Colonialism, Genocide, and Tibet

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A central element of the narrative circulated by the Tibet Movement has been that China has carried out genocide and practised colonialism in Tibet. These notions are, for the most part, uncritically accepted by politicians and the media, especially in the West. This essay challenges such characterizations as inept and as obstacles to resolving the Tibet Question. It looks at whether convincing empirical evidence of physical and cultural genocide in Tibet exists, in light of the most common understanding of such practices as rooted in efforts to destroy a people and its culture. The essay also considers what the contours of colonialism have been in light of its principal modern experience, that of European, US and Japanese colonization, and determines whether the Tibet case fits these characteristics. The essay concludes that a critique of China's policies and practices in Tibet would be best served by focusing on actual problems experienced by Tibetans.

Introduction

Colonialism and genocide are concepts hotly debated by scholars and sorely abused by political actors. The sociologist Helen Fein (1994, p. 96) has decried 'the wave of misuse and rhetorical abuse' of the term genocide: it is 'so debased by semantic stretch that its use stirs suspicion'. The result is a 'comparative trivialization' of grave historical crimes (Tatz, 1997, p. 313). The historian William Appleman Williams (1980, p. 6) noted that the concept of colonialism 'has been devalued by sloppy usage'. Examples include Iran's claim that a United Nations treaty on discrimination against women is colonialist and assertions that Scotland was a victim of Anglo-British colonialism, despite the huge role of Scots in constructing the British Empire (Anon., 2003a; Davidson, 2000).

Hyperinflationary claims of genocide and colonialism are made to advance political agendas. This essay focuses on one such case. It discusses, in relation to Tibet, the nature of genocide and colonialism, especially the latter, since many believe that colonialism, at least as practised by their ancestors, benefited the colonized. Indeed, Tokyo requires teachers to sing the national anthem facing the rising sun flag, both associated with Japanese colonialism (Norimitsu, 2004). French law mandates schools teach 'the positive role of the French presence overseas' (Henley, 2005). UK Chancellor Gordon Brown has stated '[T]he days of Britain having to apologize for its colonial history are over. . . . We should celebrate much of our past rather than apologize for it' (Brogan, 2005).

Modern colonialism has involved alien conquest, a typical high degree of exploitation, racial discrimination inscribed in law, and exclusionary rule, contours

derived from the common popular referent for colonialism, the half-millennium of European, US and Japanese practice. Other features associated with, but not definitive of modern colonialism include demographic catastrophe, a civilizing mission, and suppression of cultures. Tibet, in contrast, is highly subsidized. Tibetans and Han Chinese have the same legal rights, plus Tibetans receive some preferences. They are found throughout the organs of power, including Chinese Communist Party (CCP) committees. Tibet's population and range of cultural activities have expanded in the last quarter-century. There have been no large-scale displacements of Tibetans from the land or recent programmes to permanently settle majority ethnic group members, as in many modern colonies. Significant, ethnically-related problems exist in Tibet, but do not amount to genocide or colonialism.

Tibet and Genocide

A discourse of Tibet and genocide, initially carried out by international cold warriors, began with the self-exiling of the Dalai Lama in 1959. Reports on 'genocide in Tibet' were directed by Purshattom Trikamdas, head of an anti-China Indian political party committed to 'the liberation of Tibet', and published by Trikamdas' International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) (Shalom, 1984, pp. 66–7; ICJ, 1959; 1960). The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which helped spirit the Dalai Lama out of Tibet and conducted a proxy war against China in Tibet, funded the ICJ (Grunfeld, 1987, p. 142; Waldman, 2000; Knaus, 1999, p. 168). Its reports argued that attacks on Tibetan Buddhism were genocide because to be Tibetan is to be Buddhist and Tibetan Buddhism was being eliminated, even in the absence of mass killing. The Genocide Convention (1951), however, requires *intent* to physically destroy an ethnic or religious group in whole or in part; yet Chinese Buddhism was also attacked during this period. China had 200,000 Buddhist temples and monasteries in 1949; by 1976 barely 100 remained (there are 13,000 today, 3,000 in Tibetan areas) (Sun, 2003). Much of the destruction of Tibetan religious sites during China's Cultural Revolution was done by Tibetans convinced that religion had inhibited Tibet's modernization (Wong, 1994; Wang, 1998, pp. 314–23). Despite their misapprehension of genocide and its origin in Cold War propaganda, however, the Tibet Government in Exile (TGIE) and supporters cite the ICJ reports (CTA, 2000; Moynihan, 1998).

With the Tibet Question's internationalization from the mid-1980s, the TGIE and its supporters have widely urged the idea of genocide in Tibet. They have circulated works by British non-governmental organization (NGO) head Paul Ingram (1990, 1996), who compares PRC leaders to the Nazis and calls for independence for the nearly two-thirds of China he deems colonies. The TGIE declared in 1984 that 1.278 million Tibetans 'died of unnatural causes during the years of Chinese occupation' and set out a seemingly precise table of numbers of Tibetans who died in prisons, camps and battle or from execution, starvation, torture and suicide (Baker, 1984; Samdup, 1993). Émigré leaders continue to make the charge. TGIE Prime Minister Samdhong Rinpoche has said China is committing ongoing physical and cultural genocide (Anon., 2002a). He opposes Tibetans marrying non-Tibetans because 'Inside Tibet there is genocide, there is enforced birth control and enforced intermarriage. So to protect a pure Tibetan race is also one of the challenges which the nation is facing' (McDonald, 2003). Jamyang Norbu, a prominent émigré writer, says he thinks 'actual genocide is being practiced' (Norbu, 1997). Family planning in China, as applied to Tibetans, is alleged to be ethnic cleansing and perhaps genocide (Herzer & Levin, 1996).

