

Zhang Yintang's Military Reforms in 1906–1907 and their Aftermath —The Introduction of Militarism in Tibet—*

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Introduction

In modern Tibetan history, it is well known that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's military reforms in the late 1910s were modelled after influential powers such as Britain, Russia, and Japan, to bolster the Tibetan army amid military tensions with the Republic of China.¹ Modern Tibet, one of the largest Buddhist countries during the early 20th century, was not completely isolated from the global military trend to establish a “modern army” or “national army”, which started during the 18th century in the western world.² It has not been fully recognised, however, that prior to the Dalai Lama's modernisation project in the 1910s, Zhang Yintang (張蔭棠, 1860–1935),³ a Chinese official newly-appointed to Lhasa as an imperial high commissioner, had earlier attempted to implement military reforms in Tibet in the wake of Britain's invasion of Lhasa in 1904. This paper will discuss this military reform project in Tibet in the context of larger militarisation reforms in East Asia and Inner Asia from the late 19th to the beginning of 20th century.

Some previous studies have already examined how Zhang planned and implemented his military reforms in Lhasa, and have clarified that the reforms were aimed not only at enhancing the Qing's military pres-

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¹ Shakabpa 1967: 258–259.

² Vagts 1959.

³ Opinion is divided on Zhang Yintang's years of birth and death. Here, I would like to follow the recent study by Ma Zhongwen; Ma 2019.

ence in Tibet, but also at strengthening the Tibetan forces through military training, education, and conscription.⁴ However, these studies did not fully pay attention to the fact that these new policies were largely influenced by the Qing's military reforms inside China proper during the same period, emulating German- and Japanese-style military models. In particular, the rising militarism of Japan had grabbed the full attention of Qing officials, Chinese reformers, revolutionaries, and students in the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895). This not only led to the movement to establish a modern army in China, but also spurred the promotion of a militarisation of Chinese society at large through conscription, education, and political campaigns.⁵ As I will argue in this paper, if the use of militarisation as a tool for building a modern nation-state can be referred to as “militarised modernity”,⁶ Zhang Yintang's military reforms in Tibet can be considered as the Qing's attempt to incorporate Tibet into a part of its “nation”. Since countries such as Japan, China, and Korea were simultaneously pursuing modernisation in this period, and were intimately bound up with one another through the process of militarisation, one cannot discuss the modernisation attempts in Tibet without this context.⁷ In other words, the Qing's military reforms in Lhasa have to be examined by focusing on the history of the introduction of militarism in modern East and Inner Asia more broadly, and not merely within the framework of military history in Tibet.⁸

This paper will also illuminate the impact Zhang Yintang's reforms had on the Tibetan army after his short stay in Lhasa from 1906 to 1907. In addition to the Qing archival sources utilised by previous research, this article also makes use of valuable Chinese, English, Japanese and Tibetan materials which have not previously been fully examined.⁹

⁴ Xiraonima 1999; Zhao 2004; Hidaka 2006; Ho 2008.

⁵ Hatano 1973: 172–177; Fung 1980; Chen 1984; Schillinger 2016.

⁶ Moon 2005.

⁷ My paper is particularly inspired by Takashima 2015a who discusses the historical relations between society and the military in East Asia.

⁸ The term “militarism” in this article can be defined as follows: militarism “covers every system of thinking and valuing and every complex of feelings which rank military institutions and ways above the ways of civilian life, carrying military mentality and modes of acting and decision into the civilian sphere” (Vagts 1959: 17). It particularly applies to Germany and Japan before 1945 as Vagts has argued (*ibid.*). The late Qing military reforms, which were deeply influenced by the German and Japanese military systems, can therefore be explained by means of this concept.

⁹ Some Tibetan documents on this topic housed in Archives of the Tibet Autonomous Region in Lhasa have been published as *Ching rgyal rabs skabs kyi bod kyi lo rgyus yig tshags bdams bsgrigs* (hereafter, *lo rgyus yig tshags*). This paper also uses documents written in Tibetan housed in the Chuandian Bianwu Dachen Yamen

Based on these materials, the article tries to reveal how Zhang's successors followed or disregarded his policies, and how the Ganden Phodrang (Dga' ldan pho brang) government reacted to them.

1. The Emerging Militarism in the Late Qing Period

1.1. The Introduction of Militarism in Modern East Asia

The Chinese proverb "Good iron is not used to make nails, and good men are not used to make soldiers" (*haotie bu dading, haoren bu dangbing* 好鐵不打釘, 好人不當兵) is often used to describe the low opinion of soldiers and military service in traditional Chinese society. The principle of civilian rule had long roots in Chinese culture through the system of appointing bureaucrats based on the Imperial Examination System developed since the Song Dynasty. This gave a decisive social superiority to "literati" (*shi* 士), and the high-ranking civil officers who had passed Imperial Examinations bringing them wealth and fame. In other words, "civil" (*wen* 文) virtues became a dominant sign of masculinity for Chinese men, and "military" (*wu* 武) virtues tended to be undervalued. People who were born in underprivileged families often perceived that becoming a soldier was an attractive way to improve their life, but it was rarely attractive to the more privileged sections of society. In the public image and official ideology, a military career was no more acclaimed than other occupations such as governmental official, farmer, artisan, and merchant.¹⁰

The Manchus, who established the Qing Dynasty and conquered China with their overwhelming military power during the early 17th century, took pride in their military heritage until the late Qing period.¹¹ However, studying for the Imperial Examinations was still the most important way in which non-members of the Eight-Banners, which included the vast majority of Han Chinese, could pursue wealth and power within the Qing imperial order.

In the mid-19th century, the Qing confronted many challenges from both within and without China, and these internal enemies and foreign

Dang'an (hereafter, *Chuangdian Bianwu*) of the Sichuan Provincial Archives in Chengdu.

¹⁰ Eastman 1988: 203–204.

¹¹ Since the Qing emperors such as Yongzheng and Qianlong were so afraid of the deterioration of the Manchus' martial spirit and their prowess in martial arts in times of peace during the 18th century, they emphasised the importance of mounted archery as a traditional custom of the Manchus in addition to studying the Manchu language; see Rawski 1998: 45–48; Rhoads 2001: 57–58.

threats inspired some prominent Han Chinese officials, such as Li Hongzhang (李鴻章, 1823–1901), to shift towards the promotion of strengthening military power through the introduction of modern military facilities adopted from western countries.¹² Western-style military schools such as the Tianjin Military Preparatory School (Tianjin Wubei Xuetang 天津武備學堂), established in 1885, were set up to train military officers.¹³ In the wake of Prussia's victory in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, the German military system in particular became a strong focus of attention for Qing officials. The Qing government invited retired military veterans from Germany to be military instructors and dispatched young Qing military officers to Germany.¹⁴ This military strengthening policy challenged the supremacy of "civil culture", and the vast majority of Han Chinese high-ranking officials did not support it.¹⁵

During and after its defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, the Qing government finally accepted the necessity of establishing a modern army at the suggestion of Constantin von Hanneken (1854–1925), a German military adviser who had worked for Li Hongzhang. These newly-established military forces were put under the command of Yuan Shikai (袁世凱, 1859–1916), a military officer and former Imperial Resident in Korea. The army emulated the Western military system, particularly the German one in all its aspects, such as training, discipline, and equipment.¹⁶ However, around the turn of the 20th century, the Japanese army rapidly replaced Germany as a direct role model for Chinese military reforms, and the ethos of Japanese militarism began to permeate Han Chinese intellectual and student circles.¹⁷

After the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and the following radical reforms by the new government there, Japan had vigorously promoted modernisation to build a western-style nation-state. In doing so, the Meiji government had to dismantle the *bushi* (武士) hereditary and ruling military class, and in its place build a modern army under the control of the central government.¹⁸ The education system employed by military academies first adopted the French style but later changed to the German system under the instruction of Klemens Wilhelm Jacob Meckel (1842–1905), a German military officer who came to Japan in

¹² Kennedy 1978.

¹³ Banno 1973: 306–308.

¹⁴ Eberspächer 2008: 62; Schillinger 2016: 11–12.

¹⁵ Takashima 2015b: 121.

¹⁶ Ch'ên 1972: 31–36.

¹⁷ However Chinese intellectuals also continued to venerate German military culture until the First World War; see Schillinger 2016: 11–12.

¹⁸ Tobe 1998: 85–86.

