

PREFACE

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Tibet has a long history, and since ancient times has been an inseparable part of China. The Tibetan people is one of the many ethnic groups that compose the big family of the Chinese nation. The Tibetan people with wisdom and diligence have made great contributions to the development of Tibet and to the formation and development of China, our great motherland.

This book, beginning with an account of the Tibetan people's origins, is an introduction to the historical development of the Tibetan people and to the historical contributions made by all fraternal ethnic groups in Tibet, as well as all ethnic groups of China, to the development, construction and defense of Tibet. About 2,000 years ago Tibetan tribes and clans expanded their activities in scope and scale. The *History of the Later Han Dynasty (Hou Han Shu)* gives a record of the early relations between the tribes and clans in Tibet and the ethnic groups in the hinterland. Thus it is clear that these relations have a long history.

Songtsen Gampo, a Tibetan hero and leader of the Pugyal tribe in the Yarlung Valley in the early 7th century, unified Tibet and established the Tubo Dynasty, developing the productive activities of the Tubo society and strengthening the slave-owning system of Tibet. He attached great importance to the introduction of advanced technology and political and cultural achievements from China's Tang Dynasty. He repeatedly sent emissaries to the Tang capital to seek matrimonial bonds with the Tang court. The Tang emperor, Taizong, took friendly policies toward Tubo. In

641 the emperor sent Princess Wencheng to Tibet, in the company of a special envoy, to marry Songtsen Gampo. The princess brought with her a large number of Han craftsmen, and this greatly promoted the economic and cultural development of Tibet.

During the 8th century the Tubo Dynasty expanded its dominance into Gansu and Qinghai as well as southern Xinjiang and western Sichuan and Yunnan. As a result, the Tibetan people developed wider contacts with the Hans and other ethnic groups in western China, and thus helped to bring about progressive development for themselves.

At that time, the Tubo Tsenpo (king) Tride Tsugtsen again requested matrimonial relations with the Tang court. In 710 the Tang emperor Zhongzong gave Princess Jincheng to him as his wife. After that the Tang and Tubo courts several times pledged alliance and often exchanged envoys. Particularly in 821 and 822, the Tang and Tubo rulers held solemn ceremonies at Chang'an and Rasa (modern Lhasa) to mark their mutual pledge of peace. In 823 a stone monument was put up to commemorate the relations between the Tang and Tubo courts, relations as close as that of an uncle and a nephew. These close relations lasted for more than 200 years. After the fall of the Tubo Dynasty a large number of Tubo people remained in the Gansu and Qinghai areas of northwestern China. They lived in close contact with the local Han people. The Tibetan people since then have had closer and wider contacts with other ethnic groups and have achieved greater development, especially in the introduction of technology and the exchange of products. The historically well-known "tea-horse barter" system was formed at that time.

In the mid-9th century (the end of the Tang Dynasty) Tibet witnessed disorder and disintegration. The Tubo King Darma was murdered by a Buddhist monk. After that Tibet was divided into many small tribal groups that fought each other for more than 400 years.

During the Yuan Dynasty, after the Mongolian leader Genghis Khan founded the Mongolian Khanate in the north, he marched westward into the Tibetan areas and ended the state of turmoil there. In the 13th century the Mongolian aristocrats established the Yuan Dynasty, which achieved an unprecedented unification of all ethnic groups of China. In this unification, the central government of the Yuan Dynasty attached great importance to assigning Tibetan political and religious leaders to important official posts, and at the same time Tibetan leaders actively assisted and supported the Yuan Dynasty in its unification of the whole country.

Kublai Khan, who became the Yuan Emperor Shizu, after his accession to the throne in 1260, conferred the title of State Preceptor (Imperial Preceptor later) to Phagpa, leader of the Sakya Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. In 1264 the Yuan Dynasty established the Supreme Control Commission, a body that handled Buddhist affairs for the whole nation and the local administration of Tibetan areas, and Phagpa was appointed Chief of the Commission. Besides this, the Yuan Dynasty established three Pacification Commissions combined with Chief Military Command in the Tibetan areas. This was the first time that the central government exerted sovereignty over Tibet. In 1268 Kublai Khan sent a party of officials to Tibet to take a census, establish a tax-collection system, and set up thirteen myriarchies there (*wan-hu* in Chinese, an administrative unit, each theoretically comprising ten thousand households). Kublai Khan ordered the leaders of the Sakya Sect to collect taxes from the myriarchies. Later, he granted Tibet as a fiefdom to his seventh son, Oiruchi. Under the jurisdiction of the central government, a system of local administration based on an amalgamation of temporal and spiritual affairs was established in Tibet.

