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globalization + autonomy

# EMPIRES AND MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF GLOBALIZATION AUTONOMY

Edited by Stephen M. Streeter, John C. Weaver,  
and William D. Coleman



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## Preface

# The Globalization and Autonomy Series: Dialectical Relationships in the Contemporary World

THE VOLUMES IN THE Globalization and Autonomy series offer the results from an interdisciplinary Major Collaborative Research Initiative (MCRI) funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). SSHRC set up the MCRI program to provide a vehicle to support larger projects with research objectives requiring collaboration among researchers from different universities and across a range of disciplines. The MCRI on Globalization and Autonomy began in April 2002. The research team involved forty co-investigators from twelve universities across Canada and another twenty academic contributors from outside Canada, including scholars from Australia, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Slovenia, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Drawing on additional funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the project became affiliated with a separate interdisciplinary research team of twenty-eight scholars, the Groupe d'Études et de Recherches Interdisciplinaires sur la Méditerranée (GERIM). GERIM is based in Tunisia and includes members from France, Spain, Jordan, and Lebanon as well. Scholars from the following disciplines participated in the project: anthropology, comparative literature, cultural studies, economics, English literature, geography, history, music, philosophy, political science, and sociology.

The project was conceived, designed, and implemented to carry out interdisciplinary research. We endeavoured to put disciplinary-based theories and conceptual frameworks into dialogue with one another,

with a view to developing new theories and understandings of human societies. Four conditions needed to be met if research was to be done in this way. First, we brought humanities and social science disciplines into a relationship of mutual influence, where perspectives were integrated without subordinating one to another. To achieve this integration, the team agreed on a set of core research objectives informed by existing writings on globalization and autonomy. Members developed a number of research questions designed to address these objectives and a research plan that would permit them to address these questions in a focused, systematic way. Second, team members individually were encouraged to think inside disciplines other than their own and to respect differences across disciplines in terms of how the object of knowledge is constructed. Third, team members were selected to ensure that the research was carried out using multiple methodologies. Finally, faced with researching the complex relationships involved in globalization, an interdisciplinary approach meant that our work would be necessarily pluri-theoretical. We held to the view that theories would be most effective when, in addition to applying ideas rigorously, their proponents acknowledged the limitations of any particular theoretical perspective and consciously set out to cross boundaries and use other, sometimes seemingly incommensurable, perspectives.

To ensure intellectual integration from the start, team members agreed on this approach at the first full meeting of the project and committed to the following core objective: *to investigate the relationship between globalization and the processes of securing and building autonomy*. To this end, we sought to refine understanding of these concepts and of the historical evolution of the processes inherent in both of them, given the contested character of their content, meaning, and symbolic status.

Given that *globalization* is the term currently employed to describe the contemporary moment, we attempted to:

- determine the opportunities globalization might create and the constraints globalization might place on individuals and communities seeking to secure and build autonomy
- evaluate the extent to which individuals and communities might be able to exploit these opportunities and to overcome these constraints
- assess the opportunities for empowerment that globalization might create for individuals and communities seeking to secure and to build autonomy

- determine how the autonomy available to individuals and communities might permit them to contest, reshape, or engage globalization.

In seeking to address the core objectives for the project, we moved our research in three interrelated directions. First, we accepted that globalization and autonomy have deep historical roots. What is happening today in the world is in many ways continuous with what has taken place in the past. Thus, the burden of a contemporary examination of globalization and autonomy is to assess what is new and what has changed. Second, the dynamics of the relationship between globalization and autonomy are related to a series of important changes in the locations of power and authority. Finally, the globalization–autonomy dynamic plays out in the construction and reconstruction of identities, the nature and value of community, and the articulation of autonomy in and through cultures and discrete institutions. In each of these three areas, the team developed and agreed to answer core questions to provide a clear direction for the research. The full text of the questions is available at <http://globalization.mcmaster.ca/ga/ga81.htm>.

Over successive annual meetings of the team, our research coalesced around the following themes: institutions and global ordering; democracy and legitimacy; continuity and rupture in the history of globalization and autonomy; history, property rights, and capitalism; community; culture; the situation and struggles of indigenous peoples; and the Mediterranean region as a microcosm of North–South relations. The researchers addressing these themes tended to be drawn from several disciplines, leading to interdisciplinary dialogue within each thematic group. The themes then crystallized into separate research problems, which came to be addressed by the volumes in the series. While these volumes were taking form, the project team also developed an online publication, the *Globalization and Autonomy Online Compendium* (see next page), which makes our findings available to the general public through research summaries; a glossary of key concepts, organizations, people, events, and places; and a comprehensive bibliography. The ultimate objective of all of these publications is to produce an integrated corpus of outstanding research that provides an in–depth study of the varying relationships between globalization and autonomy.

