

Stage 6 Modern History Preliminary Course

Tibet's fight for survival in the modern world

Unit of work developed by Arran Lawrence, Birrong Girls' High School, Sydney

Principal focus of Preliminary Course Depth Studies in the Stage 6 Syllabus:

Students apply historical enquiry methods within a range of historical contexts to investigate significant social, political, economic and technological features, individuals and groups, events and other forces in the late eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Selected outcomes for this unit of work:

Students:

- P1.1 describe the role of key individuals, groups and events of selected studies from the eighteenth century to the present
- P2.1 identify forces and ideas and explain their significance in contributing to change and continuity from the eighteenth century to the present
- P3.2 locate, select and organise relevant information from different types of sources
- P3.3 comprehend and analyse sources for their usefulness and reliability
- P3.4 identify and account for differing perspectives and interpretations of the past
- P3.5 plan and present the findings of historical investigations, analysing and synthesising information from different types of sources
- P4.1 use historical terms and concepts appropriately
- P4.2 communicate a knowledge and understanding of historical features and issues, using appropriate and well-structured oral and written forms.

Depth Study, List B, 13:

Tibet's fight for survival in the modern world

China's hegemony in her immediate region

Social, cultural and political factors and the move to Tibetan independence

The roles of key individuals in promoting Tibetan independence, e.g. the Dalai Lama

Impact of the continuing Chinese occupation of Tibet

Part One: Chinese hegemony in her immediate region

Concepts

Identity

Diplomacy

Middle Kingdom

Nationalism
Sovereignty

Self-determination
Suzerainty

Imperialism

Focus question 1:

What is a nation?

Terms such as nation, people and sovereignty are difficult terms to comprehend yet all play a significant role in this unit. Prior to any investigation of the issues of Tibet's survival, knowledge of what defines a nation is required.

Strategies

- Introduce ideals of national identity by eliciting student response in a brainstorming activity on *What is a nation?*
- Upon completion of the activity, students create their own definition of what is a nation using only ideas brought forward in brainstorming.
- Content Analysis, Source 1A.
- Create a second definition of what is a nation drawing from Source 1A.
- Content Analysis, Source 1B.
- Contested Meaning: compare and contrast the students' definitions with a Western definition (e.g. Source 1A) and a Chinese definition (e.g. Source 1B)

Sources

- 1A** Haywood, H (1992) *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, an extract, "The Nation", MacMillan Press, London, page 136.
- 1B** Lawrence, A (1996) *Traditional Chinese View of Nationalism* (a summary based on Smith, WW, Tibetan Nation), Westview Press, Boulder.

Focus question 2:

Is Tibet a separate nation?

The biggest issue concerning the status of Tibet is whether it is historically a part of China. Nationalist and Communist China have contended that since the Ming Dynasty, Tibet has been an integral part of its territory. It states that due to the presence of Chinese administrators and military officers in Lhasa it has overseen all appointments and directed policy in Tibet, prior to 1911. China believes that the events of 1950 were merely a liberation of territory that had been the object of European Imperialism.

Conversely the nationalist Tibetans state any relationship formed has been with the Mongol Khanates and not with Han Emperors. Accordingly, although

a tribute to the Mongols, Tibet has never been a part of Han controlled China. Tibetans state that as a separate *nation*, the events of 1950 amounted to the invasion of a sovereign nation.

Strategies

- Revise definition of *nation*.
- Document Study Source 2A, and short answer response on validity of Chinese claims to Tibet.
- Source 2B Content Analysis. Complete the following questions:
 - Are China and Tibet considered as equals?
 - Why is China referred to as “the Uncle”?
 - What divisions of lands were made?
 - Are the terms of the treaty binding? What are the consequences of non-compliance?
- Comparison Activity Source 2C/2D.
 - List similarities and differences between the two accounts.
 - Identify the parts of the text that are biased.
 - Which of the two interpretations is more accurate? Provide examples.

