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Soft-Power Resources of the Tibetan Government in Exile

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Table of Contents

PART 1 – Introduction

1.1 The Tibetan Government in Exile and Soft Power

Tibet. Few regions have inspired the imagination of the West to the extent that Tibet did. Tibet is an issue which has received almost constant international media attention in recent years. While working on this paper, not a day passed without Western online newspapers publishing articles on the situation in Tibet or the Dalai Lama. Particularly the events surrounding the Beijing 2008 Olympics turned Tibet into an unavoidable political event, even for those only marginally engaged in international news consumption. In March 2009 the 50th anniversary of the Lhasa uprising was marked by protests around the world.

While in many ways the Tibetan situation is very special, from a certain perspective it is by no means unique. There are countless peoples around the world struggling for self-determination or political representation. The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization[1] counts more than fifty member groups. Within China itself, numerous minorities face a similar fate to that of Tibet: Mongols, Zhuang, Yi, Hui, or Uighurs are only a few examples. But none of these groups seem to attract levels of international attention and support anywhere near those attracted by the Tibetans. Why? Why this prominence of the Tibetan issue? Beyond doubt, numerous factors are involved in explaining this phenomenon. One major factor, I argue in this paper, is the Tibetan exile government's soft power. Soft power is the ability to attract others to one's own purposes in order to get the outcomes one wants.

I use the theory of soft power, as proposed by Joseph Nye, as an analytical framework to delve into the question of why Tibetans, a population of around six million, less than 150,000 of which live in exile, with a small elite that has access to modern channels of international communication, has achieved such comparably vast levels of support around the world. Why has the Tibetan cause managed to engender so much appreciation and support in the West? To a large extent, I propose, the answer to this question is: *soft power*.

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1   http://www.unpo.org/content/view/7783/240/ (accessed: 29.4.2009).

The main arguments put forth in this paper are based on an analysis of the resources that produce soft power for the Tibetan exile leadership. As will become clear below soft power depends both on the context and on the recipient. For instance, one could analyze the Tibetan exile government's soft power with regard to India: It could be explored which soft-power resources the Tibetan leadership disposes of in its relations with the host country.[2] Or one could look into the role that the leadership's soft power plays in its relations with the Tibetan exile community: The collective representation of Tibetans as a unity has internal costs. Criticism of the leadership is not confined to the Tibetan Youth Congress' criticism of the Dalai Lama's middle path; a modern, educated class of exiled Tibetans is increasingly voicing its concerns. What role does the soft power of the Tibetan government in exile (TGE) play in the reconciliation of opposing forces within the exile community? One could also study how soft power attracts the Chinese civil society to advocate a solution to the Tibet question that would be acceptable to the Tibetan exile government. Or one could explore the Tibetan exile leadership's soft power with regard to the international community. Although an analysis of the TGE's soft power in relation to each of these spheres would give different results, certain aspects of these contexts are also related. For instance, if the TGE attracts foreign acknowledgement of its cause, say, in the form of international celebrities speaking out for Tibet, this in turn can enhance its attractiveness within the exile community. This paper focuses specifically on the Tibetan exile government's soft power in relation to the international context and here, in particular, to the West. This focus draws from the fact that Western political support is of strategic importance to the TGE.[3]

In an analysis of soft-power resources one can distinguish between those resources that attract elites of other countries and those resources more attractive to wider publics. I do not make this distinction here, because the TGE's soft-power resources that attract foreign elites (politicians, pop stars, actors) to the Tibetan cause seem to be the same that also attract wider publics. I use the term 'wider publics' in this context and not 'masses,' because the 'masses' in the West tend not to be attracted to and aware of the Tibetan cause to the same extent as societal strata with higher levels of education.

Before outlining the research questions, the relevance of this paper in the context of international development studies shall be briefly discussed.

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2   In India, Tibet is represented by the Tibetan exile government as a zone of geo-strategic or military significance for India, which is quite a different approach to that followed regarding the West (see Barnett 2001:293).
3   See section 3.13.3 'Objectives of the TGE in Practice.'

1.2 The Soft Power of the Tibetan Government in Exile in the Context of Development Studies

In what way is an inquiry into the Tibetan exile government relevant to the study of international development? How is soft power, a theory of international relations, of public diplomacy, of political science related to development? Answers to these questions are conditional upon one's definition of 'development.'

The discussion regarding a definition of development has been going on for decades, and it might not be exaggerated to assume that there are as many definitions as there are people engaged in the subject.[4] I agree with Norberg-Hodge's (2001:332) view when she asks, "what criteria for judging a society could be more important than, in social terms, the well-being of people and, in environmental terms, sustainability?" I see 'human development' as being a process leading to the overall enhancement of well-being, of satisfaction, happiness and freedom for all people involved, in line with their own preferences. My notion of 'development' has been influenced mainly by the Bhutanese concept of development as the maximizing of Gross National Happiness (GNH) and by Amartya Sen's concept of *development as freedom.*

Maximizing GNH as opposed to GNP, as a maxim for the Bhutanese development process, puts the focus not only on socio-economic progress, but also on "less quantifiable factors such as the emotional and spiritual well-being of the people" (Mathou 1999:615). This approach implies an "explicit commitment to preserve Bhutan's cultural heritage and natural environment" (ibid.). In *Development as Freedom*, Sen sees development as "a process of expanding the real freedom that people enjoy" (Sen 2000:3). An important aspect to this concept is the expansion of people's freedom of choice, to determine the way they want to live. Lack of substantive freedoms can result from a number of circumstances, among which Sen lists "a denial of political and civil liberties by authoritarian regimes and [...] imposed restrictions on the freedom to participate in the social, political and economic life of the community" (ibid:4). Political and civil rights are thus a decisive aspect to this conception of development.

When judging the reality of what seems to have been occurring in Tibet since the beginning of the Chinese occupation in the 1950s with regard to the aforementioned perspectives on development, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that development, in the sense of enhancing

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4   On different ways of interpreting and defining 'development,' see Nederveen Pieterse (2008).

freedom or maximizing GNH, has not come about for the Tibetan people. Quite on the contrary, overwhelming evidence suggests that what has been happening in Tibet, from a Tibetan perspective can best be described using terms like 'regression,' 'setback' or 'negative development,' to take a moderate stance. International discourse on Tibet has frequently described the situation using terms like 'colonialism,' 'cultural genocide' and 'systematic human rights violations.'

Countless organizations and scholars have exposed the magnitude of Chinese atrocities in Tibet over the decades to some extent, and information on the various kinds of Tibetan suffering under Chinese rule is widely available and known. Particularly during the Great Leap Forward and the ensuing Cultural Revolution hundreds of thousands of Tibetans died as a result of Chinese occupation and policies. Ziemer (2001:236-7) refers to information compiled by the TGE and Amnesty International when stating:

> Between 1949 and 1979, 173,221 Tibetans were killed after being tortured in prison; 156,758 Tibetans were summarily executed; 432,705 Tibetans were killed in fighting; and 92,731 more 'struggled to death.' In all, more than 1.2 million Tibetans have been killed, out of a population of just over 6 million. The typical government reprisal for calling for an independent Tibet, carrying a Tibetan flag, or possessing or distributing books by H.H. the Dalai Lama includes long periods of imprisonment, often accompanied by torture, solitary confinement, and forced labor. Over 6,000 Buddhist monasteries have been destroyed, and the monasteries' religious texts, statutes, and artifacts have been burned, broken, or sold abroad.

A 2008 Amnesty International report states that "[f]reedom of religion, expression and association of Tibetans continued to be severely restricted [...] Peaceful expressions of support for the Dalai Lama continued to be harshly punished. Efforts to pass information abroad about crackdowns against Tibetans were harshly punished" (AI 2008). Any form of political dissent within Tibet appears to be encountered by Chinese authorities with harsh reprisals, frequently involving torture and death. Religious activity is tightly controlled and repressed. International media repeatedly reports on human rights violations in Tibet, including torture, arbitrary arrest, inhibition of religious freedom and the exclusion of Tibetans from political participation. Time and again, the situation Tibetans face in Tibet leads to demonstrations, protests and uprisings, despite the invariable oppressive reactions they engender. Countless studies and reports relate the immense suffering of Tibetans under Chinese rule. Hundreds of thousands of Tibetans have fled into exile. What kind of development is taking place in Tibet when the Tibetan perspective is taken into account?

A discussion on 'development' in Tibet hinges on one's perspective. Beyond doubt, economic development has taken place in Tibet since the PRC came to power and particularly since the opening of China to the world economy and the subsequent economic expansion. By some (important) measures, 'development' has indeed taken place. China is modernizing Tibet. It is investing, building infrastructure and promoting industries. Per capita income is rising, employment is being created and certain social indicators, such as life expectancy and literacy are reportedly improving. In a March 2009 CNN interview, the director of the China National Association of International Studies, Victor Gao, states:

> [I]f you look at the track record over the past fifty years, life expectancy for the Tibetans have [*sic*] almost doubled, and Tibet has been achieving double-digit growth rates ever since 1994; living standards have improved significantly, and infrastructure build up – including the major railway – has been completed. So I think if you look at the track record over the past 50 years, facts speak for themselves (Gao 2009).

A March 2009 *Report on the Economic and Social Development of Tibet*, produced by the China Tibetology Research Center and available at the official website of the Chinese government, publishes a number of social and economic indicators for Tibet:[5] From 1959 to 2008, total GDP of Tibet increased from 174 million to 39,591 billion yuan; GDP per capita increased from 142 to 13,861 yuan over the same period. GDP growth was particularly strong since 1984, when it totaled just over 1.3 billion yuan. The report continues that "average life expectancy is an important index of human development. The current average life expectancy in Tibet is 67 years [...] In contrast, the figure was only 35.5 in old Tibet" (CTRC 2009). Before the "democratic reform," the illiteracy rate in Tibet was 95%. According to the report, the illiteracy rate has been reduced to under 2.4%.

In a statement to Reuters, the Dalai Lama noted: "I recognize that in all these years, the Chinese have modernized Tibet in certain ways. They have built schools, hospitals, roads, houses. But at the same time, they are introducing political education in schools and this is based on Chinese culture. The risk is of the extinction of our culture" (cited from Barnett 2001:314).

When a group of people is largely deprived of ownership and participation in its development process, when it suffers under foreign occupation and repression by an authoritarian regime, what can it do? Or better, what can an exile government do when it fears "cultural extinction" in its homeland while facing a political and economic power as vast as China, with an estimated population of over 1.3 billion and with more troops than there are Tibetan civilians?

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5   The following is cited from (CTRC 2009).

This question is not easy to answer, and an attempt at answering it would exceed the scope of this paper. As argued below,[6] a major objective of exile governments tends to be the mobilization of international financial, moral and political support. The Tibetan exile government has been extremely successful in the mobilization of such support, even though it has ultimately not achieved the regaining of its homeland.

In many ways the Tibetan case is quite unique. But nevertheless, an analysis of some factors that have led to certain successes, might possibly be applicable to other cases where groups of people perhaps face a similar challenge. As is subsequently argued, soft power has played a substantial role in producing some desirable outcomes for the Tibetan leadership.

In my judgment, knowledge of soft power can be very useful for a wide variety of development objectives. When significant hard power resources are lacking, as is the tendency in many developing societies and unrepresented peoples, soft power[7] can be a valuable resource. When a group is dependent on international support to further its cause, knowledge and application of soft power can be of much help. When, say, an oppressed indigenous society manages to attract considerable numbers of individuals to its values and purposes, particularly within the powerful Western countries, pressure can be exerted on the oppressing government and funds can be raised. Additionally, when decisions are made over the distribution of loans or grants, soft 'attractive' power is certainly involved. The availability of hard-power resources and the importance of soft-power resources can be said to have a negative correlation: The scarcity of hard-power resources increases the importance of soft-power. The ability to attract international attention, followers and supporters, or lack thereof, can be decisive for the success or failure of a social endeavour. In a sense, the present paper is a case study of this ability. The Tibetan exile government has been highly successful in attracting attention and support from around the world.

1.3. Research Questions

My intention in this essay, in a nutshell, is to explore and analyze the soft-power resources of the Tibetan government in exile in the international context. Using soft power as a theoretical lens

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6   See section 3.13.2 'Objectives of Exile Governments in Theory.'
7   In the sense of a resource *per se* that can contribute to the achievement of objectives, not as a complement to hard power.

through which the Government in Exile shall be examined, the following research questions will be addressed:

What are the soft-power resources of the Tibetan government in exile?

How has the TGE's soft power contributed or not, to approaching the achievement of its objectives?

An endeavour to answer these questions raises a number of further questions: What are soft-power resources? What is the Tibetan government in exile? What are its objectives? In what ways have some of these objectives been accomplished? This paper is structured in accordance with these questions.

1.4. Chapter Outline

An introduction to the theory of *soft power* is offered in Part 2, which seeks to explain soft power and to define the term *soft-power resources.* Part 3 outlines the structure and organization of the Tibetan government in exile. It introduces the three-branch political system and addresses representational claims, the position of the 14th Dalai Lama, the TGE's relation to exile Tibetan 'NGOs,' the process of democratization of the exile government, the status of women, Tibetan Buddhism and politics, as well as the TGE's approach to the exile struggle. Part 3 ends by examining the TGE's objectives, particularly in relation to the international sphere. Part 4 deals with one major objective of the TGE – that of achieving international support. A brief analysis will attend to the degree of international support that Tibet has attained in recent years. Parts 5, 6 and 7 analyze the Tibetan exile government's soft power resources. Part 5 introduces and discusses the *Myth of Tibet*, demonstrating how it acts as a soft-power resource for the TGE and as fertile ground for Tibetan identity representations. Part 6 deals with the person of the 14th Dalai Lama as an agent of soft power, and Part 7 looks as how the values represented and communicated by the TGE act as soft-power resources. The conclusion, Part 8, returns to and endeavours to answer the above research questions.

PART 2 – The Theory of *Soft Power*

2.1 Introduction to the Theory of *Soft Power*

Part 2 of this paper constitutes the theoretical outline for the arguments to follow in the latter sections. It intends to give the reader an overview of the theoretical concept of *soft power*, the lens through which the success of the Tibetan exile government in attracting international support shall be examined further on.

First and foremost, soft power will be explained as a theoretical concept and a number of examples are given for clarification of the theory. In a next step, soft power is contrasted with hard power. After a brief historic overview of the term *soft power*, the importance of soft power in the global information age will be addressed. The term *soft-power resources* will be defined in the ensuing section. Part 2 ends with a discussion on using the theory of soft power as an analytical tool.

For the purpose of this essay, soft power is described and used in the sense that Joseph S. Nye, Jr., who coined the term, understands it. This section is mainly based on Nye's 2004 publication *Soft Power – The Means to Success in World Politics.*[8]

2.2 What is Soft Power?

> What is soft power? It is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies (Nye 2004a:x).

In simple terms, power can be defined as "the capability of acting or of producing an effect."[9] Nye (2004a:2) defines power as the "capacity to produce desired outcomes" (ibid:150) and, more specifically, as the "ability to influence the behaviour of others to get the outcomes one wants." The behaviour of others can be influenced in a variety of ways. One of these ways is to get others to want what you want by attracting and co-opting them. In essence, this is the wielding of soft power.

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8   Nye (2004a).
9   Webster's Third New International Dictionary, available at:
    http://collections.chadwyck.co.uk/home/home_mwd.jsp (accessed 16.2.2009).

Soft power is power that arises through attraction. In world politics, a country can achieve its desired outcomes because other countries, attracted by the example it sets in terms of values, ideology, culture, or policies, want to follow it. "A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries – admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness – want to follow it. [...] This soft power – getting others to want the outcomes you want – co-opts people rather than coerces them" (Nye 2004a:5).

Insofar as soft power involves the changing of other people's or nation's preferences, it can be interpreted as a type of manipulation. However, soft power often functions at very subtle, often undeliberate levels, as suggested by some of the examples below. Soft power can be defined as a type of influence resulting from the creation – deliberate or unintentional – of a positive association with oneself in others.

> If I am persuaded to go along with your purposes without any explicit threat or exchange taking place – in short, if my behavior is determined by an observable but intangible attraction – soft power is at work (Nye 2004b:2).

Nye (2004a:6; 2004b:2) makes the important distinction between soft power and influence. While influence can also be based on hard power in the form of threats or payments, soft power is essentially attractive power. Soft power goes beyond the power gained by argument or through persuasion, even though that might be an important part of it.

> In the case of soft power, the question is what messages are sent and received by whom under which circumstances, and how that affects our ability to obtain the outcomes we want. Messages and images are conveyed partly by government policies at home and abroad, and partly by popular and higher culture. But the same messages are 'downloaded' and interpreted with different effects by different receivers in different settings. Soft power is not a constant, but something that varies by time and place (Nye 2004a:44).

An important aspect of soft power is the fact that it is not entirely in governments' hands, nor is it ever entirely controllable by government or anybody else. Beyond doubt, government and particularly foreign policies have a strong impact on a country's soft power. But the civil society, non-governmental actors, popular and high culture, and values associated with culture are equally important in increasing or reducing soft power. "[S]oft power [...] is in part a social and economic by-product rather than solely a result of official government action" (Nye 2004a:32).

Soft power also depends on the recipient. One and the same policy or phenomenon can produce differing effects in different contexts. "American films that make the United States attractive in China or Latin America may have the opposite effect and actually reduce American soft power in

Saudi Arabia or Pakistan" (Nye 2004a:12). In Iran, for instance, "the same Hollywood images that repel the ruling mullahs may be attractive to the younger generation" (ibid:13).

Soft power so far has been portrayed as being mainly a phenomenon concerning governments. Although Nye concentrates his conceptualization of soft power on nation states and, in particular, the United States of America, he does explicitly state that soft power is not limited to countries. Many non-state actors are highly relevant in terms of soft power on the international stage. NGOs have the capability to attract followers, which forces governments to take them into account both as allies and adversaries (Nye 2004a:90). Organized religious movements have had soft power for centuries. "The Roman Catholic church is organized on a global scale, and many Catholics around the world adhere to its teachings on issues like birth control and abortion because of attraction, not coercion" (Nye 2004a:94). Corporate brand names equally possess soft power, as do intergovernmental organizations like the United Nations or the World Trade Organization. Nye (2004a:30-2;90-8) projects that the trends of the information age[10] will contribute to an increase in the soft power of non-state actors.

> Soft power has always been a key element of leadership. The power to attract—to get others to want what you want, to frame the issues, to set the agenda—has its roots in thousands of years of human experience. Skillful leaders have always understood that attractiveness stems from credibility and legitimacy. Power has never flowed solely from the barrel of a gun (Nye 2004b:4).

Nye (2004a) illustrates the concept of soft power using various real world examples both at the general level and the more specific level of international relations of the past and present. A few of these examples shall now be cited to further clarify the concept of soft power to the reader.

"Much of American soft power has been produced by Hollywood, Harvard, Microsoft, and Michael Jordan" (Nye 2004a:17). Since 2008, Barack Obama appears to be a major source of soft power for the United States.

"Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others." (ibid:5) At the personal level for instance, the larger or physically stronger partner in a relationship is not necessarily the more powerful one. Where power resides, depends on "the mysterious chemistry of attraction" (ibid). Similarly, in business, leadership is not only a question of command power, but leading by example and attracting others to one's own purposes are important elements of successful leadership. "It is difficult to run a large organization by commands alone" (ibid). Another

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10 See section 2.5 'Soft Power in a Global Information Age.'

example given by Nye relates to present-day methods of community-based policing, which strive to make the police "sufficiently friendly and attractive that a community wants to help them achieve shared objectives" (ibid:6).

In the arena of international relations, according to Nye, the United States is currently the country with the largest soft-power ressources, the closest competitors being the countries of Europe (ibid:75). Measures[11] for American soft power include: the number of immigrants it attracts each year, which is six times that of second-ranked Germany; the fact that the United States is by far the world's number one exporter of films and television shows; the number of foreign university students enrolled (28 percent of all students studying in a foreign country were enrolled in the United States); or the fact that the USA ranks first in Nobel prizes awarded in physics, chemistry and economics (ibid:33-4).

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union engaged in a massive campaign to foster its soft power, attempting to promote the attractiveness of its communist system. "The USSR [...] placed great emphasis on demonstrating the superiority of its cultural and educational systems, spending large sums on the arts" (Nye 2004a:74). It attracted many people in Europe due to its resistance to Hitler, and many in Asia and Africa because of its opposition to European imperialism (ibid:73). The Soviet Union's soft power declined after its brutal invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In these cases, its "hard power actually undercut its soft power" (ibid:9).

Presently, there are certain countries that enjoy greater influence on the stage of international relations than their military or economic power would suggest. A typical example is Norway, which has been contributing actively to peace talks concerning conflicts in the Middle East, Latin America or Asia during the past two decades. These contributions have exposed Norway as a peacemaker. Such a status is associated with values that are shared with many other nations, and hence has enhanced Norway's soft power in the international political arena (Nye 2004a:10). Other scandinavian countries or Canada enjoy similarly high levels of soft power due to their propagation of peace, their dedication to multilateralism, and their relative generosity concerning foreign aid.

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11 The following figures are from 2004.

2.3 Soft Power and Hard Power

The aim of this section is to clarify the difference between hard power – the power to coerce, and soft power – the power to attract (Nye 2004b:1).

There are a variety of ways to achieve desired outcomes. In terms of affecting the behaviour of others, "[y]ou can coerce them with threats; you can induce them with payments; or you can attract and co-opt them to want what you want" (Nye 2004a:2). In effect, these are the three types of power in the field of international relations according to Nye's conceptualization. The first two types, military and economic power, fall into the category of hard power. The latter is soft power.

Hard power as well as soft power relate to the ability to affect the behaviour of others according to one's own preferences and objectives. The distinction between them is one of degree, both regarding the types of behaviour involved and the tangibility of the resources employed (see Table 1).

Table 1: Power

	Hard		Soft	
Spectrum of Behaviours	**Command** coercion inducement ⬅ ● ●		agenda setting attraction ● ● ➡	**Co-opt**
Most Likely Resources	force payments sanctions bribes		institutions values culture policies	

Source: Nye (2004a:8)

According to Nye's model, behaviour for influencing others ranges along a spectrum with one extreme being command power and the other being co-option. Coercion – usually military – and inducement – usually economic – are the prevalent types of behaviour linked to command power.

> Co-optive power – the ability to shape what others want – can rest on the attractiveness of one's culture and values or the ability to manipulate the agenda of political choices in a manner that makes others fail to express some preferences because they seem to be too unrealistic. [...] Soft-power resources tend to be associated with the co-optive end of the spectrum of behaviour, whereas hard-power resources are usually associated with command power (Nye 2004a:7).

However, Nye also points out the imperfection of this relationship: Sometimes countries exercising command power enjoy a power status that is in part based on attraction caused by the existence of myths. Both Hitler and Stalin for example tried to develop myths of invincibility or inevitability, thereby attracting others (ibid:9). In other cases command power can be used to build institutions which later act as agents of soft power. Hard power can thus in certain situations create soft power. A vibrant economy can produce hard power resources for, say, payments or sanctions, but can at the same time act as a source of attractiveness. Along the same lines, economic and military decline is likely not only to affect hard power, but also attractiveness, hence soft power. Hard power can also undermine soft power, as has been observed in the case of countless military aggressions.[12] Nye argues that American military aggressions in Afghanistan and particularly Iraq undercut American soft power considerably, as had been the case during the Vietnam War (Nye 2004a:26-7; 35).

Despite these inconsistencies, the relationship between hard and soft power, the different types of behaviour involved and the respective resources required, is strong enough to act as a useful model (Nye 2004a:8).

Table 2: Three Types of Power

	Behaviours	Primary Currencies	Government Policies
Military Power	coercion deterrence protection	threats force	coercive diplomacy war alliance
Economic Power	inducement coercion	payments sanctions	aid bribes sanctions
Soft Power	attraction agenda setting	values culture policies institutions	public diplomacy bilateral and multilateral diplomacy

Source: (Nye 2004a:31)

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12 "As was observed during an Aspen Institute round table, 'soft power supports the exercise of military and hard economic powers, and arrogant or unjust use of hard power can erode soft power'" (Bollier 2003:17, cited from Hocking 2007:33).

Table 2 summarizes this section, clarifying once again the distinction between the three types of power according to Nye's conceptualization, in terms of behaviours, primary currencies and government policies.

2.4 Brief History of the Term *Soft Power*

The history of the term *soft power* is recent. The term was first introduced by Joseph S. Nye in his 1990 publication *Bound to Lead*.[13] In the ensuing years, the term entered public discourse, being used by scholars, editorial writers, and political leaders around the world (Nye 2004a:xi). According to Nye (2004a:150), he builds his concept on what Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz called the 'second face of power.'[14]

The term *soft power* is now generally accepted and widely used.[15] Particularly in relation to the foreign policy approach of U.S. President Barack Obama and his administration, the term *soft power* is frequently used in international media.[16] However, the battle for foreign 'hearts and minds' fought by political leaders is by no means recent. Melissen (2007:3) points out that "[r]eferences to the nation and its image go as far back as the Bible, and international relations in ancient Greece and Rome, Byzantium and the Italian Renaissance were familiar with diplomatic activity aimed at foreign publics." The invention of the printing press in the 15th century had a massive impact on the remoulding of foreign public opinions in Europe. The French *Ancien Régime* in particular put tremendous effort into influencing its country's reputation, which it considered one of the prime sources of a nation's power. Another example is Turkey under Kemal Atatürk, which endeavoured considerably to alter its identity and image as perceived in foreign countries (ibid.).

In 1939, British realist E. H. Carr classified power in international relations in three categories: military power, economic power, and power over opinion (Nye 2004a:8). "Power over opinion, [...] the third form of power, [...] is [...] not less essential for political purposes than military and economic power, and has always been closely associated with them. The art of persuasion has always been a necessary part of the equipment of political leader" [*sic*] (Carr 2001:120).

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13 Nye (1990); see also Nye (2004a:150).
14 See Bachrach/Baratz (1962; 1963).
15 See for instance Melissen (2007:4), Hocking (2007:33), Anon. (2006).
16 For example Astier (2008); Harris (2009); Kristof (2009).

Over the past years, numerous publications on soft power have been released. For example, Joshua Kurlantzick's (2007) *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, concentrates on how China's soft power is aiding it in the accomplishment of its objectives, particularly in Asia and Africa, but also in the international sphere at large. It was described as "a well-researched examination of China's 'peaceful rise' by way of soft power" (Gomez 2007). In *The Arts of Influence: Soft Power and Distant Relationships*, Hugh MacDonald (2008) applies the concept of soft power on workplace relationships. *The New Public Diplomacy – Soft Power in International Relations*, edited by Dr Melissen (2007), gives insight into how the theory of soft power has entered the study and practice of international relations.

The term *soft power* has become integral part of the discourse regarding public diplomacy and international relations.

2.5 Soft Power in a Global Information Age

While advocating the importance of taking soft power into account in world politics, Nye (2004a) makes numerous references to the current global information age. Globalization and the information and internet revolution are transforming the context in which political and power struggle take place. Borderless virtual communities and networks are changing politics. Many transnational corporations and nongovernmental organizations will enjoy increasing levels of soft power, and attract citizens without consideration of national borders (Nye 2004a:30-2).

Particularly in the current information age, where the transmission and processing of information has become very cheap, Nye expects soft power to gain importance relative to the other types of power.

> The countries that are likely to be more attractive and gain soft power in the information age are those with multiple channels of communication that help to frame issues; whose dominant culture and ideas are closer to prevailing global norms (which now emphasize liberalism, pluralism, and autonomy); and whose credibility is enhanced by their domestic and international values and policies (ibid:31-2).

2.6 Definition of *Soft-Power Resources*

In behavioural terms, Nye defines soft power as attractive power. In terms of resources, soft-power resources are understood as the assets that produce such attraction. "In international politics, the ressources that produce soft power arise in large part from the values an organization or country expresses in its culture, in the examples it sets by its internal practices and policies, and in the way it handles its relations with others" (Nye 2004a:8).

> The ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority (Nye 2004b:2).

Corresponding to the intangibility of soft power, the resources that produce it tend to be of intangible nature. Nye (2004a:11) states:

> The soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority.)

Nye (ibid.) defines culture as a "set of values and practices that create meaning for a society." If these values and practices are attractive to others, they have the potential to create influence. "When a country's culture includes universal values and its policies promote values and interests that others share, it increases the probability of obtaining its desired outcomes because of the relationships of attraction and duty that it creates" (Nye 2004a:11).

For example, the United States benefits from its universalistic culture, because many throughout the world feel attracted by it (Nye 2004a:11-13). The values associated with Tibetan culture and religion, such as compassion, tolerance, peacefulness or non-violence, are attractive to, and shared by many Westerners. Such values are examples for soft-power resources that benefit the Tibetan exile government, as will be argued in this paper.

Political values can be another major soft-power resource. Groups striving for political representation in autocratic countries will be attracted by the political value of democracy as embodied by the more democratic countries. If a political value is shared by others, it will act as an attractive force benefitting those that communicate it. Many political "values like democracy, human rights, and individual opportunities are deeply seductive" (Nye 2004a:x).

Soft power can also stem from a country's foreign policies. If these are seen as hypocritical and illegitimate, they will tend to alienate and repell many people, as was the case with the USA resulting from the Iraq War (Nye 2004a:14). But if foreign policies are seen to have moral authority, and are communicated in a way that makes them seem to correspond to other people's interests, they can be a strong soft-power resource.

> The values a government champions in its behaviour at home (for example, democracy), in international institutions (working with others), and in foreign policy (promoting peace and human rights) strongly affect the preferences of others (Nye 2004a:14).

But soft-power resources are not entirely in the control of governments. Cultural attraction can be a soft-power resource that is largely outside government control. Shared values are hence an important soft-power resource. In relationships between states or groups of people, shared values and purposes have considerable implications in terms of exerting influence and power. Shared values can indicate an "observable but intangible attraction" (Nye 2004a:7). Every value that a certain group communicates as being inherent in its culture and way of life or to its politics, that is shared in another group, can act as a soft-power resource.

The charisma of a central political figure or the leader of an organization can also act as a soft-power resource (Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King are a few examples). If a leader is widely respected and perceived as committed to a just cause, to values that people can identify with, his statements will receive attention and his personality will attract people to supporting his agenda.

"[A]ttraction often has a diffuse effect of creating general influence, rather than producing an easily observable specific action. Just as money can be invested, politicians speak of storing up political capital to be drawn upon in future circumstances" (Nye 2004b:3). Nye makes it quite clear that the possession of soft-power resources do not *necessarily* lead to desired outcomes. It depends on many factors, particularly on the recipient. "Attraction does not always determine others' preferences, but this gap between power measured as resources and power judged as the outcomes of behaviour is not unique to soft power. It occurs with all forms of power" (Nye 2004a.6). Nye uses World War II as an example: Eventhough Britain and France had more tanks than Germany, France fell in 1940. The "advantage in military power resources did not accurately predict the outcome of the battle" (ibid.).

Major soft-power resources are thus shared values, the engagement in causes that are perceived as just, and a charismatic political leader. Many more examples of soft-power resources could be listed here, however for the purpose of this section, i.e. the clarification of the term, we will stick with the broad definition of *soft-power resources* as being the assets that produce attraction in terms of soft power.

