achieving a basically well-off society 成就小康社会 chengjiu xiaokang shehui. A slogan developed by Hu Jintao, CCP Secretary from 2002 to 2012, and declared by Xi Jinping to be an objective that China should achieve by 2021.

agricultural production mutual aid groups 农业生产互助组 nongye shengchan huzhuzu. Mutual aid groups (also called mutual aid teams) were created by the CCP during the first stage of land reform in the 1950s, prior to the creation of communes. The groups shared labor and some capital but individual households remained the basic unit of ownership and production. By 1960, eight thousand mutual aid teams had been established in Tibet.

amban 安办 anban. The Manchu term for the imperial commissioners posted to Tibet and other areas during the Qing dynasty to oversee and liaise with local rulers.

anti-splitism 反分裂主义 fan fenlie zhuyi. A term used by regime critics and dissidents from the late 1990s onward to mock officials who exaggerate reports of “splitism” (see below) in order to enhance their positions or to increase their access to government funding.

April 1 Directive 四·一指示 siyi zhishi. Instructions issued by Mao and the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group in April 1967 ordering the military to stop suppressing rebels and Red Guards. The April 1 Directive praised leftist students and others who had earlier attacked the military. See February Countercurrent.

armed rebellion 武装叛乱 wuzhuang panluan. In the Tibetan context, this is the official term used by the CCP to refer to the uprising or revolt by Tibetans against Chinese rule in March 1959. See also full-scale rebellion.
August 19 Rally 八‧一九群众大会 bayaojiu qunzhong dahui or bayijiu qunzhong dahui. A rally of fifty thousand people in Lhasa in 1966 to celebrate the Cultural Revolution, led by Zhang Guohua (see below).

August 24 revolutionary action 八‧二四革命行动 ba'ersi geming dingdong. The first “Destroy the Four Olds” action in Lhasa in 1966, namely the sacking of the Jokhang. Apparently organized the day before by the “superior authorities,” it included a march to the Jokhang by student Red Guards from Lhasa Middle School and active involvement by members of local Neighborhood Committees.

backbone militia 基干民兵 jigan minbing. Units composed of civilians who were trained in their local areas as a military reserve force. They were given special training to detect and prevent “class enemies” from carrying out sabotage in their localities, as well as to serve as combat forces in the event of war. See also People’s Armed Forces Department.

bad elements 坏分子 huai fenzi. Maoist term for people who were to be attacked in political campaigns. See also class enemies.


Bajiao Jie 八角街. Chinese term for the Barkor, the intermediate circumambulation route that runs around the Jokhang at the heart of Lhasa. Often mistranslated as “eight-corner street” or “octagonal street.” See also Lixin Dajie and establish the new.

banshichu 办事处. An administrative office, here referring to an urban district governed by a banshichu. After 1959, the Inner City District (Chengguanqu) of Lhasa was divided into three banshichu: the South City District, the East City District, and the North City District.

beef and potato stew 土豆烧牛肉 tudou shaoniurou. A derisory CCP term referring to Khrushchev’s statement in 1964 that communism should be about practical benefits, such as providing “good goulash,” rather than primarily about revolution.

Beijing Road 北京路. The new name given to the major thoroughfare in Lhasa running from the Potala to the East Lingkor, which at its western end included the area traditionally known as Changseb Shar (East Willow Grove). The new street had been known as Dekyi Lam (“Happiness Road” in Tibetan) when it was built in the 1950s but was soon renamed Beijing Road and divided into Beijing West Road, Beijing Middle Road, and Beijing East Road.

big-character posters 大字报 dazibao. Posters handwritten in large characters and put up on walls, usually proclaiming a political comment or statement.

bombarding the headquarters 炮打司令部 paoda silingbu. See paoda silingbu.

Bright Neighborhood Committee 光明居委会 Guangming jüweihui. The new name given to the former Tengyeling Neighborhood Committee in Lhasa during the Cultural Revolution.


Capital Headquarters No. 3 首都三司 shoudu sansi. The title of an activist group during the Cultural Revolution, possibly a short name for the Revolutionary Rebel Headquarters of Red Guards from Colleges and Universities in the Capital (首都大专院校红卫兵造命造反司令部 shoudu daizhuan yuanxiao hongweibing geming zaofan silingbu), the Red Guards Headquarters No. 3 (红卫兵第三司令部 hongweibing disan silingbu), or the Revolutionary Headquarters of Rebels from the Capital Going to Tibet (首都赴藏造反革命总部 shoudu fuzzang zaofan geming zongbu), which was affiliated with Gyenlog.
capitalist rightists 资产阶级右派分子 zichan jieji youpai fenzi. The targets of a nationwide struggle campaign in 1957. At the August 19 Rally in 1966, Zhang Guohua called for the permanent defeat of “counterrevolutionary revisionists, capitalist rightists, and the bourgeois reactionary authorities.”
capitalist roader 走资派 zouzipai. Short for 走资本主义道路的当权派 (zou ziben zhuyi dao lu de dangquanpai) or “Party persons in power taking the capitalist road.” This was the standard Maoist term for people within the CPP and within the nation who were considered sympathetic or susceptible to bourgeois objectives. The primary purpose of the Cultural Revolution was defined as overthrowing such leaders who had “sneaked into our Party” and were “taking the capitalist road.” In the 1981 “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of our Party,” the CCP declared this form of targeting to have been an “erroneous thesis.”

Central Committee (中共) 中央委员会 中央委员会 Zhongyang weiyuanhui. The leading body of the CCP, with about three hundred members. In practice it is subordinate to its executive committee, the Politburo, which in turn is subordinate to the Standing Committee of the Politburo.

Central Cultural Revolution Small Group 中央文化革命小组 Zhongyang wenhua geming xiaozu or simply 中央文革小组 Zhongyang wenge xiaozu or 文革小组 wenge xiaozu. The ruling group in the CCP that ran the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1969. At times it in effect replaced the Politburo Standing Committee. It was headed by Chen Boda, with Mao’s wife, Jiang Qing, as a deputy head. Sometimes referred to more loosely as the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

Central Mandala 金戈 jinge. The main prayer hall within the Jokhang temple complex in Lhasa. Also called the Mandala Hall. The Chinese term jinge is a phonetic rendering of the Tibetan word for a mandala, dkyil ’khor.

Central Military Commission (中共) 中央军事委员会 中央军事委员会 Zhongyang junshi weiyuanhui. The body that oversees all military issues in China, usually chaired by the CCP Secretary. Technically it can refer to either of two identical bodies, one within the CCP and one within the PRC state administration.

Central Nationalities Institute 中央民族学院 中央民族学院 Zhongyang minzu xueyuan. The main teaching institution in China for training ethnic Chinese cadres to work in minority areas and also to train members of minorities for similar professions. Located in Beijing, it was upgraded to a university in 1993 and later renamed Central Minzu University.

Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio 中央新闻记录电影制片厂 中央新闻记录电影制片厂 Zhongyang xinwen jilu dianying zhipianchang. The main production house in China for news films and documentaries after 1950.

*Chairman Mao 毛主席 Mao zhuxi. Usual title for Mao Zedong (1893–1976). He was the chairman of the CCP from 1943 to 1976 (since 1982 the head of the CCP has been titled General Secretary, not chairman). He founded the PRC in 1949 and in effect was the ruler of the PRC from 1949 to 1976.

*Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石 Jiang Jieshi. Chiang (1887–1975) was the ruler of China from 1928 until he fled to Taiwan in 1949, which he ruled as the Republic of China until his death. He was the head of the Guomindang (the Chinese Nationalist Party or KMT) from 1926 to 1927 and from 1936 until 1975.

*Chen Jiajin 陈家进. Chief editor of the Chinese edition of Wind and Thunder Battle News (风雷激战报), the newspaper issued in Lhasa by Nyamdrel (see Dalianzhi) from 1966 until 1968.
*Chen Mingyi 陈明义. A Chinese military officer who was a founding member of the Tibet Working Committee in 1950. He was a major general and deputy commander of the Tibet Military Region from 1955, commander of the Tibet Military District 1970–75, deputy director of the TAR Revolutionary Committee from 1968–75, and Party Secretary of the TAR from 1971 to 1975.

*Chen Yonggui 陈永贵. Chen (c. 1915–86) was Party Secretary of the Dazhai Commune in Shanxi (see below) and was made a national hero because of the commune’s claimed agricultural achievements. He was a Politburo member of the CCP from 1973 to 1979. He visited Tibet to promote the “Dazhai experience” in November 1974.

*Cheng Demei 程德美. A high-school student in Beijing who walked to Tibet for three months in 1966 to spread cultural revolution. He and his fellow marchers called themselves the Long March Team from the Capital to Continue the Red Mission.

*Cheng Kuande 程宽德. The Chinese name of Tsering Dorje, the author’s father.

Chengdu 成都. Capital city of Sichuan Province and the closest Chinese city to Kham and the TAR.

chengguanqu 城关区. Literally, “the area within the city walls,” a Chinese term often used to designate the inner city area of towns or cities. Translated here as the Inner City District, the Lhasa Chengguanqu was divided into three subdistricts or banshichu (see above).

China dream 中国梦 Zhongguomeng. The slogan promoted by Xi Jinping from 2012 onward to signify the “rejuvenation” of the Chinese nation.

Chinese Buddhist Association 中国佛教协会 Zhongguo fojiao xiehui. The official body overseeing Buddhism in the PRC, composed of “patriotic” representatives of officially approved Buddhist groups. It is run by the Religious Affairs Bureau, which is under the United Front (see below).

Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference 人民政治协商会议 renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi. The CPPCC is an advisory assembly whose members are appointed and managed by the United Front (see below), with local assemblies at each administrative level in the country. The CPPCC that meet once a year, shortly before the annual meeting of the NPC. It has no obvious powers and exists largely to give token approval to decisions made by the CCP while providing nominal positions as paid “advisers” to religious leaders, former aristocrats, businessmen, non-CCP intellectuals, and other local dignitaries who are not or cannot be CCP members. It ceased functioning during the Cultural Revolution because it was seen as favoring reactionary elements. Up until the Cultural Revolution, the Lhasa CPPCC had its office inside the Jokhang.

class education 阶级教育 jieji jiaoyu. Maoist term for educating people about the nature of class oppression, leading to class struggle.

class enemies 阶级敌人 jieji diren. Maoist terms for targets of political campaigns, struggle sessions, or execution surges who were condemned because of their supposed history of oppressing the working classes. The term “class enemy” typically included alleged traitors, spies, capitalist roaders, capitalists, Guomindang “dregs,” landlords, and others. See also bad elements; class education; Five Black Categories; and struggle sessions.
cleanse the class ranks 清理阶级队伍 qingli jieji duiwu. A campaign from 1967 onward by Mao and the Party Center to uncover “class enemies” who had supposedly infiltrated the revolutionary camp and contaminated the class ranks. Believed to have claimed more lives than any other movement during the Cultural Revolution, according to the historian Song Yongyi, it is said to have led to half a million deaths, with thirty million people subjected to struggle sessions.

comfort money 安慰费 anweifei. Sums given to relatives of people who had been executed as supposed rebels or counterrevolutionaries but later officially rehabilitated.

commune 公社 gongshe. See People’s Commune.

Communications Department 联络部 lianluobu. One of the four administrative sections within the command structure of the Tibet Military Region, housed within the Tibet Military Region’s compound or base in Lhasa on the southern side of the Lingkor. Different from the TAR Communications Office, housed in what is now the Tibet Welcome Hotel.

Communist Youth League 共青团 gongqingtuan. The youth wing of the CCP, open to “advanced youth” between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. It had fifty-two million members in 1987 and eighty-one million members in 2018.

completely eradicate the Dalai, the root of feudalism 彻底挖掉达赖这个封建农奴主阶级的总根子 chedi waodiao Dalai zhege fengjian nongnuzhu jieji de zonggenzi. A slogan written on a Cultural Revolution poster paraded in the Lhasa Barkor.

comprehensive management 综合治理 zonghe zhili. A term created in the early 1980s to describe a set of nationwide mechanisms and policies designed to increase security, social order, and “social stability.” Known in full as “comprehensive management for [the purpose] of social security” (社会治安综合治理 shehui zhi'an zonghe zhili).

crime of riot 预谋叛乱 yumo panluan. The term used to classify twenty-two of the counties in the TAR that experienced “renewed rebellions” in 1969. The “renewed rebellions” in other counties were classified as either “full-scale rebellions” or “semi-rebellions.”

counterrevolutionary 反革命 fangeming. A term used widely in the 1950s and in the Cultural Revolution to describe perceived opposition to revolution or to its proponents. After the 1979 reforms, the term was used to refer to any kind of treason or opposition to the state, until it was replaced in the Chinese Criminal Code by the term “criminal actions that jeopardize state security” in 1997. During the Cultural Revolution, the term “active counterrevolutionaries” included “armed rebels” and “traitors,” such as those arrested along Tibet’s southern border trying to flee the country.

counterrevolutionary violent turmoil 反革命暴乱 fangeming baoluan. The official term used in the 1970s to describe the revolts or uprisings that occurred in the TAR in 1969, which had initially been categorized as “renewed rebellions” (zaipan).

CPPCC 中国人民政治协商会议 Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi. See Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference.

Crown of the Five Buddhas 五佛冠 wufoguang. A crown with five petals often found in Buddhist paintings or on Buddhist statues. In Buddhist iconography the five petals represent the five “Buddha Families.”
Cultural Palace 文化宫 wenhuagong. See Working People’s Cultural Palace.

Cultural Revolution 文化大革命 wenhua da geming or simply 文革 wenge. See Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Cultural Revolution Small Group 文化革命小组 wenhua geming xiaozu or simply 文革小组 wenge xiaozu. See Central Cultural Revolution Small Group 中央文化革命小组.

cultural work troupe 文化工作团 wenhua gongzuotuan or 文工团 wengongtuan. Performance troupes within the PLA staffed by soldiers who served as actors, singers, and writers. They are known as “cultural workers” within the military or as “Literature and Art Soldiers.” Within the PLA, only cultural workers could join Cultural Revolution factions.

Culture Bureau of the TAR 西藏自治区文化局 Xizang zizhiqu wenhuajü. The office of the TAR government in charge of all cultural activities in the region. It is under the direction of the CCP Propaganda Bureau.