1885.¹⁹ The Conscription Ordinance issued in 1873 required all men aged twenty to enter into a lottery, whereby those selected had to serve in the standing army (*jōbigun* 常備軍) for three years, and thereafter had to remain on call as members of the reserve army (*kōbigun* 後備軍).²⁰

While introducing this conscription system, the government also tried to promote a moral and disciplinary code, which was to be internalised by all members of the Japanese military. In contrast to the Han Chinese elite culture during the Qing period, in Japan “military arts” (*bu* 武) had already constituted an important value among the *bushi* or samurai class during the Tokugawa period. They expected to be brave, and to maintain an ethical loyalty to their liege lords. Even though the new government broke up the *bushi* class, the policy makers and political ideologues in the Meiji period attempted to shape the military spirit of the national army based on the ethos of bravery and loyalty long upheld by the old *bushi* code. They recast Bushidō (武士道) or the “Way of the Warriors”—the moral code of the samurai—as the code for the modern Japanese army, in which their loyalty was pledged directly to the Emperor. After the universal conscription system was introduced, “Bushidō” was widely discussed and advocated as a national standard for morality for all men during the late Meiji period.²¹

The Meiji government also introduced military training to school education. In 1872, a modern education system based on the principle of universal education was established through the Education System Order. Since the Conscription Ordinance was enacted in the following year, the introduction of military training to school education has been widely discussed.²² In the late 1880s, Mori Arinori (森有礼, 1847–1889), who became a Minister of Education in 1885, proposed the introduction of military drills (*heishiki taisō* 兵式体操, lit. “military-style physical training”), as a part of school education. In his 1887 proposition, he strongly asserted that military drills would bring discipline and order in school, and cultivate “loyalty and patriotism” (*chūkun aikoku* 忠君愛

¹⁹ The questions of how and from whence the Meiji government searched for a military model which Japan could emulate is treated in Yamada 1996: 146–235 and Tobe 1998: 92–95.

²⁰ The 1873 Ordinance included many exemption clauses, and the government gradually phased it out. A renewed Conscription Ordinance in 1889 finally established the principle of universal conscription by abolishing all the exemption clauses; see Kato 1996.

²¹ Yoshizawa 2014.

²² Okuno 2013: 256–263.

国) as well as a “martial spirit” (*shōbu* 尚武) among students.²³ Thus, through the introduction of military drills and militaristic values, Mori tried to reform school organisation based on military models.

Although military drills in schools had at first been introduced by the Education Ministry, after the victories in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, the Japanese army itself started paying greater attention to the subject of the militarisation of school education, due to the increasing demands it faced for the mobilisation of ever-larger numbers of soldiers. Thus, the Meiji government further promoted military education in schools under a slogan of “Fukoku Kyōhei” (富国強兵, “Fortifying the Country; Strengthening the Military”), and a militaristic culture and atmosphere rapidly emerged, forming the patriotic national consciousness that characterised the late Meiji period. Chinese intellectuals and students staying in Japan encountered this militarism, its ethos and its practices, and attempted to promote a parallel kind of militarism in China as I will argue in the next section.

1.2. Late Qing Militarism and Meiji Japan

By the turn of the century, Japan was a country that not only posed a threat to the Qing, but also one that offered a model for the modernisation of China. For the last dozen years of the Qing dynasty, which Douglas Reynolds has called the “golden decade” for the history of Sino-Japanese relations,²⁴ thousands of Chinese students had been making their way to Japan to learn about the western knowledge and systems which Meiji Japan had adopted. This movement was further escalated by the intellectual and institutional transformation which the Qing government implemented as “new policies” (*xinzheng* 新政) from 1901, in which education and military reforms occupied important positions.

The extensive and profound Japanese influence on military modernisation in China first appeared in the area of military education. Zhang Zhitong (張之洞, 1837–1909), the Viceroy of Huguang, invited a number of Japanese instructors to the Hubei Military Preparatory School (Hubei Wubei Xuetaang 湖北武備學堂) at Zhang’s base of Wu-chang around 1903, which effectively shifted the model for his Hubei

²³ Mori [1887] 1990. With regard to Mori Arinori’s ideas for military drills in school education, see Okuno 2013: 270–309.

²⁴ Reynolds 1993: 5–14.

New Army from a German model to a Japanese one;²⁵ and Yuan Shikai's Beiyang Army soon followed suit.²⁶ Enrolment in Japanese military academies also opened the door for many young people from China to receive education in Japan.²⁷ Furthermore, the abolition of the Imperial Examination System in 1905 by the Qing court further facilitated and incentivised overseas study in Japan, where military education occupied an important role. In effect, becoming a soldier was no longer considered a disgraceful career for young people. Rather, it came to be regarded as an honourable profession, helping China pursue the goal of strengthening itself on the global stage, where it was seen as a victim of external powers—a notion of national strengthening grounded in the ideas of social Darwinism.

Graduates from Japanese military schools were recruited as military officers who could immediately be available for active duty. In 1904, due to rising sense of national crisis following the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in Manchuria, the Qing started to organise "New Armies" (*xinjun* 新軍) into a national army under the control of the central government. Yuan Shikai's army was reorganised into six divisions to defend the capital, and many people who were educated in the military academies in Japan returned to serve as its military officers.²⁸

The militaristic culture in Japan resonated with these Chinese students, who embraced the spirit of patriotism. In 1902, Cai E (蔡鏗, 1882–1916), who was a Chinese student at the Seijo School in Japan, published an article entitled "An Essay on Military-Citizenry" ("Jun-guomin pian" 軍國民篇)²⁹ in *Xinmin congbao* 新民叢報, a journal edited by Liang Qichao (梁啟超, 1873–1929), who was Cai's mentor. Liang had taken exile in Japan after the Hundred Day's Reform in the Qing court in 1898. Cai's essay asserted that China should implement the principle of a "military-citizenry" (*junguomin*), meaning that all citizens should be potential soldiers, as in ancient Sparta and the militarised societies of the contemporary western powers and Japan. "Civil

²⁵ *Ibid.*: 155–157.

²⁶ Ch'en 1972: 62; Fung 1980: 83; Reynolds 1993: 157–158. Ralph Powell points out that as compared to occidental military officers, the employment of Japanese advisors was advantageous due to their acceptance of smaller salaries, their willingness to study Chinese, and their easier adjustment to Chinese society. Also, the transition from a German to a Japanese system was not a fundamental change, since Japan had itself modelled its army on that of Germany; see Powell 1955: 162.

²⁷ Rikugun Seijō School (陸軍成城学校) and Shinbu School (振武学校) are well known and the latter was especially established for Chinese students in 1903; see Fung 1980: 71–72.

²⁸ Kishi 1996.

²⁹ Cai 1902.

culture" (*wen*), which had been the predominant social value for Chinese men until that point, was dismissed as "weak culture" (*wenruo* 文弱); while "martial spirit" (*shangwu* 尚武) was extolled as the requirement for China to survive in the competitive struggle among the nations of the world.

This idea of "military-citizenry" was strongly inspired by a Japanese book, *Bubikyōiku* (武備教育 or *Education for Military Preparation*), published by the nationalistic publisher Min'yūsha (民友社) in 1895. The first chapter of this book, entitled *Gunkokumin* (軍國民), proclaimed on its first page that "military service should be compulsory for all citizens" (*gunmu wa kokumin no fusai nari* 軍務は国民の負債なり).³⁰ *Bubikyōiku* was a rallying call for the expansion of military education, including military drills, in school education to transform all of Japan's schools into preparatory schools for military conscription.³¹

In the following years, this idea of "military-citizenry" was widely discussed in China across factional lines. Chinese reformers, revolutionaries,³² and even policy makers within the Qing government, discussed this idea in relation to what the Chinese military and educational system should and could be. Indeed, Qing officials began to seriously consider the introduction of a universal conscription system as a part of their reform project, in conjunction with the formation of a new army. Such conscripted troops, it was suggested, could be divided into three classes: the regulars (*changbeijun* 常備軍) conscripted for three years; first reserves (*xubeijun* 續備軍) for three years after conscription; and second reserves (*houbeijun* 後備軍) for four years after that. This system aimed at creating a large pool of trained reserve soldiers upon whom the government could call in times of need.

In practice, however, it was impossible for the Qing government to implement universal conscription due to lack of census information for all male citizens. Nevertheless, the "Approved School Regulation" ("Zouding Xuetaang Zhangcheng" 奏定學堂章程), which Zhang Zhidong had proposed based on the Japanese education system, did introduce military drills (Ch. *bingcao* 兵操), including weapons training and drilling with real guns for all the male students in public primary schools of the senior grade. Private schools were however exempted. The Qing court also eventually issued the "Principle of Education"

³⁰ Min'yūsha 1895: 3.

³¹ Selected chapters of the book were also translated into Chinese and circulated among Chinese students and intellectuals in Japan right after Cai's article was published; see Tsuchiya 2008: 70.

³² *Ibid.*

(“Jiaoyu Zongzhi” 教育宗旨) in 1906, which explicitly emphasised the importance of the idea of a “military-citizenry”, and stated that military drills would be expected to play an important role in bridging school education and the military in China.³³

Thus, prior to Zhang Yintang's military reforms in Lhasa, Qing officials had already begun their militarisation efforts, largely inspired by Meiji Japan, by introducing these militaristic ideas into education, and through military reforms in China at the beginning of the 20th century. Inner Asian frontier regions under the rule of the Qing were thus not an exception in this regard.