Sources:

2A Chinese Claims to Tibet: a summary written by A. Lawrence, based on his reading of Smith, W.W., *Tibetan Nation*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1996. (See Appendix Two)

2B Tibetan-Chinese treaty of 822 www.tibetjustice.org/materials

2C <http://www.china-un.org/eng/c2975.html>

2D <http://www.tibet.com/WhitePaper/white1.html>

Part two:

Social, cultural and political factors and the move to Tibetan independence

Concepts

Identity

Self-determination

Democracy

Communism

Imperialism

Nationalism

Racism

Focus question 3:

Is Tibetan Nationalism a result of British Imperialism?

China has claimed that the upsurge of nationalism in Tibet was the result of British Imperialism in the late 19th Century. They argue that it was the manipulation of trade and the British presence in India that allowed for the

presumption of independence with the fall of the Qing Dynasty. British influence in Tibet evolved from the *Great Game* (Imperialism) with Russia. The expedition of Colonel F.E. Younghusband to Tibet in 1904 has been portrayed in Chinese history as the imposition of western ideals on Tibet. The establishment of trade offices and a diplomatic residence was viewed in the same manner as the Treaty Ports after the Opium Wars. With the imminent fall of the Manchus the Tibetans expelled the Chinese officials and the military. During the time period 1911–1949, China exercised little control over Tibet (due to internal disputes) and as a result, the Tibetans established the belief of *independence*. Under the Simla Convention of 1914, China was given *suzerainty* over Inner Tibet. However, Outer Tibet was to remain autonomous. Assurances were also sought in regards to Chinese interference in Tibetan religious and secular policies as well as the annexation of the region. British troops and officials were to be evacuated from Tibetan territory and follow the diplomatic protocols in regards to sovereign nations. However, the Chinese later repudiated the convention and from this it was assumed that China had abandoned its rights to Tibet.

Strategies

- Student discussion: What is Imperialism?
- Mind Map: What are the identifying features of Imperialism?
- Document Study Source 3A & 3B. Questions:
 - Do the treaties give Tibet independence status?
 - Does Tibet being a signatory to the Treaties give the appearance of sovereignty?
 - What rights did suzerainty give China over Tibet?
 - What evidence is there of Britain colonising Tibet?
 - What is the difference between autonomy and independence?
- Document Study Source 3C. Questions:
 - What is the Chinese justification for autonomy?
 - What evidence do the Chinese use for the inclusion of Tibet in “Greater” China?
 - What role did the Kashag play in the call for Tibetan independence?
 - By using the information in the source, what is the Chinese belief regarding the status of Tibet?

Sources

<http://www.tibetjustice.org/materials> for 3A and 3B

3A Convention between Great Britain, China, and Tibet, Simla
<http://www.tibetjustice.org/materials/treaties/treaties16.html>

3B Convention between Great Britain and Tibet, 1904

3C The consistent stand taken by successive Chinese central governments towards the sovereignty over Tibet after the Revolution of 1911: <http://www.china-un.org> (go to The Question of Tibet on the site: <http://www.china-un.org/eng/4762.html>)

Focus question 4:

Is Tibetan Nationalism a result of Chinese Communism?

China has maintained that the call for Tibetan nationalism has come from the imperialistic intensions of the west. When the Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA) entered Tibet in 1950, they did so under the belief that they were *liberating* the Tibetans from western domination. They believed that the social hierarchy was archaic and set out to reform the manner in which Tibet was administered. The Chinese intended to introduce Communism to Tibet, modernise its inhabitants and withdraw. Originally, the PLA soldiers were forbidden to take possessions from the Tibetans, however as the occupation continued and reforms introduced, this relationship worsened. Prior to the revolt in Lhasa 1959, Chinese- Tibetan relationship had deteriorated to an extent where PLA soldiers were forbidden to interact with Tibetans. The introduction of the *High Tide of Socialism* and the *Great Leap Forward* (both policies introducing collectivisation and social reforms) as well as the response to the failed Hundred Flowers' Reforms turned the Chinese presence from peaceful liberation to hostile occupation. The growing apathy of the Tibetans to communism and the desire for independence were one and the same.