2.7 Using the Theory of *Soft Power* as an analytical Tool

Soft power is a recent theory and it has not been embraced entirely without critique. Jim Hoagland, columnist for the Washington Post, for instance, complained that the concept of *soft power*, similar to *globalization*, is too "elastic" to be useful (cited from Nye 2006). Nye (ibid.) counters that Hoagland "fails to understand the difference between power resources and behavior." As discussed above,[17] the possession of soft-power resources do not automatically lead to desired outcomes.

Nye (2006) argues that

> it's quite possible to quantify sources of soft power. One can, for example, measure and compare the cultural, communications, and diplomatic resources that might produce soft power for a country. Public opinion polls can quantify changes in a country's attractiveness over time. Nor is hard power as easy to quantify as Hoagland seems to believe. The apparent precision of the measurement of hard power resources is often spurious and might be called "the concrete fallacy" – the notion that the only important resources are those that can be dropped on your foot (or on a city). That's a mistake. The United States had far more measurable military resources than North Vietnam, but it nonetheless lost the Vietnam War.

Whether soft power actually transforms into concrete and tangible outcomes depends on the context and on "the skills with which the resources are converted into outcomes" (Nye 2006).

Soft power is a reality. Although it might not be the most straight-forward theory to apply, given the intangible nature of soft power, the model does help to explain the surge in Western support for the Tibetan cause in recent decades.

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17 See section 2.6 'Definition of *Soft-Power Resources*.'

Part 2 has set the theoretical foundation for exploring the soft-power resources of the Tibetan exile government. Soft power has been defined as the ability to achieve desired outcomes through attraction rather than coercion or payments, and examples have been provided to draw a clearer picture of the concept. Soft-power resources have been determined as the assets that produce attraction in terms of soft power, for instance an attractive personality, shared values or policies perceived as just. The following part introduces the Tibetan exile government.

PART 3 – Outline of the Tibetan Government in Exile – Structure, Organization, Objectives

3.1 Introduction to the Tibetan Government in Exile

In line with an approach to the central research questions of this paper, Part 3 offers an outline of the Tibetan government in exile.[18] Vast literature has been published on the TGE. The following account is tailored for the purpose of this essay: To explore the soft-power resources of the TGE and to examine how they have contributed to the possible achievement of its objectives. Part 3 deals with some central questions regarding the exile government: Who are we talking about when we speak of the exile government? Who does it represent? How is it organized? What position does the 14th Dalai Lama hold? In what ways are exile Tibetan NGOs related to the TGE? Can the exile Tibetan political system be described as democratic? What status do women have? What is the relationship between religion and politics? How does the TGE approach the exile struggle? What are the TGE's objectives?

In 1951 the *Seventeen-Point Agreement*[19] was signed by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Tibetan government, granting Tibet internal autonomy and allowing China suzerainty over Tibet in foreign affairs. In the ensuing years the resistance movement in Tibet as well as China's aspiration to political dominance intensified, leading to the Lhasa uprising in 1959 and the flight into Indian exile of the 14th Dalai Lama, the spiritual and political leader of Tibet. A mass exodus out of Tibet and into the neighbouring countries of India, Bhutan and Nepal followed (Korom 1997a:1). By 1962, about 85,000 Tibetans had arrived in exile. In 1980, the number of Tibetans in exile had reached around 100,000 (Methfessel 1995:37). According to official figures of the exile leadership, there are currently around 122,000 Tibetans in exile. The majority of Tibetans in exile live in 53 settlements[20] in India, Nepal and Bhutan (Roemer 2008b:31).

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18 For an account on the early years of the Tibetan diaspora and the struggles associated with the settlement in new environments, see Roemer (2008a:58-87). For a discussion on early Tibetan history until the Chinese occupation, see von Brück (2004:11-39). On the invasion of Tibet and its aftermath, see Heath (2005:91-111). For a Tibetan perspective on the political circumstances of the Chinese occupation from 1950 to 1959, including the early Tibetan exiles in the 1950s, see Tethong (2000:42-53).

19 For a detailed account on the *Seventeen-Point Agreement*, see Goldstein (2007:99-113), on the implementation of the *Seventeen-Point Agreement*, see Goldstein (2007:301-313).

20 Most of these Tibetan settlements were constructed during the 1960s.

Immediate necessities after arriving in exile included the installation of a central administration for governing the exile community, the establishment of educational facilities for the refugee children, and the planning for the economic development of the people (Boyd 2004:24). The major objectives at this point were the creation of an independent economic basis for the refugee communities, and the conservation of the traditional Tibetan culture (Methfessel 1995:42). The 14th Dalai Lama initiated the establishment of a Tibetan exile government on Indian soil.[21]

McLeod Ganj, a former British hill station 500 km north of New Delhi, on the slopes above the town of Dharamsala in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, became the seat of the Tibetan government in exile (TGE) in 1960. The town, also known as "Little Lhasa" (Kollmar-Paulenz 2006:174), has become almost entirely Tibetan: one finds Tibetan shops, hotels and restaurants, Tibetan schools and Buddhist temples. The Tibetan government district is located in Gangchen Kyishong, half way between Dharamsala and McLeod Ganj (Methfessel 1995:42). The main duties of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the executive organ of the TGE, include the organization and administration of the refugee community, and the guiding of the Tibetan struggle for national self-rule (Phuntso 2004:125). Buddhism and democracy, a combination of traditional values with Western political concepts, are the main principles characterizing the structure and policies of the CTA (Roemer 2008a:90).

3.2 Who does the Central Tibetan Administration represent?

Phuntso (2004:126) states that "[t]he Tibetans, both inside and outside Tibet, recognise the CTA as their sole and legitimate government. It is also increasingly recognised as the legitimate government and true representative of the Tibetan people by parliaments around the world." The statement is a self-portrayal of the CTA, reproduced from an official CTA publication (CTA, cited from Roemer 2008a:88). Roemer's (ibid.) approach is somewhat more critical: "This statement portrays the CTA as sole representative of the Tibetan nation, which enjoys national loyalty and is internationally recognized in that position. But the reality shows that the CTA lacks official international recognition and also struggles with the loyalties within the Tibetan community."

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21 For details on the dynamics between the 14th Dalai Lama, Nehru and the PRC leadership in the early 1960s see Guha (2008:306-41).

It is a fact that the CTA has not been officially recognized by a single country in the world as being the legitimate government of Tibet. "Most foreign governments acknowledge that Tibet is now a part of China. [...] International law affecting China also covers Tibet and in that sense confirms Chinese sovereignty" (Heath 2005:251). Numerous parliaments and heads of state have indeed invited the Dalai Lama[22] and this is tantamount to a certain acknowledgement of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan cause. However, on most occasions the Dalai Lama was invited, at least officially, as a religious and spiritual leader, not as the political leader of the exile government of Tibet, that seeks support for the achievement of autonomy or independence for his occupied homeland.

Roemer (2008a:90) argues that the "fact that no sovereign state recognized the CTA did not alter the position of the functioning *de-facto* legitimate leadership of the 14th Dalai Lama and his officials in the exile Tibetan community as a whole." The claim to legitimate representation of the Tibetan nation derives from a direct link between the CTA and the pre-1959 government in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet.[23] The establishment of the exile government originally followed the same structure and employed the same personnel as the Tibetan government prior to Chinese occupation. The old elite was recognized by the government of India and most international organizations to act on behalf of the Tibetans in exile (Roemer 2008a:88-90). "The single most important variable underlying the successful initial adaptation of the Tibetans," according to Melvyn Goldstein, is the continuation of the traditional political structures, which proved to possess a high "adaptive capacity" (cited from Roemer 2008a:89-90).

Although the CTA under the authority of the Dalai Lama is widely accepted among Tibetans, the loyalties are not entirely undisputed, as the example of the Shugden controversy illustrates.[24] Nevertheless, the political strength of the CTA within the exile community is considerable. It is mainly based on the Tibetan peoples' loyalty to the Dalai Lama. Roemer (2008a:96) cites Tsering Wangyal saying: "Most people do and will continue to recognize Dharamsala [the CTA] as the only legitimate Tibetan Government as long as it is headed by the Dalai Lama."

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22 See section 4.5 'Western Government and Parliamentary Support for Tibet.'
23 For information on the Tibetan government around 1951, see Goldstein (2007:2-13).
24 The worship of *Dorje Shugden*, an obscure three-eyed deity, was banned by the Dalai Lama, since he views it as harmful to the Tibetan cause. The unquestioned power of the Dalai Lama over Tibetan affairs is considered problematic by *Shugden*-followers. Disagreements are both spiritual and political. For more detail on the *Shugden* controversy, or "*Shugden* affair", see Chhaya (2007:187-194); Lopez (1998:188-196). The controversy also illustrates the power of the 14th Dalai Lama within the Tibetan exile community, see Roemer (2008a:97-8).

3.3 The Charter of the Tibetan Refugee Community

In 1961 the first draft of a constitution for Tibet, the *Constitution for Future Tibet* was promulgated by the newly formed government in exile. This draft constitution was continuously reworked over the years. At the urging of the Dalai Lama, a *Tibet Constitution Redrafting Committee* was established in 1990, with the task to "formulate a draft democratic constitution for future Tibet [for the case that Tibet should become autonomous or independent] and a charter for the Tibetans while in exile" (TGE 2).[25] The *Constitution for Future Tibet* was drafted for an independent Tibet and "could not be faithfully implemented in an exiled setting" (Tsomo 2004:156). A document was prepared for the interim period in exile, the *Charter for Tibetans in Exile*. After circulating a draft of this charter with 108 articles among exile Tibetans "to elicit the public's response and suggestions" (ibid.), the charter was passed by the 11th Assembly of the Tibetan People's Deputies (ATPD) and the Dalai Lama. It was promulgated on 14 June 1991.

According to the Tibetan government in exile (TGE 2)[26], essential elements laid down by the charter include:

> - to uphold the principles of non-violence as laid down in the teachings of Tibetan religious traditions;
> - to be a social welfare and federal democratic Republic;
> - to adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as specified by the United Nations;
> - to emphasize the promotion of the moral and material welfare of the Tibetan people to achieve their common goal of Tibet's independence;[27]
> - to provide to all Tibetans equality before the law and the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in the Charter without discrimination of sex, race, language, religious status, social origin, or economic position;
> - to endeavour to conform to the generally accepted principles of international laws of host countries.

The *Charter of Tibetans in Exile* consists of 11 chapters with 115 articles and outlines the rights and duties of the exiled community. "The Charter is the supreme law governing the Central Tibetan Administration and is binding on all Tibetans under the jurisdiction of the Government-in-Exile [...] It [...] complies with International Law and more importantly with the laws of India" (Tsomo 2004:156).

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25 In the following, abbreviations followed by a number in brackets refer to citations from websites.
26 On the Charter, see also Boyd (2004:26).
27 It should be noted here, that this statement is in contradiction with the aspiration to 'genuine autonomy' as laid down in the *Strasbourg Proposal*, promulgated by the Dalai Lama in 1988, which has since then been the basis for the TGE's approach. This inconsistency could indicate incoherence in the policy approach of the exile Tibetan political elite, or an out-of-dateness of the website.

The system of government provided for by the *Charter of Tibetans in Exile* consists of executive, legislative and judicial branches. The Charter also provides the Dalai Lama with "controlling mechanisms to intervene in every governmental affair" (Roemer 2008a:94). The 14th Dalai Lama is hence the ruling institution of the Tibetan exile government and "holds ultimate legislative, executive and judiciary powers – competences that are still determined by the Indian hosts" (ibid.).[28]

3.4 The Position of the 14th Dalai Lama

> The exact nature of the Tibetan state is difficult to define; perhaps the most useful theoretical definition is that of legitimacy based upon charismatic authority, as proposed by Max Weber (Ardley 2002:86).

In order to gain insight into the functioning of the Tibetan government in exile, it is essential to understand the particular position and meaning of the Dalai Lama for the Tibetan people, and his position within the exile government.

The institutionalization of the Dalai Lama began in 1578, when the Mongolian lord Altan Khan named the *Gelugpa*[29] monk Sonam Gyatso (1543-1588) 'Dalai Lama' (='Sea of Wisdom'). In fact, Sonam Gyatso was the third Dalai Lama, as the first two were named retrospectively. Arguably, the Dalai Lama is the most famous *tulku,[30]* an incarnate lama that, while having reached enlightenment, voluntarily chooses rebirth purely out of compassion for other beings (MacMillin 2001:173). The meaning of the Dalai Lama for Tibetan people is illustrated by the fact that each "Dalai Lama is understood as a manifestation or emanation of the bodhisattva[31] of compassion, Chenrezig, who is himself seen as the patron deity of Tibet, and – in some myths – the progenitor of the Tibetan race" (MacMillin 2001:173; von Brück 2005:10).

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28 In practice the actual interference of the 14th Dalai Lama in daily government business is decreasing, as a statement of the current *Kalon Tripa* ('Prime Minister'), the head of *the Kashag* ('Cabinet'), conveys: "The Charter says, His Holiness is the head of government, as well as the head of state. [...] His Holiness has the final authority to make any executive decision. [...] If we propose anything as advice to His Holiness, the convention, the tradition is that the advice of the *kashag* is not binding on His Holiness. He has his free will to take any decision and that would be binding on the *kashag*. [...] But now already His Holiness delegates his power more and more to the *kashag* and therefore he doesn't like us to report to him and take his approval on each and every decision" (Interview with *Kalon Tripa* Samdhong Rinpoche by Dagmar Bernstorff on 29 March 2003, cited from: Phuntso 2004:127-8).

29 *Gelugpa* is the politically dominant of the four major Tibetan Buddhist monastic oders (the other three being *Kadampa, Kagyüpa* and *Sakyapa*, while *Bon* is the traditional Tibetan religion and not a Buddhist monastic order). See von Brück (2004:17).

30 According to Tibetan belief, the term *tulku* refers to "the bodily emanation of an enlightened being who is able to choose the manner, time, and place of his reappearance on earth" (MacMillin 2001:183).

31 A *boddhisattva*, according to Buddhist belief, is a being that refrains from entering nirvana in order to compassionately help others to attain enlightenment.

The current Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, was born in 1935.[32] He is "the fourteenth in a line of reappearing lamas, who since the innovations of the 'Great Fifth'[33] Dalai Lama (1617-1682) in the seventeenth century, have assumed preeminent religious and temporal powers within the Tibetan hierarchy" (MacMillin 2001:173). Throughout history, the magnitude of the various Dalai Lamas' powers have varied. Currently however, given the exile situation, the 14th Dalai Lama is the "single most important figure around which Tibetan identity circulates" (MacMillin 2001:173f).

The status of the Dalai Lama in the exile community is not lowered by the introduction of democratic elements to the TGE.[34] "Tibetan people's loyalty to him and his leadership remained as absolute and unqualified as ever" (Thinley, cited from Roemer 2008a:95). The loyalty to the person of the 14th Dalai Lama and the political legitimacy of his power are based on "traditional perspectives, according to which he has a divine personality" (Roemer 2008a:95).

Roemer (2008a:98-9) also demonstrates that the Dalai Lama has considerable influence on the life of Tibetans within the boundaries of Tibet itself. In 2006, for example, the Dalai Lama urged Tibetans to stop wearing wildlife skins and furs as clothing. Despite his absence from Tibet, his statement that seeing Tibetans wear furs made him wish "not to live anymore" provoked, within days, spontaneous fur-burning campaigns across Tibet in early 2006. By the summer of the same year, wearing furs as clothing had become so "'politically incorrect' that it had virtually disappeared." This is but one example and should be considered with caution. But according to Roemer (2008a:99), because of the 14th Dalai Lama's "divine personality, he is a unifying symbol for all Tibetans and remains an unquestioned leader, despite his present exile status. His authority underpins the legitimacy of the CTA as a continuation of the central government in Lhasa."

"The Dalai Lama is very strongly identified with Tibet both by Tibetans and non-Tibetans [...] for many Tibetans and non-Tibetans, where the Dalai Lama is, there is Tibet: the soul of Tibet need not stand on the soil of Tibet" (Lopez 1998:184). In his 1962 autobiography, the 14th Dalai Lama noted: "I am a mortal being [...] but [the Tibetans] believed that Dalai Lama represented Tibet and the Tibetan way of life, something dearer to them than anything else. They were convinced that if my body perished at the hands of the Chinese, the life of Tibet would also come to an end" (cited from Barnett 2001:299).

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32 On 14th Dalai Lama's history, see Gyatso (1995); (2001).
33 For details on the 'Great Fifth' Dalai Lama see von Brück (2008:77-85).
34 See section 3.9 'Democratization of the Tibetan Government in Exile.'

The Dalai Lama's affairs are dealt with by his private office, the *Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama* (OHHDL). It provides secretarial assistance and takes responsibilities for matters related to the Dalai Lama. The main responsibilities of the OHHDL include:

- Organizing the Dalai Lama's schedule, planning appointments and travels;
- Handling his diplomatic, governmental and personal correspondence;
- Acting as the liaison between the Dalai Lama and officials of the TGE (OHHDL 1).

3.5 The Executive

The executive branch of the Tibetan exile government is embodied by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) headed by the Dalai Lama and the *Kashag*, his cabinet of ministers. *Kalons* – the members of the cabinet or *Kashag* – lead the different departments of the CTA (Boyd 2004:26).

The *Kashag* consists of a maximum of seven 'ministers' called *Kalon*. Earlier, the *Kalon,* as well as the *Kalon Tripa* (the 'prime minister') were appointed by the Dalai Lama. Since an amendment to the *Charter of Tibetans in Exile* effectuated in 2001, the *Kalon Tripa* is elected directly by the people. In autumn of 2001 an election was held and 80 percent of the votes went to Lobsang Tenzin, the 5th Samdhong Rinpoche (Phuntso 2004:126-7).

The responsibilities of the *Kashag* include the execution of policy decisions made by the ATPD, and the supervision of the CTA with its departments.

The CTA is organized into various departments responsible for the daily administration of Tibetan affairs in exile. Each department is headed by a *Kalon*. In the following, short introductions to each of the departments are offered. The Department of Information and International Relations is dealt with in greater detail,due to its greater relevance to this paper's research questions.

The *Department of Religion and Culture*, founded by the Dalai Lama in 1995, is responsibe for the preservation and promotion of Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage. It supports 223

monasteries and 15 nunneries, with 11,067 monks and 1,230 nuns.[35] The department also supervises various cultural institutions, for example the *Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies* at Sarnath in Varanasi, the *Library of Tibetan Works and Archives* and the *Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts*, both in Dharamsala (Boyd 2004:27; Phuntso 2004:130).

The *Department of Home* oversees refugee settlements throughout India. It is responsible for the rehabilitation of Tibetan refugees. This department is organized into four main divisions, responsible for administration, agriculture, planning and development, and welfare, respectively. It also liaisons with international organizations that support the rehabilitation of Tibetan refugees (Boyd 2004:27; Phuntso 2004:131).

The *Department of Finance* oversees and formulates the CTA annual budget. Its income generation activities used to focus on the running of business enterprises (in areas such as handicraft industries, wool and yarn production, agro-processing, transport or tourism). After a policy decision by the *Kashag*, calling governmental entrepreneurial activity in competition with private enterprises 'violence' (many of these businesses were also running losses), activities now focus on collecting annual voluntary contributions from the Tibetans in exile. The department administers the *Dalai Lama's Charitable Trust,* the *Tibetan Administration's Welfare Society* and the *Social and Resource Development Fund*, which are non-profit registered societies for the development of the Tibetan community in exile (Boyd 2004:27; TGE 2; Phuntso 2004:131).

The *Department of Education* oversees 85 schools throughout India, Nepal, and Bhutan, that educate over 27,000 students. 34 of these schools are run by the *Department of Education*, the remainder by the government of India. The department also runs a child sponsorship scheme and provides scholarships for higher education (Boyd 2004:27; TGE 2).

The *Department of Security* is mainly concerned with the physical well being and safety of the Dalai Lama. It also runs reception centers for newly arriving Tibetan refugees in Kathmandu, New Delhi and Dharamsala. It supports refugees in their quest for employment or small-scale business entrepreneurship, or for the admission into schools and monasteries. The department also monitors developments in Tibet and China (Boyd 2004:27; Phuntso 2004:132).

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35 Figures from the CTA Department of Religion and Culture from 2002, and from the CTA Planning Council Tibetan Demographic Survey of 1998, cited from Phuntso (2004:130).

The *Department of Health*, responsible for the health needs of the refugee community in India, Nepal and Bhutan, runs health centers in in most of the settlements and six hospitals. It covers the costs for emergency treatment of poor Tibetans and, in collaboration with the *Tibetan Medical and Astro Institute,* it seeks to integrate modern with traditional Tibetan medicine (TGE 2).

The *Department of Information and International Relations* (DIIR) is responsible for ensuring that the Tibetan cause is well publicized and that journals and brochures are printed regularly for this purpose (Boyd 2004:27). Phuntso (2004:133) states that the DIIR "educates Tibetan and international public opinion on the political, human rights and environmental conditions in Tibet via print media, radio and Internet." In other words, it promotes the exile struggle and current conditions in Tibet among all Tibetans and the international public. It also serves as a protocol office of the CTA.

The DIIR is responsible for the international affairs of the CTA. The origins of the DIIR lie in the *Chisee Lekhung* ('Foreign Office') of the pre-1959 administration in Lhasa. In exile, the corresponding *Information Office* was at first operating under the Bureau of H.H. the Dalai Lama in New Delhi. In 1972 the *Information Office* was transferred to Dharamsala. International demand for information on Tibet was growing, and the CTA "felt the need to instil political, human rights and environmental consciousness among the Tibetans" (TGE 1). In 1989 the *Information Office* was expanded and renamed *Department of Information and International Relations*. Since 1990, under the DIIR there is an *Environmental and Development Desk*, an office that focuses particularly on the promotion of Tibetan environmental issues. Furthermore, there are 'Desks' for particular geographic regions: *An Africa and Middle East Desk*, a *Chinese Desk*, a *UN Desk* and an *EU Desk*, as well as a *Tibet Support Group Desk*. They all support the work of the DIIR in their specialized field.

The DIIR supervises and heads the so-called *Offices of Tibet,* which function as embassies of the CTA in currently 13 countries worldwide. The following is a list of their locations and their respective year of establishment: New Delhi (1960), Kathmandu (1960), New York (1964), Geneva (located in Zürich during the period 1964-1991), Tokyo (1975), London (1981), Paris (1992), Canberra (1992), Budapest (1993), Moscow (1993), Pretoria (1997), Taipei (1997), and Brussels (2001). The work of these offices centres around lobbying sovereign governments and transnational organization like the UN and EU. They maintain contact with Tibetans in their respective area, and organize the participation of Tibetan delegates to conferences on issues such

as the environment, human rights, women's rights, or development. Many of these offices also act as potent fund raisers for the CTA, contributing significantly to a considerable increase in CTA budget during the 1990s (Phuntso 2004:133; Roemer 2008a:102;115).

Figure 1 gives an overview of the organizational structure of the Central Tibetan Administration.

Figure 1: Organizational Structure of the CTA
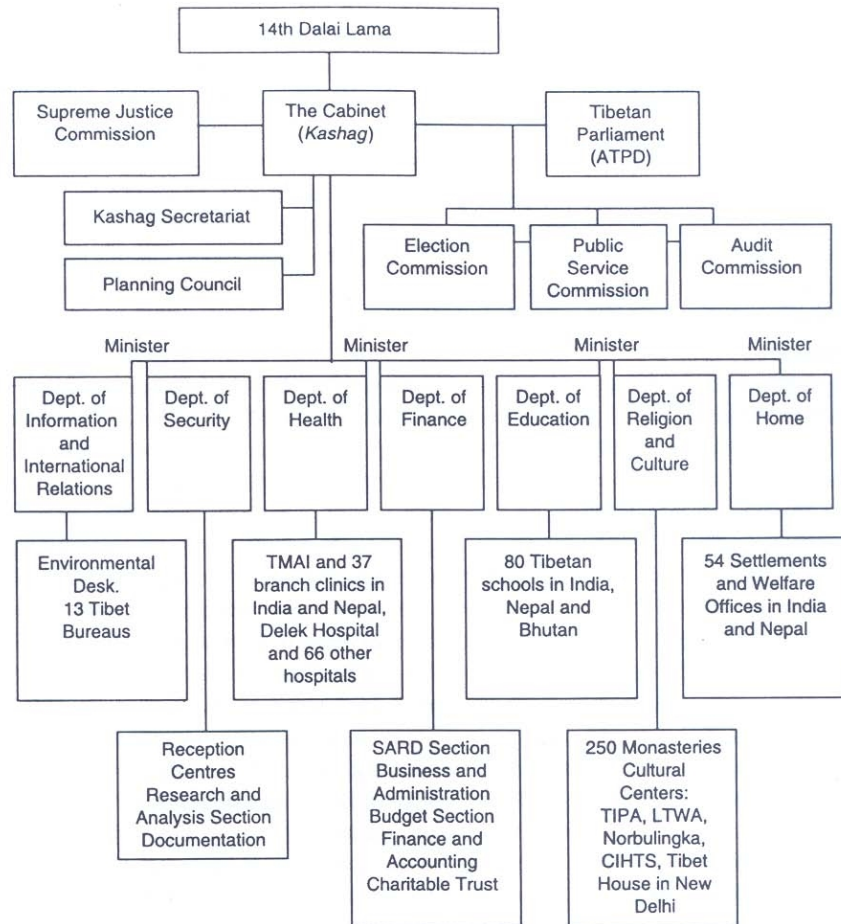
Source: Roemer (2008a:95)

3.6 The Legislature

Article 36 of the *Charter of Tibetans in Exile* states: "All legislative power and authority shall rest in the Tibetan assembly, and such legislation shall require the assent of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to become law" (TGE 3).

"The notion of electing common Tibetans as representatives [...] constituted a watershed in Tibetan history. It [...] neutralized the class-based political monopoly of the aristocracy" (Thargyal 1993:39). Roemer (2008a:99) states: "Despite the 14th Dalai Lama being vested with sweeping powers, the CTA has a legislative organ, which fulfills, at least symbolically, the demands of a democratic system."

Tibet's democratically elected[36] exile parliament – the so called *Assembly of the Tibetan People's Deputies* (ATPD) – is the legislative branch of the government in exile. The right to vote for the membership in this parliament is conferred to all Tibetans having reached the age of 18. Candidates must be at least 25 years old. The legislative power of the ATPD, as well as that of local assemblies in settlements, is subordinate to Indian state law (TGE 3).

The ATPD consists, in theory,[37] of 46 elected deputies. According to Roemer (2008a:100), "the present ATPD serves as a symbol of an institutionalized exile Tibetan nationalism by following the idea of regional and religious quotas." The three provincial regions of Tibet (Ü-Tsang, Amdo and Kham) are each represented by 10 deputies (at least two of which must be female). The five Buddhist sects (*Nyingma*, *Sakya*, *Kagyu*, *Gelug* and *Bon*) is represented by two deputies each. There are also two representatives elected by the Tibetan refugees in Europe and one by those in North America. Up to three deputies are nominated to the assembly directly by the Dalai Lama[38] (TGE 2). "The composition of the assembly emphasizes the claims of the CTA to represent all Tibetans, despite regional heritage, religious affinities or current place of living" (Roemer 2008a:100). However, it should be noted that the majority of Tibetans, those who have not left Tibet, have no possibility to voice their opinion by voting. In this respect, the ATPD "acts only symbolically as it is not legitimated to decide about the future of Tibet" (anonymous interview, 2006, cited from ibid.).

The assembly meets half-yearly, usually in March and September. It can be called for extraordinary sessions, should this be necessary. As most deputies are not residents of Dharamsala, there is a standing committee for periods between sessions, consisting of 12 members (Boyd 2004:27).

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36 See section 3.9 'Democratization of the Tibetan Government in Exile.'
37 In the 2006 election, the Dalai Lama renounced this right to appoint three members directly to the ATPD, appointing only one (see Roemer 2008a:193).
38 See the above footnote.

The main powers and responsibilities of the ATPD include election of members of the Cabinet, examining the decisions of the *kashag* and its administration in the light of policies and programmes adopted by the Assembly, enacting laws and frame rules and regulations, issuing policy decisions, as well as controlling and overseeing the finances, including the expenditure of the government-in-exile. The Assembly also oversees the functioning of the local Assemblies [Assemblies of the Tibetan settlements], the work of the Tibetan Freedom Movement subcommittees [...] It hears public grievances and petitions of Tibetans in exile, and monitors the aspirations and problems of the Tibetan people, inside and outside Tibet. The Assembly also approves the appointment of the Supreme Justice Commission, the highest judiciary body. Today the Parliament is not only a law-making body. It has become more and more a multi-funcional institution, performing a variety of roles – many of theses are interrelated (Tsomo 2004:159).

Members of the ATPD play an intermediary role between the CTA and the population. Deputies hold contact to local assemblies of Tibetan communities, which represent legislative power at the regional level (Boyd 2004:27-8).

The Assembly also liaises with Governments, Parliaments, NGOs and individuals throughout the world in order to gain support for Tibet, and lobbies for support from the Government, political parties, organizations and the people of India (TGE 2).

It is important to note that, according to the *Charter of Tibetans in Exile*, every decision by the ATPD must be approved by the Dalai Lama in order to become an act. From conducting anonymous interviews with members of the 13th ATPD in 2003, Roemer (2008a:101) concludes that the legislative organ has developed into something like a "debating circle without relevance in *realpolitik*."

3.7 The Judiciary

Article 62 of the *Charter of Tibetans in Exile* states: "There shall be a Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission vested with judicial powers suitable to the temporary and special needs of the Tibetan Administration and citizens-in-exile" (TGE 3).

The judicial branch of the TGE is represented by the *Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission*, headed by the *Chief Tibetan Justice Commissioner*. This commissioner is appointed by the Dalai Lama and must be supported by two thirds of the ATPD before taking office. The Commission is responsible for adjudicating conflicts within the exile Tibetan communities in India, but all court decisions are subordinate to Indian law (ibid.).

A permanent committee of Jurors, consisting of three citizens, assists in the judicial proceedings of the *Chief Tibetan Justice Commissioner* and is appointed by him in consultation with the *Kashag*. If necessary, the *Chief Tibetan Justice Commissioner* can appoint an ad-hoc jury of up to nine Tibetan citizens with experience in matters of law, in addition to the three permanent jurors (ibid.).

> The Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission shall be the supreme appellate court regarding legal issues involving individuals and public institutions of the Tibetans in-exile. In [*sic*] shall be the highest judicial authority of the Tibetan Administration (TGE 3).

3.8.1 Introduction to Exile Tibetan NGOs

All Tibetan exile NGOs, at the time of their founding, have received acknowledgement and blessing from the Dalai Lama. This provides them with a firm position within the exile community, but on the other hand obliges them to a certain degree of loyalty to the Dalai Lama and hence to the CTA (Roemer 113). In this sense, the validity of the term '*non*-governmental organization' might be questioned. Furthermore, all NGOs receive financial support from the CTA. Roemer (2008a:114) judges that "a totally independent functioning of the NGOs is almost impossible."