Dalai Clique 达赖集团 Dalai jituan. A polemical term used by the CCP to refer to supporters of the Dalai Lama or, more specifically, to his advisers and officials. It is sometimes translated in recent official Chinese documents in English as “Dalai group.”

Dalianzhi 大联指. The Cultural Revolution faction known in Tibetan as Nyamdrel, meaning “the Alliance.” The Chinese name is a short form of “the Great Revolutionary Proletarian Alliance General Headquarters” (无产阶级大联合革命总指挥部 wuchan jijie dalianhe geming zongzhihuibu), also known as the Proletarian Headquarters. It was formed in February 1967 and was generally seen as more proestablishment than its enemy, Gyenlog (Zaozong). After Gyenlog was discredited by the “renewed rebellions” of 1969, Nyamdrel became dominant. Its former leaders remained influential in the TAR long after the Cultural Revolution.

dare-to-die, unafraid to overthrow the Emperor 舍得一身剐, 敢把皇帝拉下马 shede yishengua, gan ba huangdi laxiama. Self-description by Red Guards extolling their determination to overthrow existing rulers and officials. The terms were used by Red Guards in Tibet to indicate their determination to depose Zhang Guohua.

dayang 大洋. Silver coins used during the Republic era and in the early PRC period in Tibet.

Dazhai 大寨. In the early 1960s, Dazhai Commune in Xiyang County, Shanxi Province, was championed for “transforming nature through the determination to battle against heaven and earth” (以战天斗地的精神来改造自然 yi zhantian doudi de jingshen lai gaizao ziran), a reference to its claimed ability to turn poor soil into rich farming land. From 1963 onward, Mao instructed all communes in China to “learn agriculture from Dazhai” (nongye xue Dazhai).

Dazhai Flowers on the Tibet Plateau 西藏高原大寨花 Xizang gaoyuan dazhai hua. A documentary film released in 1976 that claimed dramatic agricultural achievements under communism in Tibet. See Dongkar; Dazhai.

Democratic Reforms 民主改革 minzhu gaige. The official CCP term for the ending of the traditional class system and the imposition of radical socialist policies, primarily land redistribution. In Tibet, this took place immediately after the failure of the Lhasa revolt and the flight of the Dalai Lama into exile in March 1959. It included deposing the previous Tibetan government, establishing “people’s committees,” distributing all privately held land, and ending all debts owed by the peasantry.
Deng Xiaoping 邓小平. Deng (1904–97) was Political Commissar of the Southwest Military Region from 1950 to 1952 and was thus involved with plans for the 1950 advance by the PLA into Tibet. He was China’s finance minister from 1953 to 1954, vice premier from 1975 to 1980, and chair of the Central Military Commission of the PRC from 1983 to 1990. He was the “paramount leader” of China from 1978 until 1992 and was responsible for the repudiation after 1976 of Maoist doctrines and of the principle of class struggle.

denunciation statements 口诛笔伐 kouzhu bifa. An idiomatic expression, which, during the Cultural Revolution, specifically referred to attacks on individuals for their class backgrounds or counterrevolutionary nature. The denunciations were delivered orally at struggle sessions or put on walls in the form of “big-character posters.”
destroy the Four Olds 破四旧 po sijiu. See Four Olds.
destroy the old, establish the new 破旧立新 pojiu lixin. The campaign to eradicate the Four Olds and replace them with the Four News. It began in August 1966 with changing street names and shop names and then spread to the persecution of intellectuals, teachers, artists, and others, and to the destruction of cultural works and buildings. See Four Olds; Four News.
develop the West 开发西部 kaifa xibu. A campaign initiated in 1999 to redress the economic imbalance between China’s eastern and western regions. It became known as the Great Opening of the West (西部大开发 Xibu dakaifa) and mainly involved infrastructural development in western areas of China, including Tibet and Xinjiang.
dig deep tunnels, keep vast stores of grain, never seek hegemony 深挖洞,广积粮,不称霸 shenwadong, guangjiliang, buchengba. The main slogan for the Maoist campaign known as “Prepare for War, Prepare for Famine, Serve the People,” which became prominent from 1969 onward. It called on people in the entire country to build war defenses, particularly in the form of air-raid shelters.
diqueliang 确凉. A popular fabric made of mixed wool and cotton. The term was also used for the synthetic material Dacron. It came to be used colloquially to refer to products that are considered mixed and impure. The literal meaning of diequeliang is “really cool.”
douzheng dahu 斗争大会. Struggle sessions or rallies, also called “mass struggle assemblies,” at which “class enemies” were publicly denounced and humiliated.

East City District 东城区 Dongchengqu. The areas of Lhasa known in Tibetan as Sharchog (shar phyogs), which was renamed as the East City District after 1959. It included the Wapaling Neighborhood Committee, the Jebumgang Neighborhood Committee, the Banakshöl Neighborhood Committee, and the Kyire Neighborhood Committee. It was renamed The East-Is-Red Administration Office in 1966. East-Is-Red Administration Office 东方红办事处 Dongfanghong banshichu. The Cultural Revolution name for the East City District. As with almost all Cultural Revolution names, by 1981 revolutionary names of this kind had been dropped and replaced with the former names.

East-Is-Red Neighborhood Committee 东方红居民委员会 Dongfanghong jüming weiyuanhui. The Cultural Revolution name for the Wapaling Neighborhood Committee.

“East of the Sun” 东方的太阳 Dongfang de taiyang. A popular Tibetan folk song that was rewritten in the Cultural Revolution with lyrics celebrating the CCP and communism.
Eight-One-Eight 八·一八 bayaba or bayiba. The term used to refer to a mass rally in Beijing on August 18, 1966, when Mao first received a million Red Guards, mostly secondary-school students from all over the country.

Eighteenth Army 十八军 shibajun. The Eighteenth Army, sometimes translated as the Eighteenth Corps. It was set up in February 1949 and consisted of the Fifty-Second, Fifty-Third, and Fifty-Fourth Divisions. In January 1950 it was ordered to proceed to Tibet from its base in Chengdu, leading to the Battle of Chamdo in October 1950. It was the main force responsible for the subsequent annexation or “liberation” of Tibet. Its primary function was taken over by the Tibet Military Region in 1951 and officially the name is no longer used. However, its members are still widely referred to as members of the shibajun.

elimination of the rebellion. See pacification of the rebellion.

emancipated serfs翻身农奴 fanshen nongnu. The CCP term for former “serfs” or peasants who, in Tibet, were “freed” from feudal oppression and exploitation by the Democratic Reforms of 1959. See Democratic Reforms; Liberation.

Erlang Mountain 二郎山 Erlangshang. A mountain in the Kardze (Ganzi) TAP, Sichuan, on the main road leading from Ya’an to Lithang and Bathang, and onward to Chamdo and the TAR.

Ersuo 二所. Literally “No. 2 Guesthouse,” this was a name used for the TAR Guest House No. 2, which was set up during the Cultural Revolution in the former Yabshi Taktser mansion. It was the main site of armed fighting and sniper fire during the factional fighting in Lhasa in 1967–68 (see Melvyn Goldstein, Ben Jiao, and Tanzen Lhundrup, On the Cultural Revolution in Tibet, 35). The municipal equivalent—the “Lhasa Guest House No. 2”—was also known colloquially as Ersuo and during this period was housed within the Jokhang.

establish the Four News 立四新 lisixin. See Four News.

establish the new 立新 lixin. Part of the slogan “destroy the old and establish the new.” At a mass meeting in August 1966, the Barkor was renamed the Establish-the-New Avenue because the old name was “tinted with the color of feudal superstition.” The Barkor Neighborhood Committee was renamed the Establish-the-New Neighborhood Committee at the same time. See Four News.

even socialist weeds are better than capitalist seedlings 宁要社会主义的草,不要资本主义的苗 ningyao shehuizhuyi de cao, buyao zibenzhuyi de miao. A Cultural Revolution slogan that elevated leftist politics and the pursuit of revolution over all economic or practical issues. It was similar in meaning to two slogans that were later ridiculed by Deng Xiaoping: “political struggle overrules everything else” and “as long as we keep sharply focused on class struggle, it doesn’t matter if our fields lie idle.”

everyone is a soldier 全民皆兵 quanmin jie bing. Slogan used by Mao calling on all citizens to step up to fight internal subversion, foreign threats, or natural disasters.

February 5 Power Seizure 二·五夺权 erwu duoquan. On February 5, 1967, Gyenlog activists and Red Guards carried out a major “power seizure” in Lhasa by taking over the offices and functions of the TAR Party Committee. On February 17 they seized power at the Lhasa Department Store and raided the main PLA hospital in Lhasa in an attempt to hunt down and detain Wang Qimei, a CCP and military leader.
February 9 Incident 二·九惨案 erjiu can’an. On February 9, 1967, Gyenlog activists and Red Guards forced their way into the Tibet Military Region compound in Lhasa in a ten-hour attempt to seize Zhang Guohua and other leaders.

February Countercurrent 二月逆流 eryue niliu. A term used by Mao and the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group in Beijing from around April 1967 to denounce the nationwide actions of the military in suppressing leftist rebels and Red Guards in February 1967.

fish-and-water feelings 鱼水情 yushuiqing. The close feelings supposed to exist between the people and the PLA. See also junmin yijia qin.

Five Black Categories 黑五类 heiwulei. These categories were landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionary elements, bad elements, and rightists. In Tibet, they included the nga-dag or Three Great Masters. See Four Bad Categories.

Five Directives on Ceasing Armed Conflict in Tibet 关于制止西藏武斗的五项指示 guanyu zhizhi Xizang wudou de wuxiang zhishi. A set of instructions issued by Zhou Enlai, Jiang Qing, and the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group on September 18, 1967, after receiving a delegation of major military and local officials from Tibet. The instructions called unsuccessfully on factions to end their fighting.

five-star red flag 五星红旗 wuxing hongqi. The Chinese national flag showing a large yellow star with four small stars on a red background. It is often referred to by Tibetans as the Red Flag. The four smaller stars were originally supposed to represent unity around a central star or four social classes clustered around a larger star representing the CCP. Some sources claim that the stars were meant to represent the five main “peoples” or races in China (Han, Manchu, Muslim, Mongolian and Tibetan), but that was a view propagated by Sun Yat-sen (see below), not by Communist leaders.

Four Bad Categories 四坏分子 sihuai fenzi. Same as the Five Black Categories but with “rotten elements” instead of “bad elements” and “rightists.”

Four Boundlesses 四无限 siwuxian. The Four Boundlesses, also translated as the Four Infinites, were boundless love, boundless faith, boundless adoration, and boundless loyalty. These referred to devotion to Mao. Usually grouped with the Three Loyalties (see below).

Four Cleanups 四清运动 siqing yundong. Also known as the Four Purifications, these referred to carrying out “socialist education” in the fields of politics, ideology, organization, and economy. They were the principal tasks in the Socialist Education Movement, a movement started by Mao in 1963 that included many of the concepts and techniques that later typified the Cultural Revolution.

Four News 四新 sixin. In August 1966 the CCP called on the people to get rid of the “Four Olds” of the bourgeois and exploiting classes and to “establish the Four News” (立四新 lisixin) of the proletariat in their place. These were usually listed as new ideology, new culture, new customs, and new habits.

Four Olds 四旧 sijiu. The Four Olds were old thoughts, old culture, old customs, and old habits. These were to be destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and to be replaced with the Four News, hence the slogan “destroy the Four Olds” (破四旧 posijiu).
full-scale rebellion 全叛 quanpan. During 1969, fighting by Tibetans against Chinese forces took place in fifty-two of the seventy-one counties in the TAR. Eighteen of these conflicts were officially categorized as “full-scale rebellions.” The most violent and brutal of these took place in Nyemo County near Lhasa and in Palbar County in Chamdo Prefecture, TAR. See also conspiracy to riot; renewed rebellion; semi-rebellions.

Gang of Four 四人帮 sirenbang. A group of four ultraleftist CCP leaders, led by Mao’s wife, Jiang Qing, who had been prominent in the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group when it was formed in 1966 and became increasingly influential after 1973. A month after Mao’s death in 1976, the four, now officially described as “Jiang Qing’s Counterrevolutionary Clique,” were arrested, tried, and convicted of counterrevolutionary activities and the persecution of 730,000 people. Their actions were said by the prosecutors to have led to thirty-five thousand deaths.

Ganzi News 甘孜报 Ganzibao. The official newspaper in the Kardze (Ganzi), Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, in Sichuan.

Gao Yuanhong 高原红. A popular name chosen by Tibetans during the Cultural Revolution. It meant “Red Plateau.”

Garrison Command 警备区司令部 jingbeiqu silingbu. In Lhasa, the main PLA force responsible for maintaining military control of the city itself. See also Lhasa Military District.


grasp revolution, increase production 抓革命, 增生产 zhua geming, cu shengchan. When Revolutionary Committees (see below) were formed across China in 1968 they were ordered to carry out campaigns to “grasp revolution, increase production.” This included campaigns to “cleanse the class ranks” (see above) and to “carry out One Strike and Three Againsts,” as well as to “prepare for war, prepare for famine.”

grassroots organizations 基层组织 jizeng zuzhi. The CCP and the Chinese state have four main levels of formal administration below the national level: the provincial, prefectural, county, and township levels. Grassroots administration refers to CCP and state organizations at the level of townships (including Neighborhood Committees, which are the urban equivalents of townships). The state had no formal, full-time administrative presence at the village level until 2011, when new village-level institutions were established in the TAR.

Great Courtyard 前院 qianyuan or 庭院 tangyuan. The term covers a number of general expressions used in Chinese to refer to the courtyard between the western entrance to the Jokhang temple complex, which faces what became the Barkor Square after 1985, and the Central Mandala (the main prayer hall) in the center of the complex.

Great March 5 Rally 三·五群众大会 sanwu qunzhong dahui. On March 5, 1967, a rally with some thirty thousand people who were affiliated with Nyamdrel was held in Lhasa “to thoroughly destroy the new counterattack of the reactionary capitalist roaders.” The rally had the support of the military and was an expression of opposition to Gyenlog but was among the activities that would soon be denounced by Mao as part of the “February Countercurrent.”
Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution 无产阶级文化大革命 wuchan jieji wenhua dageming or simply 文化大革命 wenhua dageming or 文革 wenge. The full title for the Cultural Revolution. It began officially in May 1966 and was officially declared to have ended in July 1969. In fact, ultraleftist policies continued to be implemented until 1976 or, by some accounts, until 1979 in Tibet.