Strategies

- Mind Map: Definition of Communism.
- Predicting: What might be the reaction to communism from the theocracy and peasants?
- Summary Activity Source 4A. What were the key aspects of the Seventeen-point Plan?
- Document Study Source 4B. Analyse source for bias, perspective of writer, motivation behind the source and intended audience.
- Report: Using Source 4A and 4B. How important was the role of the Chinese in causing the Lhasa uprising of 1959?

Sources

- 4A** Seventeen-point Plan for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet (the agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet), see under China on www.tibetjustice.org/materials
- 4B** The Lhasa uprising, March 1959, <http://www.tibetinfo.co.uk/news-updates/nu250299.htm>

Focus question 5:

What is Tibetan culture?

Those desiring Tibetan independence have often pointed out that many aspects of Chinese and Tibetan culture differ. Whilst traditionally both Buddhist nations, there is a marked difference in how the religion is practised. In addition, Tibetan and Chinese language is very different, with Tibetan characters resembling Sanskrit rather than the picture writing of China. Architecture, clothing, foods and even the appearance of Tibetans are all fundamentally different from the Chinese.

Strategies

- Students to compile a profile of Tibetan culture (comprising language, religion, art, music, writing etc.) using the following websites:
 - www.tibet.com
 - www.tibetinfo.net
 - www.tibet.net
 - www.tibetlink.com
 - www.tibet.org

Focus question 6:

How has Tibetan culture and social structures influenced nationalism?

Whilst it is not in dispute that many of Tibet's social institutions were archaic, the manner in which the Chinese attempted to alter Tibetan society is questionable. The Chinese attempted to curb the authority of the Tibetan elite and take away their dominant position within society. The majority of the elite prior to the Chinese occupation were Buddhist monks and Lamas. Buddhism is a major influence on nationalistic sentiment in Tibet. The role played by monastic orders in the administration of Tibet, both secular and temporal, has been immense. It is the Tibetan monks that exemplify Tibetan culture and link the people. Language, religion, history and tradition are all conveyed through the establishment of monasteries. In addition, the orders are the force that gives cohesion to the independence movement. From the initial Chinese occupation through to the Lhasa Revolt, Tibetan monks have led and instigated the opposition to the Central Government. Consequently to break the power of the monasteries was to destroy the power that could openly oppose Chinese rule. The Chinese attempted to do this by removing estates, closing monasteries and forcing the Buddhist monks to break their vows. Traditional aspects of Tibetan culture were banned, e.g. "Sky Burial", the method in which the corpse was dismembered and left for vultures on high platforms and the Tibetans were forced to perform actions which went against their religion, e.g. the "Destroy the Four Pests" campaign in which mice, lice, sparrows and dogs were exterminated. In addition, the peasants were forced into education groups, which explained the ideals of communism and the ways in which the theocracy had been suppressing the peasants.

Strategies

- Using photographs as stimulus, complete the following questions:
 - What reasons would the Chinese have for destroying Tibetan monasteries?
 - How would the monastic orders react?
 - How would the common Tibetans react?Photographs:
<http://www.tibetimages.co.uk/politics/politicspage1/politics1.html>
- Text construction: Using the profile created for Focus question 5 and the information provided in Source 6A, create an explanation for the following statement:
“The Chinese attack on the theocracy of Tibet created the resistance to Chinese rule.”

Sources

- 6A** Anti-rebellion campaign (See Appendix Three) Tsering Shakya (1999)
The dragon in the land of snows: a history of modern Tibet since 1947, Pimlico, London

Part Three:

Roles of key individuals in promoting Tibetan independence

Concepts

Theocracy
Power

Authority
Influence

Focus question 7:

How has the Fourteenth Dalai Lama influenced Tibetan nationalism?