In the Outer Mongolian monastic capital of Ikh Khuree (modern Ulaan Baatar), Tang Zaili (唐在禮, 1882–1964), a graduate from the Japanese military academy, tried to establish a “new army”, to be controlled by the *amban* around 1910; but this caused a strong backlash from Mongol princes because they perceived that this might undermine their political power and authority.³⁴

In Inner Mongolia, in line with the Qing's reform projects, Güngsangnorbu (1871–1930), a Mongolian noble of the Kharchin Mongol Right Banner adjacent to Manchuria, invited Japanese military officers to establish a military school with approval from the Qing government in 1903, on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War. This was also a part of intelligence activities by the Japanese army in Inner Mongolia and Manchuria against the Russian threat.³⁵ However Japanese policy makers did not fully develop a concrete strategy for Tibet during this period, as compared to Manchuria and Mongolia.³⁶ Nevertheless, Chinese military reforms in Tibet need to be re-examined in the context of this increasing militarisation throughout East and Inner Asia in this period, a militarisation whose primary inspiration was Meiji Japan.

2. Zhang Yintang's Military Reforms in Lhasa

2.1. Proposal for Military Reinforcement in Tibet

Zhang Yintang, born in Xinhui (Xinhui 新會) prefecture in Guangdong province, was a qualified graduate who had passed the provincial

³³ *Ibid.*: 71–72.

³⁴ Nakami 2008: 316; Tachibana 2011: 36.

³⁵ Aruohan 2016.

³⁶ Kobayashi 2019.

exam in 1882.³⁷ For more than ten years he worked for the newly-established government office of the Imperial Navy (Haijun Yamen 海軍衙門) and in this capacity was sent to San Francisco as a third rank assistant consul in 1896 under the recommendation of Wu Tingfang (伍廷芳, 1842–1922) who himself had been appointed as a minister in the Chinese legation to the United States and was also from Guangdong province. The following year Zhang was appointed consul general in San Francisco and was then dispatched to Spain as an assistant minister in 1898. During the late 19th century, Qing diplomats who had Cantonese origin were often dispatched to the Americas and Spain since the Qing had to deal with growing problems related to the many Chinese workers in those countries, who were often of Cantonese origin, and faced considerable persecution in the U.S. and in Spanish colonies such as Cuba and the Philippines. Many of these workers were migrants from Guangdong.³⁸ Zhang's career path as a diplomat was similar to that of other Cantonese diplomats such as Wu Tingfang and Zhang Yinhan (張蔭桓, 1835–1900), who is often regarded as “the brother” of Zhang Yintang in the previous studies.³⁹

With this diplomatic background, Zhang Yintang had been committed to state affairs for a long time and had a rich diplomatic experience. In 1898 Zhang Yintang resigned as the acting minister to Spain immediately after the coup at the Qing court over the “Hundred Day's Reform”.⁴⁰ However, five years later, his name would appear once again in the annals of Qing diplomacy when he played an important role in the negotiations with British India amid the rising tensions over Tibetan affairs.

In the late 19th century, the international situation surrounding the Sino-Tibetan relationship started to change dramatically. Himalayan

³⁷ Zhang Yintang's career as a bureaucrat is described in the *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan cang Qingdai guanyuan lilii dang'an quanbian* edited by Qin Guojing (1997) [hereafter, *Qingdai guanyuan*] vol. 8, 51–52, 291–292.

³⁸ For a chronological table of diplomats and staff at Chinese diplomatic establishments during the late 19th century, see Okamoto *et al.* 2014: Appendix 2. The importance of Guangdong officials for oversea diplomats in this period is also referred in the same book (*ibid.*: 154–155).

³⁹ However, Ma Zhongwen asserts that there is no clear evidence to support the claim that Zhang Yinhan and Zhang Yintang are “the brothers”; Ma 2019: 111. Zhang Yinhan concurrently served as a minister in Spain, United States, and Peru from 1886 to 1889. With regard to Zhang Yinhan's personal history, see Ho 1941; Wang Lianying 2011.

⁴⁰ It is often said that this is most likely because of the downfall of his “brother” Zhang Yinhan who was suspected of supporting Kang Youwei 康有為, who was also from Guangdong and the leader of the reform movement. However, Ma Zhongwen dismisses this argument and argues that Zhang was not involved in the Kang Youwei issue; Ma 2019: 114–115.

kingdoms such as Nepal and Sikkim were coming increasingly under the influence of British India, which had a rivalry with Russia over hegemony in central Eurasia, and this made the Thirteenth Dalai Lama (r. 1895–1933) perceive Britain as a primary threat to Tibet. Since the Thirteenth Dalai Lama was trying to reach out to Russia to protect Tibet from Britain through Agvan Dorzhiev (1854–1938), who was a Buryat monk from the Russian empire, British India also launched an active policy to engage with Tibet. Until the end of the 19th century, British India consistently attempted to contact Tibet through the Qing, but the Ganden Phodrang government did not obey the Qing officials.⁴¹ On January 8, 1903, Lord Curzon, who became Viceroy in India from 1898, asserted that the Chinese “suzerainty” of Tibet was merely “a constitutional fiction” and that the British Government had to dispatch an armed mission to Lhasa in order to establish a direct relationship with Tibet.⁴² As a result of this, an armed expedition led by F.E. Younghusband was sent to Tibet in the summer of 1903.

This Younghusband expedition to Lhasa was a watershed moment which forced the Qing court shift their attention towards Tibet. The Dalai Lama fled to Mongolia in 1904 before the British army reached Lhasa, and in his absence, the Ganden Phodrang government signed the Lhasa Convention on September 24th of the same year in the presence of *amban* Youtai (有泰, 1844–1910), a Mongol Bannerman. However, the Qing court considered this bilateral agreement between Tibet and Britain as tantamount to an admission that the Qing had given up their “sovereignty” over Tibet and tried to renegotiate the treaty. As one of the important agendas of the “New Policies”, the Qing started attempting to assert diplomatic rights over the entirety of Tibet under the newly established Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Waiwubu (外務部) in this period. The Waiwubu dispatched Tang Shaoyi (唐紹儀, 1862–1938) to Calcutta, India in the end of 1904 to renegotiate the Lhasa Convention with Britain, and Zhang Yintang was sent as his assistant.⁴³ Tang Shaoyi strongly asserted that Chinese authority over Tibet was not “suzerainty”, but “sovereignty”, whereas British India attempted to include the word “suzerainty” in the draft of treaty.⁴⁴ Tang, who was stationed in Seoul from 1895 to 1899 after the Sino-Japanese War and witnessed the “independence” of Korea, was afraid that Tibet

⁴¹ Lamb, 1986: Chapter 9.

⁴² FO17: 1745, Curzon *et al.* to Lord George F. Hamilton, January 8, 1903: 7–8.

⁴³ Tang Shaoyi, who studied at Columbia University, was also of Guangdong origin and he requested that the Qing court send Zhang Yintang as his assistant to India; see *Qingdai guanyuan*, vol. 8: 51–52. He would later be promoted in the diplomatic field in the government by Tang's recommendation.

⁴⁴ Lamb 1966; Cheney 2017; Okamoto 2017: 365–374.

would go the same way if he compromised on this question of political status. Zhang supported Tang Shaoyi in the negotiations and shared the same concern about the threat it posed to Qing authority over Tibet.

Zhang began to actively make suggestions on the Qing's Tibet policies after he was put in charge of these difficult negotiations with the British on behalf of Tang Shaoyi in September of 1905 when Tang left for Beijing due to health reasons.⁴⁵ In December of 1905, learning that the British had invited the Ninth Panchen Lama Lobzang Tupten Chökyi Nyima (Blo bzang thub bstan chos kyi nyi ma, 1883–1937) to India, Zhang was afraid that the British would use him to exert their influence over Tibet and promote the separation of Tibet from the Qing, just as Japanese interference in Korea had resulted in its independence. Zhang Yintang thus argued that the Qing must establish strong control in Tibet through the re-enforcement of its military power there, by sending a “high-ranking officer who is well-versed in military matters and 20,000 elite troops” to Tibet.⁴⁶

At the same time, it is notable that Zhang also proposed increasing the number of Tibetan troops from its current level of 3,000 soldiers.⁴⁷ David Dahpon Ho has argued that Zhang's policy constituted a “striking shift” from the original proposal to expand the presence of Chinese troops, to instead fortifying native Tibetan troops, which he explains as a result of the warm welcome Zhang received from Tibetan people when he reached Tibet in October 1906.⁴⁸ However, even before he was ordered to go to Tibet, Zhang had already suggested this measure.⁴⁹ He understood that stationing a large Chinese army in Tibet would require an enormous financial burden for the Qing just as they had encountered similar problems after military campaigns in Tibet during the eighteenth century. Therefore, Zhang asserted that the Qing should gradually reduce the Chinese army from 20,000 to 5,000 while reinforcing the Tibetan army.

However, the financial problem inherent in the Qing military policies in Tibet was not the only reason for Zhang's plan to increase the number of Tibetan soldiers. The proposition also constituted a part of his grand design for a wider reform project in Tibet, and as I discuss

⁴⁵ *Da Qing Dezong Jing (Guangxu) Huangdi Shilu*, Juan 548, Guangxu 光緒 31/8/18.

