In the very first meeting the Chinese made it very clear that the Chinese government did not accept or recognize the Anglo-Tibetan convention of 1904 as a valid treaty. They proposed that a new treaty be worked out by the Chinese and British government superceding Lhasa convention. Fraser insisted that the Chinese representative sign the Lhasa convention which he refused to do. Finally Fraser was compelled to change his attitude and requested Chinese representative to present his plan at the next meeting.

Chinese representative Tang Shao Yi submitted a counterplan at the next meeting and the major points were as follows:

1. The obligations imposed on the Tibetans by the Lhasa convention will all be assumed by the Chinese government.
2. The new trade marts provided for by the Lhasa convention are accepted but any modification of the 1893 regulations shall be left to Anglo-Chinese, not Anglo-Tibetan discussions.
3. British officials in Tibet will deal with the Tibetan authorities only through Chinese officials.
4. The British Government shall declare that it does not have any intention either to annex Tibetan territory or to interfere in Tibet's internal affairs.

69. J. Rowland, n. 39, p. 37
70. Alstair Lamb, n. 68, p. 37
71. Shih-dun Cheng, n. 67, p. 33
5.* The British government shall further declare that all the prohibitions in Article 9 of the Lhasa convention shall apply to Britain as well as to other foreign powers. 72

The main idea of the Chinese representative’s counterplan was to emphasise Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. He wanted the British to accept that Tibet was a part of China and not a separate entity. British refused to recognise this point of sovereignty in Tibet and insisted that it was an autonomous region and China had only suzerainty in Tibet. 73 The British argued on the ground that the Chinese were unable to make the Tibetans comply with the earlier agreement signed by Britain and China on Tibet. Thus, Fraser demanded that the Chinese representative accept the Lhasa convention as it was but the Chinese refused to compromise on their sovereignty over Tibet. 74 The English started losing patience in the face of Chinese stubbornness on the matter. In July 1905 Lord Curzon told the Chinese representative bluntly that he should either sign the Lhasa convention or go home. The Chinese representative preferred to go home. 75

However, the negotiations did not break down as both sides still wanted to talk. When Tang Shao-Yi, the Chinese representative left for China, his place

* Article 9 of the Lhasa convention of 1904 reads: The Government of Tibet engages that, without the previous consent of the British Government, no portion of Tibetan territory shall be ceded, sold, leased, mortgaged or otherwise given for occupation to any foreign power; no such power shall be permitted to intervene in Tibetan affairs; no representatives or agents of any foreign power shall be admitted to Tibet; no concessions for railways, roads, telegraphs, mining or other rights shall be granted to any other foreign power. In the event of consent to such concession being granted similar or equivalent concession shall be granted to the British Government; no Tibetan revenues, whether in kind or cash shall be pledged or assigned to any foreign power or the subject of any foreign power.

72. Alstair Lamb, n. 68, pp. 37 - 38
73. Ibid, p. 42
74. Ibid, p. 38
75. Ibid, p. 45
was taken over by his assistant Chang Yi Tang to continue the negotiations. The new representative was also not empowered to go beyond the limits set by his predecessor Tang Shao-Yi and he stuck to the stand of his predecessor and stressed on Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. In desperation the English negotiator Fraser asked Chang whether he was prepared to sign the Lhasa convention, to which the Chinese emphatically said no. The stubbornness of the Chinese compelled Fraser to wind up the negotiations formally.  

Despite the failure of Calcutta talks, the negotiations were not give up. At about the same time the British government changed and the new regime sought only a limited involvement in Tibetan affairs. The new British government requested the Chinese government to reopen the Anglo-Chinese negotiations. The Chinese government responded favourably and reappointed Tang Shao-Yi once again as its negotiator. The British government selected Sir Ernest Satow, the British Minister to China, to be its delegate and the talks were to continue in Peking.

On January 10, 1906 Tang presented the proposal for a new Anglo-Chinese draft treaty which was not very different from the one presented at Calcutta. The new draft asked the British government to accept that Britain should neither encroach on Tibetan territory nor interfere in the internal affairs of Tibet; that the prohibitions contained in Article 9 of the Lhasa convention, were to apply to Britain as well as to other foreign powers and that China was not a foreign power with respect to Tibet. The new British government did not raise any serious objections to Tang’s proposed treaty and it was signed by the Chinese and British representatives on April 27, 1906. The major provisions were:

76. Ibid, p. 46
77. Ibid, pp. 48 - 49
1. The Lhasa convention of 1904 between Britain and Tibet is confirmed and attached to the present convention as an annex.

2. Britain agrees not to annex any Tibetan territory or to interfere in the administration of Tibet and the Chinese government undertakes not to permit any other foreign powers to interfere with the territory or internal administration of Tibet.

3. The concession provided in Article 9(d) of the Lhasa convention are denied to any state other than China. 78

Thus the convention of 1906 was triumph for the Chinese as it was agreed upon by Britain that Chinese sovereignty over Tibet was beyond doubt.