## **Globalization and Autonomy Online Compendium**

Readers of this volume may also be interested in the *Globalization and Autonomy Online Compendium* (available at [www.globalautonomy.ca](http://www.globalautonomy.ca)). The *Compendium* is a collective publication by the team of Canadian and international scholars who have been part of the SSHRC Major Collaborative Research Initiative that gave rise to the volumes in the Globalization and Autonomy series. Through the *Compendium*, the team is making the results of their research available to a wide public audience. Team members have prepared a glossary of hundreds of short articles on relevant persons, places, organizations, events, and key concepts and have compiled an extensive searchable bibliographical database. Short summaries of the chapters in other volumes of the Globalization and Autonomy series can also be found in the *Compendium*, along with position papers and peer-reviewed research articles on globalization and autonomy issues.

## Acknowledgments

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## **Empires and Autonomy**



## chapter 1

## Introduction

William D. Coleman, Stephen M. Streeter, and John C. Weaver

IN *The Communist Manifesto*, published in 1848, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels described mid-nineteenth-century Europe in a way that seems to foreshadow the modern-day concept of globalization:

All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.<sup>1</sup>

A scarce 150 years later, the late Paul Hirst and his co-author Grahame Thompson looked at their present economic circumstances and then

back on the era from 1870 to 1914 and concluded: “The level of integration, interdependence, openness, or however one wishes to describe it, of national economies in the present era is not unprecedented ... This is not to minimize the level of integration now, or to ignore the problems of regulation and management it throws up, but merely to register a certain skepticism about whether we have entered a radically new phase in the internationalization of economic activity.”<sup>2</sup>

Two years after Hirst and Thompson published these words, sociologist Anthony Giddens delivered the BBC Reith Lectures, which were broadcast around the world on the BBC World Service. He divided those who debated the novelty of globalization into two camps: the skeptics, such as Hirst and Thompson, and the radicals, those who believed that globalization was not only new but also revolutionary. He supported the radical position but then added that both groups “see the phenomenon almost solely in economic terms. This is a mistake. Globalization is political, technological and cultural, as well as economic. It has been influenced above all by developments in systems of communication, dating back only to the late 1960s.”<sup>3</sup> In short, what had been presented as a revolutionary change by Marx and Engels in 1848 had become commonplace in the eyes of globalization skeptics 150 years later; for the radicals, the commonplace was being revolutionized from the inside out in a set of changes as profound as those observed by Marx and Engels in the mid-nineteenth century.

In keeping with the interdisciplinary ambitions of the Globalization and Autonomy project, scholars from many academic disciplines were invited to consider how their research might answer one or more of the historical questions arising out of these debates:

- 1 What are the historical roots of globalization and autonomy? What are the continuities and differences between past and present?
- 2 How has capital enlisted political authority (local, national, and global), technologies, and communications media to open new opportunities for expansion and penetration? At what point does capital’s enlistment of these factors permit us to speak of a globalization moment?<sup>4</sup>
- 3 If we find a recent rupture and a decisive globalization moment, what is specific about the current moment? What are the deep foundations for this moment? for globality?

- 4 How has the practice and concept of autonomy changed over time? How are these changes related to class, citizenship, and identities? How do social and historical memories influence class, identities, citizenship, and autonomy?
- 5 How and in what ways are globalization and globality engaged and contested across historical moments? How does autonomy at particular historical moments facilitate or hinder the engagement and contestation of globalization and globality? To what extent is the engagement and contestation of globalization and globality a struggle for or against autonomy?
- 6 How does our research connect globalization and autonomy with the ideas of imperialism and empire? How do these connections and these ideas vary across time and at different moments of globalization?