⁴⁶ Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 31/12/13 in *Qingdai zangshi zoudu* [hereafter, *Zoudu*] edited by Wu Fengpei (1994), 1304; Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 32/1/23, *Zoudu*, 1305–1306.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Ho argues that “Zhang became convinced that a military solution was not after all the best course of action” and he eventually “reversed his calls for Chinese troops”; see Ho 2008: 217.

⁴⁹ Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 32/1/23, *Zoudu*, 1305–1306.

below, it was formulated based on his observations about British colonial rule in India, the potential enemy for Tibet.

2.2. Zhang Yintang's Reform Projects and the British Raj

The Qing court did not immediately approve Zhang's proposal on military reinforcement in Tibet at this stage, but it did recognise Zhang Yintang as the right person to handle Tibetan affairs. In the spring of 1906, when the Anglo-Chinese negotiations reached the final stage, the Qing court appointed him Chaban xizang shijian dachen (查辦西藏事件大臣) or High Commissioner to Tibet.⁵⁰ His main task in this new role was opening and managing the customs and trade marts in Yatung, Gyantsé, and Gartok based on the Anglo-Chinese treaty. Furthermore, the Qing court charged him with conducting "all the arrangements which should be made" in Tibet.⁵¹ He moved to Tibet in 1906 after his assistants, dispatched from Beijing, such as He Zaoxiang (何藻翔), had joined him in India,⁵² and he reached Lhasa in October of that year, having examined the marts for India-Tibet border trade on his way.

He proposed his entire plan for reform projects to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in February 1907, and later submitted further detailed plans to the emperor.⁵³ The plan of his new policies incorporated the system of British rule in India, which most likely he had observed during his long stay in Calcutta for the diplomatic negotiations. He proposed reforming the relationship between the Qing government and the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and the Ninth Panchen Lama according to the British model of control over princely states in India. Just as "princes rule the Indian people; but the governor-general of India asserts control over them (i.e. the princes)",⁵⁴ he suggested that the Qing should abolish the role of the *ambans* in Tibet, who had, in his view, already lost their authority over the past one hundred years, and establish in their place a new administrative position called "Xizang Xingbu Dachen" (西藏行部大臣) as a "governor of Tibet" in imitation of the governor-general of India. He stated that "the Dalai Lama, the

⁵⁰ *Da Qing Dezong Jing (Guangxu) Huangdi Shilu*, juan 555, Guangxu 32/4/6; Waiwubu Dang'an, 02-16-002-01-027, Waiwubu's memorial, Guangxu 32/4/21.

⁵¹ Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 32/4/22, *Zoudu*, 1308.

⁵² He 1910: 10. He Zaoxiang was *Zhushi* 主事 (master of affairs) at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was also from Guangdong province; see Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 32/Leap 4/10, *Zoudu*, 1308.

⁵³ Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 33/1/13, *Zoudu*, 1328; Zhang's memorial, Guangxu 33/11, *Zoudu*, 1395-1402.

⁵⁴ Zhang's memorial, Guangxu 33/11, *Zoudu*, 1397.

Panchen Lama, and the Jasak (i.e. aristocrats who received titles from the emperor)" were equivalent to "Indian princes" (*yindu turwang* 印度土王), and that they should be under the supervision of the governor of Tibet, so that the Qing would be able to practically fulfil its role as the "sovereign state" (*zhuguo* 主國) in Tibet.⁵⁵

His military reforms were also evidently inspired by the military system of British India, which "recruits Indian soldiers to military service; [and] commands and trains them with British officers". He was particularly impressed that Britain had managed to mobilise Indian troops for all their military campaigns and that they never revolted against their military commands. This he said, could also be applied to a Tibetan military system.⁵⁶ He suggested building-up the existing Tibetan army and putting them under the command of centrally-dispatched Chinese military officers who had graduated from military academies in China.

Another aspect of the military system of Indian colonial forces which attracted his attention was the presence of the Gurkhas hired by the British. He Zaoxiang, Zhang's Cantonese assistant, had already learned before he arrived in India, that many "Gurkha" troops joined the Younghusband expedition of 1903 and played a key role in British mountain warfare. This, in spite of the fact, as he noted, that the Gorkha Kingdom had become a "vassal state" of the Qing after the Tibet-Gorkha War at the end of the 18th century, after which the Gorkha Dynasty had paid tribute to the Qing. He Zaoxiang therefore proposed that the Qing should make Tibet build "an offensive and defensive alliance" with this strong neighbouring country, which had already introduced a western-style military system, in order to utilise their military power to defend Tibet in case of emergency.⁵⁷ He Zaoxiang's suggestion seemed to convince Zhang Yintang, who also probably witnessed the Gorkha troops holding an important place in the Indian Army, and he proposed the above plan to the Foreign Ministry.⁵⁸ In February 1907, Zhang issued a statement to encourage the Ganden Phodrang government to dispatch "Kalön and Dapön to inspect [Gorkhas soldiers in Nepal] and adopt their military system to train a new [Tibetan] army and reform the entire political system [of Tibet]".⁵⁹ Additionally, strengthening ties with Himalayan kingdoms

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*: 1398.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*: 1399.

⁵⁷ He 1910: 4.

⁵⁸ Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 33/12, *Zoudu*, 1325.

⁵⁹ He 1910: 4–5.

such as Gorkha and Bhutan as “Chinese dependencies” was also proposed as an important component of Zhang Yintang's new policies⁶⁰ and caused the British concern about their relations with them.⁶¹

As discussed above, British colonial rule and their colonial army in India thus provided a model for Zhang Yintang's proposals for strengthening Qing rule over Tibet, and for reforming the Tibetan army. However, he was also pursuing a further agenda—the expansion of the Tibetan army—beyond the introduction of the military system of British India. In his view, Tibet had the tradition of “drafting militia according to the size of farmland”, and, he said, this could be used as the basis for the establishment of a “universal conscription system” (*juguo jiebing zhi zhi* 拳國皆兵之制) akin to those of western countries.⁶² To achieve this ultimate goal, Zhang Yintang would start to reform the military, religious institutions, and the education system in Tibet.

2.3. Recruiting and Training the Tibetan Army

In early 1907, Zhang Yintang proposed the establishment of “Nine Bureaus” (*jiujiu* 九局) in Tibet to cover Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, Finance, Diplomacy, Police, Tea and Salt, Education, Mining, and the Military. In his proposal to establish a Military Bureau (*dulianju* 督練局),⁶³ he claimed that, in addition to the current Tibetan army, the Qing must create a standing army (*changbeijun*) and planned to train 5,000 soldiers every year for the next several years until they had a force 40,000 strong. Furthermore, direct participation in this standing army would be followed by periods served in the first class reserves (*xubeijun*) and then the second reserves (*houbeijun*). This idea was closely aligned with the Qing military reforms to establish “New Armies” in all the provinces of China. Zhang also proposed the recruitment of graduates from the Military Academy in Baodingfu (保定府) to help with training in Tibet, and to send some Tibetan recruits there to learn about military affairs. He added that the new Tibetan troops should be trained in “foreign drills” (*yangcao* 洋操), and that advanced equipment such as Gatling guns and mountain canons needed to be prepared.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Zhang to the Ganden Phodrang government, Guangxu 34/2, *Zoudu*, 1333–1341.

⁶¹ Bell 1927: 92–93.

⁶² Zhang's memorial, Guangxu 33/11, *Zoudu*, 1399.

⁶³ The Military Bureau was translated into Tibetan as “*dmag phogs las khungs*” (lit. “office of military pay”), see Lianyu to Kalön, Guangxu 33/12/19, *lo rgyus yig tshags*, vol. 8, 2242, Catalogue number: Guangxu 343.

⁶⁴ Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 33/3/2, *Zoudu*, 1342–1353.

Furthermore, he proclaimed that any healthy male between the ages of eighteen and thirty, whether Tibetan or Han, monk or layman, should be obliged to serve as a soldier in the new army.⁶⁵ In other words, Zhang's goal was the establishment of mandatory military service for all adult male residents in Tibet. A recently-published Tibetan document from the Archives of Tibet Autonomous Region in Lhasa, reveals that this part of the proposal was later translated into Tibetan and sent to the Ganden Phodrang government.⁶⁶ It would have been truly difficult for Zhang Yintang to implement compulsory military service in Tibet when the information about farmlands and residents in Tibet had not hitherto been collected in an integrated manner by the Qing officials.⁶⁷

Interestingly enough, according to reports from Kazi Bhairab Bahadur, the representative of the Nepal Kingdom in Lhasa in early 1907, the drill-master for the Tibetan army was a mixed Cantonese-Tibetan from Darjeeling, whom Zhang Yintang had brought with him.⁶⁸ In the first phase, Zhang recruited approximately 100 soldiers who were trained and drilled "using the English words of command", and "each of these soldiers [was] paid at the rate of twenty Chinese dollars per month and [was] armed with a Martini-Henri pattern rifle" which were widely-circulated in the British Empire during the end of the 19th century.⁶⁹ British India's influence cannot be ignored in Zhang's military training in these first stages, before the officers who received military education in China arrived in Lhasa. Bhairab Bahadur further wrote:

They are drilled daily from 8 in the morning till 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I saw these soldiers the other day marching through the city. They marched in regular order and had long coats (Tibetan) and Docha (Tibetan shoes) on. They appeared to understand well the "Right and

⁶⁵ Ho 2008: 219.