There is, however, no credible evidence of ongoing mass killing, physically enforced birth control, or forced intermarriage in Tibet. The claim of 1.2 million Tibetans dead, repeated by the TGIE and Tibet activists (Anon., 2001; Meek, 2002), Western politicians and media (CTA, 2004; Anon., 2004a), and thousands of websites is, moreover, inaccurate. Patrick French, ex-head of the UK Free Tibet Campaign, examined reports from which the 1.2 million dead claim is supposedly derived. He found them to be based on rumours and 'constant, unchecked duplication' of numbers. French determined that 1.07 million of the claimed deaths were male. There were only some 1.25 million Tibetan males at the time, yet with almost all males supposedly eliminated, Tibetans managed to double their numbers in the ensuing three decades (French, 2003, pp. 288–92). The Dalai Lama has also acknowledged that the 1.2 million figure is based on duplications and is in effect not reliable (Mei, 1998).

More than a third of the 1.2 million deaths are said to be from famine. The figure is not based on eyewitness accounts or access to state statistics, and refugee reports have often been skewed to please exile authorities (Goldstein & Beall, 1991, p. 301). Thus, only indirect methods can roughly gauge the number of deaths. Australian-trained demographer Yan Hao examined the 1990 PRC census's Tibetan age–sex cohorts and found a low male-to-female ratio among those 20–34 years old in 1960. That indicates a sharper decline during China's famine years (1959–1962) among young males than other Tibetans, not compatible with famine, which tends to impact equally on men and women and disproportionately kill the very young or old. Yan shows that the famine period birth decline was 11.5 per cent among Tibetans, but 40 per cent among Han. The decline among Han was due only to famine, but the Tibetan decline had additional causes, including rebellion and emigration. He estimates famine period national excess deaths at 1.2 per cent of the population per year. Even assuming famine was as much a cause of decline in Tibetan births as Han births, the Tibetan excess death rate would have been 0.3 per cent per year, as the birth decline rate among Tibetans was only a quarter of the Han rate. If there were 2.5 million Tibetans at the start of the famine, fewer than 25,000 Tibetans would have died of famine in 1959–1962 (there are no reports of significant later famine deaths in Tibet), yet the émigré claim is 413,000 (Yan, 2000).

Whatever famine occurred among Tibetans would not be genocide, which requires intent, nor would it be like the depletions of colonized peoples. American indigenous peoples decreased by 95 per cent, Australian aborigines by 80 per cent, and New Zealand Maoris by 60 per cent. Tens of millions were lost in India through famine and repression. Even greater losses occurred among Africans through enslavement and forced labour (Bonilla-Silva, 1999, p. 94; Hochschild, 2005; Sautman, 2006). Such catastrophes occurred well into the late colonial period, when the Belgian Congo population fell by half—10 million unnatural deaths directly attributable to colonialism (Hochschild, 1998; Spano, 2005). Colonizing states moreover gained 'demographic rewards of colonialism'. Wealth from the colonies reduced British mortality. Fertility increased as this capital created export industries that used child labour (Harris & Ross, 1987, pp. 105–9). In contrast, the famine that likely caused some thousands of Tibetan deaths, killed many millions of Han Chinese, as the worst hit were the predominantly Han parts of the country.

The TGIE claims 432,000, 17 per cent of Tibetans, died in battle, a proportion five times that of Britain in World War I and four times that of Germany in World War II (Hyam, 2002, p. 335; Ambrose, 1995). Yet an account of the 1950s guerrilla war by Tibetan rebel commander Andrugtsang (1973, p. 89) indicates his losses at the height of

fighting (August 1958 – March 1959) were 118 dead and wounded. Apart from the guerrilla war, the only other major fight was the 1959 Lhasa uprising, in which the TGIE originally claimed 5,000 – 10,000 people died, the PRC said 5,600 were killed, wounded or captured, and a pro-TGIE US analyst put the number at 3,000 or more killed (CTS, 1976; Strong, 1976, pp. 75 – 6; Bradsher, 1969, p. 755). Such figures diverge from the 87,000 dead the TGIE now claims (for a city of 40,000), based on a dubious interpretation of an uncertain source (see Gyari, 1997). The battle deaths and other claims are thus exaggerated and speculative (Sautman, 2006). If the charge of genocide has no basis for the 1950s – 1970s, it is still less applicable to later years, during which the Tibetan population has grown much faster than the Han (Sautman, 2005a).

The charge of cultural genocide is also without basis. No state strategy exists 'to encourage Chinese colonization and promote economic development in the hope that Tibetan culture will be obliterated and with it Tibetan memory' (Hilton, 2005). There has been no organized long-term settlement of Han in Tibet in the past three decades; the proportion of Han *decreased* between the 1990 and 2000 censuses (Sautman, 2005a). Raphael Lemkin, originator of the genocide concept, was clear that cultural genocide is violent, premeditated, and not to be confused with 'cultural diffusion'—the adaption of 'outside influences' and 'assimilation of certain foreign culture traits' (quoted in Docker, 2004). Lemkin 'took pains to distinguish genocide and cultural effacement, that is, assimilation'. He underscored that 'policies that attack a group's culture—its morality, for instance' are genocidal only if motivated by an intent to destroy the 'biological and physical structure' of a group (Moses, 2004, p. 3). The techniques of cultural genocide adumbrated by Lemkin (1944, p. 84)—forbidding local languages in school and publishing, the licensing of all cultural activities, destruction of monuments, archives, museums and art galleries—are not found in Tibet.

Some sympathizers of the émigré cause reject the charge of cultural genocide and note that Tibetan culture is flourishing (see Sautman, 2003, p. 240). It includes a 'thriving literary scene [that] encourages young Tibetans to master their own language and participate in the development of modern Tibetan literature' (TIN, 2005) and 'traditional Tibetan Buddhist Art [that is] firmly anchored once again at its roots and in its homeland' (Tethong, 2005). As for the putative obliteration of Tibetan memory, the 'sluggishness of cultural change' in Lhasa is such that the former nobility (*kudrak*) are today's cultural elite (Fjeld, 2005, p. 154). The Dalai Lama has moreover said that 'Tibetan culture and Buddhism are part of Chinese culture' and 'we are willing to be part of the People's Republic of China, to have it govern and guarantee our Tibetan culture, spirituality and environment' (Brahm, 2005).