### Continuity, Discontinuity, and Core Concepts

In thinking about how to address these questions, we believe it is important to distinguish between internationalization and globalization. *Internationalization* refers to the growth of transactions and interdependence between countries.<sup>5</sup> The governments of those countries organize the transactions and social relations that result as a unit. The respective “national” communities constitute the governed. In contrast, *globalization* involves “the spread of transplanetary — and in most recent times also more particularly supraterritorial — connections between people.”<sup>6</sup> As Jan Aart Scholte emphasizes, *supraterritorial* refers to relations that are somehow “above” territory; that is, they are relatively unconstrained by physical location. For example, Robert Latham and Saskia Sassen have explained how new communication and information technologies augmented the feasibility of supraterritorial connections. Activities by local community organizations, for example, can link horizontally with similar organizations in networks of global scope. In doing so, these organizations can bypass more easily the administrative and institutional components of the nation-state. In this respect, an increasing range of social relations has become “transboundary” — that is, less mediated by territorial-based nation-states.<sup>7</sup> Owing to the development of these new technologies, certain social relations have acquired characteristics

of transworld *simultaneity* (they extend anywhere across the planet at the same time) and transworld *instaneity* (they move anywhere on the planet at the same time).<sup>8</sup> In this respect, the supraterritoriality of social relationships alters the nature of some social spaces, which become less defined by their physical location than they might have been in the past.

One of the consequences of the spread of transplanetary connections and supraterritoriality is the growing awareness of the world as an imagined community. In reviewing the conceptual underpinnings of globalization, the sociologist Roland Robertson alludes to “an intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole” over time.<sup>9</sup> When individuals place themselves in a world context, they become more likely to imagine themselves doing things in the world beyond their country or locality.

Analyzing globalization in this manner led us to reject the commonly held notion that internationalization and globalization are always related linearly, with globalization accelerating as internationalization recedes. To the contrary, we show that these processes have often accelerated at the same time, especially over the past two centuries. The relationship between internationalization and globalization can actually be complementary, as nation-states either singly or in combination trigger globalizing processes. Economic historian Samir Saul’s study in this volume of global finance over the past 135 years illustrates this positive interdependence. Sociologist Ulrich Beck’s analysis of the increased need for states to cooperate on transboundary or transnational issues also demonstrates that internationalization does not necessarily diminish globalization.<sup>10</sup> Of course, it is possible for intensified internationalization to restrict globalization and vice versa. For example, agreements reached by states over the past decade to regulate border crossings illustrate how internationalization has impeded transworld migration. In contrast, emerging digital technologies like the Internet — which reconstitute communication by combining print with oral, visual, and auditory forms — have challenged state boundary controls over the diffusion of culture.

In describing and analyzing such phenomena, the scholars in this book hypothesize that historical ruptures and discontinuities become more likely when particular transworld social relations and spaces become supraterritorial. To date, histories of internationalization stress the importance of the gradual organization and control of the world’s territories by nation-states, a process that intensified in the nineteenth century and culminated in the decolonization movements of the mid-twentieth century. As *international* became synonymous with *worldwide*

or *global*, primary social spaces became defined as “national” ones, and the mediation of relations in the world took place through national political, economic, cultural, technological, or military institutions. When transworld social spaces became supraterritorial, however, certain social relationships, whether economic, political, or cultural, were also altered. For example, the exchange of visual media like photographs, films, or local video recordings can have more immediate global circulation with unpredictable consequences than in the past. A case in point is the death in 2008 of a disoriented Polish immigrant following the use of a stun gun by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the Vancouver International Airport. This local incident was globalized when it was captured on a bystander’s digital camera and spread instantly around the world. The video images not only contradicted the police report, leading to an official inquiry and an apology to the man’s mother and to Poland, they also helped fuel a growing international debate about the wisdom of using stun guns to apprehend criminal suspects. As this example suggests, in some instances states have increased difficulty defining or containing the spaces in which social relationships emerge and grow.

This volume investigates how the possible historical continuities and discontinuities in globalization might inhibit or promote autonomy. We also are interested in how degrees of autonomy may affect societies’ capacity to engage with and shape globalization. We are concerned with both individual and collective forms of autonomy. Scholars Len Doyal and Ian Gough have observed that “our most basic human interest” requires the fulfillment of two basic needs: health or physical capacity and mental capacity or *autonomy*.<sup>11</sup> As Gough has elaborated, “To be autonomous in this minimal sense is to have the ability to make informed choices about what should be done and how to go about doing it.”<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, three conditions must be met in order for individuals to enjoy autonomy.<sup>13</sup> First, individuals must have the *cognitive and emotional capacity* to initiate action. Otherwise, a set of disabling symptoms that erode autonomy can be observed, including hopelessness, indecisiveness, a sense of futility, and a lack of energy. Second, individuals must develop *cultural understanding* that permits them to comprehend their own social setting and to know what is expected of them in daily life. Such understanding requires teaching and learning, whether in the family, through community practices and ceremonies, or in schools. Third, individuals must have a *critical capacity*, the ability “to compare cultural rules, to reflect upon the rules of one’s own culture, to work with others to change them