⁶⁶ Zhang to the Ganden Phodrang government, *lo rgyus yig tshags*, vol. 3, 719, Catalogue number: Guangxu 156.

⁶⁷ Perhaps he had already noticed this problem and thus had ordered the high-ranking Tibetan officials to re-conduct a survey based on the *Iron-Tiger Year Land Decree* of 1830, in order to obtain accurate information about revenue from estates as well as the numbers of households on each which could contribute soldiery; Zhang to the Ganden Phodrang government, *lo rgyus yig tshags*, vol. 3, 749–750, Catalogue number: Xuantong 宣統 26.

⁶⁸ IOR/L/PS/7/210, 31st, January 1907, Kazi Bhairab Bahadur's letter to Chandra Shamsher Jang. But his letter to Chandra Shamsher Jang on 18th January 1907 in the same file says that the drill master was from Sikkim.

⁶⁹ IOR/L/PS/7/210, 18th January 1907, Kazi Bhairab Bahadur's letter to Chandra Shamsher Jang. Frederick O'Connor, the British trade agent in Gyantsé, reported that 300 soldiers were recruited; see FO535/9, No. 109, Enclosure 2, Diary kept by Captain Frederick O'Connor for the week ending 26th January 1907.

Left turns". The object of their having been brought to march through the city was perhaps to show them to the people with a view to strike awe on them, or it may be that the Amba [Zhang Yintang] wanted to impress upon the people the mode in which the soldiers were being trained. I hear that an order has already been issued to construct a barrack and a parade ground at Gyantse.⁷⁰

This shows that military parades could be seen by the people in Lhasa, and that Zhang was actively trying to expand the military training to Gyantsé, where a newly-established trade mart with British India was located. His intention was probably to show off the progress of his reforms in Tibet to the British agents there.

Zhang Yintang's educational and religious policies were also deeply connected with his military policies. In his view, Tibetan Buddhism was detrimental to the progress and scientific enlightenment of Tibetan society, and could thus be an obstacle to national security. He recognised that "because of Buddhism, Tibet not only does not know strategy, but also never moves to prepare [for an emergency]".⁷¹ For him, Tibetan Buddhism should be transformed as a religion so as to be able to contribute to increasing wealth and military power, as shown in the following statement issued to the Ganden Phodrang government in 1906:

There are many monks who are ignorant of the very elements of religion. They shave their heads and adopt the priestly vestments. Yet they do not walk in the way of perfected purification, but depend on their own worldly selves. The people of Japan are Buddhists. They practise religion and meditate at the time of the rats [from about 10 P.M. to midnight], but all work, whether as soldiers, as handicraftsmen or as traders. They also marry. It is thus that their country has become powerful. Now those monks who practise celibacy and other austerities are true monks. The others can marry, trade, train as soldiers and work at various crafts. In this way the country will increase in power and you will be able to protect it and to contend against hostile countries.⁷²

It cannot be ignored that Japanese Buddhism in the late 19th century provided an important role model for Zhang Yintang in his envisaged reform of Tibetan Buddhism. On the one hand, his view reflected the rising tide of Chinese intellectuals' severe critiques of Buddhist monks

⁷⁰ IOR/L/PS/7/210, 18th January 1907, Kazi Bhairab Bahadur's letter to Chandra Shamsheer Jang.

⁷¹ Zhang Yintang's "dialogues" with the Tibetan people, *Zoudu*, 1337–1341.

⁷² English translation of the Chinese statement issued by Zhang Yintang in IOR/L/PS/7/210, 26th December 1906, Attached document "IV" on the letter from Kazi Bhairab Bahadur to Chandra Shamsheer Jang.

and Taoists as burdening the country with “tens of millions of useless people of leisure, eating without doing anything” for the enhancement of national power.⁷³ And on the other hand, it reflected the appeal of modern Japanese Buddhism for many Chinese intellectuals, including both reformists and revolutionaries, admired for its ability to accommodate the supreme value of “protecting the nation” (Jap. *gokoku* 護國).⁷⁴ Japanese Buddhist monks, who had had special status under the Tokugawa regime until the mid-19th century, were officially allowed to marry after the Meiji era and began to live as ordinary citizens who were also required to do compulsory military service. Some Chinese intellectuals thought that Chinese Buddhism should be reformed in the same manner; and Zhang’s instructions reflected his view that the same was also applicable to Tibetan Buddhism.

Zhang offered a further plan to reform Tibetan Buddhism so as to benefit the Qing’s modernisation project. In his proposal to create an Education Bureau (Xuewuju 學務局), he asserted that all monasteries would have to establish their own “schools” at which certain numbers of Tibetan monks between the ages of twelve and twenty would receive a modern education including Chinese, English, mathematics, and military drills (*bingshi ticao* 兵式體操).⁷⁵ In the Chinese provinces, following the abolition of the state examination system in 1905, the Qing government had similarly encouraged the building of schools within temple properties as way of saving considerable expense for their education reform.⁷⁶ Zhang’s proposal also planned to utilise monastic properties for educational reform and to transform Tibetan Buddhist monasteries into centres for the inculcation of secular manners and citizenship values, as well as practical training including military drills, to large numbers of monks.

The adoption of militarism envisaged by Zhang’s reforms was not limited to the educational and religious fields alone. It also extended to an attempt to reform Tibetan customs and manners. Zhang Yintang, in his instructions to Tibetan people, set out in a pamphlet called “Improving Tibetan Customs” (“Banfa zangsu gailiang” 頒法藏俗改良), stated that all men above eighteen years old must learn how to use

⁷³ Murata 1992: 209–210.

⁷⁴ Ge 2006: 47–55.

⁷⁵ Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 33/3/2, *Zoudu*, 1342–1353.

⁷⁶ The movement called “converting temple properties to establish schools” (*miao-chan xingxue* 廟產興學) was first advocated during the Hundred Days of Reform in 1898, and was later officially revived by the Qing authorities when they tried to establish a modern educational system at the beginning of the 20th century; see Murata 1992.

guns and must study martial arts to prepare against foreign intrusions.⁷⁷ Furthermore, Zhang additionally issued a further instruction called "Notes on Training Habits" ("Banfa xunsu qianyan" 頒法訓俗淺言), which emphasised the ethical value of Confucian ideas, as shown in the passage below:

MARTIAL SPIRIT (Shangwu 尚武):

[...] [In today's world] it is said that there is only strong and weak, but no right or wrong. I regret that I am compelled to agree. If we cannot achieve self-strengthening (*ziquang* 自強), we will be prey. If we have the ambition to be a hero with courage and have the spirit to die for our country, and if we internalise "iron and blood" (*tiexue* 鐵血) as our principle and recognise ourselves as "military-citizenry" (*junguomin*) [...] [then] even strong [foreign] enemies will not dare to insult us. [...] "Train troop every day; everyone discuss military affairs" (*riri lianbing renren jiangwu* 日日練兵、人人講武). This is a vital eight-word maxim. All the "citizens" (*guomin* 國民) who are above twenty but cannot ride a horse, handle a gun, become a soldier, or fight, are good-for-nothing.⁷⁸

If we look at the above terminology such as "iron and blood" and "military-citizenry", we can find his political message, which was strongly inspired by German- and Japanese militarism, which Qing officials had internalised during this period. Zhang Yintang translated these instructions into Tibetan to propagate them to the Tibetan people. By introducing this type of militarism as an important component of the national standard for morality, Zhang was attempting to transform the Tibetan people into "citizens" with "martial spirit" who could fight and die for the Qing China.

How did the Ganden Phodrang government react to Zhang's military reforms? According to some Chinese and English materials, Zhang Yintang was to some degree a popular figure among the Tibetan people, as David Dahpon Ho pointed out.⁷⁹ It was also noted by Charles Bell, who in his book composed around 1920 after he resigned as the Political Officer in Sikkim, wrote "as his schemes did not bear much fruit and he interfered with old established customs, his popularity to some extent declined. But many Tibetans still cherish a friendly regard for the 'Overseas Amban', as he is called, since he came by sea to Calcutta instead of by the overland route through Eastern

⁷⁷ "Banfa zangsu gailiang" in *Zoudu*, 1356.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*: 1355. I partly refer here to the translation of Ho in his article (Ho 2008: 220).

⁷⁹ Ho 2008: 218.