Tibet as a Colony

Since the 1980s, when the Dalai Lama began to speak extensively of 'Chinese colonial rule', the idea has been an unquestioned proposition embedded in Manichaean discourse (Dalai, 1986; ICT, 2000; Tsering, 1998). Samdhong Rinpoche has said 'China is now attempting to exterminate Tibet's unique way of life through renewed colonization' (DIIR, 2001). US Tibet activists label as 'China apologists' scholars such as Melvyn Goldstein and Tom Grunfeld, who question this assertion (SFT, 2003). Many of the 40 resolutions on Tibet by 15 Western parliaments adopt the Tibet-as-colony theme (Kranti, 2000), a motif also an antithesis of another Tibet Movement simulacrum: Old Tibet is depicted as a land where Tibetans from all walks of life were content (Lehman, 1999, cover; Anon., 1959), even though émigré scholars describe it as

theocratic and feudal (Sangay, 2003; Shakya, 1999, p. 11). A paradisiacal, spiritual Tibet of old is set up as a contrast to a colonized, forcibly materialistic Tibet of today.

Although no country recognizes Tibet as a state, colony or occupied country, Western works on Tibet and colonialism (Steckel, 1993; Buffetrille & Ramble, 1998) are of a piece with Cold War literature on 'Soviet colonialism' (IILR, 1954; ISUSSR, 1961): little or no credible evidence of colonial practices is offered and the aim is to incite separatism (see Beissinger, 1995). A few scholars claim, with no supporting evidence, that Tibet is a colony or entitled to self-determination (Bishop, 2000, p. 655; Hannum 1990, p. 424) and one who wrote that 'China's claim to Tibet is based upon imperialist domination' was soon called before a US Senate committee to testify on China's 'colonization policy in Tibet' and made author of another ICJ report that asserted 'Tibetans are a people under alien subjugation entitled to self-determination' (Smith, 1996, 1998; ICJ, 1997, p. 345).

Most scholars of colonialism and international law, as well as the UN, however, use the same standard for 'classic colonialism' involving geographic non-contiguity and alien subjugation (Hannum, 1993, p. 32; UN, 1960). Modern colonialism's geographic non-contiguity distinguishes it from contiguous empires. Unlike colonial empires, contiguous empires that subsist tend to eventually make contiguous areas they conquer into equal parts of their territory (Suny, 2001, pp. 25–30); non-contiguous territories find it hard even to form a viable state (Keitner & Reisman, 2003, pp. 37–8; Strawson, 1998, p. 428). Non-contiguity is thus one basis for distinguishing territories entitled to self-determination from those that are not (UN, 1970). Tibet and China proper are contiguous.

There can be no alien subjugation unless two peoples are 'alien'. The Dalai Lama long asserted Tibetans and 'Chinese' are 'completely different' in history, language, customs, religion, and race (Dalai, 1950; 1987; 1995). In 2005, however, he recognized that 'Tibetan culture and Buddhism are part of Chinese culture' and 'China will turn to its 5,000-year history of tradition, of which Tibet is a part' (Brahm, 2005). In effect, he acknowledged ethnic Tibetans in Tibet could regard themselves as Chinese, just as, for example, ethnic Tibetans in India's Ladakh region, which was detached from Tibet and became part of British India in the mid-nineteenth century, identify as Indians (Anon., 2004b).

The Tibet Movement's colonial thesis aims at self-determination, required for colonies, but not minorities (Welhengama, 2000; Dahbour, 2003). Even scholars who want self-determination to extend to minorities disavow a right to secession however, except in cases of extreme oppression (Preda, 2003; Cardenas & Canas, 2002). The few scholars who seek a *right* to secession disallow it if the territory borders an existing state, is culturally, economically, or militarily essential to the state, or has a disproportionate share of its economic resources, conditions that apply to Tibet (Baren, 1984).

If Tibet is not a colony and self-determination is not a legal or political option, the likely outcome of any Tibet Question compromise will be to maintain Tibet's political status and much of its system of governance. Power could be shared however by the CCP and émigrés willing to accept that Tibet is part of China. Such an approach is within the contemplation of PRC officials and Tibet specialists (Wang, 2000). When a European Parliament member proposed to former PRC Premier Li Peng that the Dalai Lama be made governor of Tibet, Li did not reject the idea out of hand, but replied the Dalai Lama would have to acknowledge China's territorial integrity, give up separatism, accept the constitution, and liquidate the TGIE (Gahrton, 2000).

Power-sharing already exists on PRC territory: Hong Kong is ruled by a coalition of (non-public) CCP members and forces close to the territory's tycoons, groups mutually antagonistic before the 1980s (Lin, 2003). They can now cooperate because they agree Hong Kong is legitimately part of China. As long as the TGIE claims Tibet is a colony, occupied country, or only a 'de facto' part of China, however (Tsering, 2005a; TGIE, 1997), power sharing, expanded autonomy, or even a concerted effort to preserve Tibetan culture, will remain out of reach.

The Contours of Modern Colonialism

Tibet's non-colonial nature can be derived from the nature of modern colonialism. Only a few definitions have included characteristics that distinguish modern colonialism from related forms of rule: Ronald Suny (2001, p. 26) has observed that subordination, inequitable treatment, and exploitation were features of an empire he regards as having had colonial characteristics. Guyora Binder (1993) mentions geographic separation, minority rule, and relative poverty. Most definitions, however, fail to capture any distinctiveness. Some focus on the state's domination of territory beyond its border (Clinton, 1993, p. 86). Modern colonialism involves that, but so too do other transnational hegemonies. India has 'overwhelming influence' in Nepal (Devraj, 2005), but no one argues Nepal is a colony. Because it is not, Nepal can pursue policies that contravene those of India: it is friendlier to China than is India and has had royal coups opposed by India (Parajulee, 2000; Anon., 2005a. Some see the conquest and control of other people's land as a signal characteristic of colonialism (Loomba, 1998, p. 2; Brigham & Moore, 1997, p. 404), but pre-modern empires, from Egypt's Nubian possessions 5,000 years ago, through those of the Ottomans, did so as well. They mainly implanted military–civilian outposts ('colonies') in conquered territory and did not undertake the vast social transformations typical of modern colonialism (Adams, 1984; Braudel, 1973, p. 846).