**The Anglo-Chinese Treaty of 1908**

The Lhasa convention of 1904 between Great Britain and Tibet was now attached to the convention of 1906. In its third article the Lhasa convention of 1904 provided: "The question of the amendment of regulation of 1893 is reserved for separate consideration and the Tibetan government undertakes to appoint fully authorised delegates to negotiate with representative of British government as to the details of the amendments required." Thus after the conclusion of Anglo-Chinese convention of 1906, the British government asked the Chinese government to discuss the question of amendment of the regulations of 1893. 79 The Chinese government immediately accepted the request fearing that if it failed to do so the British should again conduct direct negotiations with the Tibetans. 80

The Chinese government appointed Chang Ying Tang as its representative. The British then insisted on having a Tibetan representative according to

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79. Kuan-l Liu, *A Brief History of Imperialist is Aggression Against Tibet* (Peking 1951), p. 15

80. Shih-dun Cheng, n. 67, p. 47
the clause of Article 3 of 1893. The Chinese being weak did not resist the British demand and asked Tibetans to name their representative and the Tibetans named Wang Chuk-Gyalpo to India as their representative. The Chinese and Tibetan representatives arrived at Simla on July 15, 1907. In August 1907 the representatives of Tibet and China had meetings with the British representative Sir Louis Dane. In this meeting, the Chinese representative Ching-Yin Tang submitted a draft treaty stressing that the boundaries of trade marts be defined; all activities within the limits of trade marts be handed by Tibetan officials under the supervision of Chinese officials; British subjects must follow the fixed roads to come to Gartok, Gyantse and Yatung and before the British and Chinese governments agreed upon the duties rates, Indian tea could not be imported to Tibet. These proposals were not acceptable to the British representative and he suggested that the sale of Indian tea be allowed in Tibet immediately after the treaty was concluded, that the Tibetan representative be allowed to sign the treaty, and that the British government be permitted to negotiate with the Tibetan authorities directly on commercial matters.  

When these difference arose, the Chinese government conceded that the Tibetan representatives be allowed to sign the proposed treaty along with the Chinese and the British representatives. British government agreed not to directly negotiate with the Tibetans directly on the matter of trade. The question of Indian tea was put off for later discussion, because the Chinese felt that if Indian tea were admitted to Tibetan market it would affect the economics of both China and Tibet disastrously.  

In early 1908 Dane was replaced by E.C. Wilton as the British negotiator.

81. Ibid, p. 48
82. Ibid
83. Alstair Lamb, n. 68, p. 151
84. Shih-dun Cheng, n. 67, p. 56
Wilton followed Dane's steps in these negotiations and by April 20, 1908 the two sides agreed upon a treaty that was officially titled Agreement between Great Britain, China and Tibet Amending Regulations in Tibet of December 5, 1893.

The major points of the agreement were as follows:

1. The boundaries of Gyantze mart shall be defined, and the administration of the trade marts shall remain with the Tibetan officers under the supervision and direction of the Chinese officers.

2. Any British subject, committing any crime at the marts or on the routes to the marts shall be handed over by the local authorities to the British trade agents at the mart for trial and punishment according to the law of India.

3. The Chinese will not prevent the British trade agents from holding personal interaction and correspondence with the Tibetan officers and people.

4. British subjects shall be free to deal in kind or cash, to sell their goods to whomsoever they like, to purchase native commodities from whomever they please, to hire transport of any kind and to conduct their business transactions in conformity with the local usage and without any vexatious restrictions or oppressive exactions whatever.

5. China shall furnish effective police protection at all times to the persons and property of the British subjects at the marts along the routes to the marts. The British government shall withdraw its troops and trade agents and guards from Tibet when effective police protection is adequately provided. 85

This was the last treaty concluded between Great Britain and China and first signed by the Tibetan representative along with representatives of Britain and China. By this treaty, British subjects enjoyed not only all types of conveniences in their trade with the Tibetans, but also effective police protection and full extra-territorial privileges. Now, legally Tibet remained a part of China. But in substance, Tibet was made a semi-colony of Britain.

In the post 1949 period once again the status of Tibet vis-a-vis China and its stand on Tibetan autonomy becomes a crucial factor in Sino-Indian border dispute.

The Youngsband expedition to Lhasa was considered as a humiliation by the Chinese government. The Chinese believed that such a situation should not be repeated and decided to strengthen their military capability. General Chao Erh Feng was sent to Tibet and by 1910 the General had brought all eastern Tibet under Chinese control. Dalai Lama became more and more concerned about the increasing military strength of Chinese in Tibet. Dalai lama did raise the revolt against the Chinese by spreading the rumour that the Manchu court was trying to destroy the Yellow sect but the Chinese forces being superior were able to put down the Tibetan revolt very easily and Dalai Lama fled to India on February 12, 1910. Following the flight of Dalai Lama the Chinese deposed him and the Chinese Anban was ordered to install a new Dalai Lama. The British government in India was unhappy with the Chinese action in Tibet and asked for an explanation. The Chinese government replied stating that the soldiers were sent to protect trade markets and to maintain peace and order in Tibet and to make the Tibetans accept and respect Anglo-Chinese treaties and Dalai Lama was deposed because of his defiance of the imperial court.