Tibet".⁸⁰

However, Bhairab Bahadur's report further shows that it was the military reforms in particular, among Zhang's wider range of policies, that brought controversy and led to a disagreement between him and the Ganden Phodrang government. In contrast to his proposal to the Qing court, which suggested the recruitment and training of 5,000 soldiers every year, Zhang took an even stronger line with the Ganden Phodrang government and ordered them to raise 40,000 soldiers immediately. The Ganden Tri Rinpoche (referred to as "Thirring Pochhe Lama" in Bhairab Bahadur's report), who presided over the government on behalf of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, told Bhairab Bahadur about the government's reactions to Zhang's order as follows:

The Kazies (i.e. the Tibetan ministers) replied saying that the proposal made by the Amba was an excellent one but in their opinion it seemed difficult to make the necessary provision for their feeding at once, moreover arms necessary for their equipment would not be fully forthcoming, and so it would be better, they said to begin with 10,000 men and gradually increase it to 40,000. They took a long time in making this representation. The Tang Tarin Amba got angry at this and told the assembled people that he was an officer sent by His Majesty the Emperor of China to make the necessary arrangements after proper enquiries for bettering the condition of Tibet [...]. As the Kazis and others stuck to their proposal of 10,000 troops only being maintained the said Amba became furious.⁸¹

The Ganden Phodrang government thought that Zhang's military reform plan would place a significant burden on Tibet and thus attempted to get Zhang to reconsider his radical policy. Due to Zhang's uncompromising attitude, the Ganden Phodrang government diplomatically stopped telling him "flatly that we were not able to carry out the project fully" to keep 4,000 thousand troops "as desired by the Amba" and instead sought to show him the total expenditure such a policy would entail.⁸² The failure or success of Zhang's military reforms depended on the cooperation of the Ganden Phodrang government, but the government was unenthusiastic. Zhang's goal of establishing a large Tibetan standing army was a mammoth ambitious task from the beginning; and in the end he was not able to fully launch his policies during his short tenure in Tibet, and as a result they never materialised by the end of the Qing Dynasty.

⁸⁰ Bell 1927: 89.

⁸¹ IOR/L/PS/7/201, 18th, February 1907, the conversation as reported in Kazi Bhairab Bahadur's letter to Chandra Shamsher Jang.

⁸² *Ibid.*

A Tibetan document I have collected from the Sichuan Provincial Archives in Chengdu offers a clue as to how the Ganden Phodrang government perceived Zhang Yintang's proposed military reforms. It was written by the Nyarong Chikyap (Nyag rong spyi khyab, the governor-general of Nyarong), who was stationed in Nyarong, eastern Tibet, a part of territory under the direct control of the Ganden Phodrang government since 1865.⁸³ Since he was being expelled from Nyarong by Zhao Erfeng (趙爾豐), he sent the following message to Zhao, which reads in part as follows, in January 1909:

Now, all the lands, people, and communities belonging to the Tibetan territory should be returned [to us]. [Otherwise,] the people would be seriously disappointed and depressed [...]. Since [Tibet] is a small country having people and lands which are different from other countries, it would be grateful if [you] could give us a great support just like Lonchen Zhang (*krang blon chen*) did.⁸⁴

Nyarong Chikyap, who confronted the oppressive policy of Zhao Erfeng, thus pointed to Zhang Yintang as a kind of ideal Qing official and an authoritative figure in his letter to Zhao. The letter does not however mention anything about Zhang's military reforms in this period. Zhao Erfeng was obviously irritated by this type of positive attitude of Tibetans towards Zhang. In May 1909, he found that a Tibetan battalion on the west side of the Driчу River was trying to prevent Zhao's unit from advancing. He reported to the Qing court that "more than 1,000 Tibetan troops have been conducting military training there. [...] They asserted that they were just following instructions which the High Commissioner Zhang had given".⁸⁵ This highlights the possibility that Zhang's policies to produce a stronger Tibetan army for the sake of supporting Qing dominance was, after he left Tibet in May of 1907, ironically used as a justification for the Ganden Phodrang government to mobilise its army in resistance to the Qing's subsequent military campaigns in eastern Tibet.

⁸³ Yudru Tsomu 2015: Chapter 7.

⁸⁴ The Tibetan letter from Nyarong Chikyap to Zhao Erfeng on January 1909, *Chuan-dian Bianwu Dachen Yamen Dang'an*. English translation by the present author.

⁸⁵ Zhao to Grand Council, Xuanton 1/4/13, *Qingmo chuandian bianwu dang'an shiliao*, 335–336.

3. Military Reforms in Tibet after Zhang Yintang's Reforms

3.1. Lianyu and his Military Policies

What impact did Zhang Yintang's attempted reforms have on the Tibetan army? Soon after offering his reform proposal, Zhang left Tibet in May of 1907, and was transferred to Beijing to negotiate with British India on India-Tibet trade regulations. Therefore, he merely stayed in Lhasa for approximately ten months, and did not fully enact his military reforms during his short term stay in Lhasa. The reason he left early is complicated: he was stuck in internal political struggles among high-ranking officials, including in Beijing and Lhasa, leading to his transfer.⁸⁶ However, this section will pay more attention to his colleague, Lianyu (聯豫), an *amban* who had been stationed in Lhasa since 1906 even before Zhang Yintang arrived there. Lian was a rival to Zhang's authority, as has been analysed by David Dahpon Ho, and his implementation of Zhang's policies omitted significant parts of them.

Lianyu had prior diplomatic experience in Europe where he worked for Xue Fucheng (薛福成), a famous diplomat of the late Qing period.⁸⁷ Like Zhang Yintang, Lianyu, who was also a moderniser and a reformer, paid great attention to strengthening Qing control over Tibet with military forces in the aftermath of the Younghusband expedition.⁸⁸ After Zhang's departure from Lhasa, in 1907, he began to issue the *Tibetan Vernacular News* (*Xizang Baihuabao* 西藏白話報) in both Tibetan and Chinese languages, extolling "Patriotism and Martial Spirit; Promotion of Enlightenment" (*aiguo shangwu kaitong minzhi* 愛國尚武、開通民智) of the Tibetans, as the main principle for propagating Qing modernisation policies among the Tibetan people.⁸⁹ As such, late Qing militarism was embedded in Lianyu's policies, too.

However, Lianyu did not actively try to recruit troops from Tibetan society beyond the existing numbers, in contrast to Zhang Yintang's proposals for an extensive conscription system which would include monks. Instead, he planned to reorganise the Qing army stationed in Tibet and increase their number to 6,000 troops to be stationed at locations of strategic importance. However, knowing that most Chinese soldiers would not want to come all the way to Tibet, and that "if we use the Tibetan people to make up the numbers [of the new army],

⁸⁶ Ho 2008: 227–232.

⁸⁷ Okamoto *et al.* 2014: Appendix-2, 47–48.

⁸⁸ Ho 2008: 226; Lianyu's memorial, Guangxu 32/12/28, *Zoudu*, 1475–1480.

⁸⁹ Lianyu's memorial, *Zoudu*, 1489–1890.

they would probably not be fully trustworthy",⁹⁰ Lianyu thought that Tibetan troops should be limited to performing only a complementary supportive role for the Qing army, and instead focused on strengthening forces which would not be under the control of the Ganden Phodrang government. To this end, he first recruited soldiers from the Mongols of Dam (Tib. 'Dam sog; Ch. Damu Menggu 達木蒙古) who had a nomadic life at the lakeside of Namtso Lake, and the Gyade people (Rgya sde) of "the Thirty-nine Hor tribes" 霍爾三十九族 (Ch. Huo'er Sanshijiuzu, Tib. Hor sde so dgu), who lived along the southern Qinghai border. The Dam Mongols were descendants of Oirad Mongols commanded by Gushri Khan (1582–1654) in his expedition to Tibet in the mid-17th century.⁹¹ Later, the Qing introduced the Banner System to them and put them under the direct control of *ambans* in Lhasa in the mid-18th century.⁹² Lianyu suggested that the new army should consist of sixty percent Han Chinese and forty percent Dam Mongols as well as Gyade Horpas.⁹³ Around the summer of 1909 he created one unit (*ying* 營, 500 troops for each unit) made up of Dam Mongols, and then tried to expand this with recruits from the Gyade people.⁹⁴

Thus, Lianyu focused more on expanding the army with the forces he could directly recruit and command without going through the Ganden Phodrang government to enforce the *amban's* military strength. It can be also imagined that Lianyu assumed that the introduction of military conscription to Tibetan society, as Zhang Yintang had proposed, could serve as a means not to strengthen the military power of the Qing but rather as something which could potentially turn Tibetan society against Qing rule. In a memorial, he had complained bitterly about the disobedience of Tibetan officials against his orders⁹⁵ and expressed concern that radical reforms, such as incorporating Tibet as a new "province" of China proper, could cause additional conflict with the Tibetans. Therefore, he proposed: "with regards to dispatching Qing officials and deploying the army, if such decisions were made on the grounds of defence against Russia and Britain, then [the Qing] will gradually gain control [in Tibet]".⁹⁶ In other

⁹⁰ Lianyu's memorial, Guangxu 32/12/28, *Zoudu*, 1475–1480.

⁹¹ Petech 1950: 8.