Tibetan exile NGOs are particularly active in the education sector, instructing Tibetans in schools, monasteries and community centers. They also organize campaigns, demonstrations, prayers and other community activities. Their NGO-status enables them to cooperate with other activists in the international sphere. Through their links with international NGOs they also receive donations from Tibet Support Groups (TSG).

There are numerous exile Tibetan NGOs, engaged in a variety of activities. The following account introduces the three largest and most widely known: The Tibetan Youth Congress, the Tibetan Women's Organization, and the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy.

3.8.2 Tibetan Youth Congress

The Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) is the only exile Tibetan NGO that articulates clear dissent to the CTA in its political outlook and strategy. In this sense, it acts as a sort of opposition to the CTA. On the one hand, the TYC rejects the Middle-Way Path[39] – renouncing independence for a genuine autonomy of Tibet – pursued by the CTA and the Tibetan leader. It intends to achieve full independence for Tibet. On the other hand, the TYC rejects the strategy of non-violent struggle adopted by the TGE, on the grounds that it has not worked, and due to the problem that any action in the struggle for a self-determined Tibet (including hunger strikes and self-immolation) can be interpreted as violent. It also criticizes the 'democratic system' of the TGE, claiming that, due to the mixture of religious and secular affairs, the system has little to do with Western democratic ideals. Although the TYC objects to the Dalai Lama's approach to the exile struggle, it claims loyalty to him, at least on the surface (see the TYC goals below). Hence, TYC members find themselves in a somewhat contradictory situation (Roemer 2008a:108-9).

According to the self-portrayal of the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) on its website (TYC 1), it is the largest and most active non-governmental organisation of Tibetans in exile and currently counts more than 30,000 members worldwide. It was founded in 1970, uniting mainly young Tibetans from the first generation having completed education in exile.

The TYC pursues the following goals:

> - to work under the leadership of the Dalai Lama for the common good of the government and people of Tibet
> - to unify the forces without consideration of localities, religion and class
> - to imbibe the religious precepts and conventional Tibetan good manners amongst youths, considering the richness of the Tibetan culture and carry on its tradition
> - to fight for the complete independence of Tibet as the definitive goal cherished by the Tibetans in as well as outside Tibet even by sacrificing oneself (Norbu 2004:393-4).

According to Norbu (2004:395), himself a member of the TYC, as a matter of policy, the TYC involves itself only in issues that are national in dimension and participates in activities with repercussions on the national struggle. Norbu (ibid.) also states that the TYC's "outreach and activities at national and international levels including its connective relationship in Tibet have a positive effect on the Tibetan Freedom Movement itself."

Since 1974, the TYC publishes the magazine *Rangzen* ('Freedom') in both Tibetan and English (Norbu 2004:396).

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39 See section 3.13.3 'Objectives of the TGE in Practice.'

The TYC has frequently triggered international attention through the staging of hunger stikes. For example, the distinctive hunger strike in New Delhi in 1998 was forcibly broken up by the Indian police, and ended with the self-immolation of Thupten Ngodup (Ardley 2002:49-50). On 10 March 2009, the TYC again launched an "Indefinite Fast for Tibet" which was called off 10 days later, "after gaining assurances from the European Parliament that they will actively pursue their support for the Tibetan cause" (TYC 2). According to the TYC President, the "campaign has run its course and achieved substantially its objectives" (ibid.). The position of the exile government remains that hunger strikes are a type of violence and are therefore incompatible with its approach in the exile struggle.

3.8.3 Tibetan Women's Association

Counting around 13,000 members,[40] the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) is the second largest Tibetan exile NGO. The TWA, founded in 1959, was a continuation of women's organizations that appeared after the overthrowing of the Manchu dynasty in 1911, particularly of the Lhasa Patriotic Women's Organization set up by the PLA in 1953. It is currently the only women's organization in exile (Thonsur 2004:335). During the 1960s and 1970s, the TWA was mainly engaged in the creation of working and educational opportunities for Tibetan women, e.g. by opening handicraft centers. When, with the changing politics of the TGE in the 1980s, the status of women changed, allowing them to actively participate in politics,[41] the TWA began to focus more on the political sphere and, in particular, the international community (Roemer 2008a:110).

In 1995, the TWA participated in the Fourth UN World Conference on Women, held in Beijing. Through this event, the TWA could raise awareness of the situation in Tibet, and Tibetan women became known in the international women's rights arena. As Roemer (2008a:111) puts it, "the Tibetan involvement in the UN conference helped considerably to re-frame and expand the exile Tibetan struggle as a whole through the innovative introduction of the Tibetan women's discourse." In the following years, the TWA joined an international network emphasizing women's rights and set up bureaus in Canada, Great Britain, India, Japan, Nepal and Switzerland. One example of tangible support resulting from the international network was the project

40 See TWA (1).
41 See section 3.10 'The Status of Women.'

'Stitches of Tibet' (employing and educating Tibetan women in India) which was supported by a Danish NGO (Roemer 2008a:193).

The TWA supports the political position of the CTA internationally "through the promotion of a 'feminized' exile Tibetan struggle" (Roemer 2008a:111). Apart from political engagement, the TWA operates on the community level: child care, individual support of women in terms of employment and education, social welfare assistance and health care matters belong to its activities (Thonsur 2004:335).

3.8.4 Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy

Until 1996, a Desk for Human Rights and Democracy had functioned under the DIIR. That year, the Desk was transformed into the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), changing the judicial status to that of an NGO. This widened the possibilities of political action and increased access to international fora and conferences from which the CTA would be excluded because of its governmental representative claim. "In this regard, the TCHRD [...] expands the CTA's access to the international community" (Roemer 2008a:112).

Within the exile community, the TCHRD is active in educational activities, organizing workshops and publishing teaching materials related to the TGE's version of democracy. In the international context, the TCHRD promotes the respect for human rights of Tibetans (Roemer 2008a:112).

3.9 Democratization of the Tibetan Government in Exile

It seems overstated to call the political system of the TGE a democracy. It remains a fact that the ultimate executive decision in government matters, both in the *Kashag* and the ATPD, remains with the 14th Dalai Lama. However, there are certainly democratic elements to the system, and a certain process of democratization has evidently taken place over the past five decades.

What is outstanding about the process of democratization in the Tibetan exile polity is that the process was initiated from above and, more precisely, from the person of the 14th Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama is "probably the only ruler in the world, who has voluntarily given up political power step by step, on his own initiative and without pressure from below" (Phuntso 2004:126). "Tibetan democracy is different from that of other countries because it did not cost any struggle or human lives. It originated from the political incumbent himself" (Mangtso, cited from Thargyal 1993:34).

As a first step in the democratization process, in 1961 the Dalai Lama initiated the establishment of an exile parliament, which replaced traditional secular and ecclesiastic offices and abolished hereditary privileges for occupations. In 1963 a first Tibetan 'draft' constitution[42] was promulgated, which curtailed the Dalai Lama's powers and began to embed them in democratic structures (von Brück 2005:11). Von Brück (ibid.) argues that the practice of democracy in the given situation is difficult. In order to develop a democratic mentality, it takes time, education and possibilities for economic development. When, in 1960, a year before the announcement of the constitution, first elections took place,[43] "[m]ost Tibetans had never imagined participating in government, much less heard of voting; politics had been the business of monks and noblemen for centuries" (Avedon 1984:107). Lodi Gari, chairman of the seventh assembly of deputies, noted: "A lot of people go into the election tent and just pray to His Holiness. 'I don't know any of these candidates, but please let me chose the right one to help the Dalai Lama and the people'" (cited from Avedon 1984:108). According to an opinion survey conducted by the ATPD in 1997, regarding the question of the further proceeding of the community in its exile struggle, "[s]ixty-five percent of the Tibetan refugee community said that they had implicit faith in the Dalai Lama. Whatever he decided would be acceptable to them" (Office of Tibet New York 1).

The 14th Dalai Lama proceeded with attempting gradually to democratize the community and the structures of the TGE, despite the broad sections of society that reacted with incomprehension: Would one not assume that the Dalai Lama, worshiped as *Chenrezig*, the *Bodhisattva* of compassion, had a more informed judgement than a parliament operating with altering majorities? (Tethong 2000:91; von Brück 2005:11). It has even been argued that precisely this trust and faith in the leadership of the Dalai Lama would make the system democratic, even without voting, as he truly represents the Tibetan people (Edin, cited from Ardley 2002:190). By

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42 It was labeled 'draft' because it had no approval of the six million majority in Tibet. For details on the 1963 'draft' constitution, see Avedon (1984:107-9).
43 Exile Tibetans voted representatives for their region of provenance and monastic order.

many Tibetans the Dalai Lama is also considered to be generally more knowledgeable about international happenings through his travels than any Tibetan deputy, which further underlines his authority.

The adoption of the *Charter for Tibetans in Exile* in 1991 has been described as a "decisive step towards genuine democracy" (Tsomo 2004:156). It effectively replaced the draft constitution. "The legislature, constitution and charter have all been seen as major steps towards the full implementation of democratic principles in the Tibetan government" (Ardley 2002:44). Since the promulgation of the charter, further changes have occurred. While in former years the *Kalon Tripa* ('Prime Minister') was appointed, he is now elected democratically (Boyd 2004:26).

Ardley (2002:85), examining the Tibetan case in the light of theories of democracy, concludes that the theories are of little help for a better understanding of the matter. With regards to democracy, the Tibetan exile polity is indeed a unique case, with several special factors: "[T]he nature of the Tibetan state; the lack of parties and an opposition in Tibetan exile politics; the attitudes of the Tibetan people; and the position of the unelected Dalai Lama."

In 2003, over four decades after the democratic process was initiated, Dagmar Bernstorff interviewed *Kalon Tripa* Samdhong Rinpoche, who answered the question "*Do you have the impression that the Tibetan people are getting more familiar with democracy?*" in the following way:

> Better. But His Holiness is impatient. We also feel some kind of impatience. The people are not picking up this kind of spirit. But it is understandable, to change people's attitude needs some time. We had hoped that the second generation Tibetans-in-exile would be completely changed. But that didn't happen. Now the third generation might be better (cited from Phuntso 2004:128).

The Dalai Lama often emphasizes the importance of democracy for the exile Tibetans. One factor is surely a preoccupation with what will happen after his death.

A critical voice regarding democratic claims of the TGE is that of Richard de Jongh. He commented that "the Dalai Lama's power elite misuses the word democracy because it still dominates exile Tibetan politics through 'democratic' manipulation to perpetuate the existing patrimonial structures. The introduced reforms touch only the surface of Tibetan society but do not change the traditional system" (de Jongh, cited from Roemer 2008a:91).

Ardley (2002:88) argues that the process of democratization must be put into the appropriate perspective. It is only a couple of decades since democratization had begun, and what has been achieved in this time period is considerable. If no genuine democracy has been achieved, then at least a development "toward an environment in which debate and freedom of speech are commonplace." In democratic terms, unsurprisingly, Ardley (ibid.) speaks of "a vast improvement on the traditional pre-1959 government."

According to Roemer (2008a:99), the legislative organ (the ATPD) of the TGE fulfills, at least symbolically, the demands of a democratic system.

> Indeed, the 14th Dalai Lama is head of the government but this post is more and more only theoretically [*sic*]. During recent years, his direct influence in exile politics has diminished and the ATPD became mature and more powerful. Nevertheless, there is still a considerable degree of dependency on the Dalai Lama among the Tibetan deputies. In this regard, the progress of the democratic transformation process of the exile Tibetan political system during the last decades is still questionable and not yet finished (Roemer 2008a:101).

3.10 The Status of Women

> Must the Dalai Lama reincarnate as a man?
> [Dalai Lama:] 'It can be a woman or a man. The institution of the Dalai Lama must change according to the times' (Chhaya 2007:239).

The position of women in the Tibetan exile community and in Tibetan Buddhist tradition is ambiguous. Thonsur (2004:339), (a man) taking an unequivocal pro-Tibet stance, states that "Tibetan women enjoy great freedom and lead content lives." According to him, Tibetan Women "have felt that there is gender discrimination in Tibetan society but it is minimal and therefore women have always been mindful in prioritising the issue of the national struggle" (ibid:338). Traditionally, in pre-1959 Tibet, as in most societies women had an underprivileged position (von Brück 2005:12)

Within Tibetan Buddhism, there are teachers and teachings that support the notion that attainment of enlightenment is irrespective of gender. In Buddhist cosmology there are female deities and in history there are enlightened females such as Yeshe Tsogyel, however renowned women teachers and nuns have been scarce. While women have the potential to full Buddhahood, their subordinate social position inhibits its realization (von Brück 2005:12). The subordinate role of women in Tibetan society is suggested by the Tibetan saying "If you want to be a servant, make

your son a monk; if you want to have a servant, make your daughter a nun" (cited from MacMillin 2001:197). Although there are a number of nunneries allowing for spiritual practice, education and hence freedom to a certain extent, in Tibetan Buddhism there is no lineage of fully ordained nuns. Although it is frequently proclaimed that they enjoy high levels of independence, "Tibetan women traditionally have occupied a lower status than their male counterparts" (ibid:198).

In pre-1959 Tibet, religious and thus political power was in the hands of men. After the diaspora began, the 14th Dalai Lama committed himself to improving the situation of women in Tibetan exile society and started a number of initiatives to ameliorate the standing of women. Since 1987 he was a strong advocate of the reintroduction of a *Bhikkhuni*, a fully ordained female Buddhist monastic order. He commissioned studies to trace the lineage of Tibetan nuns back to the first nunnery founded by the Buddha, the tradition of which is still alive in China. He inspired Tibetan nuns to become ordained in this Chinese tradition (in Taiwan) to empower them to study as equals to men in Indian institutions. By means of these initiatives, according to von Brück (2005:12-3), the prerequisites for a new social role for Tibetan women have been established.

In Tibetan exile politics, women are underrepresented, but they are represented. In the 14th *Kashag* ('Cabinet'), one out of eight *Kalon* is one woman.[44] In the previous *Kashag*, two women were represented (Boyd 2004:27). In 2006 the structure of the Central Tibetan Administration was run by 685 officials working at headquarters in Dharamsala. The male:female ratio was 79:21 (Roemer 2008a:93). The *Charter of Tibetans in Exile* provides that at least two of the ten deputies representing the three Tibetan regions – U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo – in the exile parliament have to be female. The corresponding Article 37 of the Charter thus ensures a minimum of six women in the ATPD (Thonsur 2004:334).

Thus it seems the status of Tibetan women in exile is improving. Women remain underprivileged in Tibetan society, as in most other societies around the world. But particularly when comparing with pre-1959 Tibet it appears that women are gaining ground socially, culturally and politically.

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44 For the composition of the current *Kashag* see http://www.tibet.net/en/index.php?id=18 (accessed: 25.4.2009)

3.11 Religion and Politics – Tibetan Buddhism and the TGE

Kollmar-Paulenz (2006:174) maintains that since the authority of the Dalai Lama is not legitimized through democratic elections but founded in religion, the TGE is ultimately religiously authorized. The Tibetan culture is characterized by a particular interplay between religious forces and political processes; politics and religion are institutionally connected (von Brück 2008:43). This is exemplified by the composition of the parliament in exile, where each monastic order is represented separately. The clergy is privileged in the Tibetan exile 'democratic system,' since monks can vote two representatives to the ATPD: one for their region of provenance and one for their religious order.

The *Charter of Tibetans in Exile* stresses religious freedom. Article 10 states: "All religious denominations are equal before the law" (TGE 3). However, moral education in schools shall be rooted in Buddhist teachings (Article 17/8). Education shall also "endeavour to disseminate a non-sectarian and wholesome tradition of Buddhist doctrines" (Article 17/11).

Tibetan culture is thoroughly characterized by Tibetan Buddhism (von Brück 2008:43). The belief system of Tibetan Buddhism is complex and will not be dealt with here.[45] It is important to stress that Tibetan exile culture, religion and politics are closely related. Interestingly, while in Western countries "the introduction of the religious into the political is primarily viewed as a negative force" (Ardley 2002:166), in the Tibetan case it is perceived positively:

> The widely held view is that in Tibet religion brought harmony and peace. A commonly held assumption is that this peace and harmony had developed because the people had not lost sight of the importance of spirituality in all aspects of life, including politics (ibid:166).

This phenomenon will be dealt with in greater detail in Part 7 ('Values Represented by the TGE as Soft-Power Resources').

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45 On Tibetan Buddhism, see von Brück (2008:127-79).

3.12 The TGE's Approach to the Exile Struggle

The approach of the TGE to its exile struggle, which began with the arrival of the 14th Dalai Lama in India in 1959, went through a significant change during the early 1980s. This change in the political focus (discussed below) was in line with a change in the objectives of the TGE in its struggle, from total independence to genuine autonomy for Tibet.[46] This section introduces the Tibetan exile struggle and illustrates the shift that occurred in the 1980s.

During the first decades in exile, expectations in the power of the UN to help the exile Tibetans were high, and the exiled political elite of Tibet used the wide international attention it gained during the early years of its struggle to lobby for its cause. Three UN General Assembly Resolutions were passed: in 1959 (1353/14), in 1961 (1723/16) and in 1965 (2079/20), expressing the General Assembly's concern with human rights violations in Tibet (Morris and Scoble, cited from Roemer 2008a:81).[47] But due to the influential position of the PRC in global politics, these resolutions had little effect on its policies regarding Tibet. Since Beijing's membership in the UN and its obtaining a permanent seat in the Security Council, the PRC has the power to block any possible resolution on Tibet.

Appart from its hopes in the UN, the second major approach of the Tibetan exile government in its initial struggle was that of maintaining bilateral relations with Beijing. There were numerous negotiations between Dharamsala and Beijing, particularly after Mao's death in 1976. The 14th Dalai Lama's elder brother, Gyalo Thondup visited Beijing in 1978, and exile Tibetan fact-finding missions to Tibet followed in 1979, 1980 and 1984. However, the outcomes of these contacts remained negligible (Roemer 2008a:82).

When it became increasingly clear that neither the UN, nor bilateral contacts with Beijing would further the Tibetan case, the CTA changed its political focus at the beginning of the 1980s. The exile government decided to internationalize the Tibetan issue. According to Shakya (1999:413), the moment to internationalize the Tibetan issue was opportune: "In the late 1980s, popular political culture in the West was rapidly changing. The ideological confrontation which had characterized popular politics had given way to concerns about moral issues such as the human rights, environment, ecology, the right of indigenous people and the fear of the proliferation of

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46 See section 3.13.3 'Objectives of the TGE in Practice.'
47 For an account on the Tibetan government's appeals to the United Nations before going into exile, see Goldstein (2007:59-81).

nuclear weapons." These changes were perceived by the TGE and its supporters, and campaigns were orchestrated accordingly.

> The nationalist demand for independence was de-emphasized and issues of environment, ecology and coercive birth-control policy were highlighted. More importantly, the campaign also emphasised the preservation of Tibets unique cultural tradition [...] The Tibetans found a receptive audience in the West (Shakya 1999:413).

The TGE's newly adopted strategy, a "political offensive [...] we can think of as their 'international campaign'" (Goldstein 1997:75), appears to have been finalized following a series of high-level meetings between key Tibetans and supporters from the West that took place in New York, Washington and London in 1986 and 1987. According to Goldstein (1997:138), the "history of these developments has not yet been well-documented and details are still sparse." One important innovation of this strategy was that the Dalai Lama should carry not only the religious, but the political message of the Tibetan exiles to the United States and Europe, especially to fora of government.

> With the help of Western supporters and donors and sympathetic U.S. representatives and congressional aides, a campaign was launched to gain American support for the exile's cause, in essence, to redirect the significance of the Tibet Question from the arena of geopolitical national interests to the sphere of core U.S. values – to the U.S. ideological commitment to freedom and human rights. The goal was to create a momentum that would lead the United States to support Tibet because it was the just and right thing for freedom-loving Americans to do (Goldstein 1997:76).

One emphasis of the new strategy was put on international NGOs. According to Thupten Samphel from the DIIR, the central concept of the Tibetan exile government's new grassroots policy was the so-called 'snowball effect', by which one NGO was approached by the CTA which would then carry Tibet-related issues to other NGOs (interview with Thupten Samphel, DIIR, Dharamsala, May 2002, cited from Roemer 2008a:82). "The CTA reacted to political developments and looked for a more promising niche to generate support for the exile Tibetan struggle" (Roemer 2008a:82). The exiled Tibetans no longer presented their issue as one package, but rather split it into various issues that could more easily be taken up by various international activists. Since the political focus changed, it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between efforts that aim at returning to a free homeland, and those for international support.

> Especially during the last two decades, exile Tibetans have taken up several Western political key issues, like human rights, non-violence, environmental protection, women's rights and peace [...]. Through the presentation of these topics to an international audience, the exile Tibetans, with the 14th Dalai Lama in the lead, have been increasingly successful in terms of generating international financial support and awareness. The exile Tibetans have managed to create an impression as propagators of Tibetan Buddhism, as peaceful and friendly with a deep insight into religious practice" (interview with Mr Thupten Samphel, DIIR, Dharamsala, May 2002, cited from Roemer 2008a:82).

Despite this focal switch there is still lobbying taking place to the UN in New York and Geneva through the various Tibet offices (Roemer 2008a:83).

The exile struggle of the TGE is based on the principle of non-violence. "I firmly reject the use of violence as a means in our struggle," the Dalai Lama (2008) states. Besides truth and genuine democratic governance, "non-violence became [...] a fundamental principle for the CTA to serve the Tibetan nation" (Roemer 2008:83) with the 12th ATPD (1995-2001). The first item of the *Five Point Peace Plan*[48] communicates the TGE's commitment to non-violence to the world.

According to the Office of Tibet in New York, the non-violent approach is due to "the personality of the Dalai Lama and his Buddhist beliefs [...] His uncompromising attitude towards violence and his unquestioned moral authority among the Tibetan people have prevented the Tibetans in Tibet and in exile from taking up arms" (Office of Tibet New York 1). Apart from communicating a general conviction that only non-violence can lead to peaceful solutions, the Dalai Lama is also well aware of the absence of a chance that a Tibetan armed struggle against China could be successful. The TGE takes the position that an armed Tibetan uprising would be tantamount to mass suicide and would be "the best excuse for China to obliterate the Tibetans from the face of the earth" (ibid.). According to Ram (2004:170), "the Tibetan nonviolent struggle has indispensable pragmatic elements where nonviolence is realistically used as only one of several possible methods with which to respond to the conflict situation with China for a mutually beneficial settlement."

The TGE's non-violent approach has been inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's satyagraha.[49] For Ram (2004:167), who calls the Dalai Lama "the chief architect of Tibetan nonviolent politics," the Tibetan leader is a "staunch follower of Mahatma Gandhi."

> For Gandhian satyagraha the basic precepts are: truth, nonviolence (ahimsa)[50] and self-suffering. For the Dalai Lama, the basic precepts of middlepath are nonviolence and dialogue [which, he believes] can be the only basis for peaceful conflict resolution (Ram 2004:166).

Ram (2004:162) also points out that Tibetan non-violence should not be overemphasized. While "nonviolence as a political tool of Tibetan policy sounds very natural, given the nonviolence potential of Tibetans and Buddhist tradition and culture," violence has by no means been absent

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48 See section 3.13.3 'Objectives of the TGE in Practice.'
49 *Satyagraha* is the strategy of non-violent resistance developed by Mahatma Gandhi. *Satya* is sanskrit and can be translated as 'truth' (Ardley 2002:97).
50 *Ahimsa* is a sanskrit term meaning the 'avoidance of violence' or hence 'non-violence' (Ardley 2002:98).

in Tibetan history. For example, the "1959 Lhasa uprising witnessed many monks carrying guns alongside the Khampas. Later, the Khampas used the guerillas tactics of 'hit and run' with the clandestine support of the CIA, on and off until 1974" (ibid.). Nevertheless, the Tibetan exile struggle is widely seen as a non-violent movement.

3.13.1 Introduction to the TGE's Objectives in the Exile Struggle

This paper intends to explore the soft-power resources at the disposal of the Tibetan government in exile, and to inquire into how these resources have aided the TGE to further the achievement of its objectives in the international sphere. One of the central research questions concerns how soft power has contributed to the achievement of the TGE's objectives with regard to the international sphere. In order to attempt at answering this question, it is necessary first to identify the objectives of the exile government. This is the aim of the present section. After offering a brief theoretical introduction to objectives of exile governments in general, the latter part of the section deals specifically with the TGE's goals, particularly with respect to the international sphere.

3.13.2 Objectives of Exile Governments in Theory

According to Stephanie Roemer (2008a:4), the theoretical approach of Yossi Shain[51] (of the Universities of Georgetown and Tel-Aviv) is the only currently existing theory on governments in exile in political science. Shain defines exile governments as "opposition groups that struggle from outside their home territory to overthrow and replace the regime in their independent, occupied or claimed home country. These groups refer to themselves as governments-in-exile, national committees, provisional governments, national revolutionary councils, national liberation movements, and in other ways that reflect their claim to be the sole or at least the most viable alternative to the existing home regime" (Shain 1991, cited from Roemer 2008a:39).

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51 See Shain (1989; 1991).

It can be deduced from this definition that the main objective of an exile government, provided it has lost its territory, is to regain it. There are two crucial factors that success, in terms of achieving this objective, depends on: The ability to secure loyalty within the own community and the ability to gain international support and recognition. The importance of these factors derive from the limited room for maneuvering available to governments in exile compared to sovereign governments (Shain 1989, cited from Roemer 2008a:39).

The continuation of the exile struggle and the political survival of the organizational structures in exile rely heavily on international support. This can be material as well as diplomatic. Hence, a major focus of an exile government tends to be the international community: sovereign states, transnational organizations, NGOs and individuals.

> Many exile organizations ascribe vital importance to foreign support for their struggle, and strive to make their case international. They endeavour to generate and cultivate international enmity toward the home regime and to earn recognition for themselves at the regime's expense, so as to undermine and eventually overthrow and replace it (Shain 1989, cited from Roemer 2008a:45).

According to Shain (1989, cited from Roemer 2008a:45), it is important for exile governments to take into account that international players tend to act pursuant to their own political, economic or social objectives. Therefore exile governments must endeavour to convince them that the exile struggle is related to the potential supporters' own objectives. A major goal of exile governments is hence to find ways of encouraging possible international patrons to act on their behalf.

Roemer (2008a:47), again citing Yossi Shain, states that "even a vague acknowledgement [of exile governments by international actors] in spheres of power becomes instrumentally important for validating the exile's claims of power because they lift up an exile community's confidence to continue its struggle and renews the hope to achieve the set goals."

International developments are subject to constant change. Accordingly, exile governments must maneuver carefully between different political authorities in the international sphere, in order to achieve sustainable alliances. If an exile government cannot achieve support from the highest political level of a possible supporting country, it tends to address lower-ranked diplomats, sub-systems of the state or the international community, or the civil society. "In this context, especially cultural, humanitarian and religious organizations, student associations, labor unions and political parties, are important for a government-in-exile" (Shain 1989, cited from Roemer 2008a:48-9). Since many of these sub-groups focus more on specific issues than on the exact

situation of the exiles, they are easily influenced in terms of the exile government's goals, by providing them with information specifically related to their focal issue. "As a result, they provide an exile government with effective aid by communicating the exile's moral and political views and, moreover, with financial help" (Shain 1989, cited from Roemer 2008a:49).

Roemer (2008a:49) refers to Shain and Appadurai in stating that "[e]xile governments mostly call for the international community's assistance through focusing on symbolically significant global issues. Universal myths are presented to the international community under the guise of 'archetypes of legitimacy', such as democracy, human rights, and self-determination."

Summarizing this section, in accordance with the theory proposed by Yossi Shain (as cited from Roemer 2008a), some of the major objectives of exile governments, in relation to the international sphere, are to:

Overthrow and replace the regime in power in the homeland;

Make their case international and gain international support and recognition from governments and other levels of foreign countries including the public; and

Motivate and encourage possible international patrons to act on their behalf and support its struggle, often by focusing on symbolically significant global issues.

3.13.3 Objectives of the TGE in Practice

The objectives of the Tibetan exile government are manifold, and it would be undue to attempt at producing an exhausting list. Objectives could, for instance, be split into very general categories: overall objective, objectives in terms of organizational survival, objectives related to allegiance and loyalty within the exile community or among Tibetans in the homeland, objectives regarding the relationship with the host country, India or with China. Many of these are naturally related. Each of these categories could again be split into minor objectives, the attainment of which would contribute to achieving the higher objective. Such an approach would exceed the scope of this paper. What is important here rather, is to elaborate a concise set of the major goals of the TGE in general, and of the more specific goals in relation to the international political sphere. Defining the TGE's goals is a necessary prerequisite to attempt an answer to one of the research

questions of this pape: *How has the TGE's soft power contributed or not, to approaching the achievement of its objectives?*

In the 1980s, the Tibetan exile government significantly altered not only its approach, but also the objectives of its exile struggle. "Until 1988, the goal of the Tibetans was independence from China; a right, they believed, that was historically proven. From that date, the official goal of the Tibetan people became 'genuine autonomy'" (Ardley 2002:169). This statement must be put into the perspective that 'genuine autonomy' had been adopted as the official goal by the 14th Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government in exile. The approach to achieve this objective is referred to as the *Middle-Way Approach*.[52] "The essence of the Middle Way Approach is to secure genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the scope of the Constitution of the PRC" (CTA 1). This change in official policy engendered substantial controversy within the exile community, as many Tibetan people objected to giving up independence as the prime objective. Particularly the TYC disagrees with this stance and continues to advocate complete independence for Tibet.[53]

This drastic change in TGE policy occurred against the backdrop of a statement by the Chinese leadership in 1979, in which it announced that it would only continue negotiations with Tibetans in exile, if these were willing to "shift their focus from total independence to autonomy" (Roemer 2008a:83). "Everything is negotiable except independence," Deng Xiaoping said (cited from Herzer 2004:425). The shift occurred out of a sense of *realpolitik* by the Tibetan leadership. Almost three decades had past since the exile period began and no advances regarding the status of Tibet had been achieved, neither was there any change to the situation in sight. In addition, the TGE perceived the PRC's population-transfer policy as an increasingly serious threat to Tibetan culture (Ram 2004:171). "Based on the pressures of the current political situation and his firm belief that Buddhism basically advocates non-violence, the fourteenth Dalai Lama has rejected the notion of leading Tibet on a path to independence within the foreseeable future" (von Brück 2004:41).

Philosophically, the 'middlepath' is also a Buddhist approach to life, to finding the appropriate way between the extremes. According to Ram (2004:174), the Dalai Lama's "political philosophy, particularly the middlepath policy, [is] rooted in Buddhism, Gandhian satyagraha and realistic understanding of international politics."

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52 The 'Middle-Way Approach' is also known as 'Middle-Way Path' or 'Middlepath'. The term 'Middle Way Approach' is sometimes also used exchangeably with '*Strasbourg Proposal*' (see Dalai Lama 2001).
53 See section 3.8.2 'Tibetan Youth Congress.'

[The] middlepath does not represent or reflect the overall belief system of the Tibetans. Rather, it is a nonviolent technique advocated by the Dalai Lama which can be crudely compared to the Gandhian satyagraha. The essence of the middle path is avoiding extremes [...] Thus, taking a middle path is a moderate position that could guarantee the common minimum interests of all concerned parties. For the Tibetans, it is the protection and preservation of Tibetan culture and religion; for the Chinese it is the security and territorial integrity of the motherland; and for the neighbours and third parties, peace at their borders and peaceful international relations" (Ram 2004:162-3).