Great Revolutionary Proletarian Alliance General Headquarters 无产阶级大联合革命总指挥部 wuchan jieji dalianhe geming zongzhihuibu. The full name for the group more commonly known as Nyamdrel (Dalianzhi), “the Alliance.”

*Guo Jinlong 郭金龙. Party Secretary of the TAR from 2000 to 2004. He was born in 1947 in Nanjing and after his work in Tibet was appointed as mayor of Beijing in 2008 and as the Party Secretary of Beijing from 2012 to 2017.

*Guo Xiangzhi 郭祥志. An activist who was in charge of a neighborhood in Lhasa during the Cultural Revolution, probably that of Tengyeling. Guo led at least one of the thirty-five struggle sessions carried out against Ribur Rinpoche (see below).

*He Zuyin 何祖荫. Deputy head of the United Front in Tibet from 1957 to 1960 and first Secretary of the Lhasa Municipal Party Committee from July 1964 until August 1966. He was one of the first targets singled out for criticism by Zhang Guohua in mid-1966, before Zhang himself became a target.

*Hebi 赫比. Head of the Wapaling Neighborhood Committee. Also called “Old Brother Hebi,” he was a Gya Kache (the Tibetan term for a Chinese Muslim).

help-develop-the-border-areas youth 支边青年 zhibian qingnian. The term for a number of Chinese youths who came from mainland China to help with production and propaganda work in Tibet.

Help Tibet 援藏 yuanzang. A term used by the CCP for numerous campaigns and initiatives to send Chinese personnel, funding, supplies and know-how from the mainland areas to the TAR to boost modernization and infrastructure there. Since the 1980s it has referred in particular to the several thousand Chinese cadres working at any one time in government and CCP offices in the TAR, usually staying for three years each. See yuanzang.


Henan Opera Troupe 豫剧团 yujütuan. One of the opera troupes brought from mainland China to entertain PLA soldiers serving in Tibet, a number of whom were from Henan Province. The troupe was based during the Cultural Revolution at the former Meru Monastery in Lhasa.

highest instruction 最高指示 zuigao zhishi. A term for statements by Mao, based on slogans such as “We must regard Chairman Mao’s writings as our highest instructions” and “Mao Zedong Thought is our political orientation, the highest instruction for our actions.” Also translated as “highest directive.”

hong baoshu 红宝书. “Precious Red Books,” a term describing publications by Chairman Mao. The two major ones were The Selected Works of Mao Zedong (毛泽东选 Mao Zedong xuan) and The Quotations of Chairman Mao (毛主席语录 Mao zhuxi yulu). Other works in this category were the Five Articles by Chairman Mao and Poems of Chairman Mao.
Hongqi 红旗. Chinese name meaning “Red Flag.” It was chosen by some Tibetans when they were required or chose to change their names during the Cultural Revolution.

*Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦. Hu Yaobang (1915–89) was the Chairman or General Secretary of the CCP from 1981 until 1987, when he was ousted by leftist opponents who accused him of “laxness.” In May 1980, he visited Lhasa and openly criticized Chinese cadres in Tibet for their failure to reduce poverty, improve development, or encourage Tibetan culture in Tibet.

*Hua Guofeng 华国锋. Hua Guofeng (1921–2008) was appointed by Mao as his successor shortly before his death in 1976 and briefly became chair of the Central Committee of the CCP before being sidelined by Deng Xiaoping. He visited Lhasa in 1975 to mark the tenth anniversary of the founding of the TAR.

*Hua Xiaoqing 华小青. A half-Tibetan, half-Chinese girl who was caught while trying to escape across the Tibetan border with her boyfriend, Thubten Jigme, in 1966 or soon after. She committed suicide in prison after being raped by a jailer. Thubten Jigme was executed.

Huangmei Opera Troupe 黄梅剧团 Huangmei jütuan. Huangmei Opera is a style associated mainly with Anhui or Hubei Provinces. During the Cultural Revolution one such troupe was brought to Lhasa. Its members used Zhide Dratshang as their base during the Cultural Revolution.

Hui 回. Chinese Muslims, recognized as one of China’s official fifty-five minorities.

*Hui Yiran 惠毅然. Head of the United Front in Tibet from 1953 to 1956 and a member of the Standing Committee of the Tibet Party Committee and director of its Organization Department from 1957 to 1966. He was one of the first targets singled out for criticism by Zhang Guohua in mid-1966 before Zhang himself became a target for denunciation.

in the final analysis, the nationality issue is a question of class. See minzu wenti de shiizhi shi jieji wenti. increase production 促生产 cu shengchan. One of the instructions given to the Revolutionary Committees when they were set up in August 1968 or soon after. It referred to establishing communes as part of the “preparing for war, preparing for famine” campaign. See also grasp revolution.

inland China 内地 neidi. The term used in Chinese by officials to refer to areas that are inland from Tibet in the sense that they lie to its east but are still within China, that is, the lowland, Han-majority areas of China. This area was referred to by Tibetans prior to 1950 as Gyanag (rgya nag), meaning simply “China,” and that term is still used in private. The word neidi was imposed on Tibetans by Chinese officials after 1950 to stop Tibetans from referring to China as a separate country. It is also translated as “mainland China” or “the China heartlands.”

Inner City District 城关区. See Chengguanqu.

Inner City District Construction Team 城关区建筑队 Chengguanqu jianzhudui. A branch of the Lhasa Inner City government responsible for construction work. The team was involved in the destruction of the Khanigoshi Stupa in 1966.

January 6, 1967 (the January Power Seizure) 一月夺权 yiyue duoquan. An incident when Mao endorsed the seizure of power by rebel Red Guards at a number of key government offices in Shanghai, notably the offices of the newspaper Wenhui bao. The incident is also referred to as “the January Storm” (一月风暴 yiyue fengbao). It triggered similar power seizures across the country, including the takeover by Gyenlog activists of the offices of the Tibet Daily in Lhasa on January 11. See also February 5 Power Seizure.
January 23, 1967 Rally 一二三大会 yi’ershisan dahui or yao’ersan dahui. A rally involving over three hundred rebel organizations in Lhasa that supported or were affiliated to Gyenlog, including the Lhasa Revolutionary Rebels General Headquarters itself (Gyenlog), the Lhasa Revolutionary Rebels Commune (拉萨革命造反公社 Lasa geming zaofan gongshe), and the Revolutionary Headquarters of the Rebels from the Capital Going to Tibet (首都赴藏造反革命总部 shoudou fuzang zaofan geming zongbu). Some twenty thousand people are said to have taken part.

* Jiang Qing 江青. Wife of Mao. She was made deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group in 1966 and a Politburo member in April 1969. She was arrested a month after Mao’s death in 1976. She was born in 1914, joined the CCP in 1933, and committed suicide in prison in 1991. See Gang of Four.

Jiangsu Road 江苏路 Jiangsu lu. New name given to the southern Lingkor in 1990 as a gesture of thanks to Jiangsu Province for having donated funds to the TAR as part of the policies known as “Help Tibet” and “Develop the West.” The road runs beside the Tibet Military District compound.

jiefang 解放. The Chinese word for “liberation,” referring in the Tibetan context to the takeover of Tibet by the PLA in 1950–51. At that time it referred to the liberation of Tibetans from imperialism, but since 1959 has been used to refer to the liberation of Tibetan serfs from feudal oppression. Also refers to a brand of trucks in China.

jieji jiaoyu 阶级教育. See class education.

jigan minbing 基干民兵. See backbone militia.

* Jin Sha 金沙. The general editor of the Tibet Daily from 1960 to 1962 and again in early 1966, and the deputy director of the TAR Propaganda Department from 1960 to 1966. He was one of the first targets singled out for criticism by Zhang Guohua in mid-1966.

jinzhumami 金珠玛米. A Chinese phoneticization of the Tibetan phrase jingdrol magmi (bcings ’grol dmag mi), which was the literal Tibetan translation of the Chinese term jiefangjunren, “liberation [army] soldier.” From soon after the PLA arrived, this Tibetan term, or its shorter form jingdrol mag (“Liberation Army,” rendered back into Chinese as jinzhumu) was popularized in Chinese propaganda songs, films and dramas about Tibet. It became one of the few Tibetan words used in Chinese, where it is used to signify Tibetans’ appreciation for the PLA.

July 1 (Seven-One) Agricultural Machinery Plant 七一农机场 qiyi nongjichang. A government factory housed in the former Chapa family mansion in Lhasa after 1959. The Seven-One in the name stood for July 1, the date which is used by the CCP as the anniversary of its founding in 1921. See Chapa Kalsang Wangdu in the glossary of Tibetan terms.

July 22, 1967. On this date Jiang Qing, the deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group in Beijing, gave a speech advocating wengong wuwei (“attack with words, defend with arms”) or armed struggle. This triggered a sharp increase in the use of violence in factional conflict across the country. See wengong wuwei.
June 7 Jokhang Incident 六·七大昭寺事件 liuqi dazhaosi shijian. The June 7 Jokhang Incident took place in the summer of 1968, when PLA troops seized control of the Jokhang temple complex from Gyenlog activists and Red Guards. The Gyenlog faction had been using the Jokhang to broadcast aggressive propaganda throughout the city. Ten people inside the Jokhang and two others on the streets nearby were killed by the troops, while many others were wounded. Both Mao and Lin Biao subsequently ordered the Tibetan military to apologize to Gyenlog.

junmin yijiaqin 军民一家亲. Literally, “army people, one family,” referring to the family-like intimacy supposed to exist between the PLA and the people. See fish-and-water feelings.

Kangding 康定. The administrative seat of the Kardze (Ganzi) TAP (Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture) in Sichuan Province. It was traditionally called Dartsendo or Dartsedo in Tibetan and was known in Chinese before the 1950s as Tachienlu.

the kindness of the motherland is deep 祖国母亲深恩 zuguo muqin shen’en. Slogan seen on a poster in the Potala Square in 2012. It was a part of a drive at the time to carry out “feeling-gratitude-to-the-Party education” among “the masses” in the TAR following widespread unrest in 2008.

Kongzi Miao 孔子庙. A temple dedicated to Confucius. Here it refers to the Confucius Temple in Beijing, originally built in 1302.

kou maozi 扣帽子. Literally meaning “made to put a hat on” or “hatted,” kou maozi in effect means labeling a person according to their political or class status. It refers to the CCP practice of making struggle targets wear a conical white hat to indicate that they have been categorized as class enemies or bad elements.

*Kuai Dafu 剪大富. A Red Guard commander at Qinghua University in Beijing who was in contact with Gyenlog leaders in Lhasa. He was imprisoned after the Cultural Revolution but later became a businessman in Shenzhen.

*Lan Zhigui 蓝志贵. A Chinese military photographer (d. 2016) who worked in Lhasa, first with the Eighteenth Army during the advance into Tibet, and subsequently with the Tibet Military Region. lao Xizang 老西藏. Literally “old Tibet,” this is an affectionate term of praise used by Chinese officials and the Chinese media to describe Chinese cadres who traveled to Tibet in the 1950s and worked there as CCP or state administrators, usually for ten or twenty years. They are assumed to have acquired some familiarity with the culture and sometimes even with the language in Tibet. Their dedication and fortitude is often referred to in Chinese propaganda as “the lao Xizang spirit.” The term is often written as lao Xizangren, which can be translated as “the old Tibet hands.”

leadership in opening up 有领导的开放 you lingdao de kaifang. An approach to foreign policy in 1972, which included China’s resumption of diplomatic relations with the United States and Japan.

learn agriculture from Dazhai. See Dazhai.

leave no loopholes, no blind spots, and no blank spots 无漏洞, 无盲点, 无空白 wu loudong, wu mangdian, wu kongbai. A formulation used frequently after the introduction of the policy of “stability maintenance” in 2007 to describe security operations that are exhaustive and that identify prospective threats as well as past ones.
Legend of the Red Lantern

Hongdengji. One of the “eight model operas” that were permitted during the Cultural Revolution. Most performances of this opera in Tibet were in Chinese, but a Tibetan-language version was performed at the Sungchöra by the Tibetan Opera Troupe.

*Lei Feng 雷锋. Lei (1940–62) was the most famous of the model heroes created by the CCP during the Maoist era. Chinese citizens were expected to replicate his reputed dedication and sacrifice to the CCP, to other soldiers, and to members of the masses.

Letter of determination 决心书 juexinshu. During the Cultural Revolution activists and Red Guards wrote public declarations known as “letters of determination” in which they stated their political loyalties and objectives.

Lhasa Martyrs’ Cemetery 拉萨烈士陵园 Lasa lieshi lingyuan. The cemetery for those who had died during the Liberation of Tibet or while working there. It is situated in the western suburbs of Lhasa and was listed as a “Patriotic Education Base” in 2001.

Lhasa Middle School 拉萨中学 Lasa zhongxue or simply 拉中 Lazhong. A boarding school in Lhasa with approximately 360 students, of whom about one hundred were Chinese. Students from the school, along with those from the Tibet Teacher Training College, were the first to set up organizations of Red Guards in the TAR and the first to take to the streets to destroy the Four Olds.

Lhasa Military District 拉萨军区 Lasa junqu. A subdivision of the Tibet Military Region responsible for military security in Lhasa. It was later implicated in the destruction of Ganden Monastery. See also Garrison Command; Lhasa Municipal Garrison.

Lhasa Municipal Garrison 拉萨警备区 Lasa jingbeiqu. The PLA force responsible for military security in Lhasa Municipality (the term “municipality” or “city” refers not to the urban area of Lhasa but to the entire prefecture that it administers, which consists mostly of rural grasslands). The Garrison troops largely supported Nyamdrel and carried out the June 7 Jokhang Incident. See Garrison Command.

Lhasa Municipal Party Committee 拉萨市党委 Lasashi dangwei, 拉萨市委 Lasashiwei, or 拉萨党委 Lasa dangwei. The CCP organ overseeing the government of Lhasa Municipality, which administers the prefecture-level area that has Lhasa at its center.