The central government of the Ming Dynasty paid close attention to the development of economic ties between Tibet and the hinterland. It encouraged Tibetan religious and political leaders

to pay tribute to the imperial court in the form of generous gifts. Consequently, the number of tribute payers increased to more than a thousand per year. In return for these tributes the emperor bestowed plentiful gifts on the Tibetans, of which tea was one item presented in the amount of more than a hundred thousand *jin* (one *jin* is half a kilogram) a year. To facilitate the tea-horse trade, the Ming court set up offices in charge of such trade in the northwestern and southwestern areas, and maintained and improved the roads between Tibet and the hinterland. All these measures promoted the tea-horse trade. As a result, the Tibetans and people of other ethnic groups in the hinterland established close economic ties.

On the basis of Yuan and Ming's systems, the Qing Dynasty court made great reforms in their administration of Tibet. During the early Qing Dynasty, the central government set up a Board of Minority Affairs (*Lifan-yuan*) to be in charge of Mongolian and Tibetan affairs and granted the official titles of Dalai Lama (1653) and Panchen Erdeni (1713) respectively to the chief leaders of two most important incarnate-lama lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. Since that time the Dalai Lama and Panchen Erdeni have been acknowledged by the central government. All their successive reincarnations were authorized by the central government. In 1728 the Qing government sent Amban (Resident Commissioner) to supervise the administration in Tibet. In 1751 the Kashag, Tibetan local government, was established. In 1793 the Qing court issued an Ordinance for the More Efficient Governing of Tibet. The ordinance prescribed the status and power of the Amban, stipulating his authority in the supervision of Tibetan affairs and his equal status with the Dalai and Panchen lamas. It included regulations concerning Tibetan officials, army, judicature, border defense, finance, census, corvee service, external affairs and reincarnating system of the Dalai and other Living Buddhas. The Qing government sent troops to Tibet to drive out the Mongolians and push back Gurkha invaders. In 1888 and

1904 Tibetan troops fought bravely against British aggression in Tibet.

The 1911 Revolution ended the feudal system in China. The government of the Republic of China inherited the Qing's administrative structure in the Tibetan areas. It set up an administrative organ in charge of Mongolian and Tibetan affairs, selected Tibetan delegates to attend the national assembly and appointed its commissioners in charge of Tibetan affairs. Trying to obstruct this, the British government engineered the "Simla Conference" of 1913, seeking to interfere in China's internal affairs and force the so-called Simla Treaty on China, which severely violated China's sovereignty and was an attempt to split China's territory. This British conspiracy was opposed and condemned by all the Chinese people and their government. At the time of the May Fourth Movement of 1919, the government of the Republic of China (ROC) disclosed to the public the Sino-British negotiation process relating to the so-called Tibet problem. It aroused anti-imperialist rage among the Chinese people both in China and abroad. Tibetan civil and religious leaders also condemned the British imperialists' attempt to split China at the Simla Conference. The government of the ROC from the very first day of its founding repeatedly declared to Tibet its policy on the republic of the five ethnic groups (Han-Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, Hui and Tibetan), and at the same time the Tibetan local government time and again told the central government that it was willing to solve any problems left over by history. In 1919 the 13th Dalai Lama indicated to the envoys sent by the government of the ROC his support for the central government and his determination to make joint efforts for the happiness of the five ethnic groups. The Ninth Panchen Lama also actively contacted the central government and appealed for the restoration of normal relations between the central government and Tibet and the maintenance of the unification of the motherland.