The term, *Dalai Lama* is an amalgamation of Tibetan and Mongol and means *Ocean of Wisdom*. The Dalai Lama is the most conspicuous image of modern Tibet. Honoured and acclaimed worldwide it is the Dalai Lama who typifies the struggle of Tibet in the modern world. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama is according to Buddhist tradition, the reincarnation of all the preceding Dalai Lamas, who is in turn the abbot of the Gelupa sect of monks. Vested in this position is both the spiritual and temporal leadership of Tibet. Accordingly the viewpoint on the Dalai Lama differs amongst Communist China and Tibetan Buddhists. The Chinese government has branded the Dalai Lama as the major force behind Tibetan nationalism and have endeavoured to remove much of the traditional power of this position. Whereas the Tibetans see the Dalai Lama as the instrument through which they will receive independence. The Mongol rulers created the position of Dalai Lama using the Cho/Yon relationship. The Mongol Khans became the patrons of the Dalai Lama and in return the Dalai

Lama provided spiritual leadership for the Khan. The regard, in which the Dalai Lama is held, is demonstrated through the links created with influential people (both spiritual and political) around the world.

Strategies

- Using the web sites: www.dalailama.com and www.tibet.com/DL/index.html, create a timeline or summary of the significant events of the 14th Dalai Lama's life.
- Note making: View the movie *Kundun*, taking notes on events and the culture of the Tibetans.
- Stimulus Activity: Using the movie *Kundun*, explain the need for the Dalai Lama to escape from Lhasa.
- Critical Analysis: Which of the mediums was the most beneficial in detailing the life of the Dalai Lama? Are there any discrepancies between the film and the web sites? Why might this be so? Which medium was the most accurate?
- Using the web site: <http://www.tibet.com/DL/leaders.html> explain the importance of the Dalai Lama as an ambassador for the Tibetan Nation. What is the purpose of the Dalai Lama's interaction with Government members?
- Source Analysis, Source 7A. Questions: How does the Dalai Lama respond to the receiving of the Nobel Peace Prize? How does he view the Chinese? How would you describe the Dalai Lama's methods of protesting?
- Source Analysis, Source 7B: Outline the proposals made by the Dalai Lama in Strasbourg.
- Source Comparison, Source 7B & 7D: How did the proposals for Tibetan independence evolve?
- Predicting: What would be the response to the Strasbourg Proposal by the Chinese and by Tibetans in Tibet?
- Predicting: Will the 15th Dalai Lama call for Independence? Read Source 7C as stimulus.

Sources

7A The Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech:
www.tibet.com/DL/nobelaccept.html

7B The Strasbourg Proposal, 1988:
<http://www.tibet.com/Proposal/strasbourg.html>

7C Dalai's Reincarnation will not be found under Chinese Control:
<http://www.tibet.com/DL/next-reincarnation.html>

7D Five-point Plan, 1987: <http://www.tibet.com/Proposal/5point.html>

Part Four:

Impact of the continuing Chinese occupation of Tibet

Concepts

Autonomy Racism Pollution Genocide Human Rights
Cultural Imperialism Ethnic Cleansing

Focus question 8:

What impact has the Chinese occupation had on the Tibetan environment?

Due to the remote position, altitude and terrain, the Tibetan environment was relatively pristine prior to the Chinese occupation. Since 1950, the Tibetan landscape has been altered considerably in terms of deforestation, pollution and resource depletion. The Chinese government claims that this is the by-product of modernisation and the implementation of new technologies into Tibetan society. The Tibetans contend that the Chinese have exploited the environment and used the area as a dumping ground for industrial and nuclear waste.

Strategies

- Note making activity. Explore the web site: <http://www.tew.org/teselphotos/teselphotos.p1.html>, record observations.
- Source analysis, Source 8A, Source 8B and 8C: Construct a profile of the Tibetan environment prior to the Chinese occupation.
- Source comparison, Source 8D and 8E: Questions: How does the content of sources alter? Which source is the most reliable? How would you be able to prove which of the sources is the more reliable?
- Source analysis, Source 8C: Why would China use Tibet for its nuclear program? What does it tell you about the Chinese viewpoint of the land and its people? How would you be able to determine the validity of each claim?