Crucial distinctions between modern colonialism and conquest empires can be seen in the examples of the Roman and Manchu empires. While oppressive, Rome's empire was not based on economic domination, as its economy and technology were hardly more advanced than those of peoples it conquered. Like other pre-modern *imperii,* but unlike modern colonialism, Rome's empire formed by expansion into contiguous areas. A people who became Roman subjects gained rights, such as immunity from slave-raiding. There was no colour bar and Rome provided much more self-government and equality to the ruled than did modern colonialism. It gradually extended full citizenship to Italians and then the whole empire. Native religions were not displaced, but became part of a syncretic imperial cult and one of them, Christianity, became the state religion. Provincials were not compelled to adopt Latin culture. Locals filled the bureaucracy, including many chief posts. By the third century, most Roman senators were not Italians, let alone from Rome; Emperor Philip the Arab was Syrian. Discontent with foreign rule did not cause the Empire's fall, because by then Roman rule was not deemed foreign in any part of it (Brunt, 1965).

The Manchu (Qing) expansion in East Asia from the mid-seventeenth to late eighteenth centuries was arguably the last pre-modern empire. Created on the cusp of the modern era and also oppressive, it combined a conquest state in the southwest with an administrative system in the north/northwest that had aspects of modern colonialism, but also presented contrasts (Perdue, 1998; di Cosmo, 1998). The Manchus penetrated conquered areas more deeply than did modern colonialists because of more

robust historical and cultural ties between core and conquered areas. Until late in their reign, Manchu emperors were Chinese rulers to the Han and a cushion against Han domination for some other ethnies (Crossley, 1999). Manchu rule had racial aspects (Dikköter, 1992, p. 34), but these paled in comparison to the pervasive racism of modern colonies. For example, restrictions on intermarriage were not due to notions of racial superiority, but to Manchu membership in a military caste that also included Mongols, Han and others. By the late Qing, the peoples of China were fellow citizens of a multi-ethnic empire (Rhoads, 2000, pp. 41–2, 294). The Manchu project was not focused on capital accumulation: money-lending and mercantile activities in conquered areas were incidental to the enterprise, while European expansion in Asia and Africa was centred on overseas trade and profit-making for investors (Adas, 1998, p. 384).

Modern colonialism is often conflated with empire (Koebner & Schmidt, 1964, p. 32; Twaddle, 2004), but not all imperial powers have been large-scale colonizers (e.g. the US). Weak colonizers (e.g. Denmark) have scarcely counted as imperialists, who also exercise informal power in non-colonized countries, as Japan and Britain did in China or the US has done in Latin America (Duus *et al.*, 1989; Bickers, 1999; Manning, 1974, p. 35). Modern formal empires involve a degree of control of economic and political development inconceivable in informal dependencies, through a complete loss of sovereignty and often the virtual exclusion of local elites from power (Fieldhouse, 1971, pp. 660–1).

Neo-colonialism has served as a bridging concept between colonialism and empire. Ghanaian leader Kwame Nkrumah borrowed it from Soviet theorists to argue that the endpoint of imperialism's teleology was direct economic and indirect political control of ex-colonies (Nkrumah, 1965; Laquer, 1963). Neocolonialism has affected part of the post-colonial world, particularly in Africa (Amin, 1973; Yates, 1996), but scholars have argued that the concept underestimates the significance of political independence, as the idea of post-colonialism attests (Warren, 1980; Turok, 1987). Osterhammel (1997, p. 21) speaks of 'non-colonial "determinant" influence' as typical of post-colonial asymmetry. Present-day proponents of neo-colonialism seek it precisely because they recognize that colonial powers have exercised a much higher degree of control than imperial powers do generally (D'Souza, 2002; Johnson, 2002; Ferguson, 2004).

Alongside a problematic equation with empire *per se*, colonialism is often reduced to occupation (Young & Arrigo, 1999, p. 50). Some colonies, however, were sparsely garrisoned and others not at all (Spybey, 1992, pp. 114–5). Some occupations are not colonial (post-war Japan and Germany) and a state's troops are not always in a weaker country to exercise political control. In 1990, the US had garrisons of 1,000-plus troops in 21 countries; in 2003, it had a military presence in 153 of the world's 191 states, with 25 large-scale deployments (Koenig, 1990; Johnson, 2004, p. 288). These troops are not all there to ensure US control of each state, but often for use against neighbouring states. Even within empire, state sovereignty, wholly absent under colonialism, may moreover be asserted to evict such troops, as happened in the Philippines in the 1990s (Shalom, 1997).

Colonialism is also sometimes reduced to settlement. Edward Said and others have held it is the implantation by dominating metropolitan centres of settlements on distant territory (Said, 1983, p. 8; Denoon, 2004). Moses Finley (1976, pp. 178, 184) even argued that as colonization implies expropriation and settlement of land, British-ruled Kenya was a colony, but British-ruled Uganda and Ghana were not! Colonialism, however, is not always or merely settlement. In 1930, the 340 million Indians were more than half the colonized world, but there were then only 30,000 Britons (including 12,000

civil servants) in India (Kennedy, 1945, p. 307; Simon, 1930, p. 46). For European empires, the export of capital soon became more important than the export of settlers (Furnivall, 1956, p. 1). There were many times the number of Chinese than Spaniards, French and Dutch in the colonial Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia, but no one deemed those countries Chinese colonies (Dixon & Heffernan, 1991, p. 2).

Modern colonialism thus has been a relationship in which alien rulers typically have subdued overseas lands, practised exclusionary authoritarianism, imposed an explicit racial hierarchy, enriched metropolitan and colonizing elites by exploiting the colony's natural resources and labour, and depleted and impoverished native populations, while in some cases extirpating their cultures. Other states may later modify its contours, but it is mainly these Western practices that have defined colonialism as an era and as a concept.