The British acknowledged the Chinese reply but were not fully convinced about the Chinese action in Tibet. The Chinese and the British governments wrote to each other on the matter for more than a year and got nowhere. It was at this time the most unexpected development took place in China in October 1911.

86. H.E. Richardson, n. 1, p. 95
87. Kuan. I. Liu, n.79, p. 16
88. Ibid, pp. 16 - 17
89. Ibid, p. 17
90. Ibid
and the Manchu Dynasty was overthrown. Dalai Lama returned to Tibet in 1912 and immediately declared Tibet’s independence and instructed the Tibetans to rise against the Chinese in Tibet. Such urgent circumstances compelled the Chinese President Yuan Shikai to issue orders to the Chinese army to put down the revolt and the Chinese were successful to some extent. The British government was naturally unwilling to see Tibet come under firm Chinese control and therefore through its minister in Peking John Jordan issued a stern memorandum on August 12, 1912 and it also threatened the Chinese government that if it did not negotiate the Tibetan matter then Britain will directly negotiate with Tibet. The Chinese being very weak and depending on the British to borrow money from the Quintuple syndicate for their expenses agreed to halt the military action in Tibet and consented to negotiate with Britain.

**China and India on Tibet**

Taking advantage of the prevailing situation in 1912, Dalai Lama declared the independence of Tibet. Under such unfavourable circumstances, the Chinese forces agreed to leave Tibet, since they realised that they could not win the war against the Tibetans at this time. The Tibetans too were not in a position to destroy the Chinese forces but neither the Chinese nor the Tibetans were in a position to reach a ceasefire agreement as they did not trust each other. Finally due to the efforts of government of Nepal through its representative at Lhasa Lt. Lal Bahadur the the Chinese and Tibetans concluded an agreement on 12 August, 1912. The agreement included the following points:

1. The Chinese were to store their weapons in a warehouse under joint Chinese Tibetan and Nepalese control.
2. The Chinese were guaranteed safe conduct from where they were to be taken to Indian border.

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91. Shih-dun Cheng, n. 67, p. 66
92. Tiek-tseng Li, n. 6, p. 131
93. Ibid, p. 9
94. P.C. Chakravarthy, n. 55, pp. 15 - 16
3. The Tibetans would provide funds to defray the cost of the Chinese withdrawal to India.

4. Those Chinese such as traders, still remaining in Lhasa would be given due protection by the Tibetan authorities, provided that they were permitted to stay and that they observed the Tibetan laws. 95

This agreement worked very smoothly and the British military officer Colonel W.E. Willoughby was put in charge of the Chinese repatriation activities. By 1913 April the repatriation of Chinese was over. From this time (1912) until the Chinese communists came to power in Chinese mainland in 1949, the Chinese government was not able to send a single soldier into Tibet. In spite of this temporary set back in Tibet, the Chinese government was still trying to regain here complete control over Tibet, not by military means but through political process. In 1929 Chinese sent Gong Jyue Chung-Ni, a Tibetan Lama who was sent to Peking by Dalai Lama during Manchu period, to visit Tibet. 96 This was the first official contact between the Chinese government and Tibet after the declaration of independence in 1912 by Dalai Lama. Despite differences between China and Tibet on political matters, Dalai lama consented to establish an agency at Nanking. The agency was established and to represent Tibet in China this agency was put under the charge of Gong Jyue Chung-Ni. 97

In late 1933 the Dalai Lama died and the Chinese government sent General Huang Mussoon, Deputy Chief of the general staff, to Tibet to pay posthumous tribute to the late Dalai Lama with a view to promoting Sino-Tibetan relations. The General was accompanied by a large number of Chinese officials in various specialities and the Chinese had taken a wireless transmitting station to Tibet. This delegation was in Tibet for more than three months. 98 During

96. Chih. H Lu, n. 2, p. 45
97. Ibid
98. Ibid, pp. 45 - 46
his stay the General held meetings with Tibetans and discussed the conditions necessary to restore normal relations between the Chinese and Tibetans. The General suggested the Chinese attitude on the matter in the following way:

1. Tibet must be an integral part of China.
2. Tibet must obey the central government of China.
3. Tibet shall be granted a status of autonomy; but its business with regard to foreign affairs, military measures and communication matters must be directed by the central government.
4. Tibet’s important officials after being selected by the Tibetan government, must be reported to government of China for appointments.
5. The central government shall send a commission to Tibet to supervise its affairs.  