In 1927, after the National Government was established in

Nanjing, relations between the Tibetan local government and the central government saw obvious changes. In 1929, the 13th Dalai Lama sent his representatives to make official contacts with the National Government and to declare: "We will never be on intimate terms with Britain or betray the central government." Then the National Government sent envoys to Tibet to express their greetings and appreciation. The Tibetan local government and the Panchen Lama established resident offices in Nanjing. In 1931, the Tibetan local government officials and the Ninth Panchen Lama attended a national assembly meeting. In the 1930s the National Government began to set up special organs for the management of Tibetan affairs. According to the tradition by which the Qing government handled Tibetan political and religious affairs, after the 13th Dalai Lama passed away at the end of 1933, the National Government granted the title of "Great Master of Patriotism, Magnanimity, Benevolence and Sagacity" posthumously to the Dalai Lama and sent Huang Musong as a special envoy to Tibet to confer the title and to convey their condolences. As to such important affairs as the appointment of a "regent," seeking and confirming the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai and the enthronement of the 14th Dalai Lama, the Tibetan local government applied for the approval of these by the National Government in accordance with tradition. In response to the application of the Tibetan local government the National Government sent Wu Zhongxin, president of the Commission of Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs, as special envoy to Tibet to preside over the enthronement of the 14th Dalai Lama in 1940. At the same time the Commission of Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs established its resident Tibetan office in Lhasa. After the death of the 13th Dalai Lama, Radreng Rinpoche did many things to improve relations between the Tibetan local government and the central government. When the Japanese imperialists launched their aggressive war against China, the monks of the three great monasteries (Sera, Ganden and Drepung) in Tibet

arranged religious services in which they prayed for victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan. Radreng Rinpoche attended these services and joined in the chanting of prayers. Through this special activity the Tibetan people showed their common hatred of the enemy and their love for their motherland. The National Government through its office in Tibet persistently maintained the status of exercising sovereignty over Tibet. In the summer of 1949 the Tibetan office of the Commission of Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs was still operating in Lhasa. In August of that same year, the National Government sent Guan Jiyu, president of the Commission, as special envoy to preside over the enthronement of the 10th Panchen Erdeni in Qinghai.

After the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, the areas inhabited by Tibetans in Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, Yunnan and Xikang provinces were liberated. The Central People's Government several times stated, in accordance with the wishes of the people of all ethnic groups of China, including the Tibetan people, that it was determined to liberate Tibet and fulfill the sacred cause of safeguarding the unification of the motherland despite of the obstruction and sabotage by imperialists. In 1951, the Central People's Government notified the Tibetan local government to send representatives to Beijing for negotiations, which resulted in the signing of "The Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet." This agreement led to the peaceful liberation of Tibet. Since then, Tibet has enjoyed a new life. According to the Chinese Communist Party's policy of ethnic regional autonomy, a Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region was set up in 1956, and the Tibet Autonomous Region was established in 1965. On the basis of democratic reform, Tibet carried out its socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production. This meant that Tibet had entered the primary stage of socialism and had realized the direct transition from feudal serfdom to socialism. Since the

Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in late 1978, particularly after the 1980 Forum on Work in Tibet convened by the central government, reforms and the opening up of Tibet resulted in scenes of flourishing life. Now all the people of the Tibet region, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese government, are struggling with one heart and one mind for the construction of a socialist new Tibet, a society of unification, prosperity and civilization.

CHAPTER ONE

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF TIBET

Section One

Origin of the Tibetan People and the Development of Tibet by Ancient Tibetans

1. The Rising of the Tibetan Land-Mass and the Formation of Its Natural Environment

Tibet is a beautiful region within the Chinese land-mass and one rich in natural resources. Located on the southwestern border of China, Tibet lies in the southwestern part of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. To its north is Xinjiang; to the northeast, Qinghai; to the east, Sichuan; to the southeast, Yunnan; to the south and west, Myanmar, India, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal and Kashmir, with a border line of about 4,000 kilometers. The Tibet Autonomous Region covers an area of more than 1.2 million square kilometers, one-eighth of China's total area and 11 times the size of Zhejiang Province or 33 times the size of Taiwan Province. Among the provinces and regions of China, it is second in size only to Xinjiang.

The Tibetan Plateau is a relatively young land-mass. According to geological surveys conducted on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, it was the seabed for a vast ocean during the early and middle Jurassic period, about 160-140 million years ago. The land began to rise above the sea only during the Pliocene epoch.

The reason it rose up was because the ancient Eurasian land-mass and the ancient Gondwana land-mass of the south hemi-

sphere came together and pressed up against one another. The area to the south of what is now the Yarlungzangbo River and the South Asian subcontinent were both parts of the ancient Gondwanaland while the area to the north of the river was part of the Eurasian land-mass. With the movement of the earth's crust, the area to the south of the Yarlungzangbo River and the South Asian subcontinent broke away from the ancient Gondwana land-mass and moved gradually from the south to the north. It pushed against the Eurasian continental plate. The line that linked them together is now along the Yarlungzangbo River. As a result of the two continental plates pressing against each other, the Tanggula area in the north of Tibet was the first to rise above the ocean. It was followed by the areas now to the south of the Tanggula Mountains, which also rose up from the ancient ocean and became dry land. A third area that rose from the ocean to become dry land was the area now along the Yarlungzangbo River. And the last area to rise up from the sea was what are now the Himalaya Mountains.