Lhasa Municipal People’s Committee 拉萨市人民委员会 Lasashi renmin weiyuanhui or 拉萨市人委 Lasashi renwei. The official name for the local government of Lhasa Municipality, a prefectural-level administrative institution, at the start of the Cultural Revolution. Control of this committee was seized by Gyenlog forces in January 1967.

Lhasa Municipal Women’s Militia 拉萨市女民兵 Lasashi núminbing. The woman’s militia force for Lhasa Municipality.

Lhasa rebellion 拉萨叛变 Lasa panbian. The official term in China for the revolt or uprising by Tibetans in Lhasa in March 1959. It was suppressed by the PLA and led to the Dalai Lama’s flight to India, together with about eighty thousand other Tibetans. The revolt had begun some three years earlier in Kham, included major conflict in Amdo in 1958, and continued in some areas until 1962.

Lhasa Revolutionary Rebels Commune 拉萨革命造反公社 Lasa geming zaofan gongshe. One of the groups affiliated with Gyenlog, consisting mainly of farmers and nomads.
Lhasa Revolutionary Rebels General Headquarters 拉萨革命造反总司令部 Lasa geming zaofan zongsilingbu or simply 造总 Zaozong. The full name for Gyenlog. See Zaozong.

Lhasa Song and Dance Troupe 拉萨歌舞团 Lasa gewutuan. A government performance troupe that was linked to Nyamdrel. During the Cultural Revolution its members lived in the former Surkhang family mansion. Some members who supported Nyamdrel took part in the June 7 Jokhang Incident in 1968.

Lhasa Trading Company 拉萨贸易公司 Lasa maoyi gongsi. The largest shopping center in the city at the time, known popularly as “the Auditorium.” It was located on Yutog Lam, opposite the TAR Party compound. It was later renamed the Lhasa Department Store.

Lhoba 珞巴 Luoba. One of the fifty-five ethnic minorities officially recognized by the PRC, consisting of about 3,500 people living in southern Tibet.

*Li Xiannian 李先念. Li (1909–92) became China’s finance minister in 1954 and was a vice premier of the PRC from 1954 to 1980. He was a Politburo member from 1956 onward and was a key figure in bringing down the Gang of Four in 1976. He was president of the PRC from 1983 to 1988.

*Li Xiran 李希然. Deputy commander of the TAR Military Region and head of financial and economic affairs for the Lhasa Revolutionary Committee. He was also General Secretary of the Lhasa Municipal Party Committee from 1972 to 1975. Implicated in the destruction of Ganden Monastery.

*Li Zhiyuan 李知远. A teacher of mathematics at Lhasa Middle School during the early part of the Cultural Revolution.

Liaison Committee against the Local Emperor 专打土皇帝联络委员会 zhuanda tuhuangdi lianluo weihuanhui. A Red Guard force affiliated with Gyenlog.

Liberation Township 解放乡 Jiefangxiang. The Cultural Revolution name for a township on the edge of Lhasa called Lhalu Township, named after the family that had owned the area before 1959.

liemin erzhi 裂民而治. A strategic principle meaning “divide and rule,” referring here to a practice carried out by activists that was known as paidui (see below).

“Lift Up Our Gaze to See the Northern Stars” 抬头望见北斗星 taitou wangjian beidouxing. One of the songs chosen by Gyenlog to represent its aims.

light the fire of the Great Cultural Revolution in every corner of Tibet 把文化大革命的熊熊烈火烧遍西藏各个角落 ba wenhua dageming de xiongxionglihuo shaobian Xizang gege jiaoluo. A slogan chanted by Lhasa Middle School students as they marched to the Jokhang on August 24, 1966, during the first action in Lhasa to “destroy the Four Olds.”

Lin 林. A Chinese surname chosen by some Tibetans during the Cultural Revolution up until 1971 to indicate support for Mao’s then designated successor, Lin Biao.

*Lin Biao 林彪. Lin Biao (1907–71) had been a marshal in the PLA and became a vice premier of the PRC in 1954 and a vice chair of the CCP in 1958. He was instrumental in creating unquestioning support for Mao and from 1966 he was identified as Mao’s successor. He died with his family in a plane crash in 1971 while supposedly fleeing after an alleged coup attempt. He then became a target of political campaigns defending Mao.
Lin Biao bourgeois military line 林彪资产阶级军事路线 Lin Biao zichan jieji junshi luxian. A posthumous campaign against Lin Biao accusing him of having supported bourgeois ideas.

linking up 串联 chuanlian. A drive that arranged for ethnic Chinese Red Guards to travel to other areas of China in order to mobilize or join forces with their local counterparts. Zhang Guohua appealed to Beijing in October 1966 to stop student Red Guards from traveling to Tibet to link up with activists there, but they continued to arrive.

Literature and Art Soldiers Headquarters 文艺兵司令部 wenyibing silingbu. A pro-Nyamdrel group formed by cultural workers in the Tibet Military Region compound who identified with Nyamdrel. Among the troops, only the cultural workers were allowed to join factions during the Cultural Revolution.

little generals 小将 xiaojiang. Short form of the term "revolutionary little generals“ (革命小将 geming xiaojiang), a form of praise for young activists. In Tibet, the phrase was used by activist teachers at Lhasa Middle School and others to encourage student Red Guards to carry out revolutionary actions such as the August 24, 1966, march on the Jokhang.

little red book 小红书 xiaohongshu. A term used to refer to various compilations of the sayings of Chairman Mao. These collections were also known as 毛主席语录 Mao zhuxi yulu or simply 毛语录 Mao yulu, The Quotations of Chairman Mao. See also hong baoshu.

*Liu Shaomin 刘绍民. Commander in chief of Nyamdrel (Dalianzhi). He had previously been the Secretary of the TAR Party Committee and in 1968 was made a deputy director of the TAR Revolutionary Committee. He went on to become deputy commissioner of Lhokha Prefecture after 1977 and later became the principal of the Tibet School of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry.

*Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇. Liu Shaoqi (1898–1969) was the first vice chair of the CCP and president of China at the start of the Cultural Revolution, and so was then the third most powerful leader in China, with only Mao and Zhou Enlai above him. He had been declared the successor to Mao in 1961 but became a target for attacks after he indicated disagreement with some of Mao’s more extreme policies. He was subjected to numerous struggle sessions and beatings during the Cultural Revolution and died in 1969 after some two years under house arrest. See also Secretary Liu.

Liuyuan 柳园. A town in what is now Jiuquan Municipality (formerly Suzhou) in Gansu Province. It was set up as a transportation hub in 1958 for rail routes that connected mainland China with roads leading to Qinghai, Tibet, and Xinjiang.

Lixin dajie 立新大街. Establish-the-New Avenue, the name given to the Barkor during the Cultural Revolution.

Lixin guangchang 立新广场. Establish-the-New Square, the name given to the Sungchöra during the Cultural Revolution.

local nationalists 地方民族主义者 difang minzu zhuyizhe. People condemned for giving preference to the interests of their own nationality or people rather than to the state or the CCP. The term can include those accused of rebellion or treason.

Logistics Department 后勤部 houqinbu. One of the four administrative sections within the command structure of the Tibet Military Region, housed within the Tibet Military Region’s compound or base in Lhasa on the southern side of the Lingkor.
*Long Guotai 龙国泰. A scholar of Tibetan literature who taught at Lhasa Middle School in 1966. His Tibetan name was Sonam Gyaltsen. His mother was Tibetan, while his father was descended from a soldier who had been sent to Tibet during the Qing era. He was also a translator and researcher, and during the early years of the Cultural Revolution he was allowed to work from an office in the Norbulingka on compiling a Tibetan dictionary.

Long Live Chairman Mao 毛主席万岁 Mao zhuxi wansui. Literally meaning "ten thousand lives for Chairman Mao," this was the most popular of the Cultural Revolution slogans. It was painted in giant characters on the top of the Potala Palace during the Cultural Revolution period. It is also found in the form "Long Live Great Leader Chairman Mao!"

See also wangse.

Long Live the Great Chinese Communist Party! 中国共产党万岁 Zhongguo gongchandang wansui. Slogan used frequently during the Cultural Revolution.

Long Live the Great Unification of All Nationalities! 民族大团结万岁 minzu datuanjie wansui. Slogan frequently used in Tibet and other "nationality areas" during the Cultural Revolution. It was painted in giant characters on the wall of the Potala. Also translated as "Long Live the Great Solidarity of the Peoples of All Nationalities." See also nationality.

Long Live the People's Republic of China 中华人民共和国万岁 Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wansui. Slogan frequently used during the Cultural Revolution. This slogan was also painted in giant characters on the wall of the Potala.

looting in the daylight and receiving gifts at night 明投暗送 mingtou ansong. A term used during the Cultural Revolution to refer to military units or soldiers who pretended to guard armories but in fact allowed members of the rival factions to raid them and take weapons.

mainland China. See inland China.

*Mao Weihua 毛卫华. A popular name chosen by some Tibetans during the Cultural Revolution meaning "a person from a Mao family who protects China."

*Mao Zedong 毛主席. See Chairman Mao.

Mao Zedong Thought Propaganda Teams 毛泽东思想宣传队 Mao Zedongsixiang xuanchuandui. See Military Propaganda Teams.

*Mao zhuxi de hua, juju shi zhenli 毛主席的话, 句句是真理. "When Chairman Mao's speaks, every sentence expresses the truth." A slogan that indicated a "whateverist" policy of absolute support for Mao's policies.

Mao zhuxi wansui! See Long Live Chairman Mao.

Martyrs' Cemetery. See Lhasa Martyrs' Cemetery.

mass organizations 群众组织 quanzhong zuzhi. Large-scale membership organizations that are run by the CCP and are claimed to represent sections of society outside the government, military, or Party. The most notable mass organizations are the official trade unions, the China Women's Association, and the Communist Youth League.

See also United Front.
May 16 Circular 五・一六通知 wuyiliu tongzhi or wuyaoliu tongzhi. The Cultural Revolution began officially with a circular or notice issued by the Politburo on May 16, 1966. The notice condemned unnamed figures “who have sneaked into the Party, the government, the army, and various spheres of culture” as “a bunch of counterrevolutionary revisionists.” It called for “a great cultural revolution, by openly and fully mobilizing the broad masses from the bottom up to expose these sinister phenomena.”

May 23 Headquarters 五・二三司令部 wuersan silingbu. A faction of cultural workers in Lhasa who were allied with Nyamdrel, including members of the TAR Modern Drama Troupe, the Shanxi Opera Troupe, and the Henan Opera Troupe. They took their name from the date of famous speeches on literature and art delivered by Mao at Yan’an in 1942. Known in full as the “May 23 Culture and Arts Combat Headquarters.”

Military Control Commission. See Tibet Military Control Commission.

Military Propaganda Teams 军宣队 junxuandui. Literally, “Army Propaganda Teams,” the full title of these was “PLA Mao Zedong Thought Propaganda Teams.” From 1967 onward they were tasked with implementing the “Three Supports, Two Militaries” campaign. They carried out agricultural and medical work as well as propaganda.

Military Region. See Tibet Military Region.

Military Region Office for Supporting Local Cultural Revolution 军区支持地方文化大革命办公室 junqu zhichi difang wenhua dageming bangongshi. In March 1967, as the military in Tibet attempted to recover control from Red Guards and activists, it created an Office for Supporting Local Cultural Revolution to attempt to coordinate Cultural Revolution activities. The Office was under the Tibet Military Region and was led by Yin Fatang, one of the standing committee members of the Party Committee in the Tibet Military Region and the director of its Political Department.

Minzu. See backbone militia.

minzu wenti de shiizhi shi jieji wenti 民族问题的实质是阶级问题. “In the final analysis, the nationality issue is a question of class.” A statement by Mao in August 1963 that signaled an end to gradualist, cooperative approaches by the CCP in its dealings with the non-Chinese (non-Han) nationalities. See also nationality.

*Mo Jianzhang 莫建章. The target of a struggle session carried out by the Barkor Neighborhood Committee. Apparently a merchant from Qinghai, Mo was known in Tibetan as Gyami Tsering, meaning Chinese Tsering. He had a small general store in the Barkor and was accused of smuggling weapons from Qinghai to Tibet and “conducting traitorous activities, using vegetable gardening as cover.”

Mo Yuzhen 莫玉珍. Daughter of Mo Jianzhang (see above).

monastery resident work team 驻寺工作组 zhusi gongzuozu. In 2011 the TAR, for the first time in China, sent teams of cadres to live permanently in each monastery at township level or above. The teams, whose members are rotated after one to two years, have taken over the running of those monasteries, which previously were run by “Democratic Management Committees” whose members were monks from within each monastery.
the most aggressive and the most dare-to-die 最积极, 最敢作敢为 zui jiji, zui ganzuo ganwei. A phrase used to express praise for the revolutionary credentials of a Red Guard or student activist.

Mountain of the Medicine King 药王山 Yaowangshan. The Chinese name for Chagpori, the hill southwest of the Potala on which the Tibetan Medical College had been sited before 1959.

Municipal Party Committee 市党委 shi dangwei. See Lhasa Municipal Party Committee.

mutual aid groups. See agricultural production mutual aid groups.

Nationalities Pictorial 民族画报 Minzu huabao. An official photographic journal published in Chinese, with versions in Tibetan and three other minority languages. The journal aims to depict the happiness and unity of the nationalities in China.

country 民族 minzu. The term used by the CCP to refer to the different peoples within China. China recognizes fifty-six nationalities within its borders, of which approximately 91 percent are classified as the ethnic Chinese, known in China as Han. Since 1995, the official English translation used by the CCP for this term has been changed from "nationality" to "ethnic group."

neighborhood committee 居民委员会 jümin weiyuanhui or simply 居委会 jüweihui. At the time of the Cultural Revolution, and still in most parts of China today, Neighborhood Committees are the lowest-level bodies in the Chinese administrative system in urban areas. They ensure that government policies are implemented at the grassroots level and work with local police (see paichusuo) on maintaining security. During the Cultural Revolution, there were twelve Neighborhood Committees in Lhasa, four for each of the three banshichu or subdistricts of the city (East, North, and South).

nets in the sky, traps on the ground 天罗地网 tianluo diwang. A term used by officials in China to describe multiple systems of security that enable complete surveillance and control. Official usage of the term increased in Tibet significantly after 2008.