The Tibetans responded to the Chinese attitude with the following counter proposal consisting of following points:

1. Tibet may remain part of Chinese territory, but the Chinese must guarantee that they will not make Tibet a Chinese province.
2. The Chinese government shall not intervene in Tibet’s internal affairs.
3. Tibet shall guard its frontiers with its own forces and only when Tibet is attacked by a foreign power it shall consult the Chinese government for counter-measures.
4. Tibet’s high ranking officials shall be appointed by Tibet itself, and the Tibetan government may notify the Chinese representative in Tibet after the appointments have been made.
5. The Chinese government may appoint a Chinese representative to Tibet, but he must be a pious Buddhist and the size of his party must not exceed twenty five.  

The Tibetan idea was to avoid the Chinese authority as long as they could and as much as they could. Unable to convince the Tibetans, the Chinese General decided to discontinue the negotiations and return to Nanking but he was allowed to leave two Chinese officials in Tibet with a wireless radio set for liasoning with China. Since 1912 for the first time a Chinese official was

99. Chung Sing Wu, My Mission to Tibet (Taipei, 1959), pp. 4 - 5
100. Ibid, pp. 5 - 6
101. Ibid, p. 8
In September 1938 the Tibetan government informed the Chinese government that it had found three boys-two in Tibet and one in China-each of whom was deemed to be a possible reincarnation of the late 13th Dalai Lama and requested the Chinese government to instruct local officials to allow the boy in China to come to Lhasa for the pending reincarnation ceremony. The Chinese government accepted the Tibetan request but in turn asked the Tibetan government to allow a Chinese official to join the Tibetan Regent in supervising the ceremony. After long deliberation the Lhasa government agreed 102 The Chinese government deputed Chung Hsin Wu, the Chairman of the commission for Mongolian and Tibetan affairs, to go to Lhasa to co-supervise the ceremony. Wu and his delegation reached Lhasa via India on December 15, 1939.

During his stay in Tibet, Wu avoided talking about politics with Tibetans since he realized that they were not interested in becoming a province of China. 103 However, he did try to discuss with them the communication problem between Tibet and China proper. The Tibetan response was negative because they insisted that talks with the Chinese were possible only after Huo Ko, De Ge and Nyarong were returned to Tibet by the Chinese. 104 (These three boys were deemed to be possible reincarnation of the late Dalai Lama) In view of the Tibetan outlook Wu discontinued the talks and left. But before he left he managed to set up the Office of the Commission for Mongolian and Tibetan affairs in Tibet at Lhasa, representing Chinese government. 105

In the summer of 1943 when the Tibetan government set up the Bureau

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102. Tieh-tseng Li, n. 6, pp. 184 - 185
103. Chung sing Wu, n. 99, p. 8
104. Tieh-tseng Li, n. 6, pp. 184 - 185
105. Hung Chi Tu, n. 9, p. 81
of Foreign Affairs to deal with foreign nations, it asked the Chinese government also to communicate with this bureau henceforth and not with the Tibetan cabinet. 106 This move amounted to treating China as a foreign power and asserting that Tibet was an independent country. The Chinese government refused to deal with the bureau. Then the Tibetan government exercised every possible means to compel the Chinese to agree to their terms. It was not until the Chinese government threatened to use force against Tibet that Tibetans yielded on this issue. 107

In February 1948 the Tibetan government sent a trade mission with Shakabpa as its head to New Delhi to discuss Indo-Tibetan commercial relations. The Tibetan government conducted this business on its own initiative without the knowledge of the Chinese government. This mission after its talks in Delhi went to Great Britain and USA, again without the permission of the Chinese government. 108 Finally in July 1949 just before People’s Republic of China was established in China was established in China, the Tibetan government took over the Chinese radio station, primary schools and other Chinese establishments and ordered all the Chinese to leave Tibet without delay. 109 As China was in the grip of internal turmoil at that time the Chinese in Tibet were left with no choice but to evacuate. 110 During this period there was no connection between the Chinese and the Tibetans especially at the governmental level.

**China into Tibet**

In his inauguration speech on October 1, 1949, Mao Tse Tung proclaimed

106.Tieh-tseng Li, n. 6, p.188
107.Ibid, p. 189
108.Hung Chi Tu, n. 9, p. 82
109.Tieh-tseng Li, n. 6, p. 198
110.Ibid
The common programme of people's central government pledged to liberate all the territories of China. Three months later, on January 1, 1950, Mao Tse Tung declared that Tibet was going to be liberated and stressed that liberation of million Tibetans from imperialist aggression would be one of the basic aims of the People's Liberation Army of China. Accordingly the Chinese government asked the Tibetan government to send representatives to Peking to discuss the Tibetan question. The Dalai Lama was alarmed. He started preparing Tibetans, monks and layman in military warfare against communists from China. He appealed to India, Nepal, UK, and USA for help. However the United Kingdom and USA gave him no encouragement and he had to cancel his plan to send missions to those countries.

When the hope of receiving assistance from outside world dwindled, the Dalai Lama responded to the Chinese call for talks by suggesting that the meeting be held in neutral India rather than in China or Tibet. At the same time he sent a mission of seven men to India to wait for the Chinese delegation. The Chinese government rejected the suggestion and urged the Tibetan government to send representatives to Peking without delay in order to save the Tibetan people from unnecessary hardship.