Sources

<http://www.loten.ch/e/cartoons/cart-03.htm>

8A Tibet's environment: <http://www.atc.org.au/tibet/enviro.html>

8B Chinese effects on Tibetan environment:
<http://www.atc.org.au/tibet/environment.html>

8C China's nuclear activities in Tibet:
<http://www.atc.org.au/tibet/nuclear.html>

8D Government in exile statement:
<http://www.tibet.com/WhitePaper/white9.html>

8E Chinese development of Tibet: <http://www.china-un.org/eng/11768.html>

Focus question 9:

To what extent has Tibet been able to maintain its cultural identity?

The cultural identity of Tibet is characterised by the nation's link to the Buddhist religion. As previously stated, the monastic orders maintain the Tibetan Culture and it is from the monasteries that much of the independence or autonomy movement is directed. Since the occupation of Tibet in 1950, the Chinese Government has attempted to remove the influence from the monastic orders in a number of ways. Initially, monasteries were closed and destroyed, monks and nuns were forced into actions contrary to their beliefs, and lands were confiscated. Additionally, power and authority (and hence, culture) was taken away from the monastic orders by the migration of millions of ethnic Chinese into Tibet. New buildings were erected and the size of cities such as Lhasa increased. With these new migrants came the ideas and beliefs of Communist China as well as many social problems (crime, prostitution). The last major step in the restriction of Tibetan culture through the education of Tibet's children. The Chinese government states that prior to the *liberation* most Tibetans were uneducated and illiterate, they claim that setting up schools has provided advantages for these students. However, in the schools the Tibetan language is suppressed and all classes are taught in Chinese. Education officers are present at all monasteries and teachings that run counter to the regime are suppressed. By removing or restricting the established holders of Tibetan culture (the monks) and indoctrinating the future (i.e. students), China is systematically eradicating traditional culture in Tibet.

Strategies

- Source Analysis, 9A, 9B, 9C and 9D: Create a profile detailing the impact of China on Tibet.
- Comparison Activity: Compare this profile with the profile created in Focus question 5
- Writing Task: How has the Chinese occupation altered traditional Tibetan culture?"
- Prediction Exercise: What will happen to Tibetan culture in Tibet?
- Prediction Exercise: What will happen to culture of Tibetans who have been exiled?
- Writing Task: Traditional Tibetan culture in the exile community is under threat of extinction. Discuss.

Sources

<http://www.loten.ch/e/cartoons/cart-05.htm>

9A Use of Tibetan in education: <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu271101.htm>

9B New religious restrictions threaten Tibetan tradition: <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu260700.htm>

- 9C Anti-religious campaign targets Tibetan schoolchildren:
<http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu200201.htm>
- 9D Monastery threatened with closure following protests:
<http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu120600.htm>

Focus question 10:

How are Tibetans being denied human rights?

The biggest issue resulting from the call for Tibetan independence is the denial of human rights for those that protest against the Chinese government. In 1948, the United Nations adopted the *Declaration of Human Rights* that guaranteed all humans the right to inalienable freedoms. In the occupation of Tibet, China has removed these rights from the Tibetans. According to the Chinese, many are held for the security of the People's Republic. The political prisoners are predominantly drawn from the monastic orders of Tibet. *Crimes* such as verbal protests, posters and speaking to foreign tourists about the situation are all grounds for incarceration. In addition Tibetan females have been placed under the same *One Child Policy* of China, and, as a result, many are forced into unwanted abortions and sterilisation. The actions and the policies of the Chinese in Tibet are designed to remove the opposition against Chinese rule. However it is the actions perpetrated by the Chinese that have unified the Tibetans in their call for *Rangzen* (Independence).