New-Forever Neighborhood Committee 永新居委会 Yongxin jüweihui. Cultural Revolution name for one of the Neighborhood Committees in Lhasa.

New Potala Square 新布达拉广场 xin Budala guangchang. A square constructed in 1995 in front of the Potala Palace in Lhasa to provide a large space for parades and rallies. It enlarged a previous square.

*Nie Conghe 聂聪和. A female teacher who was a leader of the Liaison Committee against the Local Emperor, affiliated with Gyenlog. She had arrived in Lhasa with a group called the Red Flag Sub-Team to Tibet, which was composed of students from the Beijing College of Aeronautics.

nine must-haves campaign 九有工程 jiuyou gongcheng. Literally, the Nine-Haves campaign. This was a policy launched by the TAR authorities in 2011 requiring all monasteries and temples in the region to be equipped with paved roads, water, electricity, facilities to receive national radio and television broadcasts, books and national newspapers, national flags, and portraits of the nation’s primary leaders.

niugui sheshen 牛鬼蛇神. See ox-demon-snake-spirits.

no construction without destruction 不破不立 bupo buli. A saying by Mao, first published in 1940. It referred to "sweeping away" reactionary culture.

nongye xue Dazhai. See Dazhai.
Not Allowed to Be Born 不准出生的人民 buzhun chusheng de ren. A fictional account in Chinese about twin Tibetan girls whose father, a serf, has been blinded by a cruel lama. The two girls foil a plot by the lama to stage a rebellion against the PLA in 1957, after which one of the girls joins the PLA and helps them liberate her village. The story was produced as a film under the name Tears of Snow Mountain (Xueshan lei, directed by Hua Chun and Ren Pengyuan, 1979).

not having a firm standpoint 立场不坚定 lichang bu jianding. A term used to denounce or “label” people who failed to take part in revolutionary activities. Not as serious as being labeled a “counterrevolutionary,” but still dangerous.

Office for Exhibiting the Red Guards’ Outstanding Achievement in Destroying the Four Olds 红卫兵破四旧成果展览办公室 hongweibing po sijiu chengguo zhanlan bangongshi. A government body tasked with setting up an exhibition in the Jokhang Temple during the Cultural Revolution showing religious, cultural, and other objects that had been confiscated from all over Lhasa as examples of the Four Olds.

One Strike and Three Againsts 一打三反 yida sanfan. A campaign launched in 1970 to strike against counterrevolutionaries and to struggle against bribery and theft, opportunism and speculation, and extravagance and waste. The campaign continued for up to three years in some areas.

ox-demon-snake-spirits 牛鬼蛇神 niugui sheshen. Originally a traditional Chinese term referring to visible representations of demons or spirits, it was used by the CCP during the Cultural Revolution to describe and demean those regarded as class enemies, bad elements, or other types of political reprobates who were to be used as struggle targets.

pacification of the rebellion 平叛 pingpan. In Tibet, this refers to a prolonged military campaign to suppress the 1959 revolt or uprising and to track down and punish any Tibetans suspected of supporting it. The same term was used for military efforts to suppress the “renewed rebellions” of 1969. Also known as “eliminating the rebellion” or “pacifying the counterrevolutionary rebellion.”

paidui 排队. A political practice during the Cultural Revolution meaning to “line up,” according to which people were divided into four categories: those who were reliable, those who could be united with, those who should be protected, and those who were to be attacked. See yikao duixiang.

panluan 叛乱. Armed rebellion. See also wuduo.

paoda silingbu 炮打司令部. These words, which mean “bombarding the headquarters,” were the title of a “big-character poster” that Mao wrote in August 1966. It in effect accused Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping of opposing the Cultural Revolution and called on activists to attack them and their supporters. From then on, the phrase “bombarding the headquarters” became a popular slogan for rebels physically attacking party officials and offices at various levels.

participation in the rebellion 参叛 canpan. In the Tibetan context, this refers to involvement in the panluan or “armed rebellion” that took place in Tibetan areas from 1956 onward, culminating in the Lhasa Revolt of March 1959. It includes suspected support for the uprising.

Party Congress 党代表大会 dangdaibiao dahui. The CCP holds a congress approximately every five years at national, provincial, prefectural, and county levels, attended by delegates elected from lower-level CCP committees. Because of the Cultural Revolution, the first session of the TAR Party Congress was not held in Lhasa until August 1971, six years after the TAR had been established.
the Party is the army, the Party is the gun 党就是军队, 党就是枪 dang jiushi jundui, dang jiushi qiang. A paraphrased version of Mao’s principle that “the Party commands the gun, and the gun must never be allowed to command the Party” (枪杆子里面出政权 qiangganzi limian chu zhengquan), first used by Mao in 1927. He wrote further, “having guns, we can create Party organizations, [and] we can also create cadres, create schools, create culture, create mass movements . . . only with guns can the whole world be transformed” (1938).

Party Secretary 党委书记 dangwei shuji. See Secretary.

the pavilion closest to the water enjoys moonlight first 近水楼台先得月 jinshui loutai xiandeyue. A Chinese saying referring to those who benefit from intimacy or connections with an influential person or profiteer.

peaceful liberation 和平解放 heping jiefang. Refers to the takeover of Tibet by the PLA in 1950–51.

Although the Tibetan forces fought a major battle with the PLA at Chamdo in October 1950, the Tibetan government was subsequently unable to prevent the Chinese advance and in May 1951 signed a surrender agreement acceding to China’s claims to sovereignty over Tibet. See liberation.

Peasants and Nomads Headquarters 农牧民司令部 nongmumin silingbu. An activist group affiliated with Nyamdrel that consisted of peasants, nomads, and city residents. During the Cultural Revolution it was based at Meru Temple.

People’s Armed Forces Department 人民武装部 renmin wuzhuang budui. Organizations established by the PLA in counties throughout the country in conjunction with local governments to organize military reserve forces and local militia forces in each area. The officers in each People’s Armed Forces Department were in charge of training the local militia and had direct command over them.

People’s Armed Police 人民武装警察 renmin wuzhuang jingcha. A paramilitary force that was formed in 1982 with about 1.5 million troops. It is responsible for military aspects of security within China, including policing borders, suppressing riots and major unrest, and protecting special sites. After unrest in Lhasa in 2008, PAP units carried out twenty-four-hour armed patrols and sentry duty throughout the old quarter of the city until 2014.

People’s Commune 人民公社 renmin gongshe. Communes, where all property and income is shared, were considered the highest form of socialism and were gradually introduced throughout China from 1958 onward. They were each equivalent to a township, usually consisted of twenty thousand to thirty thousand people and included all the villages formerly administered by that township, which were usually reclassified as “production brigades,” while villages became “production teams.” By 1975, 99 percent of the townships in the TAR had been communalized. See Dongkar; Pangdö.

People’s Congress 人民代表大会 renmin daibiao dahui. Known in full as the National People’s Congress (NPC), it meets once a year and serves as a legislature, giving token approval to laws decided by the CCP and the government. Delegates are elected from local-level People’s Congresses, which are found in each province, prefecture, and county, but all elections are controlled by the CCP and are nominal. Technically the People’s Congress is the highest body in the Chinese political system, but in practice its role is symbolic.
People’s Cultural Palace 人民文化宫 renmin wenhuagong. See Working People’s Cultural Palace.

People’s Daily 人民日报 Renmin ribao. The official newspaper of the CCP and its main vehicle for communicating public statements, slogans, policies, and ideology. It was not issued in a Tibetan version until August 1, 2009.

People’s Park 人民公园 renmin gongyuan. The Cultural Revolution name for the Norbulingka, the summer palace of the Dalai Lamas.

People’s Political Consultative Conference 人民政治协商会议 renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi. See Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference.

People’s Road 人民路 Renmin lu. During the Cultural Revolution, People’s Road was the main thoroughfare in the city. Previously it had been named Yutog Lam. It runs from the Jokhang to the TAR Party and government compound, just south of the Potala Square.

People’s Stadium 人民体育场 renmin tiyuchang. See Polingka in the Tibetan glossary.

Perform as a political flower vase 充当政治花瓶 chongdang zhengzhi heaping. A mocking phrase used to deride people such as lamas and former aristocrats who have accepted token positions in the Chinese administrative system. See United Front personages; CPPCC.

Pine trees imperishable, red rebels invincible 青松不老, 造总不倒 qingsong bulao, zaozong budao. A slogan favored by Gyenlog supporters.

Pingpan 平叛. See pacification of the rebellion.

PLA Mao Zedong Thought Propaganda Teams 人民解放军毛泽东思想宣传队 renmin jiefangjun Mao Zedong sixiang xuanchuandui. See Military Propaganda Teams.

PLA Pictorial 解放军画报 Jiefangjun huabao. A photographic journal founded in 1951 that provides positive news and images of the PLA.

Plateau-Is-Red 高原红. An activist group created by cultural workers among the troops serving under the Tibet Military Region who identified with Gyenlog. See also May 23 Headquarters.

Plateau Soldiers News 高原战士报 Gaoyuan zhanzhibao. The newspaper of the PLA in Tibet. It was published by the Tibet Military Control Commission after the commission was established in May 1967.


Political commissar 政委 zhengwei. A political commissar is appointed to every unit in the PLA at regiment level or above. His or her tasks are to implement decisions made by the CCP committee of that unit or above, to instill discipline among CCP members within that unit, and to provide political education to the troops. The political commissar is the Party Secretary of that unit’s Party committee, makes all political decisions for the unit, and is usually superior to the commanding officer of the unit.

Political Department 政治部 zhengzhibu. One of the four administrative sections within the command structure of the Tibet Military Region, housed within the Tibet Military Region’s compound or base in Lhasa on the southern side of the Lingkor.

Power holders within the Party taking the capitalist road 走资本主义道路的当权派 zou ziben zhuyi daolu de dangquanpai. See capitalist roaders.
precious red books 红宝书 hong baoshu. See hong baoshu.

Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet 西藏自治区筹备委员会 Xizang zizhiqu choubei weiyuanhui. The Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet (PCART) was established by the Chinese authorities in Lhasa in 1956 as a transitional device to transfer power from the traditional government of the Dalai Lama to an “autonomous” local government. The Dalai Lama was notionally in charge of the Preparatory Committee, but after his flight to India in 1959 he was replaced by the Panchen Lama, who was in turn deposed three years later. The committee was replaced by the “People’s Government,” also known as the “People’s Committee” of the TAR in 1965.

prepare for war, prepare for famine, serve the people 备战, 备荒, 为人民 beizhan, beihuang, wei renmin. The slogan used to promote the war-preparedness campaign from 1969 onward. In order to protect China from nuclear attack by “imperialists” and “revisionists,” it called on people to build war defenses in each area. It continued the earlier transfer of several hundred factories from eastern or coastal China to minority or western areas in the hinterland, as well as the sending of some twenty million youths from towns to the countryside. See also dig deep tunnels; sent-down youth.

Princess Wencheng 文成公主 Wencheng gongzhu. A Chinese princess in the Tang dynasty who was sent to Tibet to marry the Tibetan emperor Songtsen Gampo in 642. Since 1959 innumerable Chinese statues, operas, films, artworks, and monuments have been created by the state to commemorate her supposed role as the first unifier of Tibetans with Chinese.

Proletarian Headquarters 无产阶级司令部 wuchan jieji silingbu. A title claimed by all factions in the Cultural Revolution, including the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group and, in Tibet, by Nyamdrel.

Protect-the-East Commune 卫东公社 Weidong gongshe. An agricultural commune under the Tromzikhang Neighborhood Committee (see Protect-the-New Neighborhood Committee) in Lhasa.

Protect-the-East Office 卫东办事处 Weidong banshichu. The Cultural Revolution name for the North City Office, one of the three subdistricts of the Inner City District of Lhasa. It supervised the Meru, Tsemonling, Tengyeling, and Shöl Neighborhood Committees.

Protect-the-New Neighborhood Committee 卫新居委会 Weixin jüweihui. The Cultural Revolution name for the Tromzikhang Neighborhood Committee in Lhasa.

Provisional Lhasa Municipal Communist Party Committee 中共拉萨临时市委 Zhonggong Lasa linshi shiwei. The main CCP offices in Lhasa at municipal (prefectural) level in 1967. The office was one of those briefly taken over by Gyenlog activists during the January 1967 power seizure.

Public Security Bureau 公安局 Gonganjü. The Public Security Bureau (PSB) is the Chinese term in the PRC era for the police force.

pusa bing 菩萨兵. Bodhisattva-like soldiers. PLA writers and propagandists sometimes described its troops as pusabing in speeches or messages for Tibetans, meaning that the soldiers should be considered as bodhisattvas by the Tibetans whom they were liberating.

Qiangganzi limian chuzhengquan 枪杆子里面出政权. See the Party is the army, the Party is the gun.
Qiao Shi 乔石. Qiao Shi (1924–2015) was head of the CCP’s International Liaison Department from 1978, a member of the Politburo Standing Committee of the CCP from 1987 to 1997, and a vice premier of the PRC from 1986. He visited Tibet in 1988.

Qinghua University 清华大学 Qinghua daxue. One of the two top universities in China, also written as Tsinghua. The first Red Guards came from a school attached to the university and a number of Red Guards traveled from the university to Tibet to carry out cultural revolution there. See Red Guards from the Capital.

quanpan 全叛. See full-scale rebellion.

Rebels Commune 造反公社 zaofan gongshe. A short form of Lhasa Revolutionary Rebels Commune, a group affiliated with Gyenlog.

Red Arts Headquarters 红色艺术司令部 hongse yishu silingbu. Known as the Red Art Division (红艺司 hongyisi) for short, this group was made up of cultural workers from the TAR Song and Dance Troupe, the TAR Modern Drama Troupe, the TAR Tibetan Opera Troupe, and other literature and arts organizations. It was affiliated with Gyenlog.

The Red Detachment of Women 红色娘子军 hongse niangzijun. One of the “eight model plays” that were permitted during the Cultural Revolution. Most performances of the opera in Tibet were in Chinese, but a Tibetan-language version was performed at the Sunghöra.