and, *in extremis*, to move to another culture.”<sup>14</sup> To exercise this critical capacity requires some freedom of agency and political freedom.<sup>15</sup> In sum, individual autonomy means being able to formulate aims and beliefs about how to achieve one’s choices, seek out ways to participate in social life in pursuit of these choices, and evaluate one’s success based on empirical evidence in working towards these aims.

This concept of *individual autonomy* seemingly contrasts with *collective autonomy*, especially the autonomy of states. Collective and individual autonomy may be reconciled, however. Cornelius Castoriadis, a French philosopher of Greek origin, has helped explain the concept of collective autonomy by recalling the Greek roots of the term: to give oneself laws.<sup>16</sup> To be collectively autonomous, a society has to make a place for politics and the exercise of individual autonomy. There must be *public spaces* where citizens are able to freely ask themselves, “Are the rules and the laws under which we exist the right ones?” “Are they just?” “Could they be better?”<sup>17</sup> According to Castoriadis, collective autonomy exists when a society is more reflexive, more able to look at itself critically, and when its members are free, have access to public spaces, and possess the resources, the understanding, and the education needed to interrogate themselves and their laws. Clearly, autonomy in this sense involves an act of the imagination, or what Castoriadis calls the “radical imagination.”<sup>18</sup> When individuals and groups are able to imagine different ways of living, they can conceive of an idea, imagine how it might work in practice, and then take action to see if it will work.

In adopting these definitions, the authors in this volume explore how these forms of autonomy are constituted over time for individuals and communities, including nation-states. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word *autonomy* first appeared in the English language in its collective meaning during the seventeenth century, while the personal meaning of autonomy did not emerge for two more centuries. Both usages became more common as internationalization began to accelerate in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Accordingly, the contributors also assess how changes in autonomy over time relate to intensifying globalization and internationalization.

### **Avenues of Investigation**

In seeking to carry out research that would provide some preliminary answers to the historical questions raised in the Globalization and

Autonomy project, we found ourselves focusing repeatedly on several issues. Some of the early celebratory works on globalization cast the present world as the culmination of a long linear process that ended in market economies and democracy. This “end of history” allegedly marked the gradual decline of the most institutionalized form of collective autonomy: the nation-state. Such an argument made implicit assumptions about *time* that we believed deserved to be challenged. That historians had begun to explore the linkages between contemporary globalization and empires as forgers of transplanetary connections also strongly suggested that we had to incorporate the themes of empire and imperialism into our study. Finally, the globalization literature was replete with universal ideas — capitalism, the individual, democracy, free trade, human rights, nature, the environment, and markets. The spread of these ideas and others, and their reconstruction as they became implanted in particular places and varying institutions, was also part of the growth of transplanetary connections that we needed to examine.

## Time

Time is a crucial feature in many discussions of globalization. The increase in the speed of communication and of social relations themselves has led to discussions of simultaneity, instaneity, and even “timeless” time by globalization authors.<sup>19</sup> In assessing certain hidden assumptions about time, we discovered many pitfalls. First, there is the hazard of depicting human events as progressing on a smooth plane and arriving at an anticipated endpoint like contemporary globalization. Second, ransacking the past for events to illuminate the present can lead to anachronisms. Third, breaking the past into epochs imposes an implausible uniformity on the defined period.