However, during most of the dozens of millions of geological years, Tibet was a lowland area with an average elevation of about 2,000 meters and a terrain higher on the whole in the west than in the east and south. According to the record in *A Happy Feast for Wise Men*: "The Upper Three Regions of Ngari were like lakes and ponds; the Central Four Regions of U and Tsang like ditches and canals; and the Lower Three Hills of Do-kham like cultivated land."* *The History of Tibetan Kings and Ministers* also holds that after the floods subsided, "The Upper Ngari was covered by snow mountains and stone mountains; the Middle U and Tsang by rock mountains and grassland; and the Lower Do-kham by dense forests."

At that time the Himalayas were not as high as they are at present, and the humid and hot monsoon from the Indian Ocean

* *Journal of the Tibet Institute for Ethnic Groups*, No.4, 1980.

could come over the mountains and influence the climate of Tibet. The climate of Tibet was then subtropical, warm and humid. Two archeological teams in 1975 in the Xainza area of northern Tibet, found many fossils of coral, brachiopods, trilobites, three-toed horses, conifers, broadleaf trees and bushes in the stratum of the Paleozoic era. By inference, at that time the average annual temperature was about 10 degrees centigrade, and the annual rainfall was 2,000 to 5,000 millimeters. The geographical and natural conditions of Tibet in remote ancient times thus was suited to the development and multiplication of primitive humans.

With continued orogenic movement, the Himalayas rose up during the Quarternary period* and gradually became a climate barrier for Tibet. Thus the climate and natural environment of Tibet went through great changes: Tibet saw continental climate, cold and dry. And Tibet became the "Roof of the World."

As a result of this crustal movement over millions of years, the terrain of Tibet became surrounded by the Himalayas, the Tanggula Mountains, the Hengduan Mountains and the Kunlun Mountains, which has resulted in four kinds of natural environment in Tibet.

The topographic features of the Changtang Plateau in Northern Tibet are characterized by lakes. "Changtang" in the Tibetan language means "wide plain land in the north." Its average elevation is over 4,500 meters. The topographic features are characterized by rounded low hills with a height of 100 to 400 meters only. To the northwest of Damxung, an important town in north Tibet, lies the Namco Lake, a salt lake with an area of 1,940 square kilometers, the second largest salt lake in China, only exceeded by the Qinghai Lake. The Namco was formed by the earth's crust sinking during the process of the orogenic movement of the Himalayas. This lake is called "Tengri Nor" in Mongolian, meaning "heavenly pond" or "heavenly lake." The

* It was in the Cenozoic Era of geological ages, about 67 million years ago.

plateau in northern Tibet also has many basins, the lower parts of which became water storage points, or lakes. The total area composed of lakes in Tibet is 23,800 sq. km., making up 30 percent of all the lakes of China. Most of these lakes are scattered over the Changtang Plateau in northern Tibet. The plateau, far, wide and dim, is adjacent to the river valleys in southern Tibet, with the Gangdise (Kailas) and Nyainqentanglha mountains as the border between them. The plateau covers two-thirds of Tibet, and is the main pastoral zone of Tibet.

The topographic features of southern Tibet are characterized by many valleys. The zone between the Gangdise mountain range and the Himalayas is an area of many valleys of different sizes, resulting from the Yarlungzangbo River and its branches that run through the place. Its elevation is about 3,500 meters. The Yarlungzangbo River, meaning "mother river" in Tibetan, is the longest river in Tibet. The Yarlungzangbo runs from the west to the east. It turns southwestward at Mt. Namjagbarwa and then goes through Loyul into India. It is called Brahmaputra in India. Finally it runs through Bangladesh and empties into the Indian Ocean. The Chinese section is 2,057 kilometers long, the fifth longest among the many rivers of China, and the drainage area covers more than 240,000 sq. km. It is the sixth biggest among the drainage areas of China. The volume of its water flow is the third largest in China, and its elevation is the highest in the world. With many tributaries on both sides, it is a valley crisscrossed by a network of many rivers, flat terrain and fertile land. The valley has a population of 870,000 and cultivated land of 2.30 million *mu* (1 *mu* = 1/15 hectare), half population and the farmland of Tibet. It is thus the main agricultural zone of Tibet. Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, and other important cities such as Xigaze (Shigatse), Gyangze and Tsetang (Zetang) are located in this valley. Zetang in the Yarlung valley is also the main cradle of the ancient Tibetan people.