Exploitation of the Modern Colonies: Profits and De-development

The Tibet Movement casts Tibet as an exploitation/settler colony, not one for strategic security or prestige (UNPF, 1997), as it argues that holding Tibet imperils China's security by making it directly interface with India, while causing China to lose prestige through its Tibet policies. Tibet's strategic value in fact has diminished in the missile age and its prestige derives only from the Shangri-La myth. Regardless of strategic and prestige factors all modern Chinese leaders have regarded the lands held by China in the high-Qing (late eighteenth–early nineteenth centuries) to be Chinese territory; thus, in 1999, China reclaimed Macao, a territory of no strategic or prestige value.

Exploitation colonies are defined by a state-coordinated project to extract profits from native labour and resources. Profit as a motive for colonialism was most prominent in the British case (Baumgart, 1982, p. 135), but all colonial officials have known it as a prime purpose of colonies. The French state instructed that its colonies were 'nothing but commercial establishments' (Priestly, 1966, p. 299). A French official in Algeria averred that a colony's utility is 'the sum total of the profits and advantages accruing to the metropole' (Brunschwig, 1964, p. 64). French law required each colony to provide France with goods of greater value than the funds France allocated to it (Dodd, 2004). Hong Kong law required that many investments and purchases be directed to the UK (Goodstadt, 2005, p. 55).

The colonial experience was of 'capitalist penetration without capitalist development' (Phillips, 1989, p. 162)—modes of production 'transmit[ted] to the colonies the pressures of the accumulation process in the metropolis, without unleashing any corresponding expansion in the forces of production' (Jairus Banaji, quoted in McEachem, 1979, p. 13). Colonies were constructed on monopolies each metropole restricted to its citizens and most colonial histories before the mid-nineteenth century were also histories of slavery, which played a critical role, through increased multilateral trade in the Atlantic Basin, in the rise of industrial capitalism, especially in Britain (Bairoch, 1993, p. 147; Inikori, 2000). By 1800, slave labour in the Americas created a third of the value of European commerce (Hardt & Negri, 2000, p. 121). Almost all non-bullion trade between Western Europe and the New World from 1600 to 1800 was exchanges of tobacco, foodstuffs, and industrial raw materials cultivated with slave labour for European manufactures and commercial services (O'Brien, 1990, p. 165). After the end of slavery, colonizers remained a *herrenvolk*, with most physical work done by natives (Mazrui, 1986, p. 23).

Investments in each colony were limited to maximize profit, in contrast to generic international investment (Grossman & Iyigun, 1993, p. 1). Outside the settler colonies, underdevelopment was aggravated by reducing indigenous industries (De Souza & Porter, 1975; Rodney, 1972). Monocultures in many colonies destroyed the bargaining position of colonized peoples. In Africa, native entrepreneurs were so restricted they disappeared. Colonial regimes seized land for settlers, redistributed the rural poor, and mandated cash cropping to exact high, regressive taxes to finance administration (Boahen, 1989; Manning, 1974, p. 15). Colonial-era literature is replete with descriptions of 'property dispossession', 'proletarianization', and 'rural depopulation' (Balandier, 1966).

Not every colony was profitable and metropoles did not always gain from their empires. Unprofitable colonies, like Japan's Manchukuo in northeast China (1931–1945), existed, but hardly negate profit as a motive for colonies (Nandy, 1988, p. 1). The Empire's economic benefits to Britain from 1850 to 1950 are not unequivocal, but no doubt exists about the profits that accrued to elites (Cain, 1998, p. 371). From the 1880s to 1960s, Portugal's colonies in Africa brought in much-needed foreign currency from exports to other countries (Lains, 1998). France's empire in Africa and Indochina was its first or second commercial partner between World War I and World War II (Dormois & Cruzet, 1998). The Dutch colonies contributed to 'explosive growth' from 1570 to 1670 and great profitability through much of the nineteenth century. From 1830 to 1870, profits from forced cropping in Indonesia brought in a third of Dutch state income, allowing it to compensate Dutch West Indies slave owners upon manumission, rapidly expand Dutch railways, and postpone an income tax (Emmer, 1998). After 1870, the Dutch East Indies was a major importer of Dutch investment capital and the Dutch economy reaped rewards through dividend and interest payments (Van den Eng, 1998).

Infrastructure creation seemingly benefited colonizers and colonized, but benefits were asymmetrical and illusory over the long term, as colonialist 'improvement' later left many ex-dependencies lacking in human and other capital needed for the post-colonial era (Eicher, 1982). Economic sectors not beneficial to colonial enterprise were marginalized or atrophied. In colonies ranging from Britain's largest (India) to its nearest (Ireland), colonialism brought 'de-development' (Geary, 1998). Because of weakened Moghul state authority, India de-industrialized during a century of British East India Company encroachment (Clingingsmith & Williamson, 2004). The 'industrial debacle coincided with the establishment of British rule or hegemony . . . no single episode was more decisive in the balance of the world's resources than this shift in the sources [under British] control' (Fernandez-Armesto, 1996, p. 367). Whether India further de-industrialized after direct colonialism began in 1857 is debated (Roy, 2004), but over two centuries, the distribution of world manufacturing did change radically in favour of the now-developed states (Table 1).

Bairoch (1993, pp. 88–92) speaks of 'very large de-industrialization in India'. Von Albertini and Wirz (1982, p. 64) say 'a drain of wealth engendered by India's dependency without doubt occurred'. Textiles were 65–75 per cent of India's manufactures and 60–70 per cent of her exports, but after the British state took over, British textiles entered India duty-free, while Indian textiles were barred from Britain. Despite Indian native classes with the requisite skills and capital, 40–45 per cent of British cotton textile exports went to India by 1873. Rodney (1972) argues the exchange of low-cost British goods for slaves de-industrialized Africa. In contrast, Latin America's independence contributed to the fact that, with 7 per cent of 'Third World's'

population, it had 21 per cent of its cotton spindles. In China, after the two Opium
Wars, key industries were partially destroyed, but because semi-independence remained
and the influx of Western goods started later, the level of de-industrialization was less
than half that of India (Kennedy, 1989; Brett, 1992, p. 284; Hobson, 2004, p. 263).

Comparing per capita industrialization in colonized India, semi-colonized China,
Mexico (independent from 1821), Brazil (independent from 1822, but ruled by
Portuguese monarchs until 1889), the whole Third World, never-colonized Japan, and
the whole developed world, industrialization levels were about the same in 1750–1830.
In the next century of high colonialism there was a growing divergence, lending support
to the de-industrialization thesis. Lack of independence and de-industrialization seem
correlated (Table 2).