As the historian Timothy Brook has cautioned, certain intellectual traditions (mostly, but not exclusively, in the West) assume the linearity of time: “An event in the past is not isolated in its unique moment; it is conceived as a point on a line that stretches from the past to the present and beyond the present into the future. Events are thought of as occurring along a timeline that unfolds according to a forward-moving narrative logic.”<sup>20</sup> In working uncritically with terms like *continuity* and *discontinuity*, we risk misrepresenting the history of globalization as the rise of the West, the expansion of modernity, or the global penetration of capitalism. To avoid these pitfalls, we seek to distinguish the past from

the present while still showing that important interactions in the past “shape future possibilities and closures.”<sup>21</sup>

The second hazard, anachronism, arises from attempts to use the past to explain contemporary issues. The danger is that our chosen categories of analysis, formed in the present and addressing current matters, will march into the past to mix with the terms of another time and place. As one historian of colonialism has cautioned, we should not think “as if people acted in search of identity or to build a nation when such ways of thinking might not have been available to them.”<sup>22</sup> In other words, historians should not invent a new vocabulary if current terms work well.<sup>23</sup>

The third danger we faced in investigating the history of globalization and autonomy was the temptation to design a teleological project. The historian Anthony Hopkins has divided the history of globalization into a sequence of sweeping epochs: archaic-globalization, proto-globalization, modern-globalization, and postcolonial-globalization.<sup>24</sup> This approach is acceptable so long as we acknowledge that the chief concepts of globalization would have been largely unrecognizable to the people of these eras. Also, it would be a logic-defying leap to speak of global connections in historical epochs when no contacts existed between Eurasia and Africa, or between the Americas and Australasia. In the eighteenth century, several European powers had an extraordinary reach, as did the Ottomans and the Chinese, but large parts of the globe remained unknown to any of these empires. Although some of the essays in this volume do refer to the Hopkins schema, we have been careful to avoid imposing rigid periodization schemes on our contributors that would distort their findings.

### Empires, Autonomy, and Globalization

In considering the questions that motivated this volume, it became evident that the concepts of *empires* and *friction* needed elucidation. The concept of friction as an analytical tool in the study of globalization has been described metaphorically by the anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing: “A wheel turns because of its encounter with the surface of the road; spinning in the air gets it nowhere. Rubbing two sticks together produces heat and light; one stick alone is just a stick. As a metaphorical image, friction reminds us that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power.”<sup>25</sup> The pursuit of

empires played an important role in forging transplanetary connections among particular areas of life and involved, to the advantage of metropolitan centres, some parts of the world more than others.<sup>26</sup> Rarely, if ever, were these connections forged easily or systematically. For these reasons, globalizing processes should not be seen as enveloping the world inexorably or inevitably.

Friction, to varying degrees, accompanied early European expansion into Africa, the Indian Ocean, and America. Where the conquerors found indigenous political authority well established, legitimate, and undivided, they often faced resistance. Where they found small states or tribal divisions with such institutions less developed, they were more likely to establish successful colonies. Historians have long acknowledged that indigenous peoples played a vital role in shaping the pattern of colonization that unfolded during the so-called Age of Discovery. Thus, the Spanish enjoyed momentous successes colonizing the Canary Islands in the fifteenth century, and the Portuguese established enclaves along the west and east coasts of Africa soon thereafter. The historian Alfred Crosby regards the conquest of the Canary Islands as a prototype for later assaults on the personal and collective autonomy of indigenous peoples, and as a stepping stone for the trial-by-error navigators who headed south along the coast of Africa and west to America.<sup>27</sup> Once the Portuguese rounded Africa and entered the Indian Ocean, they found it easy to plant trading forts along the Swahili coast of east Africa and in South Asia because of an abundance of city-states unable to organize a concerted resistance. In their conquest of the New World, the Spanish managed to divide the tribes of Mexico, and they were able to colonize the Philippines for much the same reason.

Europeans took advantage of local disputes and indigenous knowledge wherever they could. The British East India Company extended its rule in India during an age of turmoil for the Mughal Empire. European trading companies could not do the same with a united China or Japan, but they did make commercial inroads in those places because of New World silver, and because of the shipping services that the companies provided. By 1700 Europeans knew how to organize private, large-scale, sustained commercial and manufacturing enterprises, namely, big trading companies and sugar plantations.<sup>28</sup> The management of far-flung commerce and production fostered new skills. Europeans had discovered how to channel wealth into long-term investments that left management in the hands of professional overseers. This approach occurred through

the development of the joint-stock company, the forerunner of the modern corporation. It permitted small investors to own part of a venture — say the East India Company or the Hudson's Bay Company — and to be free of the management. Merchants in an empire no longer had to be part of a specific trading community to participate in a major business: individuals in many important cities could invest in a business managed elsewhere, and capital was becoming liquid, not fixed to a place. Networks functioned because of European concepts of joint-stock companies and because of contracts supported by judicial systems that invariably accompanied colonizers and sustained the contracts of trade and the conversion of land into property.<sup>29</sup> In addition to their early establishment of the joint-stock company, the Dutch pioneered the development of stock exchanges, banks, warehouses, and a legal code that serviced commerce. Companies functioned within empires and the legal sanction of a home government; some received government subsidies, but they also admitted non-nationals and outside capital.