⁹² Ayinna 2012: 13–16.

⁹³ Lianyu's memorial, Guangxu 32/12/28, *Zoudu*, 1475–1480.

⁹⁴ Lianyu's memorial, Xuanton 1/3/14, *Zoudu*, 1515–1520; Lianyu's memorial, Xuanton 1/9/14, *Zoudu*, 1525–1528; Lianyu's memorial, Xuanton 3/2/22, *Zoudu*, 1540–1541; Lianyu's memorial, Xuanton 3/3/12, *Zoudu*, 1543–1544. With regard to the history of the Thirty-Nine Hor Tribes, see Karmay 2005.

⁹⁵ Lianyu's memorial, *Zoudu*, 1475–1480.

⁹⁶ Lianyu's memorial, Guangxu 33/11/3, *Zoudu*, 1496–1498.

words, the most important purpose of his military policies was to reinforce the basis of the *amban's* authority over the Ganden Phodrang government.

Lianyu's wariness with regard to the Tibetan military was further aroused when tensions emerged between him and the Ganden Phodrang government in 1909. He encountered strong opposition from the government to his plan to request the Sichuan provincial government to dispatch an army from Chengdu to Lhasa and to put those troops under his own control. The dispatch of the army was justified by the need to protect the trade marts on the India-Tibet border established according to the trade agreement with Britain in 1908. However, the Ganden Phodrang government was extremely alarmed by the idea that Zhao Erfeng, who had been conducting military campaigns and radical reforms in eastern Tibet since 1905, might arrive in Lhasa with a Chinese army.⁹⁷ In addition, Lianyu found that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama was returning to Lhasa via Kokonor in late 1909 after his long absence since 1904, and this had encouraged the Ganden Phodrang government to become more recalcitrant. Under the direction of the Dalai Lama himself who was at that time on his way to Lhasa, the Ganden Phodrang government ordered the former Kalön Shatra Paljor Dorjé (Bshad sgra Dpal 'byor rdo rje, 1860–1919) to rejoin the administration, ignoring Lianyu's opposition.⁹⁸ With the Dalai Lama and his entourage once again holding the initiative of the government, it would have been very difficult for Lianyu to make the Ganden Phodrang follow his orders. In his memorial to the court in October 1909, he expressed a severe criticism of Zhang Yintang's military reforms, saying that:

since he entered Tibet, Zhang Yintang ordered the Tibetans to subsidise the expense and train the Tibetan army; and [in doing so] he thoughtlessly relinquished [China's] sovereignty. It has further emboldened the Tibetan in their will to independence (*zili* 自立).⁹⁹

In February 1910, three months after the Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa, the Sichuan army did indeed reach Lhasa, despite the protests of the Ganden Phodrang government, and this made the Dalai Lama and his entourage (including Shatra Paljor Dorjé) flee once again, this time to India. The Dalai Lama then actively contacted foreign countries such as Britain, Russia, the United States and Japan to enlist their support

⁹⁷ Ho 2008: 234.

⁹⁸ Lianyu's memorial, Xuantong 1/9/14, *Zoudu*, 1525–1528. Shatra, a former Kalön as well as a favourite of the Dalai Lama, was removed from the office in 1904; see Youtai's memorial, Guangxu 30/8/20, 1197–1198.

⁹⁹ Lianyu's memorial, Xuantong 1/9/14, *Zoudu*, 1525–1528.

for Tibet's "independence".¹⁰⁰ Lianyu, amid rising anti-Qing sentiment among Tibetan people, issued new regulations to the Ganden Phodrang government not to privately possess and produce weapons such as cannons (*me gyogs*) and guns (*me mda'*), and not to build an arms factory (*me mda'i bzo khang*) without permission.¹⁰¹

Thus, after Zhang Yintang left Lhasa, his successor Lianyu virtually halted implementation of the military conscription system, and Zhang's other policies, such as expanding Tibetan forces and introducing military training into the education system, were also discontinued.

3.2. *The Extinction of the Chinese-Style Military Drill in Tibet After the Collapse of the Qing Empire*

The establishment of a military school was almost the only military policy of Zhang Yintang which Lianyu did actively implement and develop. The idea of founding a military school first briefly appeared in Zhang's proposition for the establishment of the "Nine Bureaus". He proposed that a new military school be established under the Military Bureau and planned to call graduates from the Beiyang Military Academy in Baodingfu as its instructors.¹⁰² After Zhang left Lhasa, Lianyu also thought that training officers was important and he established the school in Lhasa in the summer of 1908, named the Intensive Military School (Wubei Sucheng Xuetang 武備速成學堂).¹⁰³ Xie Guoliang (謝國樑, 1872-?), who was from Hunan Province and a graduate from the Zhejiang Military Academy (Zhejiang Wubei Xuetang 浙江武備學堂), was appointed as its first head teacher. He had himself received a Japanese-style military education in the academy.¹⁰⁴ Later he was also appointed to command the newly established unit, mentioned above, of Dam Mongols in 1909.¹⁰⁵ The new academy planned to enrol students from Tibetan, Dam Mongols, Gyade, and even Gorkhas.¹⁰⁶ The school lasted for approximately three years, until the clash between Tibetan and Qing armies after the outbreak of the 1911 Revolution. It

¹⁰⁰ Kobayashi 2019: 55–63.

¹⁰¹ Lianyu's order to the Ganden Phodrang government, *lo rgyus yig tshags*, vol. 3, 732, Catalogue Number: Xuantongchao 10.

¹⁰² Zhang to Waiwubu, Guangxu 33/3/2, *Zoudu*, 1342–1353.

¹⁰³ Lianyu's memorial, Xuantong 1/3/14, *Zoudu*, 1515–1520.

¹⁰⁴ Yajima 1983: 129.

¹⁰⁵ Zhonghua Minguo Waijiaobu Dang'an, 03–28–017–02–007, Xie Guoliang's petition including his "Tiaochen Zangshi (條陳藏事)" May 15th, 1920. Xie was dispatched by the Nanjing Government to Lhasa in 1930 as their special envoy to build a relationship with the Ganden Phodrang government; see Zhu 2016: 145–146.

¹⁰⁶ Lianyu's memorial, Xuantong 1/3/14, *Zoudu*, 1515–1520.

is difficult to ascertain with any clarity its organisation, actual numbers, the composition of its students, or how many students eventually graduated from it. Afterwards, following the collapse of the Qing Dynasty in 1912, almost all Chinese troops were expelled from Tibet to China via India at the end of that year; and thereafter the presence of Chinese military power almost completely disappeared in Lhasa. Nevertheless, the newly established Republic of China did not relinquish the ambition of re-incorporating Tibet into its sphere of control and in the summer of 1912 the Sichuan Provincial government dispatched military forces to eastern Tibet, which spurred the Ganden Phodrang government to dispatch its own reinforcements against the Chinese advance.

Even though thereafter China was recognised as a security threat for the Ganden Phodrang government, it seems that the history of Chinese military training for Tibetan army was not totally disowned by them. This can be seen in the fact that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, who returned to Lhasa in January 1913, asked Xie Guoliang, who remained in Lhasa, to train the Tibetan military. It can be imagined that if the Thirteenth Dalai Lama wanted to make the most of the existing Tibetan army who had received some training from the Chinese military officers, then Xie Guoliang, a former military commander and director of the Intensive Military School, could be a useful figure. According to Xie's records, although he was offered a salary, land and housing, he refused this offer and instead left Tibet via India in the same year.¹⁰⁷

The extinction of Chinese-style military training in Tibet may in hindsight seem inevitable, along with the emergence in Tibet of new training systems such as the Russian, British, and Japanese models which quickly replaced it.¹⁰⁸ However, how this transition took place during this short period needs further scrutiny. Aoki Bunkyō (青木文教), a Japanese monk from Nishi-Honganji Temple (西本願寺) who stayed in Lhasa for three years from 1913, described the process as follows:

After breaking away from Chinese control, the Tibetans destroyed the [Chinese] barracks and built new barracks in and around Lhasa. They are doing a comparative study of the military-drills of each country. Three barracks including small and large, for the regular troops are in Lhasa. The barracks for guardsmen is located near to the summer palace. Each of them also have branch barracks in Gyantsé and Shigatsé. Each garrison conducts different drills: a Russian-style drill is con-

¹⁰⁷ Zhonghua Minguo Waijiaobu Dang'an, 03-28-017-02-007, Xie Guoliang's petition including his "Tiaochen Zangshi" May 15th, 1920.

¹⁰⁸ Shakabpa 1967: 258-259.

ducted by a Mongol officer in Mongolian, a Chinese-style drill is conducted by Chinese instructors in Chinese, and a British Indian-style drill is conducted by the Tibetan instructors in English.¹⁰⁹

Thus, the Ganden Phodrang government rapidly replaced the former Qing military barracks with new ones built by themselves, and began to try out several foreign drills simultaneously.