Table 1. Distribution of world manufacturing output (in percentages)

Year	India	China	Other third world	Developed states
1750	25	33	15	27
1800	20	33	15	32
1830	18	30	13	39
1860	9	20	8	63
1880	3	12	6	79
1900	2	6	3	89
1913	1	3	4	93
1928	2	3	2	93
1938	2	3	2	93

Source: Derived from Copeland, 1990, p. 78; Bairoch, 1982, pp. 296, 304.

Table 2. Comparative per capita industrialization (UK in 1900 = 100)

Date	India	China	Brazil	Mexico	Third world	Japan	Developed states
1750	7	8			7	7	8
1800	6	6			6	7	8
1830	6				6	7	11
1860	3	4	4	5	4	7	16
1880	2				–	9	24
1900	1				2	12	35
1913	2	3	7	7	2	20	55
1928	2	4	10	9	3	30	71
1938	4				4	51	81
1953	6	5	13	12	5	40	135
1973					14		315
1980	16	24	55	41	19	353	347
1990	–				29	–	412

Source: Based on Simmons, 1985, p. 602; Bairoch, 1993, p. 91; Bairoch, 1982, p. 281.

De-industrialization was only one aspect of de-development. India also paid the expenses of its military occupation, the salaries of British officials in the sub-continent, and interest on British loans (Fieldhouse, 1999, pp. 34–5). The huge indemnity exacted by the Western powers and Japan after the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 'inhibited, if not incapacitated China's economic growth' (Hsu, 1978, p. 130). Such development as took place was much more profitable for colonizing elites than for natives. Japan monopolized the manufacture and sale of key products in Taiwan and 90 per cent of its foreign trade. When agriculture was commoditized by allotting much cultivated land to sugarcane for export to Japan, Taiwanese farmers had to deal with large, state-preferred Japanese companies. Many were driven under (ROC, 2004, pp. 36–7; Lamley, 1999, 217).

Colonial underdevelopment inflated Europe's prosperity (Blaut, 1992, pp. 36–53). The British Empire had 80 per cent of the world's colonial population and during most of the colonial era was hugely profitable (Svedberg, 1982; Davis & Huttenback, 1986). When Spain lost most of its empire in the early nineteenth century, its trade, investment, domestic industry, and revenues fell sharply (Prados de la Escosura, 1998, p. 85). Metropoles usually 'supported the colonial fisc to the minimum degree necessary to make good the claims of sovereignty' (von Albertini & Wirz, 1982, p. 399). If colonies proved unprofitable, they were usually abandoned (Grossman & Iyigun, 1993, p. 13). In the 1950s, Britain still held that colonies had to be financed mainly from their own resources (Haviden & Meredith, 1993, p. 300). Some received benefits during very late colonialism, but to speak of a colony is generally to convey that it profits its masters at the expense of its subjects. Scholars of colonialism have thus concluded that 'the only positive development in colonialism was when it ended' (Rodney, 1972, p. 261) and that 'the best colonial legacy was not to be colonized at all' (Kriekhaus, 2006, p. 31).

In Tibet, there are no plantations and few industrial enterprises. Little extraction takes place: the output value of minerals makes up 4 per cent of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) gross domestic product (GDP) (CRI, 2005). Most mining takes place in ethnically-mixed areas on the fringes of the Tibet Plateau. In contrast to exploitation colonies, very few Tibetans work for non-Tibetans. There are no counterparts to the brutal, European-supervised, large-scale native labour at Peruvian and Rhodesian mines or Congolese and Malayan plantations, that exemplified colonial exploitation.

A TGIE report on 'colonialism' in Tibet claims all PRC 'imperial fringes' are 'resource-rich colonies' that supply raw material for China's development (DIIR, 2001). Its one example is that revenue from timber cut in Tibetan areas before 1998 had a value several times that of subsidies provided the areas since 1959. No account is taken of costs however, which likely exceeded sales value, as extractive industry in most PRC remote areas loses money due to high labour and transport costs (Sautman & Eng, 2001; Dorian, 1994, p. 251). A report of the pro-Tibet independence Milarepa Fund (2000) on oil and mineral extraction also does not discuss profitable extraction and a Tibet Information Network study indicates that many of Tibet's minerals are unsuitable for commercial exploitation. It notes that most mines in Tibet are 'artisanal' small operations (TIN, 2002, Ch. 2). Few, if any, Tibetan area state-owned mines produce sales and taxes that exceed the costs of mining. The Tibet Information Network cites studies that find most factories and mines in Tibet incur losses, which the central state compensates at a ratio of Y2.14 for each yuan lost (Jin, 2000; Hu & Wen, 2001). The main benefits from mining in Tibetan areas are income for officials, many of them Tibetans, and revenues that pay the taxes of local peasants and herders. The TIN

study recognizes PRC mining has traditionally been about production, not profit. Industry in China is more likely to be cheaply supplied with minerals from abroad than from Tibet, so that mining, like logging, will likely diminish (TIN, 2002, p. 184). Foreign interests regard only one mineral deposit in Tibet as potentially interesting (ICT, 2005).

The Tibet Movement has claimed, against the evidence, that Tibetans derive no benefit from government aid (Sautman & Eng, 2001). Yet it has not contradicted PRC statements that from 1965 to 2004 the centre provided 95 per cent of the TAR's US$10.6 billion financial expenditures and, from 1984 to 2005, US$4.4 billion for TAR infrastructure projects (SCIO, 2004; 2005). While Han migrants, most of them temporary, disproportionately benefit because they are urban, subsidies have produced fairly prosperous Tibetan middle and working classes (Sautman, 2005b; Tsering, 2005b, Mohan, 2002). In 2005, the Dalai Lama said 'As the material development of China moves forward we gain materially. . . . If we were a separate country it would be very difficult and we would not benefit' (Brahm, 2005). There has been no de-industrialization, but instead infrastructure creation and growth in income, education and health facilities. There is none of the 'pseudo-aristocratic privilege unattainable at home' that European colonizers enjoyed by keeping out 'poor whites' and having Europeans perform only management and leadership functions (Furber, 2003, pp. 24, 66). Most Han migrants are in fact plebian (Yeh, 2003; Hessler, 1999).