Red Flag Sub-Team to Tibet 红旗赴藏小分队 hongqi fuzang xiaofendui. A Red Guard force dispatched from the Beijing College of Aeronautics. It was affiliated with Gyenlog.

Red Guards 红卫兵 hongweibing. The first Red Guards were students at a middle school affiliated with Qinghua University in Beijing. They declared themselves to be Red Guards in May 1966 and their actions were endorsed by Mao, leading to Red Guard organizations emerging in almost every school in China. Their organizations are said to have raided ten million homes across China to destroy or confiscate artworks, antiques and other “Four Olds.”

Red Guards from the Capital 首都红卫兵 Shoudu hongweibing. A loosely organized group of students from Beijing who traveled to Lhasa in 1966 to operate there as Red Guards. Some forty of the students were expelled from Lhasa by the PLA after the February 9 Incident (see above) in 1967 but were able to return to Lhasa that April. Affiliated with Gyenlog. See also the Revolutionary Headquarters of Rebels from the Capital Going to Tibet.

Red Guards from the School for Children of Transportation Bureau Employees 交通厅职工子弟学校 红卫兵 jiaotongting zhigong zidi xuexiao hongweibing. Name of a Red Guard group seen on a banner during a rally in Lhasa.

Red Guards Headquarters No. 3 红卫兵第三司令部 hongweibing disan silingbu. Possibly the same group as the Capital Headquarters No. 3 or an abbreviation for the famous Revolutionary Rebel Headquarters of Red Guards from Colleges and Universities in the Capital, which had set up a branch in Lhasa.

Red Palace in the East 东方红宫 dongfang honggong. The name that was reportedly proposed for the Potala Palace during the Cultural Revolution, but not formally imposed.

Red Rebels News 红色造反报 Hongse zaofanbao. The newspaper put out by Gyenlog (Zaozong) in both Tibetan and Chinese. It was printed at the offices of the Tibet Daily.
Red Rebels Regiment 红色造反团 hongse zaofantuan. A Red Guard force formed by students from the Tibet Nationality Institute in Xianyang, Shaanxi. The group was affiliated with Gyenlog.

red roots, sturdy sprouts 根红苗正 genhong miaozheng. A Maoist term for people with good class origins and reliable political beliefs.

reform-through-labor 劳动改造 laodong gaizao or simply 劳改 laogai. The CCP term for the main prison system in China, where prisoners were required to work in factories or prison farms as well as to undergo political education. The laogai camps were renamed prisons in 1994.

Religious Affairs Bureau 文化事务局 wenhua shiwujü. Also known as the State Administration for Religious Affairs, until 2018 the Religious Affairs Bureau was in charge of all religious institutions and personnel in China. Although nominally a government body, it was in fact run by the United Front (see below). In 2018 it was dissolved and its work was taken up directly by the United Front. Neither the United Front nor the Religious Affairs Bureau functioned during the Cultural Revolution.

Ren Rong 任荣. Ren began his work in Tibet in 1964 as a deputy political commissar of the Tibet Military Region. From March 1967 he served as the deputy head of the Tibet Military Control Commission and from 1971 was head of the TAR Revolutionary Committee. He was the Party Secretary of the TAR from 1976 to 1980. He was supported by Zhang Guohua, protected Nyamdrel, strongly opposed Gyenlog, and crushed the “renewed rebellions” of 1969.

renewed rebellions 再叛 zaipan. The official term for armed Tibetan resistance that occurred in the years after the suppression of the 1959 Lhasa revolt. It referred principally to the serious conflicts that broke out in fifty-two out of the seventy-one counties in the TAR in 1969, following raids on PLA armories by members of the two main factions the previous year. The “rebellions” involved attacks on CCP and government officials and the military. The most serious fighting took place in Nyemo County near Lhasa and in Palbar County in Chamdo Prefecture. The term “renewed rebellions” indicated that they were seen as continuations of earlier Tibetan resistance to Chinese rule, notably the March 1959 revolt. It was later replaced by the term “counterrevolutionary violent turmoil.” See conspiracy to riot; full-scale rebellion; semi-rebellion.

renmin gongshe 人民公社. See People’s Commune.

renmin lu. See People’s Road.

reversing one’s spear head to make a strike 反戈一击 fange yiji. An expression describing people who shift their support from one faction to another as political conditions change; political opportunists.

revisionist traitors 修正主义卖国贼 xiuzheng zhuyi maiguozei. The term used by China’s leaders to condemn the Soviet leadership after Khrushchev criticized the legacy of Stalin in 1956.

Revolutionary Committees 革命委员会 geming weiyuanhui. From January 1967 “revolutionary committees” were set up throughout China to operate as the organs of government in each province, province-level municipality, and autonomous region. They were based on the principle of the “Three-In-One Alliance,” combining representatives of the “revolutionary cadres,” the PLA, and the “revolutionary masses.” Party Committees were reinstated from 1972 and Revolutionary Committees were abolished in 1979 and replaced by “People’s Governments.”
Revolutionary Headquarters of Rebels from the Capital Going to Tibet 首都赴藏造反革命总部 shoudu fuzang zaofan geming zongbu. A Red Guard group active in Tibet, possibly the same as the Red Guards from the Capital, a loosely organized group of students from Beijing. It was affiliated with Gyenlog.

Revolutionary Rebel Headquarters of Red Guards from Colleges and Universities in the Capital 首都大专院校红卫兵革命造反司令部 shoudu dazhuan yuanxiao hongweibing geming zaofan silingbu. Also known as the Rebel Headquarters of Red Guards, this group had set up a Lhasa branch and was probably affiliated with Gyenlog. See also Capital Headquarters No. 3 and Red Guards Headquarters No. 3.

Revolutionary Rebel Headquarters of Tibet Red Guards 西藏红卫兵革命造反司令部 Xizang hongweibing geming zaofan silingbu. See Tibet Red Guards Revolutionary Rebel Headquarters.

Revolutionary Rebels Commune 革命造反公社 geming zaofan gongshe. See Lhasa Revolutionary Rebels Commune.

Saikang Shopping Center 赛康商场 Saikang shangchang. The new, sinicized name for the former Surkhang mansion on the southeast corner of the Barkor after it was torn down and converted into a shopping mall in 1993.

Secretary 书记 shuji. In the context of a CCP institution, the term always means a Party Secretary, that is, the head of a committee within the CCP. In non-CCP contexts the word can mean a secretary in the sense of a clerical assistant or aide (Chinese: mishu; Tibetan: drung yig).

*Secretary Liu 刘书记 Liu shuji. See Liu Shaoqi.


semi-rebellions 半叛 banpan. During the “renewed rebellions” that broke out in fifty-two of the seventy-one counties of the TAR in 1969, twenty-four were labeled “semi-rebellions.” See also conspiracy to riot; full-scale rebellions.

sent-down youth 下放知青 xiàfàng zhīqīng. Literally, “sent-down educated youth.” The CCP began sending students to work in the countryside from about 1953, and sixteen million were sent down between 1962 and 1979. From about 1968 onward, large numbers of youths were sent down in order to defuse the violence caused by Red Guard conflicts. Groups of youths from China were sent to the TAR from at least 1965.

Serf Poleaxes 农奴戟 nongnuji. An organization formed by some of the Red Guard students from the Tibet Nationality Institute in Xianyang, Shaanxi. The term “serf poleaxe” referred to a line from “Shaoshan Revisited,” a 1959 poem by Mao: “The red flags roused the serfs, their poleaxes in hand.” The group was affiliated with Nyamdrel and was said to have been the largest Red Guard organization in Lhasa. The full name of the group was the “Serf Poleaxes’ Red Guard Rebels General Headquarters.”

Serfs 农奴 Nongnu. A highly influential Chinese film (directed by Li Jun, 1963) set in the 1940s and 1950s. The film tells the life story of a Tibetan orphan called Jampa who takes an oath of silence in retaliation for abuse he has suffered at the hands of local Tibetan landlords and lamas. He is forced to become a monk but uncovers a plot by a local lama to stage an armed uprising against the PLA. He finally agrees to speak again only after hearing that the 1959 “Democratic Reforms” have begun in Tibet. The film ends with him uttering his first words since he took his vow of silence: “Mao zhuxi!” (Chairman Mao!).
seventy-thousand-character petition 七万言书 qiwanyan shu. The Tenth Panchen Lama, although publicly a strong supporter of the CCP and of China’s claim to Tibet, wrote a top secret 120-page appeal to Mao and Zhou Enlai in 1962, begging them to end policies in Tibetan areas that he said threatened to wipe out Tibetan culture and religion. He spent the next sixteen years under house arrest or in prison, including nine weeks of daily struggle sessions in 1964.

Sha Family’s Creek 沙家浜 Shajiabin. One of the “eight model operas” that were permitted during the Cultural Revolution. The show was performed in Lhasa in Chinese by the TAR Modern Drama Troupe.

shajie 杀劫. A Chinese phrase meaning “killing and looting” or “slaughter and plundering.” The word sounds similar to the Tibetan word for revolution, sarjé (gsar brje).

Shanxi Opera Troupe 秦剧团 Qinjütuan. The PLA brought in opera performers from Shanxi Province to Tibet to entertain troops from that province who were serving in Tibet. During the Cultural Revolution, the troupe took up residence in the former Surkhang mansion on the Barkor. Its members supported Nyamdrel and helped the military to close down the Gyenlog broadcasting station in the Jokhang in the run-up to the June 7 Incident in 1968 and are said to have beaten up Gyenlog members who had been wounded in the incident.

“Shaoshan Revisited” 到韶山 dao shaoshan. A 1959 poem by Mao that included the line “the red flags roused the serfs, their poleaxes in hand.”

Shengli 胜利. A Chinese word meaning “victory” that was chosen by some Tibetans as a name during the Cultural Revolution.

Shengli Office. See Victory Office.

shuji. See Secretary.

sijiu. See Four Olds; po sijiu.

“Singing from My Heart to the Liberation Army” 我心中的歌献给解放军 wo xinzhong de ge xianggei jiefangjun. One of the two songs used as an anthem by supporters of Nyamdrel. Published in 1964, it was composed for propaganda use in Tibet by the Chinese musician Chang Liuzhu, with lyrics by Zhuang Tao.

siqing. See Four Cleanups.

Sixteen Instructions 十六条 shiliutiao. On August 8, 1966, the CCP adopted the “Resolution of the CCP Central Committee Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.” This became known as the “Sixteen Instructions” or “Sixteen Articles.” It defined the purpose of the Cultural Revolution as struggling against “capitalist roaders,” criticizing “bourgeois academic authorities and bourgeois ideology,” and transforming education and literary and art production through mass mobilization, “big-character posters,” great debates, and exposing all “ox-demon-snake-spirits.”

smallpox edict 劝人种痘碑 quanren zhongdoubi. An eighteenth-century edict carved onto a stone pillar that is still located in front of the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa. The edict advises on precautions to be taken to prevent the spread of the disease.
Socialist Education Movement 社会主义教育运动 shehui zhuyi jiaoyu yundong. A movement from 1962 to 1966 that aimed to reinvigorate revolutionary spirit and collectivization among the peasants and local cadres, presented the army and soldiers as model citizens and educators, required people to learn Maoist texts by heart, and ordered class struggle to be carried out even within the peasantry. It is also known as the Four Cleanups (四清运动 siqing yundong).

Southwest Bureau 西南局 xi’nanjü. After 1959 China was divided into six “large administrative regions”: Northeast, North, Northwest, South Central, and Southwest. Each of these corresponded to a military region with the same name, ruled by military leaders who were also in charge of the corresponding administrative regions. The administration of the Southwest Region was based in Chengdu, from where its military leaders led the PLA advance into Tibet in 1950.

spiritual atom bomb 精神原子弹 jingshen yuanzidan. A term used by Lin Biao to describe Mao Zedong Thought.

splittism 分裂主义 fenlie zhuyi. The official term used in China for “separatism” or any suggestion that Tibet, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Hong Kong, or other areas within China should or could be independent.

State Council 国务院 guowuyuan. The highest-level executive body in the PRC governmental system. It consists of all government ministers and is equivalent to a cabinet in democratic systems.

struggle, criticize, correct 斗批改 dou pi gai. An instruction by Mao to “struggle against private ownership,” to “criticize revisionists,” and to “correct one’s political position.”

struggle session 批斗大会 pidou dahui or 斗争大会 douzheng dahui. A rally or public meeting in which class enemies were paraded, denounced, abused, and ritually humiliated while being required to confess to political crimes. Based on Soviet forms of class struggle, struggle sessions were carried out throughout China from the 1950s onward until they were banned after 1978.

suan luobo 酸萝卜. Pickled radish, an example of a Chinese term used constantly in modern Tibetan.

sub–police station 派出所 paichusuo. A police station or police post at township level. In urban areas, a paichusuo would be at the same administrative level as a Neighborhood Committee and one of its officers would serve on that committee.

sugarcoated bullets 糖衣炮弹 tangyi paodan. A term used by Mao in 1949 to describe enticements offered by the bourgeoisie to tempt and destroy revolutionaries.

*Sun 孙. The family name of a Chinese youth who was sent down from Fushun in northeast China to the TAR, in 1976, where he worked in the Red Flag Commune in Chonggye County, Lhokha and learned Tibetan. He later became a businessman in Lhasa.

Sun Chamber 日光殿 riguangdian. Literally “Sun Chamber” (nyi ‘od gzim chung in Tibetan), this refers to a room on the second floor of the Jokhang Temple complex that looks down onto the Great Courtyard. It was the room from which the Dalai Lama would traditionally watch the monastic ceremonies held in the courtyard during the Monlam Chenmo festival each year.

*Sun Yat-Sen 孙逸仙 Sun yixian. Sun (1866–1925) led the efforts to overthrow the Qing dynasty that led to the “Xinhai Revolution” in 1911. He was the first president of the Republic of China in 1912 and was the leader of the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party of China) from 1919–25. Commonly referred to in the PRC as Sun Zhongshan (孙中山). See Three Principles of the People.
support the leftists 支左 zhizuo. On January 23, 1967, the PLA was ordered to “support the leftists” and to provide military assistance when “truly revolutionary groups ask the army for support.” This meant that the military was to take control of government institutions in support of these groups. These instructions, which were known as the “Three Supports, Two Militaries,” led to the setting up of Military Control Commissions and subsequently Revolutionary Committees throughout China.

suppression of the rebellion. See pacification of the rebellion.