The topographic features of eastern Tibet are characterized by mountains and gorges. The eastern part of Tibet is closed off by

mountain ranges running north to south, and is divided by three of the major rivers of Asia: the Jinsha (upper reaches of the Yangtze), the Lancang (upper reaches of the Mekong) and the Nujiang (upper reaches of the Salween). Owing to the partition by the Jinsha, Lancang and Nujiang rivers, great gorges that run from north to south have been formed. The terrain is precipitous and higher in the north than in the south, with an average elevation of 4,000-5,000 meters. It is about 2,500 meters from the top of the mountains to the bottom of the gorges. Remains of the glaciers from the Quaternary period can be seen here and there in this area. The tops of the mountains are treeless and snow-covered all year around. There are dense forests on the mountainsides and green fields at the foot of the mountains. This is an agricultural-and-pastoral mixed zone of Tibet. Qamdo, an important city of eastern Tibet, is located to the north of the three river valleys.

China's border adjoining Nepal, India, Bhutan and Sikkim is formed by the Himalayas. The Himalayan range runs from east to west, stretching 2,400 km. in length and 200-350 km. in width. It is higher in the west than in the east. There are abundant rainfall and thick woods here. The range has an average altitude of 6,000 meters above sea level. Mt. Qomolangma is the highest peak in this mountain range, and is the highest peak in the world, with an altitude of 8,848.13 meters above sea level. The Himalayan range has many other peaks, of which more than 50 have an altitude of over 7,000 meters above sea level and 10 an altitude of over 8,000 meters. There are so many peaks, in fact, that a terrain barrier to airflow exists. It exerts great influences on the climate for the whole Asia. Yadong, an important town on the southern border of Tibet, is located in the curved part of the Himalayas.

The terrain conditions of the Tibetan Plateau result in much atmospheric circulation above the plateau, abundant sunshine, strong radiation from the sun, low temperature, big differences in temperature in a single day, sharp distinctions between dry and damp seasons, frequent night rains, dry winter and spring, strong

wind, low atmospheric pressure, inadequate oxygen in the air, and the weather being cold and dry in the northwest and warm and damp in the southeast.

As can be seen from the above, the natural conditions specific to Tibet are important causes for the unique social and historical development of Tibet. It should be noted that partition by high mountains, isolated natural conditions, and climate changes in remote antiquity were elements that effected the lifestyle and civilization of the ancient Tibetans. Similarly, the origin and development of the Tibetan ethnic group, its unique conditions of life and mode of civilization are important historical, geographical and social reasons for the exploration of the land of Tibet.

2. Origin of the Tibetan Ethnic Group and the Distribution of Its Population

The Tibetan ethnic community is an important part of the big family that makes up the entire Chinese nation. It has a population of more than 3.8 million, of which 2.09 million* are distributed in Tibet, and the rest in the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Haixi Mongolian-Tibetan-Kazak Autonomous Prefecture of Qinghai Province; Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County of Gansu Province; Garze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Muli Tibetan Autonomous County of Sichuan Province; and Degen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Yunnan Province. Thus, the Tibetan people are concentrated on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and its neighboring areas, comprising one

* Figure from the fourth national census of 1990.

fourth of the territory of China. Most of them live in the Tibet Autonomous Region.

The Tibetan ethnic group has a long history. According to archeological findings and historical records, 4,000 to 20,000 years ago humans began to inhabit Tibet. Tibet was called "Bod" in ancient times, the word "Bod" meaning agriculture in the ancient Tibetan language. This means Tibet had agricultural production a very long time ago. In Chinese historical books Tibet was also called "Xi-bo" or "Tubo." The Tibetan people called themselves "Bodpa." In the Tibetan language "pa" means people. Thus, "Bodpa" means people living in Bod. Judged from this designation, the Tibetan ancestors engaged in agricultural production long ago, and the Tibetans originated from local agricultural tribes.