Strategies

- Content Analysis, Source 10A: Summary of Human Rights.
- Using the following web site on political prisoners, create a summary of the Human Rights denied by China.
 - <http://www.tibet.com/Humanrights/hr151296.html>
 - <http://www.tibet.com/Humanrights/tchrd-1.html>
 - <http://www.tibet.com/Humanrights/tchrd-4.html>
 - <http://www.tibet.com/Humanrights/hr310197.html>
 - <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu230200.htm>
 - <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu060201.htm>
 - <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu310899.htm>
 - <http://www.atc.org.au/campaigns/panchen.html>
 - <http://www.atc.org.au/campaigns/sangdrol.html>
 - <http://www.atc.org.au/campaigns/nyidron.html>
 - <http://www.atc.org.au/campaigns/jigme.html>
 - <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu0902000a.htm>
 - <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/tibet/>
- Prediction exercise, written task: How will the Tibetans be able secure human rights?
- Prediction exercise: What conclusions can be drawn about the Chinese attitude towards Buddhism, Tibet and the Tibetans?

Source

10A The Declaration of Human Rights:
<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

Resources

Web sites

Tibet Government in Exile: <http://www.tibet.com/>, wide variety of information concerning all aspects of modern Tibet.

Tibetlink: <http://www.Tibetlink.com>, contemporary news and links to Tibetan culture sites.

Tibet Online: <http://www.tibet.org/>, wide variety of information on all aspects, historical documents.

Tibet Information Network (TIN): <http://www.tibetinfo.net/>, detailed research reports on major Tibetan issues.

Worldbridge's Tibet: <http://worldbridges.com/Tibet/>, photographs/screening room and information on Tibetan Culture.

Tibettoons: <http://www.geocities.com/clhamo99/home.html>, political cartoons on contemporary issues.

Tibetland: <http://www.tibetland.com/>, contemporary news and Tibetan culture.

Voice of Tibet: <http://www.vot.org/>, streamed shortwave radio news.

Demton Khang: <http://www.thetibetmuseum.org/>, photo archive and profiles of Tibetans (under construction).

The Tibet Post: <http://www.tibetpost.com/>, Tibetan Daily Newspaper.

Tibet Images: <http://www.tibetimages.co.uk/>, Photo archive.

Snowlion Publications: <http://www.snowlionpub.com/>, bookseller specialising in Tibetan publications.

Tibetan Government Department of Information and International Relations: <http://www.tibetnews.com/>, streamed documentaries, photo archive, and detailed reports on major Tibetan issues.

Australia Tibet Council: <http://www.atc.org.au>, historical background, contemporary issues and photo archive.

TibetNet: <http://www.tibet.net/>, Information on Government Offices, contemporary issues.

International Campaign for Tibet: <http://www.savetibet.org/>, background information, contemporary issues.

Amnesty International, <http://www.amnesty.org>, Human rights reports.

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy: <http://www.tchrd.org>, detailed research reports, profiles of political prisoners.

Human Rights Watch Asia: <http://www.hrw.org/asia/index.php>, Human rights reports.

Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations: <http://www.china-un.org>, Chinese viewpoint on major issues in Modern Tibet.

United Nations (Human Rights): <http://www.un.org/Overview>, Declaration of Human Rights.

China Daily: <http://www1.chinadaily.com.cn>, Chinese viewpoint of contemporary issues.

Dalai Lama: <http://www.dalailama.com>, biography of the Dalai Lama.

Tibet Environment Watch: <http://www.tew.org>, detailed reports, photo essays and maps.

Tibet Map: <http://www.tibetmap.com>, comprehensive listing of maps.

Loten Namling: <http://www.loten.ch/e/cartoons/gallery.htm>, political cartoonist

Books

Grunfeld, A.M. (1996) *The Making of Modern Tibet*, M.E. Sharpe Inc, Armonk.

Lazar, E. (ed.) (1994) *Tibet the Issue is Independence*, Parallax Press, Berkeley.

Smith, W.W. (1996) *Tibetan Nation*, Westview Press, Boulder.

Tsering Shakya (1999) *The dragon in the land of snows: a history of modern Tibet since 1947*, Pimlico, London.

Dalai Lama (1990) *Freedom in Exile*, Abacus, London.

Films

Kundun