On 21 September 1987 the 14th Dalai Lama addressed the US Congress Human Rights Caucus, in his first decidedly political speech in the USA. "In 1987, I made specific proposals in a five-point plan for the restoration of peace and human rights in Tibet. This included the conversion of the entire Tibetan plateau into a Zone of Ahimsa, a sanctuary of peace and nonviolence where human beings and nature can live in peace and harmony" (Dalai Lama 1989). In this address, the Dalai Lama outlined propositions for a solution to the Tibet question, in the form of five basic elements, which became known as the *Five Point Peace Plan*:

This peace plan contains five basic components:

1. Transformation of the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace;

2. Abandonment of China's population transfer policy which threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people;

3. Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms;

4. Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste;

5. Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples (Dalai Lama 1987).

The Chinese reaction to this plan was extremely negative. In a media campaign, Chinese officials accused the Dalai Lama of intending to "split the motherland" and denounced "US interference in China's internal affairs" (cited from Heath 2005:144).

The shift in the TGE's focal objective from independence to autonomy became official by way of a formal proposal for negotiations with the PRC formulated in an address by the 14th Dalai Lama to members of the European Parliament in a private meeting held in Strasbourg on 15 June 1988.[54] He distributed a paper clarifying his intentions "for resolving the issue of Tibet" (Shakya 1999:423). In this proposal the Dalai Lama elaborated on the *Five Point Peace Plan* and developed it further. He proposed:

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54 In fact, the Dalai Lama had already expressed the idea that he might accept some form of federal relationship with the PRC as early as 1978 (see Shakya 1999:375; see also Ram 2004:165).

> The whole of Tibet known as Cholka Sum (U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo) should become a self-governing democratic political entity founded on law by agreement of the people for the common good and the protection of themselves and their environment, *in association with the People's Republic of China* [emphasis added]. The Government of the People's Republic of China could remain responsible for Tibet's foreign [including defense] policy (Dalai Lama 1988).

The Dalai Lama would hence relinquish his claim for independence and would seek a voluntary association with China. This came to be known as the *Strasbourg Proposal*. It caused a great deal of controversy within the Tibetan exile community; accusations of betrayal and foreign involvement in the decision were voiced (Shakya 1999:423).

The Chinese again refuted the Dalai Lama's proposal. The PRC's Foreign Ministry argued that the *Strasbourg Proposal* could not be the basis for negotiation, since China would not accept "independence, semi-independence or even independence in disguised form" (cited from Shakya 1999:424), and the *Strasbourg Proposal* advocated a form of semi-independence for Tibet.

> The 'Strasbourg Proposal' was a turning point in exile Tibetan politics as the 14th Dalai Lama took the decision to aim the exile Tibetan struggle towards autonomy rather than independence, assuming that this was a general wish of his national compatriots (Roemer 2008a:83).

Although the contents of the *Strasbourg Proposal* essentially constitute the position of the TGE until today (see CTA 1) the proposal was officially withdrawn in September 1991 with the Dalai Lama's consent by the *Kashag*, due to a lack of sincere commitment by China (Roemer 2008:84).

3.13.4 Summary of the TGE's Objectives

> The twin imperatives of the Tibetan people are to restore Tibet's freedom and to transform it into a democratic country with environmental and human rights as its credo (TGE 1).

In essence, the objectives formulated in the *Strasbourg Proposal* are still valid in constituting the position of the TGE today (von Brück 2005:9; CTA 1). The *Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People*, presented by representatives of the Dalai Lama in the eighth round of meetings with officials of the PRC, held in November 2008, states: "We [the CTA] remain firmly committed not to seek separation or independence [... and ...] to fully respect the territorial integrity of the PRC" (CTA 1).

Article 15 of the *Charter of Tibetans in Exile* states that the "primary aim of the Tibetan Administration in-exile shall be to endeavor to maintain a just policy for the achievement of the

common goal of Tibet, and in addition, at the present moment, protect Tibetans in Tibet from present hardships and danger" (TGE 3). The terms 'autonomy' and 'independence' are not found in the charter, rather the more ambiguous expression 'common goal of Tibet' is used.

It seems valid to assume that a free and independent Tibet, if possible, would be the ultimate goal of the TGE. However, reality has shown that continuing to actively pursue this goal seems futile with regard to the power and firm stance of the PRC, and would furthermore compromise other very important goals. One of these is the preservation of Tibetan culture.
One immediate objective of the TGE for many years has been to enter into dialogue with China in order to ensure the preservation of Tibetan culture from Chinese policies.

> [The] Dalai Lama firmly believes that international moral, political and economic pressure is the only feasible option the Tibetans are left with to find a timely solution. Therefore he has often publicly solicited for 'immediate international pressure [to] be exerted upon the Chinese government, with an aim to beginning significant negotiations as soon as possible' (Ram 2004:171).

Consequentially, a major objective of the TGE is the generation of international support. Dodin and Räther (2001:413) observe that "the Tibetans' precarious situation forces them to turn to the outside world for as much support as possible in order to deflect the imminent threat of cultural extinction." The Dalai Lama, in a statement at the second Tibet Support Group conference held in Germany in June 1996, remarks: "Because of this lack of response from the Chinese side, I was compelled to publicly announce my Five-point Peace Plan for Tibet. This was the result of lack of response from the Chinese side and thus there was no other alternative except to seek support from the international community" (cited from Ram 2004:171).

When addressing the European Parliament in 2001 the Dalai Lama, along the same lines, states:

> In the absence of any positive response from the Chinese government to my overtures over the years, I am left with no alternative but to appeal to the members of the international community. It is clear now that only increased, concerted and consistent international efforts will persuade Beijing to change its policy on Tibet. Although the immediate reactions from the Chinese side will be most probably negative, nevertheless, I strongly believe that expressions of international concern and support are essential for creating an environment conducive for the peaceful resolution of the Tibetan problem (Dalai Lama 2001).

The political shift that occurred in the approach and objectives of the TGE from independence to autonomy, the shift toward the 'middlepath' in attempting a step towards compromise, was very much related to a strategy of generating international support. In this respect, Ram (2004:171-2), summarizes the Middle-Way policy:

[W]ith nonviolent action and dialogue as central components, the middlepath policy attempts to mobilize international pressure so as to compel China to agree to a negotiated political settlement over Tibet. Pressure has been exerted on China through legislative effort, that is, taking Tibet into governmental fora, particularly legislative branches, and effecting changes in government policies worldwide. This has become the core strategy of internationalization. This strategy has evolved since 1987 by encompassing four dimensions: nonviolent resistance inside Tibet, dialogue with PRC, Constructive Programme in Exile to protect Tibetan culture and religion, and internationalization and media mobilization on the Tibet issue [...] the internationalization of the Tibet issue mobilizes international public, political and media support to put pressure on China for a peaceful resolution (Ram 2004:171-2).

The summarizing list of major TGE objectives, with particular reference to the international sphere, is, perhaps not surprisingly, quite similar to the list of objetives of exile governments in theory,[55] except that the major objective of overthrowing and replacing the regime in power in the homeland has, in the case of the official position of the TGE, been replaced by the achievement of 'genuine autonomy.'

The major objectives of the TGE in its exile struggle, with particular reference to the international domain, are to:

Achieve a status of 'genuine autonomy' for Tibet;

Reduce the hardships suffered by Tibetans in Tibet;

Ensure the preservation of Tibetan culture and religion and to ensure respect for human rights and the protection of the natural environment in Tibet;

Enter into meaningful dialogue with the PRC;

Make the Tibetan case international and gain international support and recognition;

Encourage possible international patrons and the international civil society to support the exile struggle, amongst other things by focusing on shared values such as the protection of human rights and of the natural environment, the practice of non-violence and the advocacy of democracy.

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55 See section 3.13.2 'Objectives of Exile Governments in Theory.'

PART 4 – International Support for the TGE and the Tibetan Cause

4.1 Introduction to International Support for the TGE

Before analyzing the TGE's soft-power resources, the present section discusses international advocacy and support for the TGE and Tibet. Part 4 focuses particularly on moral and political international support. Considering the relatively small population of Tibet, and the comparably tiny group of Tibetans in exile, the international support for the Tibetan cause is overwhelming, and has manifold expressions. The Tibetan cause has attracted politicians, scholars, actors, pop stars, international NGOs and thousands of individuals, many of which have organized themselves politically by forming Tibet Support Groups (TSGs). As discussed in section 3.13.3 ('Objectives of the TGE in Practice'), the achievement of international support for the Tibetan cause is high on its agenda. Part 4 intends to offer an introduction to the dimension that Western support for Tibet has reached in recent years, and looks at support from the civil society, from celebrities and from governments.

The term *Tibet Movement* refers to the transnational efforts made on the part of Tibetans and their non-Tibetan supporters to achieve self-determination for the Tibetan people (Anand 2007:98). Another term often used for this mobilization is *Free Tibet Movement*. The term *Tibet Independence Movement* is more problematic, as it implies the goal of the movement being independence for Tibet from China, which is in contradiction with official CTA policy. The TYC and many TSGs are part of the *Tibet Independence Movement*. The term *Tibet Movement* is generally associated with the civil society, whereas support for the Tibetan cause is also manifest in the highest political levels of the West.

"The Tibet cause has attracted an exceptionally diverse group of people, some of whom see their activities on behalf of the cause as connected with Buddhist belief and practice, while others are concerned with human rights, opposing communism, and a range of other motivations" (Powers 2000). In the opinion of Heath (2005:252), the

> international campaign in support of Tibet is truly a 'people' campaign, nonviolent and not relying on governments or businesses. It has over 330 support groups worldwide. Many leading politicians, lawyers and other prominent people, including some leading Chinese dissidents, are Tibet supporters. In scale, scope and persistence, it is unique in world freedom movements. It is also a spiritually based campaign, bringing out people's finer instincts, supported by many hundreds of thousands of ordinary people – mostly non-Buddhists – who find the continuing Chinese occupation of Tibet intolerable.

After Tibet received considerable international attention during the 1960s, "the world largely lost interest in Tibet" (Powers 2000) until the events of the late 1980s when the TGE adopted its new political strategy and the Tibet issue again appeared on the global stage. Robert Barnett (2001:286) summarizes how the strategy change that occurred within the TGE towards the end of the 1980s, discussed above, affected international mobilization for the Tibetan cause:

> There had been Tibet support groups of a kind in Europe and elsewhere since 1959, but these had been conservative in character and strategy, working within political elites, and gradually becoming organizations focused on refugee relief work as they lost active support after 1971 [and the rapprochement that followed the meeting between Nixon and Mao the same year] from governments and even from right wing politicians. The great achievement, therefore, of the exiles' 1987 initiative was that, perhaps for the first time, the Tibetan issue became acceptable to center-leftists as well as to more conservative political sectors that had traditionally given it their support. The groups founded in 1987 or afterward represented the involvement in the issue of young, politically astute people from the liberal areas of the political spectrum, usually from the professional classes, who had a natural alliance with the media as well as with some sectors of the 'New Age' movements in the West, which until then had been largely resistant to any political mobilization. The romantic representation of Tibet as a site of religious excellence or as a bastion of anticommunist resistance had been deeply alienating to this professionalized, left-of-center sector of Western society, just as it was to most professional politicians of that era and, most significantly, to the media. It was the representation of Tibet as a 'specialized' site of human rights violations that seems to have made the issue palatable to a broad, cross-party community. (Barnett 2001:286)

According to Powers (2000), it was the significant amount of grass roots work being done in the West, after the TGE's strategic change, which lay the groundwork for an increasing awareness of the Tibetan cause. "Tibet support organizations were formed all over the world at this time" (ibid.). It was Western political activism that made publics and governments more aware of the Tibetan situation, but researchers, translators, and publishers were also instrumental in bringing the Tibetan cause to Western audiences.

4.2 Civil Society Support for Tibet in the West

Support for Tibet among Western civil societies has been growing and has become increasingly evident over the past two decades. Particularly the protests surrounding the 2008 Beijing Olympics serve as an obvious example, but there are many more manifestations of this support, for instance the worldwide annual pro-Tibet demonstrations on 10th of March, the anniversary of the Lhasa uprising of 1959. Powers (2000) calls these demonstrations the "most important focal symbol of the growing movement" in support of Tibet. In "recent years [they] have drawn ever-increasing numbers of protesters [...] Typically, crowds of demonstrators gather in a conspicuous public place, often in front of a Chinese embassy" (Powers 2000).

The term *Tibet Support Groups* (TSGs) depicts NGOs around the world that focus on a wide range of subjects related to the support for Tibet, including Tibetan Buddhism, human rights, the environment, the spreading of awareness about the situation in Tibet, or the demand for Tibetan independence or self-determination (Anand 2007:98). The so-called *Tibet Support Groups* (TSGs) are engaged in political campaigning and relief work. About 150 TSGs "are solely 'political' campaigning organizations, i.e. their work is dedicated to bringing about a change in the political status of Tibet. The majority of these advocate independence as the primary goal of a process of political change for Tibet" (Reynolds 2004:448). On its official website, the CTA lists 243 TSGs and 54 Tibet Associations throughout the world (CTA 2), although these numbers might be out of date. In 2005, Heath (2005:252) refers to 330 TSGs around the world.

Since around 1990, international civil society support for the Tibetan cause has seen a dramatic increase. One measure for this increase is the surge in participation in the International Conferences of Tibet Support Groups. So far, five such international TSG meetings have taken place, the first of which was held in Dharamsala in 1990, with delegates from 25 countries represented. In Berlin in 2000, almost 300 participants were present (CTA 2). The latest conference held in May 2007 in Brussels, was organized by the DIIR[56] and the Friedrich Naumann-Foundation, in collaboration with the Belgian Inter-Parliamentary Group for Tibet. 315 representatives from 56 countries and five continents participated (Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung 1). Following Rolf Berndt, the managing director of the Naumann Foundation, it was "the most political Tibet Support Groups Conference ever" (cited from ibid.), due to the upcoming Olympic Games in China.

The *International Tibet Support Network* (ITSN) is a network of Tibet Support Groups that intends to effectively coordinate their work around the world and acts as a communication hub between them. The ITSN was founded at the Third International Tibet Support Group Conference held in the Legislative Assembly of the Land of Berlin in May 2000 (von Welck 2004:476).

> [The] ITSN aims to develop campaign strategies on priority issues, determined by consensus, and construct action plans, which members can adopt to whatever degree they feel is possible or appropriate, based on their resources and the cultural and national political context in which they operate (Reynolds 2004:448).

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56 The DIIR's participation in the organizing of the TSG conference puts into question information from the TGE's website, according to which Tibetan Support Groups "are entirely separate from the Central Tibetan Administration" (TGE 1).

Many TSGs that are members of the ITSN are very small, run by volunteers. In 2004 there were around half a dozen TSGs with one or more full-time staff members. One of these is the *Free Tibet Campaign* (Reynolds 2004:448).

The *Free Tibet Campaign* (FTC), an NGO established in 1987, campaigns "for an end to the Chinese occupation and for the Tibetans' fundamental human rights to be respected" (Reynolds 2004:449). The basis for the campaigning is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The activities of the FTC include events for public awareness raising, demonstrations, lobbying, letter-writing campaigns and media work (Reynolds 2004:449). According to its website, the FTC has more than 20,000 supporters, and is financed entirely from their contributions (FTC 1). There are approximately 50 local groups, varying from a single person to local committees with regular meetings, across the UK and oversees that work on behalf of the FTC (ibid.).

When PRC President Jiang Zemin officially visited the UK in October 1999, it was, according to Reynolds (2004:449), the merit of the Free Tibet Campaign that "Tibet was at the top of the public agenda." Almost every UK newspaper featured on its front page an image of a lone protestor attempting to unfurl a Tibetan flag as the PRC President together with the Queen rode down the London Mall. There was a public outrage when it became known that pro-Tibet protestors had been apprehended and their flags and placards confiscated, while supporters of Jiang Zemin were permitted to wave Chinese flags. "[T]he campaign became something of a cause celèbre [...] The Free Tibet Campaign exposed the sensitivity not only of the [PRC] President to protest, but the fear the British government had of souring relations with China" (Reynolds 2004:449).

In terms of palpable outcomes, the work of the FTC has achieved the early release of a number of Tibetan political prisoners, including, in 2002, Ngawang Choephel (who had served an eighteen-year sentence for 'spying'), Takna Jigme Sangpo (who had spent most of the previous four decades incarcerated for supporting Tibetan independence), and Ngawang Sangdrol (a young nun who had been imprisoned for participating in pro-independence demonstrations). The Free Tibet Campaign, other TSGs and human rights organizations like Amnesty International have worked toward raising the international profile of political prisoners such as Ngawang Sangdrol.

> The effect of this campaigning has been that Chinese leaders, who recognise that there is political capital to be made by releasing high profile prisoners, particularly before important summits with the United States, have identified Tibetans as being at the 'top of the list' for release (Reynolds 2004:451).

The work of the FTC also led to the publicizing and 'breaking the story' of the witnessed killing of a Tibetan nun and a youth on their way to crossing the Nangpa La Pass to Nepal: "Following an unprecedented investigation, the Chinese general in charge of the troops involved in the incident was forced to step down" (FTC 2007).

The *International Campaign for Tibet* (ICT), according to its mission statement, "works to promote human rights and democratic freedoms for the people of Tibet" (ICT 1). Founded in 1988, the ICT is a non-profit member organization with offices in Washington, D.C., Amsterdam, Berlin and Brussels, and field offices in Dharamsala and Kathmandu. In 2007, the active membership of the ICT reached 100,000 (ICT 4), making it the largest Tibet Support Group (Powers 2000). Although many of the members are Buddhists, the ICT is a non-religious organization (ibid.). One of the chairmen of the ICT is the celebrity Richard Gere.

In terms of activities it is engaged in, the ICT:
- Monitors and reports on human rights, environmental and socio economic conditions in Tibet;
- Advocates for Tibetans imprisoned for their political or religious beliefs;
- Works with governments to develop policies and programs to help Tibetans;
- Secures humanitarian and development assistance for Tibetans;
- Mobilizes individuals and the international community to take action on behalf of Tibetans; and
- Promotes self-determination for the Tibetan people through negotiations between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama (ICT 1).

The ICT is engaged in fact-finding missions in India and Nepal and in reporting activities, distributing the bi-monthly *Tibet Press Watch* to organizations and individuals involved in work on Tibet. It has published reports[57] on religious persecution, population transfer, racism, development projects and nuclear activities in Tibet (ICT 2).

Its lobbying activities included the hosting of a roundtable at the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva in 2004. According to the ICT, the organization helped "secure the Congressional Gold Medal for the Dalai Lama in recognition of his many enduring and outstanding contributions to peace, non-violence, human rights, and religious understanding" (ICT 4). It also arranged for a public speech by the Dalai Lama in Washington, D.C. after receiving the Congressional Gold Medal in 2007. "More than 10,000 gathered to hear his message of peace and nonviolence, and over 65,000 people around the world watched a live webcast of the day's proceedings on ICT's website" (ICT 3).

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57 For ICT reports, see http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports (accessed: 24.4.2009).

In terms of financial assistance, in 2007 alone the ICT "[s]ecured the allocation of funds for Tibetan refugee communities, including $2 million for humanitarian assistance, $600,000 for scholarships, and $250,000 for programs that support human rights and democracy initiatives [and] secured an additional $3 million for development assistance, $500,000 for educational and cultural exchanges, and Radio Free Asia and Voice of America funding to reach inside Tibet" (ICT 3).

In 2008, the ICT launched a campaign around the Olympic Games in Beijing, "to protest the Olympic torch relay, to gain access for international journalists in Tibet, and to highlight human rights abuses during the Olympics" (ICT 4). This campaign gained international media attention on a massive scale.

Founded in New York City in 1994, *Students for a Free Tibet* (SFT), another major Tibet Support Group, is a chapter-based network of young people around the world (SFT 1). It "works in solidarity with the Tibetan people in their struggle for freedom and independence [...] Through education, grassroots organizing, and non-violent direct action, [Students for a Free Tibet campaigns] for Tibetans' fundamental right to political freedom" (SFT 1).

According to its website, the SFT consists of over 650 chapters at universities, high schools and elementary schools in more than 30 countries, and one permanent office in New York. Activities center around two main areas: campaigns (education, lobbying, media advocacy, non-violent direct action) which, according to SFT, mobilize tens of thousands of people around the world; and leadership training, which "has given thousands of young people the skills and inspiration to be leaders in the struggle for Tibet and for social justice worldwide" (SFT 1).

Outcomes of the SFT campaigning activities include the early release of a number of Tibetan political prisoners, the raising of awareness about the Tibet issue, as well as contributing to the prevention of a controversial $ 40 million World Bank loan to China for a project comprising the relocation of around 58,000 Han Chinese into Tibetan areas in 2000 (SFT 2). The project ran under the title 'poverty alleviation' and intended to settle Han Chinese farmers to a more fertile area in Qinghai, part of traditional Amdo province of Tibet. The project raised "a storm of protest" from environmental and human rights groups. "Those groups contended that the bank was aiding China's effort to dilute the minority Tibetan population" (Sanger/Kahn 2000). The prevention of this loan was seen as a major success of Western civil society campaigning for the Tibetan cause.

While the campaigning work of Tibet Support Groups has raised Western awareness about the Tibet issue for some time, the events marking the 2008 Beijing Olympics secured media coverage on Tibet of an unprecedented scale. Protests targeting the Olympic Torch Relay turned it into somewhat of an embarrassment for China, since it is surely not in the 'Olympic spirit' to require massive police protection for the Olympic torch in almost every major city it passed. Demonstrations, in part violent, against Chinese policies accompanied the global tour of the torch.[58]

In its *Beijing 2008 Olympics Campaign Evaluation*, the International Tibet Support Network (ITSN 1) assumes that the uprising and subsequent repression within Tibet "was the largest single contributor to increased public awareness about Tibet for the duration of the Olympics campaign." However, the report continues, "the awareness and sympathy was magnified and channeled into activity because of the existence of Tibet Groups and their preparedness for the Olympics campaign."

In its analysis, the ITSN (1) holds that

> the situation of Tibet was covered in the vast majority of mainstream media analyses of Beijing 2008 as one of the critical issues facing the Chinese leadership today. Attention first grew noticeably during the worldwide actions that took place during the One-Year Countdown, particularly those of Students for a Free Tibet inside China. The major western media outlets that have not given Tibet extensive coverage in recent years began to single out and discuss Tibet rather than lumping it with general human rights issues. The Tibetan uprising, and the Olympic torch relay that followed on its heels, brought unparalleled intensity of coverage and placed Tibet front and centre in much of the analysis of China and the Olympics both by journalists and experts. This decreased after May but continued to an extent through the Olympics. As of November 2008, it appeared that Tibet was still attracting a higher level of attention than before the campaign (ITSN 1).

The report also claims that increased awareness led to an amplification of the Tibet movement in general:

> The capacity of individual Tibet Groups grew because of the Olympics campaign. Sixty-six percent of member organisations that responded to ITSN's Olympics evaluation survey said their capacity increased (their budget grew, they got new volunteers, supporters and/or members, or developed new media contacts or contacts in government) because of the Olympics campaign. Small member groups were strengthened by the knowledge and resources shared by larger groups (ITSN 1).

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58 For an interactive map, detailing each stop of the Olympic torch, see the website of the University of Southern California US-China Institute at:
http://www.uschina.usc.edu/ShowFeature.aspx?articleID=1740&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1 (accessed: 24.4.2009). For a collection of links to media reports on the torch relay, see
http://www.freetibet.org/newsmedia/april-2008-0 (accessed: 24.4.2009)

Economy and Segal (2008:56) believe that the "barrage of criticism China has endured prior to the Olympics may have brought a short-term gain in forcing the Chinese leadership to agree to meet with the Dalai Lama's envoys, but real reform of China's Tibet policy or a broader willingness to embrace domestic reforms is unlikely to follow in the near term." This might be the case, but the protests demonstrated international outrage with a number of China's policies, and increased international awareness of the Tibet issue.

There is little doubt that the campaigns surrounding the Beijing Olympics had effects on international public opinion. A *Harris Interactive* poll published in May 2008 finds that:

> More than three-quarters of adults in France (84%) and half the adults in Germany (51%) say they have heard a lot about the recent global protests surrounding the freeing of Tibet from Chinese rule; Pluralities in China itself (46%), Great Britain (44%) and the United States (41%) have also heard a lot about these protests; At least three in five adults in Italy (60%), Japan (66%), and Spain (68%) have heard at least a little about the protests; Three-quarters of adults in Italy (75%) and Germany (74%), two-thirds of adults in Japan (69%), France (67%) and Spain (64%) and a majority of adults in the United States (59%) and Great Britain (53%) all believe Tibet should not be under Chinese rule (Harris Interactive 2008).

4.3 The Internet as a Tool for Support

> A fascinating use of the Internet to wield soft power can be found in the politics of diaspora communities. David Bollier, an expert on the impact of digital technologies, notes, 'The Internet has been a godsend to such populations because it enables large numbers of geographically isolated people with a shared history to organize into large virtual communities (Nye 2004a:92).

Support for the Tibetan cause in virtual realms is significant and has manifold expressions. Most of the English-language Tibet-related internet sites are pro-Tibetan. Tibet Support Groups now tend to work and communicate over the internet. Saunders (2008) cites a communications professor at Simon Fraser University, Peter-Chow White, in saying that the internet has a very significant role in global activism: "The internet has been a source of alternative media, not just in terms of alternative institutionalized forms of media, but in terms of everyday people using technology to spread their own information [...] FaceBook, Youtube and My Space are all central to how activists now work." According to Saunders (2008), FaceBook is home to over 500 Tibet-related groups, and the 'Free Tibet' group counts over 80,000 members.

In an online petition arranged by Avaaz[59] to Chinese President Hu Jintao, asking to show restraint and respect for human rights, and to open meaningful dialogue with the Dalai Lama, one million people signed within seven days. Response, which came from every country in the world, was greatest in France, where six out of 1,000 citizens signed the petition (Saunders 2008). Towards the end of April 2009, well over 1.6 million people had signed.

> The presence of support for Tibet is particularly significant in the virtual world where most of the Internet sites related to Tibet are pro-Tibetan. In fact, there is an increasing realization within the Tibetan diaspora of the possibilities offered by the Internet as a means for disseminating information and mobilizing support (Anand 2007:98).

The virtual support for the Tibetan cause, and the internet as a tool for mobilization and dissemination of information seems to confirm what Joseph Nye (2004a:31) argues in relation to how the global information age affects politics:[60]

> [T]he information revolution is creating virtual communities and networks that cut across national borders. Transnational corporations and nongovernmental actors [...] will play larger roles. Many of these organizations will have soft power of their own as they attract citizens into coalitions that cut across national boundaries. Politics then becomes in part a competition for attractiveness, legitimacy, and credibility. The ability to share information – and to be believed – becomes an important source of attraction and power.

4.4 Celebrity Support for Tibet in the West

Many Western celebrities are actively involved in supporting the Dalai Lama, the TGE and the Tibetan cause. The most prominent is probably the American actor Richard Gere, "the Hollywood star most identified with the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan freedom movement" (Shell 2000:44), who was also the first major celebrity who became active in the Tibetan cause.

At the 1993 Academy Awards, Gere utilized the international spotlight to draw attention to Tibet, calling for Deng Xiaoping to stop oppression in Tibet. "Gere, a devout Tibetan Buddhist, asked the audience to mentally send a message to Deng asking him to bring 'a little sanity' to the Tibet situation" (Powers 2000). Powers (ibid.) calls this a "key moment in the current surge of interest in the Tibet cause."

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59 See http://www.avaaz.org/en/tibet_end_the_violence/ (accessed: 24.4.2009).
60 See also section 2.5 'Soft Power in a Global Information Age.'

Many other celebrities followed Gere in speaking out for Tibet, including "film star Harrison Ford, his wife Melissa Mathiesson, a movie script writer, and rock musician Adam Yauch of the Beastie Boys" (ibid.).

One of the highest-profile activists for the Tibet cause is definitely Robert Thurman, who attracts attention not only for being America's first ordained Tibetan Buddhist monk, but also for being the father of Hollywood actress Uma Thurman. He is characterized by journalists as America's leading Buddhist, occasionally acts as the Dalai Lama's unofficial spokesperson and is the Jey Tsong Khapa Professor of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University (Lopez 1998:83). In 1987, Thurman and Gere, along with composer Philip Glass and others, founded the Tibet House in New York, which "aims to promote and preserve Tibetan culture by serving as both a cultural center in New York City and an online global resource for those interested in Tibetan civilization" (Tibet House 1). According to Powers (2000), Tibet House "has been particularly effective in bringing celebrities to the Free Tibet cause." Emphasizing the position of Robert Thurman, he was chosen one of "Time's 25 Most Influential Americans" in 1997 (Time Magazine 1997).

Adam Yauch, frontman of the American hip hop group the Beasty Boys, has been very active in bringing the issue of Tibet to younger audiences, mainly through the organization of the so-called 'Tibetan Freedom Concerts.' These concerts, staged as charity and awareness raising events for the Tibet cause, have featured widely known artists like the Foo Fighters, Alanis Morissette, Sonic Youth, Patti Smith, Pearljam, Radiohead, Red Hot Chilli Peppers, Fugees, REM, and U2 (Penenberg 1997; Powers 2000). The first concert, held in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park in June 1996, attracted over 100,000 people (Shell 2000:36). According to the online encyclopedia wikipedia.org, citing beastiemania.com, a website of the Beastie Boys,[61] these concerts that were held in 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999 attracted a total of well over 300,000 attendees, and raised over $ 1.5 million for the Tibetan cause.

Towards the end of the 1990s in Hollywood "there was something of a craze brewing around Tibet" (Schell 2000:34). Joan Chen, a Chinese actress who moved to the United States in the early 1980s, explains the fascination with Tibet in Hollywood in the following way:

> People in Hollywood like the idea of Tibetan mysticism because they don't really understand it and so can interpret it any way they want. It's a lazy way of achieving enlightenment (cited from Shell 2000:270).

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61 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibetan_Freedom_Concert (accessed: 24.4.2009).

The Tibet movement gained unprecedented publicity through the growing interest in Tibet among Hollywood stars, rock musicians, and other celebrities. In 1997 two big-budget productions on Tibet were released: *Seven Years in Tibet* and *Kundun*. These films contributed significantly to popularizing the Tibet issue in the West.

Seven Years in Tibet, a version of Heinrich Harrer's classic released in October 1997 was budgeted at $ 65 million (Shell 2000:314). The Sony-Tristar production was directed by Jean-Jaques Annaud and featured superstar Brad Pitt. *Kundun*, a $ 28 million production directed by Martin Scorsese and released in December of the same year, relates the Dalai Lama's story from his birth in 1935 to his flight to India, and "ends with powerful images of the Chinese invasion of Tibet" (Powers 2000).