Tibet is in some respects like ex-Soviet Central Asia, a focus of Cold War charges of 'Soviet colonialism'. Cambridge geographer Graham Smith (1989, pp. 72–4) examined the claim that Soviet Central Asia was an internal colony. He noted that while Central Asia lagged behind Russia, the Soviet regime fostered rapid urbanization and industrialization. There were great advances in health care and education and the region was much better off in terms of social development than neighbouring Muslim states. There was no evidence Moscow purposely discriminated against Central Asians in income, housing or jobs and 'every indication to suggest that a considerable transfer of wealth has occurred from the relatively rich to the relatively poor republics'. Due in part to subsidies and preferential policies, a 'growing native middle class emerged in the region' and 'natives are generally well represented in posts in their union republics'. The internal colonialism concept thus had limited applicability to Soviet Central Asia. Will Myer (2002) found the peoples of Central Asia valued their part in the USSR's material advances. Although they identified with Islam and their ethnic groups, there was little separatist mobilization among Central Asians at the time of the Soviet breakup, as they foresaw that independence might diminish living standards, which indeed it has (Luong, 2002, p. 14; Bessinger, 2002, p. 2; Sievers, 2003, pp. 6, 197). Like the Dalai Lama, many Tibetans now judge it beneficial to be part of China and some émigrés and supporters recognize that there is no visible separatist movement in Tibet (Pan, 2003; Anon, 2003b; Pattanayak, 2003).

Political and Cultural Oppression in the Modern Colonies

A 1997 TGIE-chartered report by European politicians dubbed Tibet 'The World's Largest Remaining Colony' (UPNF, 1997). The title better fits US-controlled Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans, unlike Tibetans, are not provided the same formal political rights as their mainland fellow citizens: they cannot vote in presidential elections and lack a voting representative in Congress (Malavet, 2004). In modern colonies, natives are politically subordinated to colonizers. Discrimination was exceptionally harsh in

Africa, but thoroughgoing even in the 'best' colonies, such as Hong Kong and US possessions (Forster *et al.*, 2000; McFerson, 1997; Klein, 1995). The concept of biological–cultural hierarchy prevailed, epitomized by Ernest Renan's notion that whites are a race of masters, Asians are workers, and Africans tillers of the soil (Renan, 1993[1871]). Power in colonies resided with settlers or the governor and his expatriate lieutenants. All top bureaucrats were drawn from the metropole (Abernathy, 1988, p. 8). India had the greatest native participation in administration, but in 135 years of British state rule, it was only in the last three decades, in anticipation of Britain's retreat, that Indians were admitted to the higher civil service. Rough parity of Europeans and Indians was achieved just before independence (Misra, 1977, p. 291). In Hong Kong, the British governor staffed all governing institutions from the colony's inception in 1842 until 1985. Almost no Chinese were appointed until after World War II (Goodstadt, 2005, Ch. 5).

Colonizers enacted repressive laws aimed at denying slaves rights enjoyed by others, and after slavery colonized peoples continued to be denied citizenship (Quinn, 2000, pp. 90–1; Hall, 1999, pp. 226–8). In Cochin China (South Vietnam) in 1906, after 45 years of French rule, only 254 of 15 million natives were French citizens; in Algeria, after a century of colonization, only 7,817 Arabs qualified for citizenship; in French West Africa (apart from Senegal), fewer than 2,500 of 15 million were citizens (DeFrancis, 1977, p. 141; Fieldhouse, 1965, p. 318; von Albertini, 1982, p. 289). In no colonies in their heyday did natives have equal rights with colonialists, but instead suffered a harsh, demeaning racial double standard (Osterhammel, 1997, p. 60). In Hong Kong, British judges punished Chinese defendants much more severely than Western defendants, while in colonial Taiwan discriminatory measures covered education, intermarriage, business, and criminal justice (Marcks, 2000, p. 287; Lamley, 1999, p. 217). In many colonies, all communications with government had to be in the colonizers' language and the imported church was privileged. In Macao, legal documents had to be in Portuguese, the language of 2 per cent of residents; the Catholic Church, representing 6 per cent of residents, was charged with schooling (Anon., 2000; Bruning, 2000; 2001). French colonists termed Vietnamese a language useless for expressing abstract reasoning and embarked on replacing the Chinese-based educational system with one that would create an 'Asiatic France' (DeFrancis, 1977, p. 143). Lord Macaulay, future president of India's First Law Commission, stated that 'A single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia' and sought to create persons 'Indian in colour and blood, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect' (Brunt, 1965, p. 280). The farcical insouciance of colonial education is exemplified by the dark-hued children of French colonies assigned a history text that began 'Nos ancêtres les Gaulois étaient grands et blonds' (our ancestors the Gauls were tall and blond) (Lincoln, 1997).

Colonial states crafted a folk wisdom that the West encountered already-impoverished Others, adding the insult of claims of inherent backwardness to the injury of de-development. In fact, studies of pre-modern and early modern development levels and calculations by Bairoch (1991) and Maddison (1983), indicate the future Third World had a higher level of urbanization than Europe and that much of the technology and forms of economic organization that Europe credits itself with creating came from Asia and Africa (Thomas-Emeagwali, 1993; Abu-Lughod, 1989; al-Hasan & Hill, 1986). Bairoch (1993, p. 108) concludes that before colonialism there was a parity of income per capita for the average future Third World and developed countries. Some countries were on a par with much of Western Europe until the early nineteenth

century. The transfer to colonies of democratic institutions is also mythical. Until late in the colonial era, Britain allowed assemblies only in settler colonies (Madden, 1979, pp. 20–1).

Colonial status carried a common experience of powerlessness (Abernathy, 1988, p. 6). The dichotomy between the colonizers' power, rights and interests and the powerlessness, lack of rights, and destruction of interests of the colonized has been popularly understood: in 1942, as the US promoted goodwill toward wartime ally Britain, a poll found 60 per cent of Americans, recognizing the huge gap the world's main colonialists had created with their colonial subjects, thought the British 'oppressors' (Pfaff, 2000).