Empires tried to put in place law codes and courts based on domestic models that served the institutionalization of law imposed from the outside in dominated lands. Local imperial administrators and jurists had to practise discretion and compromise to achieve order, practices that involved trade-offs between domination and autonomy. In commercial law, empires showed flexibility and adaptation, accepting at first for practical reasons the laws and conventions employed in newly acquired territories and then introducing changes by statutes: informal limits to autonomy thus became more formal. There were adjuncts of empires that retained their own law codes. During the nineteenth century, British financiers, merchant houses, manufacturers, and diplomats exerted so much influence in China, Argentina, and the Ottoman Empire that the populations of these regions found their collective autonomy jeopardized and became incorporated into informal empire. In Nigeria, for example, British colonial authorities of the late nineteenth century relied on indigenous leaders to rule indirectly.

Participation in the empire by local lenders, merchants, and landowners did not mean power sharing. Friction was intrinsic to the imperial form of global integration. Empires may not have always enriched metropolitan powers, but they were organized to benefit Europeans principally, not subject peoples. These organizational steps invariably involved restrictions on collective and individual autonomy. Metropolitan impositions disrupted the structure of local economies and exacerbated local

divisions.<sup>30</sup> In India in the nineteenth century, the demise of the Mughal court diminished luxury trades and arts.<sup>31</sup> French incursions in North Africa in the mid-nineteenth century and the Russian occupation of central Asia in the late nineteenth century implanted colonies and assailed customary land and water allocation practices.<sup>32</sup> Empires yielded benefits to specific European families and trading houses, gave employment to Europeans paid out of local revenues, and procured indigenous soldiers for imperial armies.

A thematic description of empires could leave the false impression that European empires operated identically according to a single imperial model. Cultural, social, and legal differences among the imperial powers created distinctive colonies that varied considerably in their autonomy and that left legacies important for understanding forms of autonomy today. Thus, disparate legal traditions, labour availability, the type of commodity produced, and local resistance created different statutes and enforcement practices, even though major colonial law codes in all empires backed labour exploitation. Maps of enclaves, colonies, annexations, and trade can only minimally explain the themes of friction and diversity. Each imperial centre had unique designs, expectations, and capacities. Once the Spanish Crown wrested control of New World colonies from the heirs of the conquistadors, it installed a highly centralized and bureaucratic administration that attempted to control the movements of people and goods. The Royal Council of the Indies, however, proved incapable of preventing smuggling on a widespread scale. As a weak European state, Portugal exerted even less control over its overseas territories and was forced to rely on the British Empire to police its imperial domains. Even the British Empire often proved incapable of regulating land allocation and property rights in its colonies. It is common to remark that globalization has fostered hybrid cultures. In fact, colonialism led to hybridization too.

From 1500 to 1850, European seaborne empires played havoc with local cultures and ecologies, which also led to internal shifts in the distribution of collective autonomy. The slave trade exacerbated intratribal conflicts in western Africa and Angola, and it dramatically altered the cultural landscape of the Americas. Missionary activities in Africa, Latin America, and Asia proved especially disruptive. According to the historian Charles Boxer, the Jesuits developed a worldwide trading entity with activities “far greater in scope than those of either the Dutch or the English East India Companies, which are sometimes termed the first

multinationals.”<sup>33</sup> Civil authorities did not always welcome missionaries, of course, because of their reputation for interceding on behalf of indigenous people. But whether welcomed, barred, manipulated, or watched with suspicion, Christian churches made irreversible inroads that connected people across oceans.