Seven Years in Tibet and *Kundun* reached millions of viewers. Shell (2000:32) believes that "Hollywood films are the most powerful vectors of fantasy ever known to humankind," and ascribes Hollywood "global economic reach and [the] ability to animate popular sentiment around the world" (ibid:305). Indeed, the films' productions and the publicity created thereby had effects. According to John Ackerly, director of the Washington based International Campaign for Tibet, membership in the ICT surged immensely in the aftermath of the films' release (cited from Powers 2000). The increased popularity of Tibet fostered hopes for concrete improvements:

> Among many exiled Tibetans there arose an almost millenarian hope that the release of these films and the identification with Tibet of such pop icons as Martin Scorsese, Steven Seagal, Brad Pitt, Richard Gere, and the Beasty Boys might precipitate the long-awaited moment when China would feel compelled by the power of world opinion to address the question of Tibet in a more humane and conciliatory way (Shell 2000:305).

Shell (ibid:311) too believed that the hype around these films might rouse the world from "its neglect of Tibet's tragedy." But, he concludes, "there was no deliverance to come." In this connection, Richard Gere says:

> In the end, they're all just movies. They will be transformative only to the degree that one wants to be transformed and is capable of being transformed. The dangers are that one will get a kind of wet catharsis from them. Namely, people will think that because they've lived through a movie, they have somehow lived through the Tibetan experience and had an effect on it. In that way, people may just allow Tibet's problems to be put back into their compartment, while they move on to the next film (cited from Shell 2000:57).

But despite a lack of momentous transformative power, the films played a significant part in popularizing the Tibetan image in the West.

4.5 Western Government and Parliamentary Support for Tibet

Since the Dalai Lama's extensive travels began in the 1980s he has been received by numerous Western parliaments and has met with various politicians including many heads of state. A good deal of resolutions on Tibet have been passed by Western parliaments, endorsing the Dalai Lama's and the TGE's cause.

In order to provide an introduction to Western parliamentary support the Tibetan cause has received, in the following two recent legislative resolutions concerning Tibet are dealt with: One from the U.S. House of Representatives passed on 9 March 2009, and one passed by the European Parliament on 12 March 2009, both marking the 50th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's flight from Tibet. Although these examples highlight the tendency of Western parliamentary resolutions[62] to be non-binding on executive organs, they do demonstrate significant Western political support for the TGE and its cause.

Adopted on 9 March 2009, the most recent U.S. Congress resolution on Tibet is entitled: Resolution "[r]ecognizing the plight of the Tibetan people on the 50th anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama being forced into exile and calling for a sustained multilateral effort to bring about a durable and peaceful solution to the Tibet issue" (USHR 2009:1).

In this resolution, the House of Representatives "recognizes the Tibetan people for their perseverance in face of hardship and adversity in Tibet and for creating a vibrant and democratic community in exile that sustains the Tibetan identity" (ibid.). This is inarguably a form of political endorsement and, notably, a recognition of democracy in the exile political system.

The House of Representatives further "calls upon the Government of [...] China to respond to the Dalai Lama's initiatives to find a lasting solution to the Tibetan issue, cease its repression of the Tibetan people, and to lift immediately the harsh policies imposed on Tibetans, including patriotic education campaigns, detention and abuses of those freely expressing political views or relaying news about local conditions, and limitations on travel and communications" (ibid.). No doubt, such statements are in the interest of the TGE. This resolution is a clear sign of, if not more, at least moral political support.

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62 For a list of resolutions on Tibet, with the respective links, see http://www.tibet.com/resolution/index.html (accessed: 24.4.2009)

Finally, the House of Representatives "calls upon the Administration to recommit to a sustained effort [...] that employs diplomatic, programmatic, and multilateral resources to press the People's Republic of China to respect the Tibetans' identity and the human rights of the Tibetan people" (ibid.). Despite a lack of concrete political commitment, Resolution 226 is a clear message that there is political support for the TGE and its cause in the U.S. Congress.

The European Parliament "Resolution of 12 March 2009 on the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising and dialogue between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government" (EUP 2009) sends a strong political message. The resolution "[c]alls on the Council Presidency [...] to adopt a declaration calling on the Chinese Government to open a constructive dialogue with a view to reaching a comprehensive political agreement" (ibid.). It "[u]rges the Council Presidency to take the initiative of including the question of Tibet on the agenda for a meeting of the General Affairs Council with a view to discussing how the EU could facilitate progress on a solution for Tibet" (ibid.).

The legislative organ of the European Union endorses some of the TGE's interests. For instance, it "[a]sks the Chinese authorities to provide foreign media access to Tibet," and "[c]alls on the Chinese Government to release immediately and unconditionally all those detained solely for engaging in peaceful protest, and to account for all those who have been killed or gone missing, and all those detained and the nature of the charges against them" (ibid.). Furthermore it "[u]rges the Chinese authorities to grant UN human rights experts and recognised international non-governmental organisations unimpeded access to Tibet so that they can investigate the situation there" (ibid.).

These requests are an explicit indication of political support for the TGE on the part of the European Parliament. They do not result in concrete changes in China's Tibet policy, nor necessarily in increased pressure on China from the European Council or from individual governments, but they are evidence of the existence of a Tibet lobby within the parliament and they express an unambiguous political signal to China and the world.

While Western parliamentary resolutions on Tibet indicate political support from the legislative side, heads of state meeting the Dalai Lama demonstrate a form of support from highest political levels. Every government leader that meets with the Dalai Lama, be it George W. Bush and Angela Merkel in 2007, or Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008, in a sense endorses his person and thereby

indirectly also the associated cause, despite the fact that Western leaders often stress the 'private' nature of these 'informal' talks with the Dalai Lama. Over the past decades, the Dalai Lama has met with numerous Western heads of state.

Since George H. W. Bush in 1991, every U.S. President has met with the Dalai Lama. Both George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton met him unofficially, "each 'dropping in' as the monk visited with [*sic*] a senior advisor" (Klug 2009). George W. Bush, in an elaborate ceremony in October 2007, conferred the U.S. Congress' highest civilian award, the Congressional Gold Medal, on the Dalai Lama "in recognition of his lifetime efforts to promote peace worldwide and a non-violent resolution to the Tibet issue" (USHR 2009:3). This award implies substantial political support and appreciation for the Dalai Lama from the U.S. President and Congress. With regard to speculations whether Barack Obama will also meet the Dalai Lama, the *Agence France-Press* asserts that "analysts in Washington believe it is unlikely Obama would shun the spiritual leader, who enjoys a wide following in the United States" (Anon. 2009).

When Angela Merkel met with the Dalai Lama in September 2007 it was the first time the Tibetan leader was received at the German chancellory. Despite the 'informality' of the talks, they demonstrated an appreciation from the highest German political level and caused extensive publicity for the Dalai Lama. Similarly, the meeting of French President and then EU Council President Nicolas Sarkozy with the Dalai Lama in Poland in December 2008 provoked substantial publicity for the Dalai Lama. As always when Western leaders encounter the Dalai Lama, the Chinese leadership reacted furiously; it cancelled an EU-China summit which France was to host shortly after (Anon. 2008).

Whatever the motivation of Western heads of state in meeting with the Dalai Lama, every such meeting is a powerful symbol of Western appreciation of the Dalai Lama. Indirectly, it can be argued, meetings such as the ones discussed above endorse, beyond the Dalai Lama's person, the TGE and the Tibetan people as a whole, even if this tends not to be explicitly emphasized. Such meetings secure powerful media publicity for the Dalai Lama, and accentuate the fact that he enjoys political support from top governmental levels in the West.

When considering political support for the Dalai Lama and his cause from Western governments and parliaments, it should be kept in mind that the TGE remains unrecognized as the legitimate government of Tibet. Nevertheless, parliamentary resolutions on Tibet, receptions of the Dalai

Lama by parliaments and heads of state are all positive signs of Western political support. In a sense, such events help to keep the Tibet issue 'alive' in world politics. Although tangible outcomes remain lacking, and although the Dalai Lama is mostly regarded officially as a spiritual leader, such events do have strong symbolic power, particularly through the international media attention they provoke, in directly endorsing the Dalai Lama, and thereby indirectly also the organization he heads and the cause he represents.

4.6 Summary of International Support for the Tibetan Cause

> If Tibetans abroad lacked diplomatic recognition, embassies, or representation in important international organizations, they were gaining crucial access to power, money, and the media through their newly forged partnership with these unofficial and ardent American groups and supportive celebrities (Shell 2000:38).

While by no means offering a comprehensive account, Part 4 has introduced the vast international popular support for the Tibetan cause. As we have seen, support for Tibet in the West is manifold, involving various levels of Western society. No doubt, this support is limited, and it is yet to be seen if there are ways it can contribute to the TGE's overall objective, to regain the homeland.

Part 4 demonstrated that the TGE has successfully achieved one of the objectives in its exile struggle, namely the mobilization of international support. While government support remains somewhat faint, particularly in terms of binding, executive decisions, civil society support has attained astonishing levels. The question arises: How has this been achieved?

The next part argues that the achieved support has been to a large extent the result of the Tibetan exile government's soft power. It examines how different aspects of the TGE's soft power has contributed to generating these levels of Western popular support for Tibet.

The many Tibet Support Groups are motivated by a wide spectrum of issues, including human rights, the environment and the attraction caused by Tibetan culture and religion. As will be seen, these issues, which represent popular values in the West, have been politicized by the exile government and thereby transformed into attractive soft-power resources.

PART 5 – The *Myth of Tibet*

5.1 Introduction to the *Myth of Tibet*

So far, in a sense, this paper has laid the foundations for the analysis conducted in Parts 5, 6 and 7. Part 2 offered an explanation of soft power and the term *soft-power resources.* Part 3 dealt with the Tibetan exile government, and closed with a display of the TGE's objectives in relation to the international sphere. The previous section, Part 4, highlighted to some degree the levels that Western support, particularly civil society engagement for the Tibetan cause have attained. The following three parts of this paper analyze various aspects of the TGE's soft power, attempting to specify the different soft-power resources at its disposal. Joseph Nye states that soft-power resources can be at the hands of government, or can be outside of their control. With regard to the TGE, this is the case. Some aspects of the TGE's soft power are out of the TGE's direct control, others are deliberately fostered.

Part 5 explores the *Myth of Tibet* as a soft-power resource for the TGE. The Myth *per se* is outside the control of the TGE, it is in a sense 'given,' but it acts as an attractive force for the TGE's cause. In addition, certain elements of the Myth have been deliberately politicized to act as attractive power for the TGE. Part 6 deals with how the personality and position of the 14th Dalai Lama act as an asset of soft-power. Part 7 enquires into values represented by the TGE which are instrumentalised as attractive power resources. It focusses more specifically on the ways in which the TGE has used the context of the Myth to actively pursue a strategy of soft power. It portrays how the TGE has politicized the Myth in an active endeavour to gain attention and support. But the present section deals with the context in which the TGE's soft power is wielded: the *Myth of Tibet.*

The context of soft power is paramount for its effective application. Nye (2004b:2) states: "All power depends on context – who relates to whom under what circumstances – but soft power depends more than hard power upon the existence of willing interpreters and receivers." Part 5 discusses how Western societies have become "willing interpreters and receivers" by the formation of the *Myth of Tibet.*

The history of European and American projections in the creation of its image of Tibet is long. Tibet has been seen to offer the key to the fulfillment of Western desires. It has been seen a sacred place, as the refuge of the occult, the mysterious, as the embodiment of a mystical world from which one could expect salvation from the prosaicness of European-American culture (von Brück 2008:26).

This section deals with *Shangri-La*, or the *Myth of Tibet* as a soft-power resource for the TGE. According to Nye (2004a:9), both Hitler and Stalin managed to attract foreigners through the fostering of a "myth of invincibility or inevitability," based to some extent on hard power. In the Tibetan case, the myth surrounding Tibet is not based on economic or military power, but on images and representations of Tibet as a sanctuary of peace and wisdom, as a holy land, as the beholder of the solutions to the problems of the West. As will be demonstrated below, such a myth can act as a significant source of attraction for the TGE and the Tibetan case.

After discussing the origins of the term now widely used to depict the *Myth of Tibet*, *Shangri-La*, the Myth itself will be historically introduced. Also, negative aspects of the generally positive Myth will be discussed. The Myth will then be illustrated using two popular books in the West as examples. The current state of the *Myth of Tibet* and an analysis of the Myth as a soft-power resource for the TGE will close this section. It will be discussed how the Myth itself acts an attractive force, hence a soft-power resource, and how it forms, in a sense, fertile grounds on which a 'soft-power strategy' of the TGE could be built.

5.2 Origins of the Term *Shangri-La*

> One of the final and most complete embodiments of Tibet as a sacred place in the Western imagination was the utopia of Shangri-La described in Hilton's famous 1933 novel *Lost Horizon* (Bishop 1989:19).

Following Jan Magnusson (2002:196), the term *Shangri-La* was first established as a concept in Tibetan studies by Peter Bishop in his 1989 publication *The Myth of Shangri-La*. The term has become generic for myths surrounding Tibet and its culture among Westerners. These myths have increasingly become objects of study in Tibetan studies (Magnusson 2002:195).

The origin of the term is literary: *Shangri-La* is the name of a hidden Himalayan valley, a utopia, in the 1933 novel *Lost Horizon* by the British author James Hilton. This novel was an outstanding bestseller in Britain and the United States, and in 1937 a film version directed by Frank Capra was released.

> Nothing did more to popularize the notion of Shangri-La than Hollywood's version of the novel [...] With Capra's film, the Tibet of filth, ferocity, arcane religious practices, grinding poverty, barren wastes, inhospitable weather, serfdom, disease, and theocratic absolutism vanished totally from public consciousness (Shell 2000:246).

Bishop (1989:211) summarizes the essence of the story:

> The leading character, Conway, was one of the lost generation – burnt out by the First World War, disillusioned by the post-war situation, alienated from his own extroverted, materialistic and spiritually shallow culture. But in a remote Tibetan-type monastery, hidden in the wilderness of the Kuen Lun Mountains that formed the northern boundary of Tibet, he found hope [...] It was imagined that Shangri-La would preserve the wisdom and beauty of civilization and be the faint light to guide the world.

The novel was particularly significant in shaping and inspiring Western and particularly European fantasies about Tibet. *Lost Horizon* was published against the backdrop of general disillusionment with Western civilization in the West.

> The First World War administered a profound shock to Westerners' confidence in their own civilization. It was a time of doubt and reflection on a scale almost unknown in pre-war times. [...] By the close of the Second World War, [...] the disillusionment was all-embracing. Tibet seemed to offer hope, not just for a personal despair but for the malaise of an entire civilization, and perhaps for the whole world. James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* [...] brilliantly encapsulated and popularized this symbolic drama (Bishop 1989:209-211).

Lost Horizon contributed significantly to consolidating a Western image of Tibet as a distant utopia. A myth that had, in one form or another, existed for centuries (McRae 2003:107).

5.3 Short History of the *Myth of Tibet*

In his 1989 publication *The Myth of Shangri-La – Tibet, Travel Writing and the Western Creation of Sacred Landscape,*[63] the Australian researcher Peter Bishop traces the history of Western perceptions and fantasies of Tibet and the Himalayan regions. Acting on the assumption that we "inescapably shape the world, even if only with our minds and not our hands" (Bishop 1989:1), Bishop analyzes Western travel accounts of Tibet from the end of the eighteenth century to 1959,

63 Bishop (1989).

situating them against the background of Western culture, in order to "assess the *inner meaning* that Tibet has held for the West" (ibid:2). Working with concepts from archetypal psychology, humanistic geography, and French deconstructivism, he demonstrates how the *Myth of Tibet* became comprised of a placeless utopia, an alternative society and of a criticism of modern society. He explores the imaginal Tibet created by the West, "not as an abstraction, but as a sensual reality: not as a series of disembodied ideas, but as a complex world of images – shapes, colours, textures" (Bishop 1989:19), in an endeavour to uncover "the past foundations of present fantasies."

While following the process whereby the *Myth of Tibet* in the West transformed from a geographical rumour to a sacred place, Bishop is well aware that geographical or psychological otherness is rarely an imaginal wholeness or unity. He stresses the complex phenomenology of the image of a sacred space – "the fluidity of its boundaries; the shifts and realignments of its crucial features; its transformations across time; the often contradictory levels of fantasy-making (political and religious, individual and social) sliding across each other, contradicting or reinforcing each other" (Bishop 1989:246). However, the fact that there is always a diversity of images about otherness does not undermine a certain imaginal coherence. Certain aspects of an image tend to be more emphasized, or imagined, more clearly and forcefully than others (ibid:247). To illustrate a profound imaginal continuity offered by Tibet, Bishop (1989:249) employs the metaphor of the echo. "*Places echo.*"

> Echoes counter the narcissistic desire, held by many Westerners, to see a simple reflection of themselves in the mirror of Tibet. Tibet was never a simple mirror to the West's desires. At the very least it gave these projections its own specific form, colour, tone and texture (ibid.).

Bishop maps the changes that have occurred in the Western perception of Tibet; how different myths, different Tibets have been created in Western fantasy over the centuries. While European travellers had previously visited Tibet, "[t]he encounter[64] between Britain and Tibet in the last quarter of the eighteenth century marked the beginning of something new: the sustained creation of Tibet as an important imaginal landscape for Western cultures" (Bishop 1989:25). This period was characterized by a rich complexity of contradictions and oppositions, a "*complexio oppositorum* [which] was to provide the basis of Tibet as a sacred place in the Western imagination" (ibid:63). Landscape Romanticism dominated the early nineteenth century. By the mid-nineteenth century, almost the entire globe had been basically mapped. One of the few blank

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64 'Encounter' in the sense that travel accounts written by representatives of the East India Company (George Bogle, Samuel Turner) became available in Britain.

spaces left was Tibet, which became a focus for mystic projections, for European longings and aspirations (Bishop 1989:65; 242). An aspect of these longings was also Tibet as an object of European imperial desire. "[T]he failure of the European powers to dominate it politically only increased European longing and fed the fantasy about the land beyond the Snowy Range" (Lopez 1998:5-6). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, accompanied by "an overwhelming belief in the final and general scientific comprehension of nature" (ibid:242), many Westerners set out to aesthetically map the last unknown regions of the world. The symbolic power that had recently been spread throughout Tibet, became increasingly concentrated in Lhasa and eventually in the person of the Dalai Lama, who became "the embodiment not only of all Tibet's paradoxical mysteries and forces but of those of the wider world [...] many came to imagine him as one of the last remaining vessels of ancient wisdom and occult power in an otherwise disenchanted world" (Bishop 1989:243). A gradual demythologization of the land of Tibet set in, caused by social realism or political pragmatics. The image of Tibet as the sacred place became "fragmented into isolated points of heightened imaginative significance: the Dalai Lama of course, but also the yeti, Mount Everest, and remote mystic recluses" (ibid:243).

> The fantasy of Shangri-La was the final chord in one line of imaginative development. It literally had no-place (utopia) left to go. The 'conquest' of Mount Everest also meant that by 1953 these mountain summits had ceased to be the untouched, mysterious preserve of the gods. The yeti, by its very nature, lingers on in the twilight realm as either a curious oddity or an archetypal mythologem. By 1959 only the Dalai Lama and a handful of high lamas remained with something approaching the sense of mysterious possibility previously contained within *all* of Tibet (Bishop 1989:244).

5.4 Negative Myths of Tibet

Shangri-La, in the sense of the Tibetan utopia, contains very positively connoted myths regarding Tibet. Further on it will be discussed how these positive myths of Tibet have acted and are acting as a soft-power resources for the TGE. First however it should be pointed out that *Shangri-La* has not been the only *Myth of Tibet* that circulated in the West.

Before the end of the nineteenth century, particularly Western missionaries returning from Tibet painted a gloomy picture of the foreign land: Aided by the light of Christianity, it should finally be liberated from its ignorance. Militant missionary polemics had described Tibet as a "stronghold of the evil," or "seemingly impregnable Gibraltar for modern missionary activity"

(William Carey 1902, cited from von Brück 2008:23[65]). However, von Brück (ibid.) points out, that such descriptions were probably at least in part motivated by the desire to spur donations from local communities to support further missionary engagement.

British Orientalists of the nineteenth century held and dispersed similar perceptions. Among them it was common to view Tibetan Buddhism as a degenerate form of the original pure Buddhism of earlier days. Rhys Davids in 1881 for instance, described Tibetan Buddhism as a mixture of animistic, speculative and emotional confusions, characterized by the striving for power of priests. The influential *Buddhism & Lamaism of Tibet (London 1895)* by L. Austine Waddell had a similar view of Tibetan Buddhism as the height of Buddhist degeneration. To some extent, traces of such perceptions continue to abide (von Brück 2008:24-5).

Currently, the dominant positive image of Tibet in the West is contested in some circles, and clichés like Tibet as a "feudal hell" are spread in the internet and some random publications. However, Dodin and Räther (2001:415) argue that "the heavily dogmatic character of these circles, their marginality and the poor quality of their arguments make them negligible."

Particularly the pro-Tibet movement has had formidable influence on the public opinion regarding Tibet in the West, so that negative views of Tibet as a "feudal hell" have been "almost completely eclipsed" (Dodin/Räther 2001:409).

5.5 Illustrating the Myth: *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* and *The Third Eye*

Two popular books have had substantial impact on Western myths concerning Tibet. On the one hand, the examples embodied by these books demonstrate how literature has contributed to create and foster the myths. On the other, they illustrate how the books themselves are, in part, an outcome of the *Myth of Tibet.*

A good example for the formation of the *Myth of Tibet,* of Western understanding and misunderstanding of Tibet and its culture, and of how Western images and projections have determined its perception of Tibet, is illustrated by the Western interpretation of *The Tibetan*

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65 My translation from German.

Book of the Dead. The text[66] became known in Europe after its first English language publication by W. Y. Evans-Wentz in 1927, and since then has taken on a life of itsown as a kind of "timeless world spiritual classic" (Lopez 1998:47). With over half a million copies sold in English and translations into various European languages, Evan-Wentz's version had become the most widely read 'Tibetan text'[67] in the West by 1998 (von Brück 2008:28; Lopez 1998:47-8). In the meantime, Songyal Rinpoche's 1992 version has sold many more copies (see below).

The original Tibetan 'treasure text,'[68] said to have been written in the eighth century and then found and translated in the fourteenth century, was traditionally used as a mortuary text in Tibet, "read aloud in the presence of a dying or dead person" (Lopez 1998:49). It describes the different phases of death and rebirth.

Lopez (1998:46-85) demonstrates how this text has gone through a history of European projections and interpretations, that were closely related to European issues, desires and problems of the respective period. Over the course of almost a century, the book has been discovered and rediscovered in the West. Each of the five major incarnations[69] (1927, 1964, 1975, 1992, 1994), and several minor ones, served an agenda in some way suitable for its own time, reflecting cultural fashions of twentieth-century Europe and United States, rather than giving insight into the way the text had in fact been used for centuries in Tibet.[70]

For instance, in his 1935 'Psychological Commentary,' Carl Gustav Jung "declares the Tibetan work to be psychological in its outlook, and begins to compare its insights to the more limited views of Freud" (Lopez 1998:57), incorporating Asian wisdom into his psychological theory, which was subsequently marketed to European and American consumers in the form of therapy. The 1964 version *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead* assumes that mental and spiritual oneness, proclaimed in the 'original' version of Evans-Wentz,

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66 Originally *Bar do thos grol,* which means literally "liberation in the intermediate state [through] hearing" (Lopez 1998:47).

67 Quotation marks because the most widely read 'Tibetan text' is in fact an "amalgam of commentaries appended to a translation of a Tibetan text" (Lopez 1998:48), see the second footnote down.

68 A 'treasure text:' "one of the thousands of works said to have been secreted by Padmasambhava during his visit to Tibet in the late eighth century, works that he hid in stones, lakes, pillars and in the minds of future generations because Tibetans of the eighth century were somehow unprepared for them. Thus they were hidden to be discovered at the appropriate moment" (Lopez 1998:47).

69 Every published version was in some sense uniquely interpreted in terms of translation and added commentaries. In most cases, the original Tibetan text was dwarfed by the various prefaces, introductions and commentaries, making the distinction between original text and interpretation difficult. In the latest edition of Evans-Wentz's version over half the book is comprised by forewords, commentaries and notes (Lopez 1998:48;85).

70 With the exception possibly, of the latest version published by Robert Thurman. It can be argued, however, that even 'authenticity' is a Western cultural trend of the present.

could now be confirmed through the use of hallucinogens, interpreting the stages of death as different stages of an 'acid trip,' offering an esoteric guide to the use of psychedelic drugs. Songyal Rinpoche's version of 1992, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, which sold over three hundred thousand copies within six years,[71] interprets the text against the background of exceptional states of consciousness, connecting these with American New-Age Thinkers of the 1960s. Songyal Rinpoche communicates the text

> not as a Tibetan Buddhist tradition but [as] a universal message, a perennial philosophy, that has always been known to those who know [... known to mystics of all traditions but preserved most perfectly in Tibet ...] Songyal Rinpoche has said that Tibet is lost, that all that remains is its wisdom. He places that wisdom in a global and ahistorical spiritual lineage of thinkers that no other Tibetan author has ever cited (Lopez 1998:79).

The most recent version, translated and commented by Robert Thurman, seems to be the only one placing the text into the context, that Tibetans themselves would see it: as a description of areas through which a dying human passes (von Brück 2008:29). "Only Thurman appears to believe what real Tibetans believe" (Lopez 1998:83).

The way in which the book has been perceived and interpreted in the West at different stages exemplifies how the image of Tibet has in fact been consistently subject to Western fantasies and projections.

The Third Eye, by T. Lobsang Rampa was released in Great Britain in 1956 and reached a circulation of 300,000 copies within eighteen months. According to Michael von Brück (2008:30), the most fantastic and spectacular 'encounter' of the West with Tibet has been embodied by the Book *The Third Eye*. He argues that the great success of this book until today illustrates how the West prefers not to perceive Tibet historically in its own stature and self-portrayal, but in terms of its own projections onto the land of snows and its mysteries.

The story is an autobiographical account of Tuesday Lobsang Rampa, the son of an aristocrat from Lhasa. After rigorous education and training, including the drilling of a hole in his forehead at the point between his eyes so as to create a third eye allowing him to see auras, he would become a *trappa*, or medical priest. After further studies and travels comprising an encounter with the yeti, he finally becomes a lama. Before leaving for China, at the end of the book, the Dalai Lama warns him:

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71 According to the online encyclopedia wikipedia.org, to date "more than two million copies have been printed in 30 languages and 56 countries." See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tibetan_Book_of_Living_and_Dying (accessed: 29.3.2009).

> As I told you once before, they believe only that which they can do, only that which can be tested in their Rooms of Science. Yet the greatest Science of all, the Science of the Overself, they leave untouched. That is your Path, the Path you chose before you came to this Life (cited from Lopez 1998:90).

Scholars immediately recognized the account as a fraud, as clearly not written by a Tibetan. After investigation, the author T. Lobsang Rampa in fact turned out to be Cyril Henry Hoskin, a plumber's son from Devonshire, England, who had never been to Tibet but found the material on which to base his fantastic account in London libraries. Hoskin later claimed to have been possessed by a Tibetan lama, and over the course of seven years, to have become Tibetan. According to him, his account is true (Lopez 1998:93-9).

In terms of its image of Tibet, the West has found and is continuing to find it difficult to discern reality and myth. Most readers do not have the appropriate knowledge to make the distinction, and in any case tend to be motivated by a yearning for a mysterious Tibet (von Brück 2008:30). Even when Donald Lopez gave *The Third Eye* to a class of his at the University of Michigan without telling them about its history, the "students were unanimous in their praise of the book, and despite six prior weeks of lectures and readings on Tibetan history and religion, [...] they found it entirely credible and compelling, judging it more realistic than anything they had previously read about Tibet" (Lopez 1998:104). Lopez also points out that when discussing Rampa with other Tibetologists and Buddhologists in Europe, he found that *The Third Eye* was the first book many of them had read about Tibet; "for some it was a fascination with the world Rampa described that had led them to become professional scholars of Tibet" (Lopez 1998:112).

5.6 The *Myth of Tibet* after the Chinese Invasion of Tibet

While previously the image of Tibetan religion had been embedded in its landscape, having been imagined as belonging to its place, the situation had been reversed by the mid-twentieth century. The landscape was no longer the coherent factor in Western fantasies of Tibet, but it was Tibet's esoteric religion "that gave Tibet and its landscape imaginative difference and significance. Even Tibetan religion *as a whole* had ceased to be the object of fascination; now only the spiritual masters and their most advanced techniques excited Western fantasies" (Bishop 1989:244).

Bishop (1989:244) argues that by expelling the Dalai Lama and his ecclesiastical elite, the Chinese also expelled the "final concentrated *essence* of Tibetan occult mystery and authority," as perceived in the Western image. China "inadvertently seeded Western fantasy-making with what could prove a whole new series of transformations in its imaginings about Tibet. Spiritually and psychologically, many in the West provided fertile ground for these exiled Tibetan fantasies" (Bishop 1989:244). As will be discussed below, the *Myth of Tibet* has indeed acted as fertile ground for the TGE's representations of Tibet and Tibetans to the West.

A fantasy of Tibet as a utopian society in the form of a physically existing land, as a possible exemplary model country for the spiritually shallow and materialistic West, largely ceased to exist upon Chinese occupation, but the Myth continued to exist, detached from the land, to some extent, but embodied in culture, religion, and values.

According to McRae (2003:99-100), the image of Tibet in the West during the early 1990s was dominated by ideals of peace and enlightened awareness. Responsible for this was a "brilliant image campaign by the Tibetan exile government" on the one hand, and the actual preoccupation with the continuing menace to Tibetan culture and religion due to Chinese policies, on the other.

5.7 The *Myth of Tibet* Today

Jan Magnusson (2002:198) discusses how the *Myth of Tibet* continues today, portrayed in travel accounts and in New-Age literature, both of which he describes as literary genres. The genre of travel accounts on Tibet emerged from early documents written by missionaries, soldiers, civil servants, and explorers. New-Age literature is part of a Western reinterpretation of Asian religions, whereas it is the reinterpretative quality that makes it 'New Age.' It began with accounts on exotic religions, and was developed through the publishing of books on the experiences of Western converts, who increasingly attracted significant numbers of followers.

According to Magnusson (2002:198), contemporary travel stories about Tibet often continue the legacy of the past: Tibet continues to be 'rediscovered' by Westerners, who present Tibet as mystic, closed and inaccessible, and thereby giving the stories a heroic and adventurous quality. According to the exile-Tibetan historian Tsering Shakya, Chinese destruction and repression in

Tibet and the refugee status of the Tibetans abroad, are factors which have been integrated into the Myth (Shakya 1994, cited from Magnusson 2002:198). "Recent accounts are thus often dramatised as a life and death drama populated with Tibetan partisans and Chinese security forces, where the Westerner, at the risk of his or her life, is in secret collusion with the Tibetans" (Magnusson 2002:198). A decade earlier, (Bishop 1989:245) stated that the "literature of the popular, 'mass' adventure tourism has had a profound influence on the shaping of contemporary images of Tibetan landscape and culture."