Unlike a colony, Tibet's only ethnic-based differences in rights are its preferential policies for Tibetans, in family planning (Han are restricted to one child; urban Tibetans may have two and rural Tibetans three or more), education (Tibetans are admitted to secondary and higher education with lower test scores than Han), hiring and promotion of cadres, and economic policies (special loans for Tibetan start-ups; quotas for employment of Tibetan construction workers, etc.). Half the TAR party committee and prefecture party secretaries are Tibetan. On an everyday basis, Tibetans probably play a larger role in running Tibet than does the TAR's Han party secretary, who devotes much of his time to liaising with Beijing (Sautman & Eng, 2001; Wang, 2005, p. 142). Tibetans are 0.5 per cent of the PRC population, but six of the CCP Central Committee's 357 members (Anon., 2002b).

The state and some Han have had a sense of civilizing mission, embodying an ethnocentrism dating back millennia, and ethnic prejudice is found among both Han and Tibetans (Fisher, 2004, p. 29; ICT, 2001). The CCP has a social evolutionary view that posits that ethnic groups evolve from backward to advanced. The Tibet Movement's discourse, however, also includes the idea of Tibet 'to be preserved as an exotic artifact of a lost age' (Kellam, 2003, pp. 193–4) and the Dalai Lama (2004) too speaks of Tibet as 'backward'. The state operationalizes its doctrine through the notion that Tibet needs more modernization, the Dalai Lama's position as well (Anon., 2004c; Brahm, 2005). Unlike a colonial regime, however, China's government insists Tibetans are part of the nation (the *Zhonghua minzu* or a supra-ethnic Chinese nationality) and capable of self-governance. Many younger Han now regard Tibetans as having a spirituality from which Han can learn. A Tibetan émigré journal notes that 'In the past few years there has been a dramatic development of newfound interest in Tibet, Tibetan culture, and Tibetan Buddhism among ordinary Chinese' (ICT, 2003). The Dalai Lama has said that 'Many young Chinese like Tibetan culture as a tradition of China' (Brahm, 2005). In China, moreover, 'civilizing mission' and prejudice go beyond ethnic difference. Urban Han have both with regard to rural Han. In Beijing today, Tibetans are probably better received than Han migrant workers from Henan province, who face all manner of social obloquy and discrimination (Kwok, 2005; Anon., 2005b).

The state bears a responsibility for prejudice among Han migrants to Tibetan areas, due to its adherence to social evolutionary dogma (Gladney, 2004, pp. 88–9). Yet prejudice is not inscribed in law or officially endorsed and interaction between the two groups is scant. It is not reflected as the institutionalized racism characteristic of colonial practice. The main complaint of discrimination in Tibet concerns Tibetans being passed over for employment, particularly by Han entrepreneurs who contend they lack skills, 'proper' work habits, and Chinese-language facility (Roberts, 2003). The state also bears a responsibility, due to the lack of an anti-employment

discrimination law in China. In the state sector—which is much more prominent in Tibet than elsewhere in China—there is not, however, the monopoly of high-level posts and ethnic pay and benefits differentials that characterized almost all colonies. In recent years, the Tibetan proportion in the cadre force in state-owned economic units has varied from half to three-quarters, with the proportion much nearer the higher figure if the more numerous administrative cadre force is also taken into account (XZT, 2004, p. 47; Anon., 2002c).

Conclusion

The trend of the last several decades to term as 'genocide' almost every atrocity arising from an ethnic conflict has begun to produce a reaction. For example, in 2001 the Greek Ministry of Culture declared 14 September 'Genocide Day' because, in 1922, tens of thousands of Greek civilians were killed, raped or robbed when Turkish troops re-took the city of Izmir, which had been part of Turkey for five centuries before the Greek army seized it at the end of World War I. Noting that this crime was analogous to the violent expulsion of ethnic Germans from central European states after World War II, a prominent British journalist averred that no one would call that genocide and concluded that 'Words have meanings, and we are all made poorer when the meanings are blurred. . . . I don't think many Jews would find the Greek claim acceptable, or many Rwandans either' (Dyer, 2001). There has also been an academic tendency to expand the boundaries of genocide beyond its embodiment in international law. The utility of doing so is hard to grasp in light of the sorry record of the 'international community' in preventing genocide *in sensu strictu*, yet conflations of genocide with 'politicide' and other 'democides' persist (Chalk & Jonassohn, 1990, p. 23; Fein, 1990, p. 24).

Greek Genocide Day is tied to political aims related to the conflict with Turkey over Cyprus and disputed maritime territories. Scholars' attempts to expand the concept of genocide are aimed at forcing states to intervene when large-scale human rights violations occur. In the case of Tibet, a political goal also accounts for unsupported charges of genocide. The aim is mobilization, especially in the West, where charges go unchallenged due to confusion over what is genocide, the sacralized popularity of the Dalai Lama, a constructed image of Tibetan victimhood, anti-Communism, and anti-Chinese racism.

The common understanding of colonialism is that it is a system that does not provide native peoples with political responsibility, legal equality or development. If a people are equal in law and political responsibility to the state's majority *ethnie*, they cannot be said to endure colonial-style special oppression; still less are they colonial subjects if they are not super-exploited, but benefit from subsidized development and affirmative action, features unheard of in most colonies. Relations of dominance and subordination and relative wealth and poverty among regions and ethnic groups exist in most countries, but it is reductionist to generally label them as colonial. In the case of Tibet, it is also self-defeating for those who seek a settlement of the Tibet Question. Short of a (most improbable) disintegration of China, a settlement can only occur if Tibet's place in the PRC is acknowledged, as the Dalai Lama recognizes (Sautman, 2005c; Brahm, 2005). Since colonies are perforce entitled to independence, maintaining that Tibet is one undercuts the only basis for a settlement. Discursively breaking the putative link between colonialism and Tibet is thus a necessary element of a solution to the Tibet Question.

Acknowledgement

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