The Tibetan mission then intended to talk with the Chinese in Hong Kong but their application for visa was turned down by the British government on the

111. Keesings Contemporary Archives, Vol. 7 1948-50, p. 10441
113. Ibid
114. H.E. Richardson, u. 1, p. 181
115. Ibid, p. 181
117. Ibid
grounds that the mission's negotiation in Hong Kong might worsen the delicate situation already existing there. 118

Nevertheless, the Tibetan mission was instructed to remain in India to wait the arrival of General Yuan Chung-Hsien, the first Ambassador of PRC to India, General Yuan came to New Delhi in the middle of September and soon began talks with the Tibetans. 119 At the suggestion of the Government of India, the Tibetan mission eventually agreed to proceed to Peking.

While the Tibetan mission was still in India some 40,000 Chinese soldiers were unleashed from three directions to attack Tibet on its eastern frontiers. 120 This was on October 7, 1950. The major attack was directed at the city of Chanindo the political centre of Eastern Tibet. In spite of their bravery the Tibetans were subdued by the People's liberation Army. At the same time the Chinese government sent another armed force into north-western Tibet from Khotan in the Sinkiang province crossing the Kuen Lun mountains and passing through the disputed area of Aksaichin. 121 The Indian government or the security forces manning our frontiers were not able to detect the cutting across Aksaichin by the Chinese. Thus they took the Tibetans by surprise as they had not expected the Chinese to enter Tibet through such a difficult route and the Chinese had no difficulty in overrunning the northern and western Tibet. The purpose of this action, in part, was to cut off Tibet's supply lines from India. The Chinese government did not disclose these military operations to the outside world until October 25. 122 Actually in the middle of October rumours of Chinese invasion of Tibet began to circulate. Then Indian officials in Peking

118 Ibid
119 London Times, 2nd October, 1950, p. 4
120 P.C. Chakravarthy, n. 55, p. 28
121 H.E. Richardson, n. 1, pp. 183 - 184
122 P.C. Chakravarthy, n. 55, pp. 183 - 184
visited the Chinese Foreign Ministry in an attempt to ascertain the truth of such rumours. The Chinese officials treated them with politeness but revealed nothing. On October 21, Sardar K.M. Panikkar, the Indian Ambassador to China in accordance with Nehru's instructions sent a memorandum concerning the Chinese military actions in Tibet to the Chinese government. The Indian government expressed its hope that the problem of adjusting relations between China and Tibet would be solved by peaceful means and warned the Chinese government that taking military action against Tibet would jeopardize the chances of the People's Republic of China being admitted to the UN. On October 25, when he heard the Chinese announcement that the task of liberating Tibet was underway, Nehru became very upset and instructed Panikkar to lodge a protest with the Chinese government. Accordingly on October 26, Panikkar sent another note to the Chinese government expressing deep regret at the fact that they had chosen to use force rather than peaceful means to solve their problem with Tibet. In its October reply to the Indian notes of October 21 and 26, the Chinese government stated bluntly that Tibet was an integral part of Chinese territory. The problem of Tibet was entirely a domestic problem of China. The Chinese PLA must enter Tibet to liberate the Tibetan people and defend the frontiers of China. It further added that the central people's government has repeatedly expressed the hope that the problem of Tibet might be solved by peaceful negotiation, but regardless of whether the local authorities of Tibet wish to proceed with peaceful negotiations and whether results may be achieved by negotiations, the problem of Tibet remained a domestic problem of the People's Republic of China and no foreign interference would be tolerated. The particular problem of Tibet and the problem of the participation of the

people's Republic of China in the United Nations were two entirely separate problems.  

On October 31, the Indian Government responded to the note by saying: "The Government of India had sought earnestly that a settlement of the Tibetan problem should be effected by peaceful negotiations adjusting the legitimate Tibetan claim to autonomy within the framework of Chinese suzerainty. Tibetan autonomy is a fact... the Chinese Government were themselves willing to recognize and foster."

The Indian government further warned that in view of the military operations in Tibet, the Government of India was no longer in a position to advise the Tibetan delegation to proceed to Peking for peaceful negotiation. The Indian government then pointed out to the Chinese government the India had certain rights and privileges in Tibet which had grown out of forty years and India was keen on the continuation of these establishments.

The Indian note of October 31 was taken very seriously by the Chinese and considered as an intervention in the internal matters of China. China responded to this note on November 16, 1950 by stating that: "Tibet is an integral part of Chinese territory and the problem of Tibet is entirely a domestic problem of China". The Chinese government accused India of attempting to influence and obstruct it in exercise of its sovereign rights in Tibet. China made it clear that, "although the Chinese government has not given up its desire of settling the problem of Tibet peacefully, it can no longer continue to put off the set plan of Chinese People's Liberation Army to proceed to Tibet."