*Tao Changsong 陶长松. An ethnic Chinese teacher at Lhasa Middle School at the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution who became the commander in chief of Gyenlog. In 1968 he was made a deputy head of the TAR Revolutionary Committee. He later became a researcher at the Tibet Academy of Social Sciences in Lhasa.

TAR. See Tibet Autonomous Region.

TAR Communications Office 西藏自治区交际处 Xizang zizhiqu jiaojichu. The office within the TAR administration with responsibility for managing communications and broadcasting. During the Cultural Revolution its premises in Lhasa (now the Welcome Hotel) were used as a broadcasting station by Nyamdrel. Different from the Communications Department (联络部) under the Tibet Military Region.

TAR Cultural Revolution Leadership Small Group 西藏自治区文化大革命领导小组 Xizang zizhiqu wenhua dageming lingdao xiaozu. An entity established by the Tibet branch of the CCP in May 1966 to try to direct the Cultural Revolution in the region.

TAR Modern Drama Troupe 西藏自治区话剧团 Xizang zizhiqu huajütuan. A governmental theater troupe that used Meru Monastery in Lhasa as its base during the Cultural Revolution. Some of its members supported Gyenlog, while others allied with Nyamdrel.

TAR Party Committee 西藏自治区党委 Xizang zizhiqu dangwei. The topmost body in the TAR branch of the CCP and the effective rulers of the region after the TAR was established in 1965. It replaced the Tibet Working Committee, which in effect had ruled Tibet since 1951. The functions of the TAR Party Committee were taken over and its leaders deposed by radical activists in February 1967 and, in May that year, it was replaced as the topmost body in the TAR by the Military Control Commission, which was in turn replaced by the TAR Revolutionary Committee in September 1968. The Party Committee was reinstated as the topmost authority in the TAR in 1978. Until January 1980, the area ruled by the TAR Party Committee did not include Ngari in far western Tibet, which was under the Xinjiang branch of the CCP.

TAR People’s Broadcasting Service 西藏自治区人民广播电台 Xizang zizhiqu renmin guangbo diantai. The public broadcasting service of the TAR government.

TAR People’s Committee 西藏自治区人民委员会 Xizang zizhiqu renmin weiyuanhui. The official name for the government of the TAR from 1965 to 1967. It replaced the "Tibet People’s Government” once the TAR was founded. It was taken over by revolutionary activists on January 24, 1967, and replaced in September 1968 by the TAR Revolutionary Committee.
TAR People’s Government 西藏自治区人民政府 Xizang zizhiqu renmin zhengfu. The official name for the government of the TAR from August 1978 onward. It replaced the TAR Revolutionary Committee and remains the name for the current administration. Until 1980, Ngari Prefecture was under the administration of Xinjiang, not that of the TAR. Under China’s law promising autonomy for minority nationalities, the chair of the TAR People’s Government has to be a Tibetan. Accordingly, its first two chairs were Tian Bao and Ngapö Ngawang Jigme.

TAR Revolutionary Committee 西藏自治区革命委员会 Xizang zizhiqu geming weiyuanhui or simply 西藏革委会 Xizang geweihui. The TAR Revolutionary Committee was established on September 5, 1968, on orders from Beijing, with representatives from the CCP, state, and military, including the leaders of both Nyamdrel and Gyenlog, both of whom were given positions as deputy heads of the committee (the “Three-In-One Alliance”). It was disbanded in 1978.

TAR Song and Dance Troupe 西藏自治区歌舞团 Xizang zizhiqu gewutuan. A performance troupe established by the TAR government. Many of its members were affiliated with Gyenlog.

Teacher Training College. See Tibet Teacher Training College.

Three-dimensional social stability preventive control system 立体化社会治安防控体系 litihua shehui zhi'an fangkong tixi. A policing system or monitoring network introduced in the TAR and elsewhere in China from 2012 onward. It includes digital surveillance; monitoring at the grassroots level carried out by cadres based (in the case of the TAR) in monasteries, villages, and local neighborhoods; and policing carried out by officials in grid management offices. The term emphasizes the integration of multiple information systems.

Three Educations Work Team 三教工作团 sanjiao gongzuotuan. Members of the Three Educations Work Teams were dispatched to villages and the grasslands between 1963 and 1965 to “use education about class to lift up the lid of class struggle in the farming and nomadic areas.” Their job was to implement the “Three Great Educations”—education about class, education about patriotism, and education about the socialist future. In practice, the campaign screened individuals to assess their political reliability and to identify dissidents.

Three Great Masters 三大领主 san da lingzhu. “Three Great Masters” was the term used to refer to the “reactionary estate holders of the three kinds”—that is, government officials, aristocrats, and high lamas in Tibetan society before it was “reformed” in 1959. See nga-dag in the glossary of Tibetan terms.

Three-In-One Alliance 三结合 san jiehe. The organizing principle behind the composition of each Revolutionary Committee. According to this principle, which was designed to bring an end to factional warfare throughout China, the leading group of each committee had to include representatives of the “revolutionary cadres,” the PLA, and the “revolutionary masses.” In practice, the “revolutionary masses” were represented by leaders of the warring factions.

Three Kinds of People 三种人 sanzhongren. The “three kinds” were “robbers and vandals,” “obsessive factionalists,” and “instigators of rebellion.”

Three Loyalties 三忠于 san zhongyu. These were loyalty to Chairman Mao, loyalty to Mao Zedong Thought, and loyalty to Chairman Mao’s proletarian revolutionary line. They were usually linked to the Four Boundlesses (see above).
Three Principles of the People 三民主义 sanmin zhuyi. The basis of Sun Yat-sen’s political philosophy and his aims for China, and the title of his most famous book. He outlined the principles in a series of lectures in 1924. The three principles were “nationalism” or independence from foreign imperialist domination; “rights of the people” (sometimes translated as “people’s sovereignty” or “democracy”); and “the people’s livelihood.”

Three Represents 三个代表 sange daibiao. A theory presented by the then Party Secretary of China, Jiang Zemin, in 2002. It stated that the CCP should represent “advanced social productive forces,” “advanced culture,” and “the interests of the overwhelming majority.” In effect, this meant widening membership of the CCP to businessmen, managers, and others who would formerly have been ostracized as capitalists.

Three Supports, Two Militaries 三支两 军 sanzhi liangjun. This was the short title for the instructions given to the PLA in January 1967 ordering them to establish military control after the initial chaos caused by the Red Guards and activists. The new Military Control Commissions were ordered to support the “leftist masses,” agriculture, and industrial production, and to impose military control (军管 junguan) on certain work units and administrative offices and by enforcing military training ( 军训 junxun) for students. See Support the Leftists.

Tibet Autonomous Region 西藏自治区 Xizang zizhiqu. On September 9, 1965, the area recognized by the PRC as Tibet (the western half of the Tibetan Plateau, including the area that had been ruled by the government of the Dalai Lama in Lhasa until 1950) was renamed “the Tibet Autonomous Region” (TAR) and the TAR People’s Government (or People’s Committee) was founded to administer this area. China’s Regional Nationality Autonomy law requires the head of the regional government and the head of the regional congress in the TAR to be Tibetans.

Tibet Daily 西藏日报 Xizang ribao. The CCP organ in Tibet. It has been published since the 1950s in both Chinese and Tibetan versions.

Tibet local government 西藏地方政府 Xizang difang zhengfu. The official PRC term for the former government of the Dalai Lama, which is seen by China and the CCP as having been a subsidiary or “local” entity under the “central government” in Beijing since historical times. From about the 1970s onward, the PRC claimed that Tibet became a part of China in the thirteenth century, but in 2015 it announced that the Tibetan government had been a local government of China “since ancient times,” referring to relations between China and Tibet during the seventh century or even earlier.

Tibet Military Control Commission 西藏[自治区]军事管制委员会 Xizang [zizhiqu] junshi guanzhi weiyuanhui. On May 11, 1967, Beijing ordered the PLA in Tibet to establish the Tibet Military Control Commission (sometimes written as the TAR Military Control Commission). It began operations on June 24 that year. Zhang Guohua was made the director of the new commission, with Ren Rong and Chen Mingyi as its deputy directors, all of them supporters of Nyamdrel. It was housed within the former TAR Communications Office in what is now the Tibet Welcome Hotel. It continued in name until May 1973, but its main functions had been taken over by the TAR Revolutionary Committee in September 1968.
Tibet Military District 西藏省级军区 Xizang shengji junqu. In December 1968, the military system in China was reorganized and the Tibet Military Region was downgraded to a provincial-level unit known as the Tibet Military District, which was under the Chengdu Military Region. After January 1980 the Tibet Military District included Ngari, but before that time and again after 1987, Ngari was part of the Southern Xinjiang Military District. In 2017 the Chengdu Military Region became part of the Western Theater Command.

Tibet Military Region 西藏军区 Xizang junqu. The term used variously to refer to either the Tibet Military Region Command, the Tibet Military Region Headquarters, the geographic area under their authority, or the Tibet Military Region compound in Lhasa.

Tibet Military Region Cadre School 西藏军区干部学校 Xizang junqu ganbu xuexiao. The cadre training school run by the Tibet Military Region in Lhasa. Tsering Dorje, Woeser’s father, studied at the school in 1954.

Tibet Military Region Command 西藏军区司令 Xizang junqu siling. The Tibet Military Region, also known as the Tibet Military Command, was established in February 1952. In 1955 it was made one of the twelve (later thirteen) military regions/commands in China. In December 1968 it was downgraded to a provincial-level military district. It did not include Ngari in far western Tibet, which was administered by the Xinjiang Military Command. The four major work units within the Tibet Military Region were the Military Region Headquarters (junqu silingbu), the Political Department (zhengzhibu), the Communications Department (lianluobu), and the Logistics Department (houqinbu).

Tibet Military Region compound 西藏军区大院 Xizang junqu dayuan. The military base that houses the headquarters of the Tibet Military Region (renamed the Tibet Military District in 1968). It is located beside the Kyichu River on the southern stretch of the Lingkor, which has since been renamed Jiangsu Road.

Tibet Military Region Flagship Hospital 西藏军区总医院 Xizang junqu zongyiyuan. The hospital in Lhasa operated by the Tibet Military Region and considered the best medical facility in the region. Often referred to as the PLA Hospital, it is located to the north of the city, near Sera Monastery.

Tibet Military Region Headquarters 西藏军区司令部 Xizang junqu silingbu. The command center for the Tibet Military Region. It is housed within the Tibet Military Region compound.

Tibet Nationality Institute 西藏民族学院 Xizang mingzu xueyuan. A college-level educational institution in Xianyang in Shaanxi Province that was established by the Tibet authorities in 1958 under the name Tibet Public School. Its mission was to train cadres, including Tibetans, to work in the TAR. It was renamed the Tibet Nationality Institute in 1965 and is administered by the TAR government.

Tibet Red Guards Revolutionary Rebel Headquarters. A Red Guard group in Tibet affiliated with Gyenlog. Its members were mainly students. Probably a different group from the Revolutionary Headquarters of the Rebels from the Capital Going to Tibet.

Tibet School of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry 西藏农牧学校 Xizang nongmu xuexiao. A college-level educational institution based in Nyingtri, east of Lhasa. Also translated as the Tibet College of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (西藏农牧学院 Xizang nongmu xueyuan).
Tibet Teacher Training College 西藏师范学校 Xizang shifan xuexiao. Commonly known as the Tibet Teacher Training College, the official name of this institution was the Lhasa Teacher Training College (拉萨师范学校 Lasa shifan xuexiao). It was established in 1960 and after some delay started accepting students in March 1966. In August 1966, students from the Tibet Teacher Training College, along with those from Lhasa Middle School, were the first in the TAR to establish a Red Guard organization and the first to take to the streets to destroy the Four Olds.

Tibet Academy of Social Sciences 西藏社会科学研究院 Xizang shehui kexue yanjiuyuan. The premier social sciences research institution in the TAR, set up in 1985 to promote CCP objectives in the use of the social sciences in Tibet. It is also known as the TAR Academy of Social Sciences (西藏自治区社会科学研究院 Xizang zizhiqu shehui kexue yanjiuyuani).

Tibetan Literature 西藏文学 Xizang wenxue. Tibetan Literature is an official journal for Tibetan literature that first appeared in 1977 under the name Xizang wenyi. It changed its name to Xizang wenxue in 1983. It is published in Chinese by the TAR Culture Bureau.

Tibetan Opera Troupe 藏戏团 Zangxituan. The official TAR troupe for traditional Tibetan opera. It was based at Zhide Dratshang during the Cultural Revolution.

to protect emperors is a crime, to commit a crime is to be put to death ten thousand times 保皇有罪, 罪该万死 baohuan youzui, zui gai wansi. A slogan favored by Gyanlog.

“To Rebel is Right” 造反有理 Zaofan youli. A song favored by Gyanlog.


Toward-the-Sun Neighborhood Committee 向阳居委会 Xiangyang jüweihui. The Cultural Revolution name given to one of the twelve Neighborhood Committees in Lhasa.

Traitorous Dalai-Panchen Anti-national Clique 达赖班禅反动卖国集团 Dalai Banchan fandong maiguo jituan. An official term used during the Cultural Revolution to refer to Tibetans who were considered class enemies, secret “splittists,” or supporters of the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama, and Tibetan exiles.

Traitorous Panchen Clique 班禅卖国集团 Banchan maiguo jituan. A term used after 1966 to denounce Tibetans such as Lhamön Yeshe Tsultrim who had once been close advisers to or supporters of the Tenth Panchen Lama. Even as early as 1965 Beijing Review denounced “the criminal activities of the anti-people, anti-motherland, and anti-socialist serf-owner clique represented by Panchen Erdeni.”

Treaty Pillar 唐蕃会盟碑 Tang-Fang huimengbei. A ninth-century stone pillar or stele (rdo ring in Tibetan) outside the Jokhang Temple. The text carved on the stone summarizes a treaty signed between Tibet and China in 823, which set the border between the two countries.

tu huangdi 土皇帝. Literally, “local emperor.” The term was used for officials and others who exercised their powers excessively.

ultraleftist 极左 jizuo. A term implying criticism of extreme leftist behavior or ideas.
United Front personages 统战对象 tongzhan duixiang. People who have official positions in the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the People’s Congress, the local branch of the Chinese Buddhist Association, or similar quasi-governmental bodies. In Tibet these appointees are usually former aristocrats, religious leaders, or non-CCP intellectuals. See perform as a political flower vase.