New-Age literature related to Tibetan Buddhism has a tendency to take traditional knowledge from Tibet to the West, adapting and presenting it as a "pure core of wisdom and mysticism deprived of sociocultural historic circumstances" (Hammer cited from Magnusson 2002:199). The result is often presented as "accessible without any intellectual effort, without any discursive input" (Bharati cited from Magnusson 2002:199). The example of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* has been discussed above. Another example for how the *Myth of Tibet* continues today is seen in the publications of Nepal-based Tibetan lama Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche. He is popular with Western students in part due to claims like that the understanding of more advanced teachings of Tibetan Buddhism is easier for the Western than for the Tibetan mind.

Von Brück (2008:31) states that the dream of a utopian Shangri-La continues to nurture Western fantasies today. The Western image of Tibet in recent years has pivoted around concepts of Tibet as a maltreated land and people that deserves support, and of the Dalai Lama as a teacher and sage, from which one expects instruction and advice (von Brück 2008:32). These images, following von Brück, tend to be based on a superficial perception of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. But this does not reduce the potential of the Myth as a soft-power resource.

Numerous scholars argue that the historic paradigm of Tibet as *Shangri-La* continues today. According to Lopez (1998:6), some of the "[h]ighly romanticized portrayals of traditional Tibet" that have emerged historically, "continue to hold sway." Lopez (1998:206) remarks that Western desires projected onto Tibet have "remained remarkably consistent during the past century." Norbu (2001:373-4) concludes, from the examination of the many new travel books on Tibet and the New-Age works on Tibetan religion and 'culture' (many with introductions by the Dalai Lama), that one is left "with the uncomfortable feeling that nothing much has changed in the West's perception of Tibet since the days when books such as James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* and Lobsang Rampa's *The Third Eye* constituted the bulk of available literature on Tibet."

Rinpoche (2001:385) argues that, on the one hand, also the negative image of Tibet persists: "Leftist critics still accuse devotees of Tibetan Buddhism of practicing a species of Catholicism, wherein the Dalai Lama is worshiped as a 'pope.'" On the other hand, he argues, "the myth of Tibet that arose at the end of the [19th] century also persists [...] The more the Chinese destroy authentic Tibetan culture, the more the West loves this myth of Tibet. Today, the cliché of the wise old lama thoroughly saturates the mass media" (ibid.). He claims that the concept of 'Tibet' "becomes a symbol for all those qualities that Westerners feel lacking: *joie de vivre*, harmony, warmth, and spirituality. For many Westerners today, 'Tibet' is the primordial, the actual, and the real. It is their real 'home'. Tibet thus becomes a utopia" (Rinpoche 2001:386).

Anand (2007:98) puts it concisely:

> The dominant representation of Tibetans in the West in the early twenty-first century is as peaceful, nonviolent, religious, spiritual, compassionate, and close to nature. A corollary to this representation is the idea that the inherently good-natured Tibetans are victims of forced modernization brought about by Chinese rule.

Lopez, in his influential volume *Prisoners of Shangri-La,*[72] interprets the effects of the Myth on the Tibetan exile government as a 'prison,' from which Tibetans seem unable to escape: In order to win Western sympathy and support, Tibetans are forced to deliver what we expect from them.

Lopez's interpretation might be justified. In order to receive attention and support from the West, the TGE might be forced to adhere to certain elements of the Myth. Magnusson (2002:211) argues that the *Myth of Tibet* is both a prison and a power for Tibet. As the following section will discuss, indeed the *Myth of Tibet* itself acts as a soft-power resource for the TGE. It attracts supporters to the Tibetan cause. Moreover, it acts as fertile ground: Particular elements of the Myth can be deliberately politicized, and these issues in turn become soft-power resources for the TGE.

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72 Lopez (1998).

5.8 The *Myth of Tibet* as a Soft-Power Resource for the TGE

When dealing with a myth as a soft-power resource, the crucial question does not concern the ways in which the myth might be based on facts. The question is not: Can Tibet really show the way? Can Tibetan society truly be a model for achieving world peace and harmony? The extent to which a myth is based on facts is not decisive for its potential as an attractive force, hence a soft-power resource. As long as people *believe* that Tibet represents all the good that has been lost in the spiritually shallow West, and are thereby attracted to the Tibetan cause, we are dealing with soft power. When people are attracted to the idea that the support of a free Tibet, able to adequately protect and sustain Tibetan culture, its values, its spirituality, is a worthwhile cause, in line to some extent with their own preferences and interests, soft power will be at work.

Part 5 has demonstrated that the *Myth of Tibet* as *Shangri-La* prevails today, and that the destruction of Tibetan 'authentic' culture has been incorporated into the Myth. This image, this representation of Tibet, the perseverance of the Myth is hence a significant source of attraction for the Tibetan cause and therefore for the TGE which represents this cause. *Shangri-La*, the utopia, the beholder of essential wisdom, which might one day be instrumental for the West in saving itself from self-destruction, is threatened by extinction. The mythical, magical, occult world that Tibet represents to large parts of the West is threatened to be incrementally demolished by the profanity of modern materialism in the form of Chinese 'market socialism.'

The power of attraction coming from the Myth is enforced by the fact that much of the Myth is the result of Western projection. Hence it is the proper dream, the own idealistic imagination of 'Tibet' which is endangered. And there exists an effort to counteract the menace to the complete destruction of the ideal projected into Tibet. This effort is best represented by the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan exile government.

The attractiveness of a nation, constituting its soft power, has been called a nation's "brand" (Kurlantzick 2007:5). The Tibetan nation's "brand," being the way it has been represented and perceived, and, as will be seen below, the way it has been deliberately forged, has been largely the result of various positive aspects of the *Myth of Tibet.*

The *Myth of Tibet* acts as an asset of soft power for the Tibetan exile government. According to Nye's (2004a:11) theory, "[w]hen a country's culture includes universal values and its policies

promote values and interests that others share, it increases the probability of obtaining its desired outcomes because of the relationships of attraction and duty it creates." Clearly, the TGE represents the cause of 'saving' the Tibetan culture. "In seeking the goal of Tibet as a modern nation-state, the Dalai Lama invokes the universal value of Tibet and Tibetan culture" (Lopez 1998:200). To all who are fascinated by Tibet and its culture, to all those who 'fall for' or 'believe in' the *Myth of Tibet*, the protection of the Tibetan culture will be of interest, or represent a value that is shared with the TGE. Of course, Nye stresses that such an attraction *increases the probability* of obtaining desired outcomes. As will be seen further below, the Tibetan case demonstrates that soft power by no means automatically leads to the achievement of desired outcomes.

The attraction provoked by the persistence of the positive *Myth of Tibet* in the West might be only sufficient to provoke a general interest in the survival of Tibet as a culture and civilization. It might not be sufficient to motivate millions in the West to pressurize their governments in turn to seriously pressurize the PRC to significantly improve conditions in Tibet. But, as will be argued below, the *Myth of Tibet*, apart from acting as an attractive force in its own right, provides fertile ground for other myths to flourish and to engender tangible attraction to the Tibetan cause in the West.

5.9 How has the Myth been politicized by the TGE?

Lopez's (1998) view that Tibetans are caught in the *Prison of Shangri-La* is contested by Dodin and Räther (2001:410). They argue that his perspective "seems to ignore the very active participation of the Tibetans in the emergence and continuing reiteration of the current image of their country and culture, as well as their remarkable skills in promoting it." Indeed, aspects of the Myth have been used by the TGE politically. As has been demonstrated, Tibetans have often been seen as possessing a power to regenerate the West. Following Magnusson (2002:202), "[i]t is this perceived essence and power that is pivotal to the politicisation of the myth." It is in turn a source of power "to influence the agenda of the global political arena" (ibid.).

Magnusson (ibid.:204) argues that "the attractiveness of the Shangri-La version can be a useful power resource in influencing the global agenda of the Tibet issue."

How does this particular soft power work? During the exile, especially since the mid-1980s, a lot of effort has been put into a build-up of Tibet as a transnational symbol of *soft issues* (e.g. human rights, peace, ethics an [*sic*] environmental protection) in world politics. Once associated with solutions to durable problems in the modern world, Tibet becomes a source of soft power and conferred with a certain legitimacy in the global community [...T]here is presently a global marketing of Tibetan culture as inherently good and as a protector of a wisdom needed to solve global soft issues that goes back to the 1980s (Magnusson 2002:205).

This is indicated by the contents of speeches held by the Dalai Lama in foreign countries, particularly after 1979 when he began to access non-religious fora. Magnusson (2002:205-6) analyzes the topics of the Dalai Lama's foreign lectures in the period 1993-1994, a large majority of which dealt with global soft issues:

The lectures fell roughly into four categories: 1. Human Ethics, 2. Global Peace, 3. Environmental Issues, 4. Tibet (if topics overlap in a single lecture they appear in more than one category). The first two categories amounted to about 75 percent of the lectures and environmental issues to about 17 percent. Only three out of a total of 22 lectures had the issue of Tibet as its main topic (ibid.).

Magnusson (2002:210) is convinced that to "recruit supporters in the struggle with China over Tibet's future the Dalai Lama is forced to play his part in the myth." Dodin and Räther (2001:410) judge that the "current instrumentalization of an uncritical 'myth of Tibet' has been extremely successful in gaining global sympathy for the Tibetan cause."

The issue of how different aspects of the *Myth of Tibet*, and notions of Tibetan culture and identity have been politicized and transformed into attractive power for the TGE starting in the 1980s will be discussed in greater detail in Part 7. The following part deals with the way the person of the 14th Dalai Lama operates as a soft-power asset for the Tibetan exile government and the Tibetan cause.

PART 6 – The 14th Dalai Lama as an Agent of Soft Power for the TGE

6.1 Soft Power of Tenzin Gyatso

> His Holiness the Dalai Lama [...] creates a charismatic atmosphere of irony by expressly conveying his humanity [...] The Tibetan leader is rocketed to the high moral ground in the ideological battle with China over Tibet. The Dalai Lama succeeds by just being himself. This is a type of 'soft power' (Klieger 2002:7).

Following Nye, the charisma of a leader can be a strong source of attractive power. "The personality and skills of the secretary-general can [..] affect the reputation of the organization. Like the pope, Kofi Annan commands few troops, but his popularity and position assure attention to his statements" (Nye 2004:95).

Tempa Tsering, the 14th Dalai Lama's brother-in-law, said that the Dalai Lama remains the "most potent weapon for the Tibetans inside and outside Tibet" (cited from Chhaya 2007:243). The only power this "weapon" possesses is soft.

The popularity and position of the 14th Dalai Lama have attained near popstar levels. He has often been described as an extraordinary and highly charismatic leader.[73] In his popular book *Re-Enchantment – Tibetan Buddhism Comes to the West*, the American journalist Jeffery Paine (2004:184) speculates that the Dalai Lama might be "the most admired person on earth." "He has, in a sense, acted as a therapist to the world's suffering [...] His exuberant spirits, his endless sense of humor and fun, his good cheer despite every reason not to feel it, these have not escaped the notice of the watching world" (ibid:186).

The Dalai Lama's popularity in the West is tremendous. When asked: "Who is the wisest human of the present?" in January 2002, one in three Germans answered "Dalai Lama" (Ruch 2006:17). In a March 2009 '*World Leaders'* – *Opinion Barometer* poll conducted in Western countries by the market research agency *Harris Interactive* for *France 24* and *The International Herald Tribune,* the Dalai Lama ranks second place of all "world leaders," behind Barack Obama, in terms of popularity and perceived influence.[74] He attracts thousands of listeners when holding

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73 For example Roemer (2008a:97), Dodin/Räther (2001:409), Chhaya (2007:171), Paine (2004:184-6).
74 The poll was conducted online among 6,538 adults within France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and the USA in the period 25.2.09 – 3.3.09. See Harris Interactive (2009).

public speeches, and even before receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, he had gained considerable popularity in the West. "Hardly any other political or religious leader of our time has such a positive image, and this image is almost automatically transferred to Tibet as a whole – as are his liberal and pacifist political ideas" (Dodin/Räther 2001:409).

Indeed, the image of the Dalai Lama and the image of Tibet in the West are highly connected. Barnett (2001:299), for instance, states: "In the political domain, especially in governmental documents, the dominant representation of the Tibetan issue in the late 1990s has thus become this representation of Tibet as the Dalai Lama. The elision of the leader with the nation runs deep within the Tibetan tradition." Following Barnett (ibid:299-300), in the West the words of the Dalai Lama are taken as the words of the Tibetan people, "his personal history is seen as the story of an exiled, religious people, even though 97 percent of Tibetans remain in Tibet and many may not be religious. Journalistic accounts of meetings with him tend to find meanings in the details of his body or attire, seeing his laugh as symbolic of the collective cheerfulness of the Tibetan race and his robes as representing their religiosity and modesty." According to MacMillin (2001:174-5), "in the West the Dalai Lama has become the symbol of Tibet par excellence. Nobel Peace Prize winner, indefatigable traveler, best-selling author, the Dalai Lama has become a household name – one of the three most widely known human beings in the world, alongside the Pope and Michael Jordan."

6.2 What does the 14th Dalai Lama represent?

"I sincerely believe that tolerance, compassion, and non-violence eventually prevail" (Dalai Lama, cited from Chhaya 2007:167).

The Dalai Lama is a spiritual, religious and political leader. In a sense, he operates as a symbol for many Tibetans and Westerners. For MacMillin (2001:181), "symbols are very powerful things: they construct lives and selves; they shape our experience of the world and each other."

What does this symbol stand for? Apart from representing the Tibetan people and their cause, which values does the Dalai Lama represent? The Dalai Lama's acceptance statement (see Dalai Lama 1989) after receiving the Nobel Prize in 1989 gives good indications of the values he stands for:

> I believe the prize is a recognition of the true values of altruism, love, compassion and nonviolence which I try to practise, in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha and the great sages of India and Tibet. [...] I accept the prize [...] as a tribute to the man who founded the modern tradition of nonviolent action for change - Mahatma Gandhi - whose life taught and inspired me [...] No matter what part of the world we come from, we are all basically the same human beings. We all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering [...] Because violence can only breed more violence and suffering, our struggle must remain nonviolent and free of hatred [...] Any relationship between Tibet and China will have to be based on the principle of equality, respect, trust and mutual benefit. [...] The problems we face today, violent conflicts, destruction of nature, poverty, hunger, and so on, are human-created problems which can be resolved through human effort, understanding and the development of a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. We need to cultivate a universal responsibility for one another and the planet we share. [...] I pray for all of us, oppressor and friend, that together we succeed in building a better world through human understanding and love, and that in doing so we may reduce the pain and suffering of all sentient beings (Dalai Lama 1989).

What the Dalai Lama conveys in this speech, in essence, is what he stands for and symbolizes. These are values that are respected and widely shared among human beings: Altruism, love, compassion, non-violence, the search for happiness, the avoidance of suffering, equality, respect, trust, mutual benefit, understanding, the development of a sense of brother and sisterhood, the building of a 'better' world. These are values that maybe not all, but definitely many people can identify with.

> In describing himself the Dalai Lama often states 'I am just a simple Buddhist monk.' That may well be the case; but somehow with him the term 'simple' seems pregnant with a wealth of meanings, from uncontrived laughter, heartfelt warmth and human authenticity to universal compassion and transcendental wisdom. I look into the Dalai Lama's simple smile, and all of these qualities seem to dance in the fires behind his eyes. Indeed, even in this rather cynical age he continues to embody the magic and mystery that is Tibet (Glenn 2001:516).

Glenn is apparently quite impressed by the Dalai Lama (as many others who have met him in person). He affirms Peter Bishop (1989:244), who stated that the *Myth of Tibet* continues today in the form of what the Tibetan religion, the high lamas and, in particular, the Dalai Lama represent.

In an address to the European Parliament in 2001, the Dalai Lama states:

> I strongly believe that we must consciously develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. We must learn to work not just for our own individual self, family or nation, but for the benefit of all mankind. Universal responsibility is the best foundation both for our personal happiness and for world peace, the equitable use of our natural resources, and, through a concern for future generations, the proper care for the environment [...] In the context of our newly emerging global community all forms of violence, including war, are totally inappropriate means of settling disputes (Dalai Lama 2001).

The content of this speech, held over a decade after receiving the Nobel Prize, again highlights the values represented by the Dalai Lama. Personal happiness, world peace, equitable use of resources, care for the environment, non-violent conflict settlement; these are all universal values that are highly attractive to many in the West.

On the Dalai Lama's website,[75] in an essay entitled *Human Rights, Democracy and Freedom* (representing, arguably, the three most widely shared political values in the West), he states:

> [R]esponsibility for working for peace lies not only with our leaders, but also with each of us individually. Peace starts within each one of us. When we have inner peace, we can be at peace with those around us. When our community is in a state of peace, it can share that peace with neighbouring communities and so on. When we feel love and kindness toward others, it not only makes others feel loved and cared for, but it helps us also to develop inner happiness and peace. We can work consciously to develop feelings of love and kindness. For some of us, the most effective way to do so is through religious practice. For others it may be non-religious practices. What is important is that we each make a sincere effort to take seriously our responsibility for each other and the world in which we live (Dalai Lama 1).

The focus on 'universal responsibility' as a solution to the world's problems is very powerful in a Western society obsessed with the self. The Dalai Lama offers solutions viable to both egocentrically and altruistically inclined people, solutions that are intended to lead to peace and happiness. Religious tolerance is another aspect of what he represents, which attracts those alienated by the dogmatic nature often associated with Christianity.

> The Dalai Lama has been an active participant in the Buddhist-Christian dialogue. During the summer of 1996, his comments on selected passages from the New Testament were published as *The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on the Teachings of Jesus*. In the introduction, he is described by Father Laurence Freeman, O.S.B., as 'one of the most loved and accessible spiritual teachers in the world today. Tibet's agony, which he carries constantly with him, has elevated him to a global spiritual role in which the universal religious values of peace, justice, tolerance, and nonviolence find a joyful yet serious embodiment' (Lopez 1998:186).

In a message on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Dalai Lama, in only two sentences, summarizes some of the major issues of the Western political discourse of the present, which coincide with what he stands for:

> Human rights, environmental protection and social and economic equality are all inter-related. In all these issues, I believe a sense of universal responsibility is the key to human survival and progress. It is also the best foundation for world peace and promotion of human rights and a political culture of non-violence and dialogue in resolving human conflicts (Dalai Lama 1998).

The Dalai Lama "stands for the values of democracy, tolerance, justice and peaceful dialogue" (Berndt 2007:2), his politics are "driven by Buddhist spiritual values" (Ram 2004:174), and he is "generally acknowledged as a well-known religious environmental advocate" (Huber 1997:107).

By appealing to these general, universal values, the Dalai Lama manages to attract hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Western sympathizers. His personality and charisma act as a powerful soft-power resource for his, and hence the TGE's, cause. Since, as discussed above, the

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75 http://www.dalailama.com

Dalai Lama and the Tibetan cause are perceived as closely related, who is attracted by him is, to a certain extent, also attracted to the cause he represents.

According to Chhaya (2007:242), the Dalai Lama believes that those who are attracted by what he says about life "automatically enlist themselves in support of the Tibetan cause." The Dalai Lama said: "Tibet is not just about being an independent country. It is about a valuable belief system that is being destroyed by China. So when you support what I have to say you also support that belief system and therefore Tibet" (cited from Chhaya 2007:242-3).

6.3 Dalai Lama – Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

On 10 December 1989, the 14th Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.[76] The Nobel citation reads that the Nobel committee had

> decided to award the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize to the [Fourteenth] Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, the religious and political leader of the Tibetan people. The Committee wants to emphasize the fact that the Dalai Lama in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently has opposed the use of violence. He has instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people.
>
> The Dalai Lama has developed his philosophy of peace from a great reverence for all things living and upon the concept of universal responsibility embracing all mankind as well as nature. In the opinion of the Committee the Dalai Lama has come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues, and global environmental problems (Norwegian Nobel Committee 1989).

The fact that the Dalai Lama was chosen to receive the award is related, in part, to his efforts towards finding a constructive and peaceful solution to the Tibet question. However, as becomes evident in the citation above, the values represented by the Dalai Lama also played a significant role: his general philosophy of peace and non-violence, universal responsibility, the protection of human rights and respect for the global environment.

Thus, while the Dalai Lama's soft power, his representing of widely shared values, contributed to his receiving the Nobel Prize, the deed of receiving the prize itself acted as a further catalyst for the soft power he possesses. The Nobel Prize is one of the world's most prestigious awards. One of the measures Nye (2004a:33) cites for American soft power is that "the USA ranks first in

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76 While the Nobel Prize might be the most prestigious of awards, it is by no means the only one the 14th Dalai Lama was granted in the West. For a list see Mullin (2001:493-5).

Nobel prizes awarded in physics, chemistry and economics." The winner of a prize as renouned as that granted by the Nobel committee attracts considerable attention and respect. "After winning the Nobel Peace Prize, the Dalai Lama's reputation soared internationally as a spiritual leader who made sense not just for Tibet but perhaps for the rest of the world. The prize was by far the most potent recognition that he was a global force to reckon with even though his cause was confined to a geographical territory" (Chhaya 2007:163).

Chhaya (2007:168-9) holds that what the Nobel Prize did for the Dalai Lama was to grant him a

> very visible and recognizable moral platform from which to operate. Over the last decade and a half after receiving the prize the Dalai Lama has firmly established himself as one of the world's most consequential voices in favor of peace and compassion as an alternative to violence and recrimination and as an instrument of change.

In the years ensuing 1989, foreign travels of the Dalai Lama intensified dramatically. According to official records, the Dalai Lama visited over forty countries between 1989 and 1992 (cited from Chhaya 2007:170). For both the TGE and the Dalai Lama this travel activity was seen as a necessity to ensure that the world would not forget the Tibetan cause (ibid.).

Chhaya (2007:171) offers a good overview of the Dalai Lama's importance as a resource of soft power for the Tibetan cause:

> The more the Dalai Lama traveled, the more he was able to keep Tibet throbbing in the international consciousness. In a world where even conflicts have to jockey for television ratings, having a charismatic, albeit exotic, proponent for a cause is a most important element of the struggle. Although Tibet never really captured the world's imagination other than during its early years in the immediate aftermath of the Dalai Lama's flight, it has managed to interest and attract high-profile supporters because of the sheer force of the Dalai Lama's personality, and they in turn have helped Tibet stay alive in the West. During the three years after he won the Nobel Prize, the Dalai Lama met heads of state, foreign ministers, important religious leaders such as Pope John Paul II, academics, and members of the media in Europe, Australia, North America, and Central America as part of a conscious effort to draw the attention of the world to his campaign. 'We saw that the only weapon we had was His Holiness's tremendous ability to convince the world to see our side of the issue. In many parts of the world which he visited Tibet was not even known by a lot of people. For a campaign that is decidedly peaceful and nonviolent, staying alive in the world's memory is a tough job. The Dalai Lama has done that job with outstanding resolve and results,' said Tenzin Geyce Tethong, the Dalai Lama's private secretary, who has worked with him closely for decades.

6.4 The Dalai Lama invoking the *Myth of Tibet*

In many ways, aspects of the *Myth of Tibet*, as discussed in Part 5 ('The *Myth of Tibet*'), are invoked by communications of the TGE and the 14th Dalai Lama. In this sense, the current political situation is powerfully linked to the positive imagination and fantasies of the Western mind, who's image of Tibet is still largely determined by mythical elements, as discussed by numerous scholars.[77]

In his famous *Strasbourg Proposal* speech to the European Parliament in 1988 for instance, the Dalai Lama states: "For over a thousand years, we Tibetans have adhered to spiritual and environmental values in order to maintain the delicate balance of life across the high plateau on which we live, inspired by Buddha's message of non-violence and compassion and protected by our mountains, we sought to respect every form of life and to abandon war as an instrument of national policy" (Dalai Lama 1988). In 2008, when addressing the European Parliament, the Dalai Lama states: "For centuries Tibet acted as a peaceful buffer zone separating the two most populated countries on earth" (Dalai Lama 2008).

Numerous scholars[78] have demonstrated that such a representation of Tibet as a sanctuary of peace, of Tibetans avoiding war and respecting every form of life and the environment, are simply not based on facts. But the representation fits well with the Western image of Tibet as the peaceful sanctuary of enlightened knowledge, as embodied by the Myth of *Shangri-La*.

By appealing to mythical elements of the Western image of Tibet, the Dalai Lama effectively politicizes the *Myth of Tibet*. Referring to the Dalai Lama's *Five Point Peace Plan*, MacMillin (2001:180) confirms the active politicization of the Myth:

> When [the Dalai Lama] calls for the demilitarization of the Tibetan plateau, the prohibition of nuclear weapons and other armaments, the transformation of Tibet into 'the world's largest natural park or biosphere', and the promotion of human rights' organizations, among other things, the Dalai Lama echoes the Western fantasy of Tibet as a place that never had a standing army, and whose people always acted out of Buddhist principles. In effect, with this proposal the Dalai Lama reclaims Shangri-La – a place that preserves all that is best in the world – and makes it fully Tibetan.

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77 See section 5.7 'The *Myth of Tibet* Today.'
78 For example: Clarke (2001:341), Conboy (2002), Norbu (1994), Sperling (2001:326-7). This is discussed in more detail in section 7.6.4 'Universal Values associated with Tibetan Buddhism.'

In summary, the Dalai Lama, and along with him Tibet, the Tibetan cause and the Tibetan exile government, represent, next to a political cause and religious / spiritual messages, certain values. The values that the Dalai Lama keeps referring to, in political terms, are very popular in the West: respect for human rights, the protection of the natural environment, the adherence to the principles of democracy, universal responsibility, etc.; In religious terms the represented values such as non-violence, compassion, tolerance, patience, etc. have the effect of rocketing the Dalai Lama and his case on the "high moral ground," as Klieger (2002:7) puts it. By presenting Tibet and the Tibetans as in harmony with these values, the *Myth of Tibet* is effectively politicized and instrumentalised as a soft-power resource for the TGE.

If we recall briefly what Roemer (2008a:49) states concerning the strategies of exile governments, that "[u]niversal myths are presented to the international community under the guise of 'archetypes of legitimacy', such as democracy, human rights, and self-determination," it becomes evident that Roemer's depiction is confirmed by the Tibetan case. The values the TGE and the Dalai Lama stand for are presented as such 'archetypes of legitimacy' in the context of Western perception. The attraction resulting from being associated with these values is a form of soft power. The following part deals with the way such values have been in part actively communicated and deliberately politicized in order for them to become effective soft-power resources for the Tibetan government in exile.

PART 7 – Values represented by the TGE as Soft-Power Resources

7.1 Values as Soft-Power Resources

> Popular support for Tibet in the West fixes mainly on values according to the norms of the West now – projections of the political ideals and individual needs of relatively well-educated, wealthy, and emancipated populations, without much consideration of social and historical context in its own terms (Clarke 2001:341).

So far, two important aspects of the TGE's soft power with regard to the Western world have been discussed. Part 5, exploring the effect of the *Myth of Tibet*, demonstrated how the Myth continues attracting Western people to the Tibetan issue today. Part 6 dealt with how the TGE's charismatic leader himself represents a source of soft-power for the organization's cause. The present part explores more deeply into how certain aspects of the *Myth of Tibet* have been deliberately politicized to gain attraction and support from the West. But first, the mechanisms by which shared values can act as soft-power resources, shall be briefly recalled.[79]

Nye (2004a:7) states: "Soft power uses a different kind of currency (not force, not money) to engender cooperation – an attraction to shared values and the justness and duty of contributing to the achievement of those values." One way to engender attraction can be to appeal to certain values that are shared with others. Politics serves as an example: If a certain candidate represents, in my view, the values I share, a sense of attraction will probably make me support that candidate. Or charity contributions: If I decide I want to donate my spare money to a 'worthwhile' cause, I will chose to support an organization that shares my values and endeavours to promote them, say world peace or environmental protection. Or career decisions: If my overriding value in life is money, I might decide to join an institution representing this value, say a major bank, but if altruism dominates my value system, I might want to spend my energy and efforts in an organization supporting refugees. Or religion: If I truly believe in the justness of Christian values, I will feel a certain attraction to those truly representing Christian values, even if I never go to church and pay no church tax. This is an important point. Attraction does not necessarily lead to immediate, concrete outcomes. Attraction "often has a diffuse effect, creating general influence rather than producing an easily observable specific action" (Nye 2004a:16).

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79 Referring back to section 2.6 'Definition of *Soft-Power Resources*.'

"Seduction is always more effective than coercion, and many values like democracy, human rights, and individual opportunities are deeply seductive" (Nye 2004a:x). In the following, it will become evident that the strategy adopted by the TGE in its exile struggle starting in the 1980s was in effect a soft-power strategy with the objective to engender international attraction and support. By focusing on a set of specific attractive, popular values in the international discourse, the TGE deliberately fostered a representation of Tibet and Tibetans that would be in line with these values, and hence act as an attractive force.

A case in point is the *Five Point Peace Plan* announced by the Dalai Lama.[80] Four of the five points are directly connected to core Western values: Peace; fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms; protection of the natural environment; and a culture of dialogue. By declaring the *Five Point Peace Plan*, the Dalai Lama powerfully associates the Tibetan exile struggle with some of the central values of Western culture. He thereby appeals to a sense of duty in the West to comply with these shared values by supporting his person, the TGE and the associated cause.

Furthermore, the TGE has actively politicized aspects of the *Myth of Tibet* through representations of Tibetan identity disseminated from Dharamsala. In his paper *Shangri-La in Exile* Toni Huber (2001) demonstrates how certain specific identity representations have begun to appear in many publications and press releases issued by the Tibetan exile community starting in the 1980s. They consist of claims regarding the fundamental identity and character of Tibetans, their traditional society and culture, and include statements such as: "Tibetans are an essentially peaceful and nonviolent people, who never developed an army of their own," or "Environmentalism is an innate aspect of Tibetan culture," or "Women in traditional Tibet enjoyed a higher degree of equality than in other Asian societies" (cited from Huber 2001:357).

> From the contact situation imposed by exile, Tibetans have learned to express coherently particular concepts of 'culture' and have collected a whole range of representational styles and strategies during the process. It took some time before customs, practices, habits, and laws long taken for granted became selected and then eloquently objectified as their 'unique culture.' But, by the mid-1980s, the more sophisticated fruits of this process began to appear in the form of a modern, liberal, reinvented Shangri-la identity image" (Huber 2001:366).

Huber discusses how Tibetans in exile have "reinvented a kind of modern, Shangri-la image of themselves" (ibid:358). This image creation, he argues, has its precedents in a set of transnational discourses: environmentalism, pacifism, human rights, and feminism, and was largely the result

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80 Discussed in section 3.13.3 'Objectives of the TGE in Practice.'

of the creation of a small political and intellectual elite in Dharamsala. "This small group of educated and cosmopolitan Tibetans has learned and skillfully adapted a repertoire of modern representational styles and strategies during the course of their enforced and prolonged contact with the modern world" (ibid.).

The Dalai Lama and the TGE, in the words of Anand (2007:100), have "projected their culture as being compatible with universalizing discourses such as environmentalism, (world) peace, and nonviolence."

One of the reasons why such identity claims have been successful and credible in the West, is the existence of the *Myth of Tibet.* Huber (2001:358-9) states that while the *Myth of Tibet* was historically a Western enterprise, new Tibetan exile identity claims have, in a sense, appropriated this Western discourse and creatively reflected it back to the West. This explains why exile "identity claims are often so appealing to, and uncritically accepted by, many Westerners." In this respect, the *Myth of Tibet* has acted as fertile grounds on which the exile government could effectively build its desired Tibetan image creation.