126. S. Gopal, n. 124, p. 107
127. K. Sarwar Hassan, n. 125, pp. 65 - 67
128. Ibid, pp. 67 - 70
129. Ibid
warned once more that regardless of whether the local authorities of Tibet wish to proceed with peace negotiations, no foreign intervention would be permitted. 130

The Indian attitude following this reply underwent a change and Nehru began to stress on understanding the new China and its environment and he was keen that India should attempt to establish friendly relations with China because any other method would be harmful not only to India and China but also to the world. 131 While New Delhi and Peking were exchanging notes on Tibet, Tibet was desperately trying every method available to it in order to save itself from the subjugation of Chinese communism even appealing to the UN. The Tibetans asked the Government of India to sponsor Tibet’s case in the UN. The Government of India advised Tibet to present the issue to UN itself but promised to support the Tibetan position in the UN. 132 Accordingly, the Tibetan government on November 11, 1950 made a direct appeal to the Secretary-General of UN. It asserted that Tibet was an independent country, not a part of China. It accused the Chinese government of undertaking an unwarranted act of aggression against Tibet and pleaded with UN to intervene. It recognized that before 1912 there was a close relationship between the Emperor of China and Holiness the Dalai Lama. But it argued that such a connection was essentially born of a common faith and could be described only as the relationship between a spiritual guide and his lay followers; it had no political implications. 133

The Secretary General hesitated to take action on Tibet’s plea. The El Salvador delegation sponsored Tibetan’s case in UN. On November 14 and

130. Ibid
131. S. Gopal, n. 124, p. 108
132. P.C. Chakravarthy, n. 55, p. 31
133. U.N, Document A/1549, November 24, 1950
again on November 17 it requested the President of the General Assembly to add the item on “invasion of Tibet by foreign forces” to the General Assembly’s agenda for the current session. The El Salvador delegation based its argument on the assumption that Tibet was an independent nation and proposed that the UN condemn Communist China as an aggressor and establish a committee to work out appropriate measures to be taken. 134

This request was referred to the General Committee of the General Assembly. The General Committee on November 24, 1950 discussed the Tibetan question and, in the meeting UK said that the committee did not know exactly what was happening in Tibet and the legal status of Tibet was not clear. Further there was still hope that the existing difficulties in Tibet could be settled peacefully by both China and Tibet. The committee was asked to defer the decision on the matter. 135 The Indian representative in UN, Jam Saheb Navanagar, stated that his government got a note from China recently indicating that it intends to pursue the Tibetan matter peacefully and the government of India was confident that the matter would be settled peacefully and he supported the decision to defer the issue for the time being. 136 Soviet Union also supported this proposal suggested by UK and also stated that the Soviet Union believed that Tibet was an integral part of China and it was an internal matter to be the exclusive concern of the Chinese government. Therefore Soviet Union was against the matter being discussed by UN 137 The other countries like Australia, USA, Nationalist China too did not object to this proposal. The committee then unanimously decided to postpone the decision to consider the inclusion of the

134. U.N. Document A/1534, November 18, 1950
136. Ibid
137. Ibid
item proposed by El Salvador in the agenda. Thus the United Nations was of no help to Tibetans to maintain their independence which they had declared in 1912. (13th Dalai Lama had declared the Independence).

The Chinese government now began to put pressure on Tibetans to send a delegation to Peking as soon as possible and specified the land route which the Tibetans should take to the Chinese capital. Realizing that they have no other way the Dalai Lama accepted the request for talks with Chinese in Peking. Moreover, in order to maintain his freedom of action, Dalai Lama, on the advice of his elder brother Tubten Jigme Norbu, left Lhasa along with his ministers on December 18, 1950 to Yatung in Chumbi valley, so that he could cross the border to India in the event of danger.

Negotiation between China and Tibet started on April 29, and ended on May 21 resulting in the accord - "Agreement on measures for peaceful liberation of Tibet between the Central People's Government and Tibetan local government. As per this agreement the following points were agreed upon:

1. The Tibetan people shall return to the big family of People's Republic of China.
2. The Tibetan government shall actively assist the People's Liberation Army to enter Tibet.
3. The troops shall be reorganised into the People's Liberation Army and become a part of national defence forces.
4. The Central People's Government shall conduct all the external affairs of the Tibet region.
5. The Tibetan people shall have the right to exercise regional autonomy under the unified leadership of Central People's Government.
6. The religious beliefs, customs and habits of Tibetan people shall be respected and the Lama monasteries shall be protected.

138. United Nations, Official Records of the UN General Assembly, 5th Session, General Committee, 73rd meeting, November 24, 1950
139. J. Rowland, n. 39, pp. 63 - 64
140. Ibid
7. In matters related to various reforms in Tibet there will be no compulsion on the part of the central authorities.

8. The Central People's Government will not alter the political system in Tibet, nor will it alter the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama.  