Like other ethnic groups, the Tibetans have a legend of "Creation" that tells of their origin. Tibetan books, such as *The History of Tibetan Kings and Ministers* and *A Happy Feast for Wise Men*, record the legend of how monkeys transformed themselves into human beings in the Yarlung valley. The legend says that in times of remote antiquity Tibet was a howling wilderness, which was like a sea of fog when looked at from the heavens. In order to establish a world of utmost joy in Tibet, the heavenly god sent a divine monkey down. The monkey united with a rakshasa maiden, who lived in a local cave. The couple gave birth to six children, who multiplied and produced many descendants. The heavenly god taught them how to speak, gave them seeds of grain, and taught them to cultivate the land. At the same time the heavenly god gave them kindling material and taught them how to cook. At last, a world of happiness was established. Mythical legends are not history, but they contain elements of history anyway.

According to *The History of Tibetan Kings and Ministers*, Tibetans are "the descendants of a monkey and a rakshasa."* *A Happy Feast for Wise Men* says: "The monkeys ate grains and thus

* Lozang Gyatso, *The History of Tibetan Kings and Ministers*, Ethnic Groups Publishing House, 1983, p. 15.

gradually transformed into human beings. They ate wild grains, wore clothes made with tree leaves and lived like beasts in the forests.”* This is a description of how primitive people lived in the primitive society of Tibet. The legend of Tibetan people originating from monkeys reflects to a certain degree the fact that the Tibetan ancestors went through a process of evolution during a pre-historic period in which monkeys transformed themselves into human beings, and productive labor and cooking over a fire played a role in their evolution. The rakshasa in the legend was a cliff goddess worshipped by the primitive matrilineal clans in the Yarlung valley, and the divine monkey was a male deity worshipped by local patrilineal clans. Engels pointed out:

The gods thus fashioned within each people were national gods, whose domain extended no farther than the national territory which they were to protect; on the other side of its boundaries other gods held undisputed sway. They could continue to exist, in imagination, only as long as the nation existed; they fell with its fall.**

The legend of the union of a monkey and a rakshasa reflected the historical process by which Tibetan ancestors developed from a matrilineal system to a patrilineal system during the process of their evolution. Usually the pre-historical records of an ethnic group are passed down orally from generation to generation because of the lack of a written language. The Tibetan legend of “Creation” reflected the Tibetan people’s reasonable imagination about their ancestors’ evolution. That is why the legend of monkeys transforming into human beings is still spread among the Tibetans, Lhobas and Moinbas in Tibet.

* Pawo Tsuglag Trengwa, “A Happy Feast for Wise Men,” *Journal of the Tibet Institute for Ethnic Groups*, No.4, 1980.

** *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works in Two Volumes*, English edition, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1955, Vol. II, p. 397.

If the mythical legend reflects, from only one aspect, the main role aborigines played in the formation of the Tibetan people, archeological findings have eloquently proved that Tibet was the cradle of the Tibetan ethnic community. Ancient human skulls were found in Nyingchi of Tibet in 1958 and 1975.* Systematic excavations made at the Karo neolithic archeological site in Qamdo, in 1977 and 1978, revealed 29 house sites, about 60 chipped stone tools, about 600 tiny blade tools, 500 polished stone tools and 366 bone tools, of which the smallest bone needle was 2.4 cm. long with an intact needle nose, as well as a large number of potsherd, millet and animal bone fossils. With radiocarbon dating (C14 test) and dendrochronology tests the fossils were dated to 3,900 to 5,600 years ago, and the place was determined to be a neolithic cultural site.** Since 1966, various stone, bone and pottery articles have also been unearthed in Tingri, Nyalam, Nagqu, north Ngari, Medog, the northern suburbs of Lhasa and other places of Tibet. A site for making primitive stone articles was discovered by the side of the Chedo Chaka Lake in northern Tibet. These archeological finds were of great significance. They were so widely distributed and had such a long history that they prove the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau has been a habitation for human beings from time immemorial.

The stone articles were appraised to have been produced in paleolithic, mesolithic and neolithic times respectively. Their special characteristics are: first, being similar to those of the same type found in North China; and second, having obvious regional features. The chipped stone tools found in Tibet consist of chopping tools, striking tools, scrapers, plated tools and pointed implements, made by striking stone from its broken face to the back of the stone. This was characteristic of the tools made in North China during the paleolithic age. But to strike from different angles is a characteristic of the Tibetan stone tools. The smallest Tibetan stone tools consisted of cuneiform stone cores, cone-like

* *Archeology*, 1975, No. 5.

** *Karo of Qamdo*, Cultural Relics Publishing House, 1985.