Huber (2001:359) argues that the TGE adopted this strategy of Tibetan identity representation with the intention "to create a distinct community of sentiment to direct at a liberal Western and non-Tibetan audience of potential supporters in lobbying for the cause of Tibetan independence from Chinese colonialism" (Huber 2001:359). He maintains that the "purpose of promoting oneself with such liberal identities is now becoming transparent to all observers. They are no longer just a signal of commitment to the environment, nonviolence, equality, and so on – they are a specific form of self-marketing" (Huber 2001:367).

In the following, it will be discussed how the TGE has employed this strategy of Tibetan image creation and dissemination. It will be demonstrated how the TGE has, by focusing on certain aspects of the *Myth of Tibet*, managed to capitalize on values that are of importance in Western societies, thereby operationalizing them as soft-power resources. Magnusson (2002:211) states that "in the service of the Tibetans the myth and Tibet's enchantment of the Western mind is [...] a soft power resource that can be manipulated[81] to get attention and to get some access to the stages of world politics."

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81 With the term 'manipulate,' Magnusson (2002:195) means to "negotiate, control and influence actors."

Part 7 deals with how this manipulation has taken place. The analysis focuses on five specific sets of values, respectively associated with: environmentalism, human rights, democracy, women's rights, and Tibetan Buddhism. Particular attention is paid to environmentalist identity representations (section 7.2 'Green Tibetans'), as this field demonstrates particularly well how a certain set of values has been politicized and a certain identity representation deliberately fostered. The essence of the effect of each of the values discussed in Part 7 is similar: The appeal to a sense of duty due to a shared value. In this regard, the more detailed analysis of 'Green Tibetans' is representative for the other four sets of values discussed in lesser detail thereafter: Human rights (section 7.3), democracy (7.4), women's rights (7.5) and the values associated with Tibetan Buddhism (7.6).

7.2.1 'Green Tibetans'

One of the core Western values the TGE has deliberately politicized and thereby transformed into a soft-power resource is that of environmentalism, of environmental protection, of nature preservation. Toni Huber (1997) conducted extensive research on the phenomenon of Tibetan environmentalist identity representations, which he calls "Green Tibetans."

The characterization 'green' is now commonly understood as a depiction for groups, institutions and social movements related to concerns such as ecological awareness, environmental protection and the preservation of nature (Huber 1997:103). In his paper *Green Tibetans: A Brief Social History*, Huber (1997:103-119) discusses "a set of essentialist representations of Tibetan peoples, their culture and lifestyle which depicts them as being in harmony with nature, non-exploitative of the natural world and its resources, and consciously sensitive to the complex ecological processes inherent in the physical environment" (ibid:103). Such representations, which have been disseminated successfully around the globe, are the product of a small circle of people in exile, but "they claim to represent all Tibetans across space and time" (ibid). Irrespective of whether such representations are factually justified, Huber treats them as "real," as "social facts," as "part of life *in* society" (ibid:104, emphasis in original).

The active cultivation and dissemination of a 'green' identity is not unique to the Tibetan exile government. A wide range of non-Western populations have endeavoured to be perceived in

connection to such identities, for example indigenous groups of the Amazon, Polynesians, Australian Aborigines or natives of North America, which can "readily be linked to nature by living materially simple lifestyles in uncultivated environments" (Huber 1997:106). Also Western commercial or industrial groups, political parties, civil society organizations and other social movements have pursued the dissemination of 'green' identities.

The promotion of 'green' identities in general and in the particular case of the Tibetan exile government have taken place against the backdrop of the "formation of a strong global environmentalist *Zeitgeist* during the 1980s and 1990s" (Huber 1997:106). Environmental protection and sustainability have become prime issues not only within the system of the United Nations or for individual politicians or political parties, but also for numerous NGOs and other civil society groups. Mainstream media has also popularized concern with the global environment. The rationality behind cultivating a 'green' image can certainly be explained by a preoccupation with nature on the one hand, but particularly also by striving for "strategic positioning for social, economic and political advantages, as well as competition for scarce resources within the contemporary world system" (Huber 1997:106). In the international context, where environmental protection is an issue or value experiencing increasing attention and importance, the cultivation and dissemination of a 'green' identity can act as a strong attractive force, in other words, a soft-power resource.

7.2.2 Illustrating the Tibetan 'Green' Identity

In the following, a number of examples are presented that illustrate the ways in which the essentialist 'green' representation of Tibetans have been communicated.

The way that the *Five Point Peace Plan* invokes core Western values has already been referred to above. In his elaboration on the fourth point, regarding the environment, the Dalai Lama states:

> Tibetans have a great respect for all forms of life. This inherent feeling is enhanced by the Buddhist faith, which prohibits the harming of all sentient beings, whether human or animal. Prior to the Chinese invasion, Tibet was an unspoiled wilderness sanctuary in a unique natural environment. Sadly, in the past decades the wildlife and the forests of Tibet have been almost totally destroyed by the Chinese. The effects on Tibet's delicate environment have been devastating. What little is left in Tibet must be protected and efforts must be made to restore the environment to its balanced state (Dalai Lama 1987).

The first two sentences are a good example of the essentialist representation of Tibetans as 'environmentally friendly.'

According to Huber (2001:359), "[i]nvoking an environmentalist Tibetan identity has become an almost obligatory aspect of publicly presenting the issue of Tibet in the 1990s. We find such images in pro-Tibetan political literature, especially in a range of increasingly sophisticated texts issued by the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamsala, India. From these sources such images have become globally disseminated into popular world media."

An example of the 'green' representation in a relatively sophisticated publication is seen in the report *Environment and Development in Tibet – A Crucial Issue* released by the Environment and Development Desk of the DIIR in 2008. In its introduction, it states:

> Prior to the Chinese occupation, Tibet was ecologically stable. Environmental conservation through human intervention was never felt before partly due to the sparse human population and partly due to the Tibetan way of life, which has been strongly influenced by spiritual beliefs in the interdependence of both living and non-living elements of the earth. Tibetans strive to live in harmony with nature. These beliefs are strengthened further by the Tibetan Buddhists traditional adherence to the principle of self-contentment: the environment should be used to fulfill one's need and not one's greed (DIIR 2008:5).

Such a representation exemplifies what Huber (2001:359) means when he argues that typical statements of 'green' Tibetan identity "stress the innateness of a certain type of traditional worldview or values and behaviour" (Huber 2001:359).

In an article featured in the *Tibetan Review* in 1991, Atisha states:

> [W]e Tibetans have always been aware of the interdependent nature of this world. We know that [...f]or most of Asia, Tibet's environment has always been of crucial importance. And so for centuries Tibet's ecosystem was kept in balance and alive out of a common concern for all humanity (cited from Huber 2001:360).

This example might be a bit extreme in terms of an essentialist representation, but it conveys the essence of this phenomenon.

A typical statement for how the issue of the environment is connected to Tibetan Buddhist tradition, is: "Both science and the teachings of the Buddha tell us of the fundamental unity of all things. This understanding is crucial if we are to take positive and decisive action on the pressing global concern with the environment" (Dalai Lama, cited from Huber 2001:361).

Another example is a statement from a document entitled *The Tibetan Buddhist View of the Environment,* published by the TGE, which goes:

> For centuries, Tibetans lived in their vast, sparsely populated country in perfect harmony with their environment. It was not simply due to a small population and plentiful resources, but the result of an attitude of respect for all living creatures, fostered by the Tibetan Buddhist outlook (Yeshi 1996).

These examples of essentialist reductions illustrate how the TGE has connected the representation of Tibetans to a popular issue or value of the dominant discourse, which is of concern to most Western governments and publics: The environment.

7.2.3 How did the Tibetan 'Green' Identity come about?

The Tibetan 'green' identity is a complex social phenomenon, and as such it is the result of manifold factors. Many people would agree that buying into a Tibetan 'green' identity does not seem too far-fetched in the context of a prevailing *Myth of Tibet* (as dealt with in Part 5). It seems credible that a peace-loving, compassionate, harmonious, spiritual society might also respect its natural environment and hence be environmentalist in nature (see Magnusson 2002:203). But it is difficult if not impossible to comprehensively prove or evaluate the extent to which the existence of the utopian *Myth of Tibet* in the West aided in the international reception of the 'green' identity. What can be said for certain, however, is that the coming about of a Tibetan 'green' identity is the result of "a complex of intersecting social forces and discourses mediated through the agency of a variety of individuals and institutions" (Huber 1997:106).

A great deal of impetus for the creation of the Tibetan 'green' image came from outside the exile community. One major source of inspiration is what Poul Pedersen termed the "religious environmentalist paradigm," which, essentially, is the "creative linking of religion with the idea of ecological crisis" (Huber 1997:107) and, consequentially, the reading of ecological insight into religious dogmas, particularly of Asian religions (Kalland 2003:6).[82] After the 1967 publication of Lynn White's seminal paper *The historical roots of our present ecological crisis*, the relationship between religions and issues of ecology, biological diversity and sustainability have gained increasing attention.

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82 For details on the religious environmentalist paradigm, see Pedersen (1995).

An important landmark in the coming about of the 'green' Tibetan image was the participation of the TGE in various institutions promoting the 'religious environmental paradigm.' One important project was called *Buddhist Perception of Nature: A New Perspective for Conservation*, which was funded by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and initiated around 1985. The aims of this project included the study of traditional Buddhist literature regarding human interdependence, and to find relationships to responsibilities towards the earth and living things (Huber 1997:109). Although the direct outcome of this project was rather meager ("after a year's intensive research [... the group ...] finally found a single stanza worth quoting" (cited from Huber 1997:109)), some indirect consequences were quite significant: The participation in the project gave the TGE "full exposure to the 'religious environmentalist paradigm' in institutional operation [...] and brought Dharamsala firmly within the orbit of the WWF, the world's largest private conservation organization" (ibid.).

An example of the TGE's exposure to the 'religious environmentalist paradigm' in action is its participation in the interfaith ceremony held in Assisi, Italy in 1986 to mark the 25th birthday of the WWF. Representatives of five world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism) met to discuss the connection of their creed with questions of ecology and sustainability.[83]

On the occasion of the World Environment Day on 5 June 1986, the Dalai Lama produced his renowned statement, *An Ethical Approach to Environmental Protectionism* (see Dalai Lama 1986). "The appearance and wide circulation of this short (one page) statement helped put the Dalai Lama 'on the map,' as it were, as a global religious-environmental advocate" (Huber 1997:110).

The events and connections of the period 1985-1986 "provided graphic examples to the GIE [government in exile...] of how a Buddhist identity could be powerfully linked to the major global discourses of our time, such as environmentalism. It also showed that the whole world was a potential audience for such messages. It was from this point onwards that a politicized identity became linked with what had mainly been talk about Buddhism and nature, but which then was transformed into talk about Green Tibetans" (Huber 1997:111). An indication of this is the Dalai Lama's announcement of the *Five Point Peace Plan* for which he was later awarded the Nobel Prize.

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83 In the following decades, Tibetans regularly participated in the numerous conferences on religion and ecology that were held at places such as Harvard University. A *Forum on Religion and Ecology* was also created (Kalland 2003:6).

7.2.4 When did 'Green' Tibetan Representations begin?

The 'green' Tibetan identity representation began in the mid-1980s. One factor explaining why the TGE decided to 'become green' at that point is definitely the reports on environmental destruction in Tibet that became available when restrictions on the access to Tibet were loosened. Fact-finding delegations from Dharamsala visited Tibet in 1979, 1980, 1982 and 1985. At first, the reports on environmental destruction by the PRC were merely reproduced as further evidence of Chinese atrocities (Huber 1997:108).

Huber (ibid.) claims that he "heard privately voiced suggestions both from Tibetan exiled intellectuals and Western scholars that the Tibetan [exile government] in Dharamsala was advised by various well-meaning foreign supporters to become 'green' at that particular time as that would greatly add to international sympathy for their cause. This is especially true when coupled with the reports of ecological damage in Tibet under Chinese occupation."

According to Huber's (1997) research, the solid date for the appearance of the 'green' Tibetan image is 1986. Until 1985 at least seven full-length books had been published by the Dalai Lama, but none of them specifically mentions environmental issues, the connection between Buddhism and nature, or ecology (Huber 1997:107). "Similarly, in his published collected public statements to Tibetans, press interviews and articles which cover a great many subjects and issues of all kinds, there is not a single mention of any topic related to Green Tibetans until the year 1986" (Huber 1997:107-8). Until 1986, neither *Shes bya*, the official organ of the exile government, nor the English language *Tibetan Bulletin* (also published by the TGE), or the more independent *Tibetan Review* covered articles on Buddhism and ecology.[84]

7.2.5 Communicating the Tibetan 'Green' Image

Huber (1997:106) argues that the Tibetan exile government not only generated the images of Tibetans as 'green,' but also continues to disseminate them. In the late 1980s, elaborations on the 'green' Tibetan image began to occur in the major print and electronic media controlled by the

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[84] "But *Shes bya* reported other local 'environmental' stories very occasionally before Green Tibetans appeared," e.g. concerning rubbish problems around Buddhist shrines (Huber 1997:108).

government in exile. 'Green' Tibetan representations appeared in organs published by the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) – in the monthly *Shes bya* (in Tibetan) and the bi-monthly *Tibetan Bulletin* (in English, French, Hindi and Marathi) – as well as in the quarterly *The Tibet Journal*, published by the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, and in *Chö Yang*, published annually by the Council of Religious and Cultural Affairs of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In Huber's (1997:111) view, the deliberations behind the dissemination of 'green' Tibetan representations through these media, including the priority target audience, are clear: Most texts coming from the TGE appeared first in English and other Western languages before they were translated into Tibetan, and by contrast, publications produced simultaneously by the independent Tibetan exile intellectual elite, particularly *Zla gsar* and *dMang gtso*, contained virtually no material supporting or creating the 'green' Tibetan image (Huber 1997:111).

In 1992, the Environment Desk was established within the framework of the DIIR (which, in 1994, became the Environment & Development Desk). It represented the institutionalization of the production and dissemination of all environmental materials of the TGE, and began to publish a series of books on environmental issues, first in English, later also in Tibetan.

> When comparing this new material with the content of publications issued by the earlier Information Office,[85] a radical turnaround in the image of the exile community projected by the GIE [government in exile] is quite apparent. The full-page photographs of Tibetans spraying pesticides around agricultural settlements or accounts of the large expenditures on deforestation for clearing settlement lands which appeared in GIE publications in the recent past are now completely unimaginable and have given way to photos of tree planting ceremonies and stories of strong Tibetan Buddhist resistance to pesticide use (Huber 1997:112).

According to Huber (1997:111), the most impressive publication conveying the 'green' Tibetan image is the "handsome coffee table book" *My Tibet*[86] by Tenzin Gyatso, which is "filled with evocative photographs [...] and accompanying text by the Dalai Lama." It is "designed specifically to reach into the living-rooms of a wealthy Western readership."

The production standards of Environment & Development Desk outputs are very high compared with other TGE publications. In general, they are produced with high quality paper, full color fotos and glossy covers. This indicates that "the GIE has clearly decided to allot a significant budget to market the environment issue" (Huber 1997:112).

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85 The DIIR was formerly the Information Office. See section 3.5 'The Executive.'
86 See Gyatso (1990).

Simultaneous to the construction of the 'green' Tibetan image, there has been a strategy of constructing a "negative, ecologically destructive Chinese 'Other'" (Huber 1997:112). When considering the supporting factual evidence, such a construction has not been too difficult. "The political subtext here is that Green Tibetans should gain their independence because they would 'obviously' do a better job of maintaining the environment than the Chinese have in the past" (Huber 1997:112).

According to Huber's (1997:106) judgement, "Green Tibetan images now circulate both globally and within the Tibetan exile community, apparently accepted on face value by many who consume them."

7.2.6 The 'Green' Tibetan Image as a Soft-Power Resource

Clarke (2001:339-355) demonstrates that "the simple polarized picture that contrasts Tibetans as naturally environment loving versus Chinese as environmentally destructive is a fiction." However, the question whether the 'green' Tibetan image is based on myth or reality is not central when it comes to the analysis of this image in terms of its soft-power potential.

Through creating and fostering a "modern, reflexive and politicized" (Huber:1997:114) Tibetan identity as ecological and environmentally friendly, and by communicating this image to the international sphere through publications, statements and press releases, the TGE has connected its exile struggle to one of the major international issues of the present. Environmental protection is a value that is widely shared throughout the world. According to a Pew (2008:65) poll, majorities in most of the Western countries believe that global warming, for instance, is a "very serious problem." While in the United States 42% of the people polled saw global warming as a very serious problem, the percentage in Australia and Japan were 62% and 73%, respectively. Opinions in western Europe were also strong (Britain: 56%, Germany: 61%, Spain: 67%, France: 72%). A Pew poll conducted in 2002 showed that about one in three people in western Europe believes that environmental problems are the first or second greatest danger to the world. In the United States it was almost a quarter, in Canada 44% and in Japan 55% (Pew 2002:48). Due to the high attractiveness of environmental issues and concerns, the TGE has thus employed and operationalized the global concern for the environment, and hence transformed it into an asset of

soft power for its own purpose. The target recipient of the 'green' image, as has been discussed, is the West. The invoking of values associated with environmental issues has thus been part of the TGE's 'soft-power strategy' to increase support from the West.

Barnett (2001:276) shows how the language used in the European Parliament regarding Tibet has begun to include references to the environment in the 1990s. Resulting in part from the activism on the Tibet issue by Petra Kelly and the German Green Party, in 1992 a European Parliament resolution was passed, "deploring the destruction wrought on the natural environment of Tibet by [...] the ruthless exploitation of the country's natural resources," which, it said, had "resulted in major deforestation around the upper reaches of Asia's greatest rivers, with catastrophic implications for the future of the region." (cited from Barnett 2001:276). Much of this language, according to Barnett (ibid.), came from what the Dalai Lama had written on pre-1959 Tibet, for instance in his elaboration on point four of the *Five Point Peace Plan* cited above.[87]

This example demonstrates how the Tibetan 'green' image has, after dissemination from Dharamsala, found entry into influential circles with the potential to advocate for the Tibetan cause.

Huber (1997:114) assumes that the 'green' Tibetan representation will remain "at least as long as environmentalism strongly influences transnational discourse."

7.2.7 The Value of Environmental Protection as a Soft-Power Resource

In relation to the environment, not only the 'green' Tibetan identity has been politicized as a soft-power resource. The TGE also appeals to a shared interest in protecting the global environment. Frequently the TGE in its communications expounds that the Tibetan environment is of vital importance to the entire world. A report issued by the Environment and Development Desk of the DIIR in 2000, for example, states that 47% of the world's population is dependent on the rivers originating in Tibet:

> Given the high altitude and the extreme climatic conditions of Tibet, the damage caused to the environment and the fragile mountain ecosystem is becoming irreversible. This is a cause of great concern not only for the Tibetan people; it has much larger ramifications. More than ever before, the need to save the Tibetan Plateau from ecological devastation is urgent because it is not a question of the survival of Tibetans, but half of humanity is at stake (DIIR 2000:i).

87 See section 7.2.2 'Illustrating the Tibetan 'Green' Identity.'

In a 2008 report, the DIIR states:

> Experts predict that water shortage will create tensions in the world in the coming years. About 50 percent of the total world population depend on Tibetan rivers. Today, these rivers are threatened by tapping their water and diverting them to north to fulfill the needs of the Chinese people alone (DIIR 2008:37).

It can be debated whether such communications result in soft power, or whether they are merely criticisms of Chinese rule with the political subtext that Tibetans would do a much better job concerning the environment if they were in power. But in a sense, these communications appeal to a shared value: Global environmental protection, or better: The inhibition of global environmental degradation. In this regard, the dissemination of such information can also act as an attractive, soft-power resource for the TGE.

7.3 The Values of Human Rights as a Soft-Power Resource

> [T]he dominant appeal in Western political rhetoric about Tibet remains that to the principles of human rights. It is in this choice that, perhaps, the influence of the exile Tibetan leadership can be seen most clearly. (Barnett 2001:280)

It seems fair to argue that in the Western world, the values associated with human rights are widely shared. According to Amartya Sen (2000:227), the "idea of human rights has gained a great deal of ground in recent years, and it has acquired something of an official status in international discourse." Human rights belong to the major issues of the UN. The principles of human rights, and their underlying values, enjoy a level of prominence that few other current international issues can claim. A 25-nation poll conducted by *World Public Opinion* (2008a) "has found a remarkable degree of consensus in support of the principles enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." A *Harris Interactive* (2008) poll found that "very strong majorities" in France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Japan and the United States "(between 56% in Japan and 85% in Italy) believe that human rights should be a central figure of their country's foreign policy." Due to the strong international support for human rights, a focus on the related issues "brought the Tibetans unexpected hearings in the USA and Europe" (Roemer 2008a:113).

A major aspect of the 'grassroots' strategy adopted by the TGE in the 1980s was a strategic focus on the issue of human rights. One influential factor in this decision was the coming to power of Jimmy Carter in 1977, because Carter was "pledging to carry out a foreign policy based on the principles of 'human rights' around the world. This led Tibetans to declare that, 'it is his special emphasis on the human rights issue that makes him a potential Messiah for Tibetans'" (Grunfeld, cited from Roemer 2008a:112). Unlike the 'green' Tibetan phenomenon, human rights in relation to the Tibet question have already been taken up by the UN General Assembly resolutions on Tibet between 1959 and 1965. However, when the human rights discourse increasingly emerged in the international sphere, considerable attention was paid to Tibet (see Anand 2007:83).

The TGE saw the human rights discourse as a policy tool of high potential, particularly for indigenous or displaced people, like themselves, to change the political situation in their home countries (Roemer 2008a:112). By connecting the Tibetan issue with the topic of human rights, the TGE has created an association of high attractive potential. This section argues how the subject of human rights has been, and is continued to be used as asset of soft power for the TGE.

The rhetoric of human rights as a policy tool in international relations is fairly recent. Towards the end of the Cold War, the principles of human rights were being widely applied in the media and by politicians to various situations. In 1987, "Roberta Cohen, formerly Carter's adviser on human rights, called for the principle to be applied to relations with the PRC. At about the same time, the exile leaders in Dharamsala completed their plans for the Dalai Lama to give political speeches abroad in order to place international pressure on the Chinese to end abuses in Tibet" (Barnett 2001:280). According to Barnett's (2001:281) understanding, it was around this time that the TGE decided that the main principle to which the Dalai Lama would appeal in his foreign speeches would be the principle of human rights [...] in the summer of 1987 the Dalai Lama began a series of speeches, mainly in Western countries, in which he invoked the language of threatened and violated specialness and called for support for Tibet on the grounds of human rights" (Barnett 2001:280-1)

> The human rights approach has also shown evident advantages, particularly in that it has attracted wide media attention and public sympathy, and in that it allowed access to the UN through its Commission on Human Rights: For the planners in Dharamsala the deployment of this approach was a strategic success of a high order (Barnett 2001:282).

Human rights violations in Tibet had been known to occur for some time. The resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly on Tibet between 1959 and 1965 had already drawn attention to human rights violations in Tibet.[88] For the 'human rights approach' to work, it was necessary to provide concrete evidence for human rights violations in Tibet. For this purpose, the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), formerly the Human Rights Desk under the DIIR, gathers information on the human rights situation in Tibet, primarily through testimonies of Tibetans recently arrived in exile (TCHRD 1). The TCHRD releases monthly publications called *Human Rights Update*, ever since its creation in 1996,[89] as well as annual reports on the human rights situation in Tibet (see TCHRD 1). Since the late 1980s, NGOs specialized in human rights such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch regularly publish reports and press releases on the situation in Tibet.

To give some insight into the extent to which the Tibetan issue has been linked to the topic of human rights, a Google search[90] for the phrase "human rights in tibet" gives about 40,500 results in English.

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88 See section 3.12 'The TGE's Approach to the Exile Struggle.'
89 "Since the first issue in November 1996, the readership has expanded and now 1100 copies are sent around the world to relevant human rights organizations, Tibet Support Groups, embassies, and individual subscribers" (TCHRD 1).
90 On 27 April 2009. A search for the phrase "human rights violations in tibet" still produces about 6,800 English language hits.

Barnett (2001:286) points out an interesting detail, an "unexpected bonus" of the TGE's strategy of having the Dalai Lama speak on political issues, particularly human rights in foreign countries:

> It led to the reluctance or rumored refusal of Western governments to allow entry to the Dalai Lama on his round of tours. This created a mobilizing issue for those to whom the notion of universal human rights was of growing importance, and for whom the idea of a Western democratic government accepting Chinese dictates about whom it should meet was unacceptable.

The ensuing controversies[91] appeared not only in international news but also in the more influential domestic pages of Western papers. Both lobby groups and opposition parties accused governments of "complicity with Chinese intolerance – a representation that was hard for any democratic government to refute so long as it refused access to the Tibetan leader" (ibid:287). The political strategy of the TGE had thus "created a cross-party support base and had also moved the Tibet issue from the foreign agenda to the much more potent domestic agenda of many Western countries" (ibid.).

Numerous statements and publications by the Dalai Lama and the TGE refer to the topic of human rights. In the *Strasbourg Proposal* for example the Dalai Lama states:

> As individual freedom is the real source and potential of any society's development, the Government of Tibet would seek to ensure this freedom by full adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the rights to speech, assembly and religion (Dalai Lama 1988).

The document *Human Rights, Democracy and Freedom* published on the Dalai Lama's website, is a message marking the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In it, the Dalai Lama links the topic of human rights to other highly attractive values. In view of the widely spread poverty, he advocates transforming the economy into one based on compassion. "This form of compassion affirms the principles of dignity and justice for all embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (Dalai Lama 1). Further on, he states: "Peace and freedom cannot be ensured as long as fundamental human rights are violated." Hence, along with advocating the importance of human rights, the Dalai Lama connects the topic with other popular Western issues like peace or freedom.

The human rights discourse was also conductive in giving the Dalai Lama access to the U.S. Congress: The *Five Point Peace Plan*-speech – which included the assertion that "Human rights violations in Tibet are among the most serious in the world" (Dalai Lama 1987) – was given at the U.S. Congressional Human Rights Caucus.

91 The rumoured refusal of the UK government to issue a visa for the Dalai Lama reportedly led to the emergence of the first Tibet Support Group in the UK in 1988 (see Barnett 2001:311-2).

In summary, the strategy of embracing the topic of human rights in the Tibetan exile struggle has proven to be successful in many ways. Not only has the human rights issue legitimized the Tibetan exile struggle in the view of wide sections of Western societies, it has also given the Dalai Lama access to influential political fora based on moral authority. Furthermore, it has stimulated international media attention and attracted prestigious international NGOs to contribute to its struggle in moral and political terms. A focus on human rights suggests itself for the TGE due to the Tibetan reality. Human rights enjoy a high level of legitimacy in the international sphere. The values associated with human rights are widely shared. By connecting the exile struggle with this topic, based on the shared value of human rights, the TGE has managed to attract considerable support for its cause. In this sense, human rights have acted as a soft-power resource for the TGE.

7.4 The Value of Democracy as a Soft-Power Resource

> [The] Dharamsala establishment has been moving toward democratization [...] for gaining legitimacy in the West (Anand 2007:100-1).

In Western countries, with democratic political systems, the value of democracy tends to be highly cherished. A *World Public Opinion* (2008b) poll finds large majorities in the West agreeing with democratic ideas. For instance, in the United States 87% agree with the democratic principle that "the will of the people should be the basis of the authority of government," and 96% agree that "government leaders should be selected through elections in which all citizens can vote." In France, the respective findings are 77% and 87%, in Great Britain 87% and 89% and in Spain 94% and 91%.

As discussed in section 3.9 ('Democratization of the Tibetan Government in Exile'), the exile Tibetan political system is not fully democratic, eventhough a process of democratization has taken place and democracy in exile Tibetan society is improving. But despite the shortcomings, the Dalai Lama and the TGE repeatedly emphasize the importance of democracy and the democratic nature of the Tibetan exile political system. Thereby TGE appeals to one of the major values of Western political culture.

When receiving the US Congressional Gold Medal in 2007, the Dalai Lama states:

> following our arrival in India as refugees, we have democratised our political system and adopted a democratic charter that sets guidelines for our exile administration. Even our political leadership is now directly chosen by the people on a five-year term basis (Dalai Lama 2007).

In point three of the *Five Point Peace Plan*, the Dalai Lama (1987) asserts that Tibetans in Tibet are deprived "of all basic democratic rights and freedoms," and calls for "[f]undamental [...] democratic freedoms" to be respected. In the Dalai Lama's speech to the European Parliament in October 2001, he states: "I am a staunch believer in freedom and democracy and have therefore been encouraging the Tibetans in exile to follow the democratic process" (Dalai Lama 2001). Seven years later, at the same venue, he repeats:

> I am a staunch believer in democracy. Consequently, I have consistently encouraged Tibetans in exile to follow the democratic process. Today, the Tibetan refugee community may be among the few refugee communities that have established all three pillars of democracy: legislature, judiciary and executive. In 2001, we took another great stride in the process of democratization by having the chairman of the Kashag (cabinet) of the Tibetan Administration in exile elected by popular vote (Dalai Lama 2008).

In the document *Human Rights, Democracy and Freedom* referred to above, the Dalai Lama declares:

> Where there is democracy there is a greater possibility for the citizens of the country to express their basic human qualities, and where these basic human qualities prevail, there is also a greater scope for strengthening democracy. Most importantly, democracy is also the most effective basis for ensuring world peace (Dalai Lama 1).

The 'democratic' nature of the Tibetan exile political system seems to be confirmed at highest political levels. The United States Congress, for example, in its resolution 226 on Tibet (adopted 9 March 2009) explicitly recognizes the process of democratization of the TGE: The "Dalai Lama set out to instill democracy in the exile community, which has led to the Central Tibetan Administration with its democratically elected Executive and Legislative Branches, as well as a Judicial Branch" (USHR 2009:3). This formal recognition is a strong statement of endorsement of the TGE, effectively calling the Tibetan exile political system democratic.

There are numerous reasons why the Dalai Lama decided to embrace democracy. One surely consists of consideration on what will happen in the event of the Dalai Lama's death. But it appears that the efforts to democratize "have been primarily targeted toward a Western audience" (Ardley 2002:172). By democratizing, the TGE could occupy "the high moral ground when compared with China" (ibid.). Ardley (ibid:86) notes that "the process of democratisation has been initiated by the Tibetan government more in the anticipation of foreign approval than as a specific requirement of foreign governments and organisations." The TGE has indeed received Western approval and legitimacy by democratizing its political system. By appealing to democracy which is a widely shared value in the West, and by living up to it in its domestic policies, at least in foreign perception, the TGE has operationalized the value of democracy and turned it into a potent soft-power resource.

7.5 Women's Rights as a Soft-Power Resource

> The traditionally strong position of women in Tibetan society melds seamlessly with Western feminist ideals to construct yet another soft power resource for the positing of Tibetan aspirations for a global audience (Klieger 2002:7).