United Front Work Department 统战部 tongzhanbu. The agency within the CCP that carries out “United Front” tactics on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party. Adopted from the USSR in the 1920s, these tactics are designed to win over enemies or potential enemies—particularly local dignitaries who are not or cannot be CCP members—and to turn them into supporters of the Party. The United Front Work Department typically operates by making secret offers of high-status positions, political concessions, or material gifts to local dignitaries or potential critics of the CCP in order to secure their support. Its primary targets are religious leaders, former local leaders, aristocrats, non-CCP intellectuals, businessmen, and overseas leaders. It runs religious and nationality policies in China, appoints the members of the CPPC, deals with overseas Chinese, and ran China’s policy for Hong Kong and Macao before reunification.

upper-strata patriotic personages 上层爱国人士 shangceng aiguo renshi. The official CCP term for former aristocrats, religious leaders, and other dignitaries from the former Tibetan elite who have supported the CCP and the Chinese state.

Victory Office 胜利办事处 shengli banshichu. The Cultural Revolution name for the office formerly known as the South City Office, one of the three offices or subdistricts (banshichu) into which the Inner City District had been divided after 1959. The Victory Office oversaw the Barkor, Tromzikhang, Lugu, and Rabsel Neighborhood Committees.

Victory Peak 胜利峰 shenglifeng. The Cultural Revolution name for Chagpori, the hill to the southwest of the Potala on which the Tibetan Medical College had been sited until it was destroyed in fighting in 1959.

*Wang Qimei 王其梅. Wang Qimei was a military commander in the Eighteenth Army who led the advance force of PLA troops on their march to Lhasa in September 1950. He was a deputy political commissar of the Tibet Military Region from 1952 until his death in August 1967 after extensive abuse in struggle sessions. When the Cultural Revolution began, he was made the leader of the Cultural Revolution Leading Small Group in the TAR, but he was soon denounced and made a major struggle target.

*Wang Tingyan 王廷彦. Wang was a soldier with the Eighteenth Army who became a deputy director of the Communications Department of the Tibet Military Region. During the Cultural Revolution he was persecuted by other soldiers in the Tibet Military Region compound because his family had been landlords. He committed suicide by hanging himself.

wansui 万岁. Literally “ten thousand years,” this is the phrase used in Chinese for “long live.” In Tibetan, it sounds similar to the phrase wangse, which means “turn the power off.”

War Flag News 战旗报 Zhangqibao. The newspaper of the Chengdu Military Region.

“We Wish Chairman Mao a Long Life” 毛主席祝您万寿无疆 Mao zhuxi zhunin wanshou wujian. A song that made the Tibetan “red songstress” Tseten Drolma famous. It was taken from the opera The East Is Red, which came out in 1964.
Wei Zhiping 魏志平. A leader of the Liaison Committee against the Local Emperor and the commander of the “Red Rebels’ Regiment,” which was formed of students from the Tibet Nationality Institute in Xianyang, Shaanxi. Both groups were affiliated with Gyenlog.

Weidong 卫东. A Chinese name meaning “Protect the East” or “Protect (Mao Ze)dong.” During the Cultural Revolution it was chosen by some Tibetans to be their new, revolutionary name.

Welcome Hotel 迎宾馆 Yingbinguan. A contemporary hotel in Lhasa, known in full as the Tibet Welcome Hotel, constructed on Beijing East Road on the site of the building which was used by the TAR Communications Office in the 1950s and taken over for use as a broadcasting station by Nyamdrel during early stages of the Cultural Revolution. From June 1967 the building was used by the Tibet Military Control Commission as its base.

Wencheng 文成. See Princess Wencheng.

wenduo 文斗. “Non-armed struggle.”

wengong wuwei 文攻武卫. “Attack with words, defend with force.” In July 1967 Mao Zedong’s wife, Jiang Qing, deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group, gave a speech praising this principle, triggering violence by activists across the country. See July 22, 1967.

The White Haired Girl 白毛女 Baimaonü. One of the “eight model operas” that were performed in China during the Cultural Revolution. The TAR Song and Dance Troupe staged a version of it in Lhasa in Chinese.

“Whoever Sides with the Revolutionary People Is a Revolutionary” 什么人站在革命立场上, 他就是革命派. Shenme ren zhanzai geming lichang shang, ta jiushi gemingpai. A revolutionary song based on a quotation from a 1950 speech by Mao. It became one of the two songs favored by supporters of Nyamdrel.

whom to trust—the faction decides! 亲不亲, 派来分 qin buqin, pai lai fen. A popular Cultural Revolution slogan that meant that loyalty to one’s faction was more important than one’s family, relatives, or any other considerations. Also translated as “factional interests above all else!” Similar to the principle that “the correctness of the ideological and political line decides everything.”

Wind and Thunder Battle News 风雷激战报 Fenglei jizhanbao. The newspaper issued by Nyamdrel. Nyamdrel ended publication of the paper in November 1968 as part of the supposed “Grand Alliance” that had been arranged between the two factions when the TAR Revolutionary Committee was established.

work team 工作队 gonzuo dui. A team of CCP cadres or soldiers and officials who are delegated to carry out a specific task. Work teams are usually sent temporarily to a specific location or work unit to respond to a conflict or to implement a particular political task.

work unit 单位 danwei. A government or CCP office or enterprise. Work units are largely self-contained communities whose staff live and work within the premises of the community.

Working Class General Headquarters 工人阶级总司令部 gongren jieji zongsilingbu or 工总司令 gong zongsiling. A group affiliated with Nyamdrel. It consisted of workers from several factories.

Working People’s Cultural Palace 劳动人民文化宫 laodong renmin wenhuagong. A 1960s building on the south side of the Potala that was used for most important meetings in the TAR until 1985. It was demolished in 2005.
The Wrath of the Serfs 农奴愤 Nongnufen. An exhibition of about a hundred life-size models of Tibetans carrying out acts of brutality before the Chinese arrived to liberate them. The exhibits were commissioned by the TAR Revolutionary Committee in 1975 to show that the old Tibet was "the most miserable hell on earth." Books showing photographs of the exhibits were published in multiple languages and distributed worldwide.


wuzhuang panluan 武装叛乱. Armed rebellion.

*Xi Jinping 习近平. CCP General Secretary since 2012 and president of the PRC since 2013.

*Xie Fangyi 谢方艺. A language teacher at Lhasa Middle school who gave speeches encouraging the student Red Guards to launch their first action against the Jokhang in August 1966. He was General Secretary of the CCP branch in Lhasa Middle School and later became one of the leaders in Gyenlog, the "Rebel" faction. In the 1980s, he was transferred to Fujian, his home province.

xilu xiaofu 希鲁晓夫. A misheard version of Heluxuefu (赫鲁雪夫 Heluxuefu, q.v.), the Chinese transliteration of Khrushchev.

Xinhua 新华 Xinhua. Literally "New China," usually referring to the national news agency, which had a branch office in Lhasa.

Xinhua Road 新华路 Xinhua lu. The Cultural Revolution name for Do senge lam—"Stone Lion Road"—in Lhasa.

"Xiyi ge" 洗衣歌. Literally the "Laundry Song," this was the most famous of the revolutionary songs produced in the Mao era to praise the achievements and beneficence of the CCP and the PLA in Tibet. First released in 1964, the song describes a PLA soldier helping a young Tibetan woman wash clothes in a stream on the grasslands. A dramatized version of the song was filmed and widely distributed at the time and since.

xuanzhanshu 宣战书. Literally "Declaration of War Letters," these were proclamations by Red Guard groups in imitation of an action by Red Guards from Beijing Middle School No. 2 on August 17, 1966, in which they "declared a war against the old world" (xiang jiushijie xuanzhan). In their "Declaration of War Letter" they had stated their commitment to the Sixteen Instructions (see above), which had been issued nine days earlier.

*Yan Zhenzhong 阎振中. A Red Guard who came to Lhasa from the Tibet Nationality Institute in Xianyang, Shaanxi. A Hui (Chinese Muslim), originally from Henan Province, he went on to become the chief editor of the journal Tibetan Literature.

*Yang Dongsheng 杨东生. A veteran Tibetan cadre whose Tibetan name was Sherab Dondrub (饶登珠, 1918–92). He was a member of the Tibet Working Committee from 1957 to 1958, a standing committee member of the Tibet CPPCC from 1959 to 1965, and a deputy director of the TAR Revolutionary Committee. He was chair of the TAR People's Congress from 1981 to 1983.

*Ye Jianying 叶剑英. Ye Jianying (1897–1986) became a marshal in the PLA in 1955 and China's defense minister in 1975. He was a core member of the CCP Politburo in October 1976 and took part in the overthrow of the Gang of Four. He was chair of the National People's Congress from 1978 to 1983.
Ye Xingsheng 叶星生. A Chinese artist who lived in Lhasa during the 1960s. He was born in Sichuan in 1948 and moved to Tibet when he was thirteen. He worked for the “Office for Exhibiting the Red Guards’ Outstanding Achievements in Destroying the Four Olds.” He later became president of the Tibet Artists’ Association.

*Yin Fatang 阴法唐. Born in 1922, Yin Fatang arrived in Tibet as an officer in the Eighteenth Army during the 1950 advance into Tibet from Sichuan. He became a member of the Chamdo Working Committee in 1950, was General Secretary of the Gyantse Party Committee from 1953, a standing committee member of the Tibet Military Region Party Committee from 1963, and the director of the “Office for Supporting Local Cultural Revolution” from March 1967. He was Party Secretary of the TAR from 1980 to 1985 but remained influential even in retirement.

*Yu Xin 余新 (characters reconstructed from the pronunciation). A Chinese soldier who criticized Zhang Guohua during a meeting in the Tibet Military Region compound during the Cultural Revolution. He was beaten to death by other soldiers.

Youth Palace 少年宫 shaoniangong. A two-story building built near the Sungchöra in 1975 on the south side of the Lhasa Barkor.

*Yue Fei 岳飞. A legendary military leader from the twelfth century who is promoted by the current regime as a model of patriotism and loyalty.

*Yue Zhongqi 岳锺琪. A Chinese general during the Qing dynasty. Yue (1686–1764) led a military force to Lhasa in 1720 to expel Dzungar Mongol invaders.

*Yulushi 玉鲁斯. An activist from Wapaling. A Muslim, he became the commander of the Peasants and Nomads Headquarters, which was affiliated with Nyamdrel.

*Yuzhen 玉珍. A Chinese name that sounds similar to the Tibetan female name Yudron. It was used by some Tibetans when they were required to or chose to take Chinese names during the Cultural Revolution.

zaipan 再叛. See renewed rebellion.
Zaozong 造总. Literally “the Rebels General Headquarters,” known in Tibetan as Gyenlog. Its full name was “the Lhasa Revolutionary Rebels General Headquarters.” Zaozong was one of the two main factions in the TAR during the Cultural Revolution. It was established on December 22, 1966, when over a thousand people from fifty-six local organizations attended its founding rally. Its commander was Tao Changsong. It was seen as more radical than Nyamdrel. A number of its members were killed in the June 7 Jokhang Incident in 1968. It officially ended operations in March 1969 but was implicated in the violence of the “renewed rebellions” later that year.

*Zeng Yongya 曾雍雅. Zeng Yongya (1917–95) was a senior PLA officer serving in Tibet. He was made a major general in 1955, a vice commander of the Tibet Military Region in 1964, and acting commander of the Tibet Military Region in 1967. Seen as a supporter of Gyenlog, he was appointed chair of the TAR Revolutionary Committee in September 1968. He was deposed from his positions in Tibet in 1970.

*Zhang Guohua 张国华. Zhang Guohua (1914–72) was commander of the Tibet Military Region during and after the PLA advance into Tibet. He commanded the PLA ground forces during the Sino-Indian war of 1962 and was the General Secretary of the Tibet Working Committee from 1950 to 1952 and of the TAR Party Committee from 1965 to 1967. He was heavily attacked by Gyenlog activists during the Cultural Revolution and in May 1967 he was transferred to Sichuan to take up the role of provincial governor. He died from a stroke in Chengdu in February 1972.

*Zhang Jingwu 张经武. Zhang Jingwu (1906–71) was the Representative of the Central Government in Tibet from 1951 to 1954 and Political Commissar of the Tibet Military Region from 1956 to 1965. He was First Secretary of the Tibet Working Committee from 1952 to 1965. In 1967 he was denounced as a “bourgeois reactionary,” tortured, and severely beaten. He died in 1971.

zhaodai marpo 招待玛波 zhaodai mabo. A half-Chinese, half-Tibetan phrase meaning “the Red Guest House.” See Ersuo.

zhiqing 知青. See sent-down youth.

Zhongguo 中国. Literally “the Middle Kingdom,” the official Chinese name for China.

*Zhou Enlai 周恩来. Zhou (1898–1976) was premier of the PRC from 1949 to 1976. He also served as foreign minister from 1949 to 1958. He was one of the few leaders not to be purged or persecuted during the Cultural Revolution. Some reports claim that he protected some monuments such as the Potala Palace and privately supported more moderate policies.

*Zhou Renshan 周仁山. Zhou Renshan (1912–84) was transferred from Qinghai to Tibet in December 1956 and appointed as a deputy Secretary of the Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet. He was made a vice chair of the TAR government in 1965 and became General Secretary of the TAR Party Committee in May 1966. He was targeted by Nyamdrel, who suspected him of supporting Gyenlog. He later became Party Secretary of the Xinjiang Autonomous Region.

*Zhu De 朱德. Zhu De (1886–76) joined the CCP in the 1920s, met Mao in 1928, and helped found the Red Army. He was commander in chief of the PLA from 1946 to 1954, one of the ten marshals of the PLA, and chair of the National People’s Congress from 1975 to 1976.

zuzhi 组织. A Chinese word meaning “organized”; an example of a Chinese loan word used in contemporary Tibetan instead of the Tibetan equivalent.