The provisions of this agreement clearly prove that People’s Republic of China was able to get the Tibetans to accept conditions according to their interest so that Tibet was brought under the firm control of China. The Chinese through this agreement granted autonomy to the Tibet but what has been noticed by the Tibetans was that by agreeing to return to the big family of People’s Republic of China, it was acknowledging Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. The points 1 and 4 are clear in this regard.

Even before the signing of the agreement between Tibetans and Chinese, Indian Ambassador K.M. Panikkar reported from Peking that relations between “two countries were again as good as they had been before the exchange of sharp notes on Tibet”.  

Indian government had also started realising that the Tibetan independence or the autonomy of the Tibetans was not possible with the People’s Government established in China. Indian attitude underwent a change. Though India had earlier expressed its desire to continue or maintain those interests in Tibet which it had acquired through usage, now to strengthen its friendship with China it decided to give up some of its rights in Tibet. The first step of India to show its goodwill to China was by declaring in September 1952 that office of Indian Representative at Lhasa would be converted to Consulate General and all Indian trade agencies in Tibet would be placed under the control of Consulate General.  

141. Ibid, pp. 67 - 70
142. S. Gopal, n. 124, pp. 177
143. Shanti Prasad Varma, Struggle for the Himalayas (New Delhi, 1965), p. 30
the acceptance of fact that Tibet was no longer regarded by the Indians as an independent country. Then the government of India took the initiative in proposing that China and India negotiate to settle their outstanding differences. 144

The Chinese government responded favourably and negotiations began in Peking between two countries on December 31, 1953 and lasted for 4 months. On April 129, 1954 a treaty was concluded and it was known as Agreement Between the Republic of India and the People’s Republic of China on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet region of China and India.

1. The Indian government agrees that China may establish trade agencies at New Delhi, Calcutta and Kalimpong and the Chinese government agrees that India may establish trade agencies at Yatung Gyantze and Gantok.

2. The Chinese government agrees to open Yatung Gyantse and Phari to the Indians for trade and Indian government agrees to open Kalimpong, Silguri and Calcutta to the Chinese for trade.

3. The Chinese government agrees that pilgrims from India of Lamaist Hindu and Buddhist faiths may visit Kang Rimpoche, Mavam Tso and Lhasa in the Tibet region of China, and the Indian government agrees the pilgrims from Tibet region of China of Lamaist and Buddhist faiths may visit Banaras Saranath, Gaya, Sanchi in India.

4. The Chinese and Indian governments agree that traders and pilgrims of both countries may travel by Shipkila pass, Meena pass, Niti pass, Kungri Bingri pass, Darma pass, Lipu Lekh pass and the customary route leading to Tashnigung along the valley of Indus river. 145

The most significant point in the agreement was that the Indian government clearly indicated that it no longer regarded Tibet as an independent state but as a part of China. Furthermore India declared that:

1. It would withdraw all its military escorts stationed at Yatung and Gyantse in Tibet within 6 months from the date of exchange of present notes.

2. It would hand over its postal, telegraph and public telephone services together with their equipment and its 12 resthouses to the Chinese government at reasonable prices.

144 Ibid

3. It would return to the Chinese government all lands used or occupied by the Indian government except those within its trade agency compound wall at Yatung. 146

On April 30, one day after signing of the agreement, the government of India announced that postal, telegraph and telephone installations operated by India in Tibet, together with their equipment were to be transferred free of cost to Peoples Republic of China as a gesture of good will. 147

The significance of this agreement was that in part I of this treaty was a preamble which contained the five principles which should become the basis for an ideal relationship between two countries or among the nations of the world. These five principles are:

1. Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty.
2. Mutual non-aggression.
3. Mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs.
4. Equality and mutual benefit.
5. Peaceful co-existence.

The signing of this treaty signified the fact that friendship with China was of more concern to India than with any other country. By recognizing Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, India rationalised the developments in Tibet since 1950 and giving up the interests and rights acquired from the British was thus “the logical consequences of the assertion of Chinese authority in this region”. 148

Despite the signing of an agreement between Tibet and China in 1951, the Chinese grip over Tibet began increasing. By 1951 the People’s Liberation Army controlled virtually all of Tibet. 149 Slowly the Chinese government started

146 Ibid
147 P.C. Chakravarthy, n. 55, p. 53
148 S. Gopal, n. 124, pp. 180 - 81
149 J. Rowland, n. 39, pp. 70 - 71
undermining the Dalai Lama's power. As a first step in 1951, it set up the People's Liberation Committee of Chando to rule the whole region, of eastern Tibet. In 1952 the government put pressure on Dalai Lama to dismiss his two ministers on the grounds of their defiance of Chinese government. He was also told by the Chinese that he should not appoint new ministers without the approval of the Central People's Government. The Chinese action was to reduce Dalai Lama to the position of religious symbol. In March 1954 the Chinese divided the Tibet region into two administrative areas—one with Lhasa as headquarters and the other Shigatse as its headquarters. Dalai Lama was asked to rule Lhasa and Panchen Lama was to rule the Shigatse area. In March 1955 the Chinese government created the preparatory committee for the Tibet autonomous region and located it in Lhasa and this committee was made responsible to the state council in Peking. This preparatory committee was headed by Dalai Lama but under this committee there were ten subcommittees where all the work was to be done and in which Chinese officials had the decisive voice.