Gender equality is a popular value in the Western world, both among men and women. In a 2007 *Pew Global Attitudes Survey* for example, between 98% and 99% of all people surveyed in Western countries believed it to be equally important to educate girls and boys (Italy was the only exception with only 89% agreement) (Pew 2007:47). The fact that Tibetan women are often represented as emancipated and as having a strong position, benefits the TGE due to the attractiveness resulting from the shared value of gender equality.

A typical example of an essentialist representation of the unique status of Tibetan women is Thonsur's (2004:334) statement:

> Women all over the world suffer discrimination, violence and exploitation and the struggle has been for more equal partnership and women's rights. Fortunately Tibetan women have not been subjected to these inequalities and do not spend their energy struggling for equality within their society. Women in exile have, therefore, always believed that their first priority is the struggle for national survival and the return to their occupied homeland.

He asserts that "Tibetan women [...] are known for the liberal status they enjoy in their society. It can be said that an understanding of the role of Tibetan women may be an inspiration to women in other countries" (Thonsur 2004:322).

In Tibetan Buddhist monastic life women tend to be lacking, a fact related to the question of celibacy of monks. On this phenomenon, the Dalai Lama commented: "It is an individual choice. There is no bar on women joining the Sangha. Women are treated as equal to men and in many ways are even superior to men" (cited from Chhaya 2007:234).

Probably the most widely known Tibetan 'feminist' symbol is Rinchen Dolma Taring, the first Western-educated Tibetan woman. She died at the age of ninety-two in the year 2000. In her autobiography *Daughter of Tibet* she "emerges as a heroine, both on her willingness to speak out on behalf of women and her continuing desire to live a spiritual life" (MacMillin 2001:202). What Taring offers is "presented as universal" and "connects to Western feminist ideas about independence and self-realization" (ibid.). She "occupies the position of heroine for feminist, Western Buddhist practitioners" (MacMillin 2001:208).

As referred to in section 3.8.3 ('Tibetan Women's Association'), the TWA is active in various international women's rights fora and networks, including the UN Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. By raising awareness of the situation of Tibetan women in Tibet, it connects the exile Tibetan struggle to the gender discourse. As of the mid-1990s, Tibetan feminism has presented a new perspective from which to promote the exile struggle. However, the "Tibet activists 'politicised' women's rights in the sense that they linked women's rights to a nationalist cause for sovereignty, rather than to a social goal of gender equality" (Pike cited from Roemer 2008a:111). During the last decade, according to Roemer (ibid.) "the CTA directed struggle has been literally 'feminized'."

A publication of the TWA tells the story of a number of Tibetan women that "showed a deep sense of patriotism and unwavering courage" (TWA 2) in their resistance to Chinese occupation, that caused them their lives. It continues:

> All Tibetan women, both inside Tibet and in exile always remember the sacrifices made by those brave women who fought in the early years of our struggle. We are determined to follow in their footsteps and march forward to achieve our goal. Our leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has introduced democratic principles in the governance of our country. There is equal opportunity for women to hold responsible political and administrative positions. We shall therefore continue with our struggle for the sake of our country and our people.

The introduction of a 'feminist' aspect into the exile struggle produces a variety of effects. In international fora specialized in gender issues, Chinese atrocities can be presented particularly with regard to women. By focusing representations of Tibetan women on the bravery and strength, the imagination of Western feminists and others advocating gender equality is inspired. To the extent that Tibetan gender equality is communicated and believed, and that initiatives from the TGE leadership to improve the status of Tibetan women become known, the value of gender equality becomes a source of attractive power for the TGE in the Western world.

7.6.1 Tibetan Buddhism as a Resource of Soft Power

Just as "Japan [...] benefits from the cultural attractiveness of its traditional spiritual disciplines such as Zen Buddhism and the martial arts" (Nye 2004a:86), the TGE benefits from the cultural attractiveness of Tibetan Buddhism. Much of the attraction resulting from the Tibetan religion has already been discussed in Part 5 ('The *Myth of Tibet*'). After the Chinese occupation, the Western longing and desire, formerly projected onto the whole of Tibet, concentrated increasingly on Tibet's esoteric religion. This longing, this Western projection of seeing possible salvation in the Tibetan way of life and religion, is a form of soft power that benefits the TGE.

As mentioned in 3.11 ('Religion and Politics – Tibetan Buddhism and the TGE') Tibetan exile culture, religion and politics are closely related. Religion is one of the major determining factors of Tibetan culture. The Dalai Lama is the world's most famous and popular Buddhist monk. Through the close association of the Dalai Lama with the TGE and Tibetan Buddhism, this religion has proven to be a highly attractive soft-power resource for the TGE on three levels that are intricately connected: Its uniqueness; by attracting Western followers to the religion; and by representing universal values.

7.6.2 Uniqueness of Tibetan Culture

When statements or publications refer to 'Tibet's unique culture,' to a large extent what this refers to is Tibetan Buddhism, at least in the image of Western projection. In 1987 the Dalai Lama first began to speak on the uniqueness of Tibetan culture, and since then this phrase has appeared in most of his political speeches (Barnett 2001:275). Speaking to the EU Parliament in 2001, he remarks:

> The Chinese authorities view Tibet's distinct culture and religion as the source of threat of separation. Hence as a result of deliberate policies an entire people with its unique culture and identity are facing the threat of extinction (Dalai Lama 2001).

In the *Strasbourg Proposal* of 1988 he states that Tibetans in Tibet "yearn for freedom and justice and a self-determined future, so that they are able to fully preserve their unique identity and live in peace with their neighbours" (Dalai Lama 1988).

Benjamin Gilman, a U.S. Congressman said in 1999: "The world has witnessed the sad and almost total destruction of Tibet's unique culture and religion, and has done precious little to end the extraordinary repression" (cited from Barnett 2001:275). According to Barnett (ibid:275-6), "[s]imilar language can be found in resolutions put to parliaments, and in some cases passed by them, in Russia, France, Belgium, Germany, Australia, the United States, and other countries."

Huber (2001:367) points out that the "institutionalized mainstreaming" of the new identity images discussed above ('green,' 'democratic') negate the cultural uniqueness constantly claimed by the Dalai Lama and the TGE. Despite this irony, the claims of uniqueness have been instrumental as an

> extraordinarily effective and sustained political vehicle for the Tibetan leadership: Over a dozen or so years the Dalai Lama was able to visit forty countries on some 170 occasions, always amid extensive publicity, and often, despite strong Chinese objections and Western reluctance, meeting the political leaders of those countries as well (Barnett 2001:281-2).

By continuously emphasizing that the Tibetan culture is 'unique' and in danger of becoming extinct, exile Tibetans have attracted considerable attention and support. It can be argued that the value of uniqueness acts as an attractive force *per se*. Phenomena with qualities such as uniqueness, rarity or scarcity tend to be valued. Economic thinking, in a sense, is based on the assumption that precious resources are finite. So the uniqueness of Tibetan culture or Tibetan Buddhism is, in some respect, a soft-power resource for the TGE which represents this culture.

7.6.3 Western Followers of Tibetan Buddhism

> The myth of Tibet and the Western crisis of the senses [...] work together to make a quick, but rather superficial, spread of Tibetan Buddhism possible (Rinpoche 2001:386).

The cultural attraction emanating from Tibetan Buddhism in the West is powerful. The Dalai Lama has become the most important medium and advertising vehicle for Tibetan Buddhism (Ruch 2006:19). Ruch (ibid.) pledges for a thorough examination of what he calls the "phenomenon Dalai Lama" and of his "extraordinary missionary effect on the West" (ibid).[92]

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92 My translation from German. To give an impression of the dispersion of Tibetan Buddhism in the West, an English language Google search for "tibetan buddhist center" produces about 8,190 hits (28.4.2009).

This attraction has its roots in the *Myth of Tibet.* Before Tibetan Buddhism came to the West, there already existed a potential interest in anything Tibetan (Ruch 2006:19).

> Though many Europeans and Americans have been captivated by other forms of 'Oriental' religion, Tibet's brand of Buddhism – steeped as it is in tales of magic and mystery, including accounts of unbelievable spiritual feats – continues to hold a special fascination" (Shell 2000:18).

When the diaspora began in 1959 Tibetan lamas began to disperse in the Western world. Particularly in the 1970s they laid the foundation for the "globalization of Tibetan Buddhism" (Stoddard cited from Rinpoche 2001:400). While Tibetan religion developed specific forms in the West, often merging with other spiritual beliefs, "notions of Tibetan culture that prevailed (and to some extent still prevail) among Western converts have been thoroughly positive but largely uncritical" (Rinpoche 2001:400).

When Tibetan lamas increasingly arrived in the West, people longing for Tibet, its values and religion no longer needed to travel across half the globe in order to search for possible truths offered by Tibetan Buddhism. Throughout the West, "monastic and quasi-monastic communities, well stocked with teachers, instructors, sacred texts and highly skilled translators" (Bishop 1989:245) were established. Apparently, Tibetan Buddhism is filling a spiritual vacuum existing in the West (Ruch 2006:26).

One particularly popular Tibetan lama was Lama Yeshe. He began teaching in the United States in the 1970s, and by the year 2000, together with his students he had founded one hundred and thirty centers in twenty-nine countries (Paine 2004:56). In 2000, one in every thirty-five French citizens was a Buddhist. "In the United States, Buddhism keeps doubling its numbers faster than any other religion, and the fastest-growing form is Tibetan Buddhism" (ibid:11). According to the online database of the *Deutsche Buddhistische Union*, an umbrella organization for Buddhist centers in Germany, there are currently 644 Buddhist groups in Germany, 272 of which adhere to the Tibetan version of Mahayana Buddhism.[93]

Shell (2000:37-40) outlines the popularity Tibetan Buddhism had reached in the USA in the 1990s. Subscriptions to Buddhist journals such as *Tricycle*, *Shambhala Sun*, and *Mandala* surged. Their ads featured Buddhist study sessions and retreats in dharma-centers and trips to Tibet, Nepal and Ladakh. Yoga and sacred sex videos appeared, as well as baseball caps with the mantra

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93 http://www.dharma.de/dbu/frameset.php?content=http://www.dharma.de/dbu/dbu_english.php   (accessed: 27.4.2009)

Om mani padme hum. "[D]harma centers were springing up like Starbucks coffee bars" (ibid:39). In 1997, over a thousand Buddhist centers throughout the United States were registered in a database of the Pluralism Project, a study group at Harvard University researching religious diversity (ibid.). Today,[94] the database lists 2,218 Buddhist centers in America. Not too surprisingly, the largest prayer wheel in the world is found in the USA (Shell 2000:40).

The popularity of Tibetan Buddhism in the West, resulting from its cultural attractiveness, is widely known.[95] Ruch (2006:17) speaks of a sustained boom that Tibetan Buddhism enjoys in the West. A particularly attractive aspect of this religion to the West is its interpretation of Tantrism, a set of complex symbolism that originated in India and is also present in Hindu traditions. Tantrism is often seen as connecting sexuality and spirituality: Earthly pleasures can contribute to spiritual development. The careers of neo-Tantric gurus such as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh or Chogyam Trungpa exemplify the popularity of Tantrism in Western popular culture (see Urban 2000: 272-91).

> Tibetan Buddhism has taken root in the Western world as a refugee culture: Besides serving the needs of its own small diaspora of Tibetans for whom historical Tibet is a real memory, Tibetan culture has also come to fill an exotic religious 'niche' in highly developed Western urban centers, and becomes reinterpreted and redefined in relation to that host society (Clarke 2001:341).

The popularity of Tibetan Buddhism in the West demonstrates the powerful cultural attraction it emminates. This attraction is a form of soft power. To the extent that the Dalai Lama and the TGE are associated with their religion, which is a large extent indeed, Tibetan Buddhism becomes a soft-power resource for the exile government and its leader.

7.6.4 Universal Values associated with Tibetan Buddhism

> In Western depictions, terms such as peace, tolerance, and religion – probably borrowed from relevant texts of international norms – are reproduced in their adjectival forms in representations of Tibet, or Tibetans, to define them as peaceful, tolerant, or religious; in some cases the process is extended to superlatives, so that Tibetans are presented as the most advanced collective embodiment so far of this or that form of specialness (Barnett 2001:275).

The major values which tend to be connected with Tibetan Buddhism include non-violence,

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94 http://pluralism.org/directory/results.php?flags=C&state=&tradition=Buddh&keyword=title&anyall=+%7C%7C +&text=&sort=title&submit=Search (accessed: 27.4.2009).
95 One strong indication for their popularity is the existence of Buddhist studies and Tibetology. On the establishment of these scholarly disciplines in the West see Lopez (1998:156-173).

peacefulness, compassion, tolerance and harmony. They are universal religious, humanistic and social values. As Tibetan Buddhism is closely associated with Tibet, the Dalai Lama and hence with the organization he represents, the connected values are equally associated. Furthermore, such values are repeatedly embedded in the speeches, statements and publications by His Holiness. By representing these values, due to their universal nature they become soft-power resources.

One aspect of Tibetan Buddhism, as represented by the Dalai Lama, appears to be tolerance toward other religions. The Dalai Lama repeatedly stresses that in every religion there is truth, and that Westerners should rather search for value in their own religions than convert to Buddhism. Religious tolerance seems to be a widely shared value in the Western world. A *World Public Opinion* (2008b) poll finds that 95% of Americans "say equal treatment for people of different religious beliefs is 'very important' (77%) or 'somewhat important' (18%)." The respective findings for France are 94% ('very important:' 66% / 'somewhat important:' 28%), Germany 93% (67% / 26%), Britain 92% (70% / 22%), Italy 91% (66% / 25%), and Spain 84% (44% / 40%). By emphasizing his tolerance and respect for other religions, the Dalai Lama relates to a widely shared Western value.

Another major value that is often included in representations of Tibetan Buddhism and in communications by the Dalai Lama is that of compassion. The political consequence of this value is non-violence. Non-violence is a central pillar of the TGE's exile struggle[96] and it is closely related to the value of peacefulness.

> To a wide Western public, Tibet symbolizes an isolated, peaceful, timeless Buddhist state. Yet [...] its political history is far from peaceful (Clarke 2001:341).

Sperling (2001:317-328) demonstrates how Tibetan Buddhism, Tibetans in general and the Dalai Lama in particular are often represented by modern writers solely in terms of non-violence, love and compassion. It is often ignored that indeed Tibetan Buddhism, while surely based on values such as kindness and compassion toward all sentient beings, has a history that is definitely not free of violence. The reduction of Tibetan Buddhism, in the modern, international image, to "a doctrine of nonviolence of the absolutist sort," (ibid:325) is simply not historical, and "must be seen in the light of the Tibetan exile assimilation of common images about the East" (ibid). Norbu (1994) has demonstrated that armed Tibetan resistance against the PLA goes back to the

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96 See section 3.12 'The TGE's Approach to the Exile Struggle.'

1940s. While the resistance war, particularly in eastern Tibet, was fierce and prolonged, with large casualties on both sides, little has been documented on these events. "Such lack of information on the Tibetan Revolt has enabled the Tibetan leadership to successfully rewrite history, playing down the role of the armed revolt and fostering the fiction that the popular resistance was non-violent" (Norbu 1994:188).

> The promotion of the image of pre-1959 Tibet as a land of peace, harmony, and spirituality is one of the main tasks of the Tibetan leadership in exile [... It fosters] the fiction that the popular resistance against the Chinese was nonviolent and was led, Gandhian style, by the Dalai Lama (Norbu 2001:377).

Sperling (2001:324) observes that Tibetan Buddhism, in its popular presentation to the Western world, is often "reduced (of late, by the Tibetan exile community) to an essential emphasis on love and compassion."

"Kindness, compassion, nonviolence: All these have their place in Tibetan life and Tibetan Buddhist doctrine. But prior to the last three or more decades their centrality was nothing like what one sees now" (Sperling 2001:326). Anand (2007:101-2) sees TGE representations of Tibetans as inherently compassionate and non-violent rather as a "selective appropriation of historical narratives for contemporary purposes than about specific historical truths."

Huber (2001:363) stresses the effectiveness of Tibetan exile discourse on non-violence and world peace and of the projection of "an essential nonviolent Tibetan national identity" starting in the 1980s. The TGE managed to "quickly and effectively [... transform] the Tibetan Buddhist image." Related identity statements often refer to "innate Tibetan spirituality or unique religious orientation" (ibid:364). Simultaneously, such representations construct a negative Chinese Other, characterized by "soulless materialism and moral bankruptcy" (ibid.).

Thus, irrespective of the factual foundation of such representations, it remains a fact that Tibetans, the Dalai Lama and the TGE tend to be closely associated with the values connected to Tibetan Buddhism. According to the Dalai Lama, the tremendous international support for Tibet is due to the non-violent nature of the exile struggle. "The Dalai Lama has often acknowledged the media's sympathy towards the nonviolent movement and its importance to Tibet's cause. He has said that media interest on Tibet has attracted 'people the world over [... to] the Tibetan cause.'" (Ram 2004:170).

Roemer (2008a:83-4) sees the non-violent approach of the TGE as an unambiguous and pragmatic call on the international community as a whole to prevent war. Since the 12th ATPD (1995-2001), she explains, the message of peace has been disseminated from Dharamsala throughout the world in the form of videos, radio programs and books.

> Over the years [non-violence] has developed into a powerful instrument for return to Tibet, which was especially emphasized by the international feedback, such as the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the 14th Dalai Lama in 1989. In this regard, the non-violent struggle has helped to mobilize increasing support from 'guilt-ridden foreigners' (Roemer 2008:84).

Whether non-violence is effectively "a *powerful instrument for return to Tibet*" may be disputed. What remains certain is that the stance of non-violence and the related peaceful outlook in the exile struggle of the TGE has acted as a strong soft-power resource.

PART 8 – Conclusion

8.1 What are the Soft-Power Resources of the Tibetan Government in Exile?

In retrospect, this paper has offered a theoretical overview of soft power, an inquisition into the Tibetan government in exile, including its objectives with particular regard to Western countries, some insight into the international support the Tibetan cause and the TGE enjoy, and an analysis of the TGE's soft-power resources in the international context. In conclusion, answers to the research questions stated at the outset shall be provided.

The resources that produce soft power for the Tibetan exile government are manifold and this paper does not claim to give a comprehensive account of the TGE's soft power. The intangible, relative and complex nature of soft power impedes an analysis covering each and every aspect. Rather, the analysis in Parts 5, 6 and 7 of this paper presented some of the TGE's major soft-power resources.

Part 5 dealt with the *Myth of Tibet*. The current fascination with Tibet in the Western world is a legacy of centuries and continues to engender attraction to Tibet and the Tibetan cause among many Westerners. The *Myth of Tibet* has been exposed as a major soft-power resource benefitting the Tibetan exile government.

Another major soft-power resource for the TGE, dealt with in Part 6, is the charisma personified in its leader, the 14th Dalai Lama. Many Westerners are attracted to the Tibetan cause simply due to his person, to what he stands for and communicates and due to the values he represents. Because of the close association of the Dalai Lama with the organization he leads and with the Tibetan exile struggle, the attraction he engenders is a tremendous soft-power resource for the TGE.

Shared values can be highly attractive soft-power resources. Part 7 demonstrated how the TGE has politicized elements of the *Myth of Tibet* by forging certain Tibetan identity representations. The values involved in these images have been described as 'archetypes of legitimacy.' These universal values that Tibetans are associated with, be it due to the nature of their exile struggle – ('human rights,' 'democracy,' 'non-violence), their Tibetan Buddhist religion ('compassion,'

'tolerance,' 'peacefulness,'), initiatives from within the exile community ('women's rights') or due to the way the TGE has represented the Tibetan identity (all of the above, including 'environmentalism') – appeal to the justness of a shared duty. These values are widely shared in the Western world. By focusing the exile struggle on and linking it with these issues, the TGE has managed to attract enormous levels of support from a wide spectrum of people within Western societies.

Thus to summarize, the major soft-power resources of the TGE with respect to the international domain are: The *Myth of Tibet* (in its 'pure' and its 'politicized' form), the person of the 14th Dalai Lama, as well as specific values that are associated with Tibetans and shared in the West: environmentalism, human rights, democracy, women's rights and those linked with Tibetan Buddhism such as non-violence, compassion and peacefulness, as well as Tibetan Buddhism itself.

Although analyzed to some extent separately for pragmatic reasons, these soft-power resources are all naturally connected. The *Myth of Tibet*, offering in a way the 'fertile ground,' overshadows the entirety of the TGE's soft power, as well as to some extent the Tibetan Buddhist religion. The attraction engendered by the 14th Dalai Lama in the West is intricately connected to the Myth. He is also closely connected with the values associated with Tibet and Tibetans, because he represents them. The values in turn are linked to the Myth, because the Myth makes them more credible. In all, the attraction caused by Tibet in the West is substantial.

8.2 The TGE's Approach to the Exile Struggle: A Soft-Power Strategy

The change that occurred in the Tibetan exile political approach in the 1980s[97] consisted essentially in the embracing of a soft-power strategy. Rather than continuing to focus on the major topic of Tibetan independence, the TGE split this topic and related it to various key Western political issues, which coincide with Western core values: human rights, environmental protection, non-violence, women's rights and peace. By explicitly appealing to these values and by deliberately representing the Tibetan identity as being in line with these values, the TGE appealed to a sense of duty in the West. With this strategy, the TGE effectively internationalized

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97 As discussed in section 3.12 'The TGE's Approach to the Exile Struggle.'

and popularized the Tibetan issue, with the result of an impressive attraction to the Tibetan cause in the West. The attraction caused by this strategy and by the TGE's soft power at large has evidently had effects. The extent to which it has contributed to the achievement of TGE objectives shall now be discussed.

8.3 How has the TGE's Soft Power contributed or not, to approaching the Achievement of its Objectives?

For the purpose of answering the second major research question of this paper, the TGE's objectives shall be briefly recalled.[98] The main goals of the TGE in relation to the international domain include: to achieve a status of 'genuine autonomy' for Tibet; to reduce hardships suffered by Tibetans in Tibet; to ensure of the preservation and promotion of Tibetan culture and religion; to enter into meaningful dialogue with the PRC; to achieve international attention and support; and to encourage possible international patrons and the international civil society to support the exile struggle. Has the TGE's soft power contributed to achieving any of these objectives? Yes. Has it been sufficient to provide for the achievement of its ultimate goal, a 'genuine-autonomy' status for Tibet? No.

Soft power has contributed substantially to the achievement of two major objectives that are related, namely to gain international support and to encourage international patrons to act on the TGE's behalf. Part 4 ('International Support for the TGE and the Tibetan Cause') provided insight as to the extent of international support for Tibet. The comparably vast levels of support, particularly from Western civil society, have been attained to a large extent as a result of the TGE's soft power. It is important to point out that human motivations are difficult to ascertain. Consequentially the precise extent to which soft power contributed cannot be determined. There are certainly other factors involved in motivating Western support for Tibet (e.g. anti-communism, to harm China, a general sense of justice). What has become evident throughout this paper however is the substantial contribution of soft power for the TGE to achieve such levels of international attention and support.

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98 Referring back to section 3.13.3 'Objectives of the TGE in Practice.'

The TGE's soft power in terms of cultural attractiveness has contributed to another TGE objective to some extent: The preservation of Tibetan culture. Due to the realities within Tibet the TGE has focused cultural preservation on the exile sphere. Western interest in and attraction to Tibet has led to the establishment of projects that engage in Tibetan cultural and religious preservation of some form[99] and of numerous Tibetan Buddhist groups that have appeared throughout the West. This is not to say that these Western groups are always preserving Tibetan culture and religion in its 'traditional' forms, but nevertheless Western interest contributes to the preservation of Tibetan culture and religion in some form.

Has the TGE's soft power contributed to achieving meaningful dialogue with the PRC? No, in the view of the TGE there is no meaningful dialogue taking place with the PRC. Currently[100] in fact there is no official dialogue whatsoever taking place between the two parties. However, the broad popular support for Tibet along with support from Western governments is a form of pressure exerted on China. Thus, popular support increases the likelihood of China entering into dialogue with envoys of the TGE. In this sense, the TGE's soft power, while not directly contributing to this objective, has the potential to be influential in an indirect way, namely through popular government support leading to international pressure on Beijing.

Has the suffering of Tibetans decreased as a result of the TGE's soft power? To a minor extent, yes. Numerous Tibet Support Groups, attracted by soft power, as well as international NGOs have repeatedly campaigned for the early release of Tibetan political prisoners.[101] On numerous occasions such campaigns have resulted in the release of prisoners. In these individual cases, suffering has been reduced. But with regard to the entire Tibetan population, the TGE's soft power has not significantly reduced the hardships experienced by Tibetans in Tibet.

What about the overall objective of the TGE's exile struggle: Has the TGE's soft power contributed to an approximation to the major objective of 'genuine autonomy' for Tibet? This question must be answered with a definite no. While attracting substantial levels of attention and support, this support has not been sufficient for it to be translated into a solution for the Tibet question.

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99 For example the Tibet House in New York (see Tibet House 1).
100In April 2009.
101As dealt with in section 4.2 'Civil Society Support for Tibet in the West.'

From analyzing the Tibetan exile experience regarding the Western world using the theoretical lens of *soft power*, on might draw the conclusion that while soft power is an important instrument that can aid in the achievement of certain objectives, particularly for militarily and economically 'powerless' peoples, ultimately it still remains subordinate to hard power. China possesses immense military power, and its economic position makes it an important focus for Western economics and hence politics. In the case of Tibet, so far hard power has remained the ultimate power.

Finally, in an attempt to put the findings of this paper into a wider perspective, their applicability onto other cases shall be considered. As stated in the outset, numerous peoples face a fate in some ways similar to that of the Tibetans. But of course in many ways the Tibetan issue is very unique indeed. No group of unrepresented people, apart from the Tibetans, has a Dalai Lama. The 14th Dalai Lama is certainly an extraordinarily outstanding figure to have at the forefront of a movement. Furthermore, the *Myth of Tibet* is likewise quite a unique phenomenon. No other group has this type of legacy on which to build on. And these two factors, the Dalai Lama and the *Myth of Tibet*, are central to the success of the TGE in terms of international mobilization. But the Dalai Lama and the *Myth of Tibet* have been around for long, and the levels of partly hysterical attention Tibet enjoys in the West today is a phenomenon which has developed increasingly over the past two decades. There is little doubt that the soft-power strategy launched by the TGE has been very successful in mobilizing support. A focus on shared values has a high potential for engendering support and attention. And while support and attention might not be sufficient to ultimately achieve all desired outcomes, they do ensure that one's issue is not forgotten among the many social hardships existing in the world today.

List of Acronyms

AI – Amnesty International

ATPD – Assembly of the Tibetan People's Deputies

CTA – Central Tibetan Administration

CTRC – China Tibetology Research Center

DIIR – Department of Information and International Relations

FTC – Free Tibet Campaign

GNH – Gross National Happiness

GNP – Gross National Product

ICT – International Campaign for Tibet

ITSN – International Tibet Support Network

NGO – Non-governmental Organization

OHHDL – Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

PLA – People's Liberation Army (of China)

PRC – People's Republic of China

SFT – Students for a Free Tibet

TCHRD – Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy

TGE – Tibetan Government in Exile

TSGs – Tibet Support Groups

TWA – Tibetan Women's Association

TYC – Tibetan Youth Congress

UN – United Nations

UK – United Kingdom

USA – United States of America

WWF – World Wildlife Fund

List of Tables and Figures

130

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Abstract (English)

The present paper deals with the Tibetan government in exile and its success in mobilizing international support from the theoretical perspective of *soft power*. Soft power is the ability to attract and co-opt others to one's own purposes. *Soft-power resources* are the assets that produce such attraction.

After introducing the theory of *soft power* as well as the Tibetan exile government, the paper goes on to analyze the soft-power resources of the Tibetan exile government in the international context, whereby two central research questions are addressed: What are the soft-power resources of the Tibetan exile government? And: How has the exile government's soft power contributed to the achievement of its objectives?

The soft-power resources of the Tibetan exile government are manifold and intricately linked, however they can be presented on three levels. Firstly, the *Myth of Tibet*, which acts as a strong attractive force for the exile government within the West until today. Secondly, the person of the Dalai Lama, who's charismatic personality acts as another major soft-power resource for the exile government. The third level is that of values represented by the exile governments that are widely shared in the West: environmentalism, human rights, democracy, women's rights, and values associated with Tibetan Buddhism. These values, along with a Tibetan identity representation created by the exile government in line with these values, act as further soft-power resources for the organization.

While the Tibetan exile government's soft power has contributed to the achievement of some of its objectives, such as the mobilization of support from different levels within Western societies, and the exertion of Western political pressure on China, it has ultimately neither led to a substantial improvement in the Tibetan situation, nor to the achievement of the overriding objective of the exile government: a status of genuine autonomy for Tibet.

Abstract (Deutsch)

Aus dem theoretischen Blickwinkel von *Soft Power* befasst sich die vorliegende Arbeit mit der tibetischen Exilregierung und ihrem Erfolg bei der Mobilisierung internationaler Unterstützung. Soft Power bezieht sich auf die Fähigkeit, andere durch Anziehung und Kooption für seine Interessen zu gewinnen. *Soft Power Ressourcen* sind die Mittel die zu solcher Anziehung führen.

Nach einer Darstellung der Theorie von *Soft Power* sowie der tibetischen Exilregierung, analysiert die Arbeit die einzelnen *Soft Power* Ressourcen der Exilregierung im internationalen Kontext. Dabei wird insbesondere zwei Forschungsfragen nachgegangen: Welche sind die *Soft-Power* Ressourcen der tibetischen Exilregierung in Bezug auf die internationale Sphäre? Sowie: Inwiefern haben diese zur Erreichung der Ziele der tibetischen Exilregierung beigetragen?

Die *Soft Power* Ressourcen der tibetischen Exilregierung sind vielfältig und miteinander verbunden, lassen sich aber grob in drei Ebenen darstellen. Erstens, der Mythos Tibet, welcher bis heute als starke anziehende Kraft innerhalb des Westens für die tibetische Exilregierung fungiert. Zweitens stellt die Person des Dalai Lama als charismatischer Führer der Exilregierung eine bedeutende *Soft Power* Resource für die Organisation dar. Drittens wirken die Werte, die vom Dalai Lama und der tibetischen Exilregierung vertreten werden (Umweltfreundlichkeit, Menschenrechte, Demokratie, Frauenrechte, sowie Werte verbunden mit dem tibetischen Buddhismus wie etwa Mitgefühl, Friedfertigkeit, etc.) bzw. eine tibetische Identität welche von der Exilregierung kreiert wird und mit diesen westlichen Werten übereinstimmt, als *Soft Power* Ressourcen für die tibetische Exilregierung.

Während die *Soft Power* der tibetischen Exilregierung zur Erreichung mancher Ziele beigetragen hat, wie etwa zur Mobilisierung von Unterstützung aus verschiedenen Ebenen westlicher Gesellschaften, sowie zur Ausübung eines gewissen westlichen politischen Drucks auf China, so hat sie schlussendlich weder zu einer wesentlichen Verbesserung der Situation Tibets beitragen können, noch zur Erreichung des übergeordneten Ziels der Exilregierung: wahrhaftiger autonomer Status für Tibet.

Curriculum Vitae

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