Among them, it seems that the Russian-style military drill, which was provided by the Buryat-Mongol instructor, quickly increased its importance in Tibet around 1914.¹¹⁰ While the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had sojourned in Mongolia, China, and Kokonor from 1905 to 1909, he was under the escort of Buryat-Mongol guards, dispatched by Tsarist Russia, and some of them had been giving military training to his Tibetan attendants in Xining since as early as 1909.¹¹¹ In other words, the new-style military drills for the Tibetan army adopted after the expulsion of the Chinese garrisons in 1912, owed more to the legacy of these Buryat guards than they did to Zhang Yintang's ambitious programme of military training initiated at Lhasa in the same period.

According to information from British India's agent in 1914, "there were 500 cavalry and about 5,000 foot infantry all trained by a Mongol Russian in Russian model and their uniforms are in Cossacks style".¹¹² This number is perhaps overestimated, but it does appear that Russian-style drills were dominant over the prior Chinese-style drills at this point.

Why did the Dalai Lama and the Ganden Phodrang government still try to introduce Japanese military drills to Tibet in this period, when a Russian-style drill had already become influential there? Aoki's unpublished account reveals a clue:

The new type of military training is a blend of Chinese style (the Japanese-style drill around 1895) and Russian-style. At present, a Mongolian instructor is providing the Russian style mainly; and Tibetan and Chinese (naturalised Tibetan) instructors are teaching the Chinese style. So the general training has become a blend of the two. In its inexperience, it is at about the same level as primary students in my country, and cannot match the company-level military drill for junior high school.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Aoki 1920: 312.

¹¹⁰ Eric Teichman, who was a British diplomat and visited the Tibetan military camp in Chamdo in 1918, met a Buryat-Mongol instructor recommended by Agvan Dorjiev; see IOR/L/PS/11/714, Teichman to John Jordan, 28th May, 1918; Teichman 1922: 152.

¹¹¹ Wada 2019: 89.

¹¹² IOR/L/PS/11/79, Achung Sring to J.T. Rankins, Darjeeling, 14th May, 1914.

¹¹³ Aoki 2006: 366–367.

His observation betrays the condescension of a person from a country now ranked as one of the “major powers”, which had defeated Russia. Nevertheless, as a Japanese male citizen who had probably himself undertaken or at least witnessed military drilling as part of school education in Japan, Aoki's testimony has the value of coming from someone well-qualified to assess the quality of military drills.

Aoki's observation also indicates that there were some Tibetan military officers who could teach the Chinese-style military drill, aside from the Chinese defectors, and these were possibly individuals trained at the Chinese military academy in Lhasa before the collapse of the Qing. It would have been neither realistic nor wise for the Dalai Lama to invite new military instructors from China, and for this reason he seriously considered the introduction of a Japanese military drill to Tibet. According to Aoki, because the Dalai Lama realised “the Chinese-style military drill for the current Tibetan army derives from the Japanese military system”, he asked Aoki if he could invite Japanese instructors.¹¹⁴ It is not surprising that the Dalai Lama, who had visited China and met many Japanese dignitaries including military figures in Wutaishan and Beijing in 1908, might have been aware of the close relationship between the Qing and Meiji military systems.¹¹⁵ In his view, Japanese military training seemed an attractive option to introduce as an advanced military drill for the Tibetan army which would represent a smooth transition from the Chinese military drills, brought by the Qing. A further possibility is that the Dalai Lama considered the introduction of Japanese military training a realistic option since he was aware that both Britain and Russia had agreed not to send military representatives to Tibet in the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907, which mutually recognised Chinese suzerainty over Tibet.¹¹⁶

Aoki answered the Dalai Lama that it was difficult for him personally to persuade the Japanese government to send military officers, but he ordered all the texts on military teaching methods from Japan such as *Drill Regulations of Infantry (Hohei Sōten 歩兵操典)*, and translated them into Tibetan.¹¹⁷ At the same time, as is well-known, a Japanese traveller, Yajima Yasujirō (矢島保治郎), who was a former military officer of the Japanese Army who had been resident in Lhasa since the summer of 1912, was nominated as an instructor for the Tibetan army in 1914. He was a graduate of the Toyama Military School and had fought in the Russo-Japanese War as a sergeant in the infantry. He

¹¹⁴ Aoki 1920: 132.

¹¹⁵ Kobayashi 2019: 47–51; Tada 1965: 48.

¹¹⁶ With regard to Anglo-Russian Convention and the Tibet-Japan relations after the collapse of the Qing, see *ibid.*: 51–56.

¹¹⁷ Aoki 1920: 132–133.

gave a Tibetan regiment military training and later supervised training for the Dalai Lama's personal guards, illustrating the confidence the Dalai Lama had in him. This training was conducted in Japanese language, and it included drills used for companies as well as battalion classes of the Japanese army.¹¹⁸

In the summer of 1916, the Ganden Phodrang government held a military parade which included all styles—Russian, British, Japanese and “the system of the combined Chinese and Mongol army”—which took place over four days and was presided over by the Dalai Lama himself.¹¹⁹ Shakabpa states that the outcome of this was that the government decided that “the Tibetan army would be modelled along British lines thereafter”.¹²⁰ Yet, Japanese records show that Japanese-style military training in fact continued in Tibet even after this parade, although it gradually diminished since it was dependent on Yajima's service alone.¹²¹ Later, Yajima had no choice but to stop his duty as well, and left Lhasa in October 1918, as directed by the Ganden Phodrang government, due to suspicion about him from British India whose presence in Tibet was increasing.¹²²

The precise manner in which Japanese-style military drills disappeared from the Tibetan scene, and how the Tibetan military training was henceforth integrated with the British style are beyond the scope of this article, which hopes to have shown how Japanese military models, which had rapidly flourished in East and Inner Asia during the torrid period around the turn of the 20th century, reached Tibet, but eventually left only small footprints in Tibet's military history.¹²³

Conclusion

This paper has examined Zhang Yintang's military reforms in Tibet after the 1904 British invasion to Lhasa, by focusing on the history of the introduction of militarism in modern East and Inner Asia.

¹¹⁸ Yajima 1984: 81–82. On Yajima, see also Yasuko Komoto's article in this volume.

¹¹⁹ Shakabpa 1967: 259. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama's biography says that military drills (*dmag rtsed*) were held in Russian, Japanese, and British tactics, for three days; see D13N-kha: 164b.

¹²⁰ Shakabpa 1967: 259.

¹²¹ Hidaka 2008: 151–153.

¹²² *Ibid.*: 153–155.

¹²³ Teichman, when he visited the Tibetan army in August of 1918, reported “the greatly increased efficiency of the Tibetan troops under Japanese training, a tactful terminological inexactitude, seeing that squads of Tibetan soldiers spend half the day ‘sloping’, ‘presenting’, and ‘ordering’ arms [...]”; see IOR/L/P&S/714, Teichman to Jordan, on 21st August, 1918.

After its defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War (1895) and the ensuing foreign military intrusions during the Boxer War in 1900, the Qing initiated military reforms emulating Japanese-style military models. Chinese intellectuals also promoted the introduction of a militaristic education system inside China based on the notion of a "military-citizenry" which was inspired by the rising militarism in Japanese. Zhang Yintang's attempted military reforms in Lhasa were in line with this broader movement, while his policies were also unique in proposing a system for Tibet modelled on the British colonial army in India.

Zhang attempted to expand the recruitment of Tibetan soldiers, upgrade their equipment, and provide them advanced military training to enable them to cope with the threat of foreign intrusions. He was also planning to introduce the so-called "military-citizenry" education model to Tibet in order to inculcate a new national morality which included "martial spirit" and to promote greater patriotism towards Qing China. The ultimate goal of his reforms was the introduction of a universal conscription system in Tibet.

His plan to establish a conscription system never materialised. The Ganden Phodrang government did not support his radical military reforms due to the significant burden they would place on the government. His successor, Lianyu, also did not fully follow Zhang's policies because of his concerns that such an extensive policy of conscription and military training would create threat against the Qing amid the rising tension between Tibet and China. The potential of his policies to produce a stronger Tibetan army for the sake of supporting Qing dominance was later used, ironically, as a justification for the Ganden Phodrang government to mobilise its own army in resistance to the Qing's subsequent military campaigns in eastern Tibet.

The Chinese military reforms were, for the most part, conducted during the period when the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and Tsarong Dasang Dadul (Tsha rong zla bzang dgra 'dul, 1888–1959), who would later become the highest commander of the Tibetan army, were absent from Lhasa after the British invasion (1904). It is doubtful that these short-lived reforms had a significant impact on the later Tibetan military reforms after 1913, when the Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa. However, it seems fair to surmise that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama was influenced to some extent by what he had seen during his sojourn in China. In this period the Qing were rapidly trying to establish a modern army in all Chinese provinces, stimulated by the crisis of foreign invasions, and this may have impressed on the Dalai Lama the need for something similar in Tibet. As such, the military reform projects in Tibet under the Thirteenth Dalai Lama would benefit from further research in the context of East and Inner Asia's "militarised modernity", and not only in the context of Tibetan-British relations during this period.

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