The structure of the administration would indicate that Dalai Lama was the most powerful man in the Tibetan administration. Actually he had no power as all the divisions were controlled from Peking. Apart from controlling Tibet politically, slowly the Chinese government tried to make changes in the Tibetan way of life, which eventually provoked revolts among the Tibetans. One of the main reasons for the revolt was imposition of heavy taxes on monasteries and

151. J. Rowland, n. 39, p. 71
152. H.E. Richardson, n. 1, p. 71
153. Frank Moraes, n. 150, p. 71
154. Ibid
forcing the monks to work in the fields and on the roads. 156 By 1958 under the inspiration of Khampas, the worst affected by Chinese government’s actions in Tibet, the discontent and revolt began to spread throughout Tibet and many refugees began to cross over to India especially in the eastern side by January 1959. 157

In view of growing rebel activities the Chinese government asked Dalai Lama to take action against the rebels. Dalai Lama expressed his inability on account of the weakness of Tibetan army and they danger of shifting to the sides of the rebels. 158 The Chinese authorities started reacting to the situation when on March 17th they fired shells towards Dalai Lama’s summer palace Norbulingka Palace. 159 This incident made Dalai Lama realize that he was in danger and he was not in a position to withstand the Chinese attack. On the same day Dalai Lama slipped out of the summer palace and started his journey towards India. On March 31 with an entourage of 80 members he reached India and sought political asylum which was given by the government of India. With the granting of political asylum to Dalai Lama, India was once again indirectly getting dragged into Tibetan affairs. The attempt to restore Dalai Lama back in Tibet coupled with the boundary dispute with China precipitated a crisis between the two major Asian countries. The Chinese government had failed to preserve the Agreement of 21st May 1951, to respect the autonomy of Tibet. Yet as the previous discussion shows Tibet was legally a part of China and the problem was essentially a Chinese domestic issue.

Resume

From the preceding discussion it is very clear that from the thirteenth

156. P.C. Chakravarthy, n. 55, p. 88
157. Statesman, January 4, 1959
158. Girilal Jain, n. 155, p. 79
159. Concerning the Question of Tibet, Foreign Languages Press (Peking, 1959), p. 78
century onwards Tibet has been a vassal state of China. That is from the time of Kublai Khan's invasion of Tibet in 1253 AD. It was during the rule of Manchus that Tibet was made an integral part of China and Tibet was ruled by the Chinese through an Amban (the Chinese representative). The Amban was above the local heads of Tibet and all the decisions by Tibetan authorities needed the approval of the Chinese Amban in Tibet. Under the Manchus the Chinese authority was firmly established in Tibet and integration of Tibet with China had taken place.

The Britishers after colonisation of India extended their influence to Tibet. To strengthen their influence in Tibet they signed a series of treaties with the Chinese and these treaties provided all conveniences to the British in their trade with Tibet and they also began to enjoy extra-territorial privileges. Under the British legally Tibet remained a part of China but in substance Tibet was made an instrument of British interests in Tibet.

Following the October revolution in China in 1911 and in February 1912, the Manchus were overthrown. Dalai Lama took this opportunity to declare Tibet's independence. The Chinese did try to prevent Tibet from becoming independent of China. But the Chinese President Yuan Shih-Kai had to buckle under British influence as China was at that time too weak to resist the British and agreed to negotiate with the British on status of Tibet and matters related to it. The British therefore convened a meeting at Simla in 1913 and it was presided over by Sir Henry McMahon, Secretary of Foreign Affairs in Indian Government. The Chinese refused to sign this convention and convention was signed between Sir Henry McMahon and the Tibetan representative Lonchen Shatra. The Chinese refused to sign this convention because the terms of the convention were detrimental to the Chinese interests. A few weeks later first World War broke out and Tibetan affairs were relegated to background. After the first World War Britain once again did try to initiate talks with China on
the Tibetan problem but the Chinese kept on stalling the British invitation for talks as they knew they will not be able to bargain favourably with the British. Thus the process of Simla Conference remained an unfinished business. As long as the British remained in India, Tibet was able to resist all the moves of China to bring the Tibet region under its complete control.

The situation began to change with the quitting of British from India in 1947 and with the establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949. In 1950 the Chinese Army marched into Tibet and in 1951 the Chinese Communist Government signed an agreement with the Tibetans according to which Tibet agreed to return to the big family of People's Republic of China. After few years the Tibetans were disillusioned with the Chinese style of governing of their region and they revolted against the Chinese government. Dalai Lama fled the country and took asylum in India. The political asylum to Dalai Lama and the respect and popularity that he commanded in India became a major irritant in the Sino-Indian relations and India got indirectly involved in the Tibetan problem though the Tibetan problem was essentially a domestic problem of the Chinese.