Empires also appear to have fostered globalization by mixing people, plants, animals, and ideas across oceans. They increased internationalization by aspiring to control their subjects through lines of authority backed by men in national uniforms under national flags. The more zealously intrusive empires practised patriotic indoctrination and precipitated friction with multiple outcomes, including indigenous nationalism. Authorities attempted to maintain more or less uniform law codes within their jurisdictions, but these were often adapted to local circumstances and customs.<sup>34</sup> The attempts of empires to extend metropolitan laws resemble the efforts of transnational bodies in recent decades to initiate judicial bodies; the difference is that transnational bodies attempt to harmonize laws across boundaries, while empires attempted to codify and enforce laws mainly within imperial boundaries. In their chapters, both John Weaver and Adrian Jones consider the reach of imperial law and the later evolution of international criminal law. Apologists for colonialism spoke incessantly of the importance of law but then sanctioned the use of force to trample on the rights of indigenous peoples. Such contradictions in empire provided openings for the contestation of forms of globalization in pursuit of new forms of personal and collective autonomy. Christopher Bayly has proposed that many drivers of change — ideology, economics, and the state — produced chaotic changes in different parts of the world, “which cannot be traced back to any one of these ‘drivers’ or domains alone.”<sup>35</sup>

A new type of imperialism took shape with the economic and military ascendancy of the United States in the first half of the twentieth century. Under the US model, formal collective autonomy might co-exist with economic dependency. The first informal colonies in Latin America and the Philippines, for example, were permitted some local political control in exchange for US access to markets and trade. During the remainder of the century, US ambitions for worldwide political and economic supremacy, as well as a strong desire by US allies to avoid another world depression, shaped the formation of international agencies such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.<sup>36</sup> As is shown in the chapters by Pruessen and Streeter,

the compulsion to manage world affairs and to assume international responsibilities that had been shirked in the 1930s led to foreign-aid programs in the postwar period aimed at shaping agrarian and industrial development.

By the 1960s US officials had adopted universal economic development models for the Third World, which were assumed to be free of historical circumstances and constraints. Confronting the US empire was a different imperial system led by the Soviet Union, and later China, with ambitions of implanting Socialist models beyond eastern Europe into the Third World. Both the US empire and the Soviet empire aimed for unprecedented world domination in terms of scale and scope, but they differed in strategy and tactics. The United States eschewed territorial annexation and direct rule, opting instead for informal empire.<sup>37</sup> More than any European empire, the United States unequivocally claimed divine inspiration in carrying out an altruistic mission that would allegedly benefit all of humankind. And, while previous empires had attempted to export languages, religions, and culture, the United States developed new mass communications technologies to promote the American dream on an unprecedented global scale. The Soviets, by contrast, were inspired by leftist secular European heroes, including Marx, Engels, Kautsky, and Lenin, which led to cults of personality around such figures as Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong. While the Soviets could not match superior American technology, Communism did gain a wide following in certain parts of the Third World for brief periods of the Cold War.<sup>38</sup>

### Ideas, Epistemic Communities, and Globalization

When exploring global connections at particular moments, one cannot go very far without running into ideas associated with universal claims. Some of these ideas have particular relevance to collective and individual autonomy: free trade, human rights, property rights and improvement, environmental management, and self-determination, to name but a few. Often, such ideas are nurtured by *epistemic communities*, networks of scholars, savants, and professionals that have recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to knowledge in that domain.<sup>39</sup> Such communities share certain normative beliefs that suggest avenues to action, and they confidently link causal beliefs to everyday problems.

In studying global connections around particular moments, we were

drawn to observe how universal ideas travel, how knowledge moves from one locality to another and from one culture to another, and how truces and compromises with the absolute forms of ideas are made. The mission of the universal, Tsing writes, is “to form bridges, roads, and channels of circulation. Knowledge gained from particular experience percolates into these channels, widening rather than interrupting them.”<sup>40</sup> As they travel, these ideas become hybridized, reformulated, and recast through dialogue, and sometimes struggle. In these senses, ideas are a source of friction. While free trade can provide a doctrine for the expansion of pharmaceutical transnational corporations’ intellectual property rights and control over the sale and distribution of medicines, it also is invoked by developing countries seeking access to wealthier countries’ markets for agricultural commodities and foods. References to law can back impositions of order by force but also bolster appeals for justice and restitution.<sup>41</sup> Economic development schemes can and have served the Leviathan, but some societies have embraced them to good effect to house and feed their hundreds of millions. Human rights can cut in more than one direction; political rights follow a convoluted history of struggles.<sup>42</sup> Strands of ideas in Enlightenment thought may have been egregiously misrepresented in some accounts so that their pertinence to “still debated principles, intellectual tendencies, and institutions” is neglected. Leading Enlightenment figures argued from universalistic positions that imperialism was manifestly unjust.<sup>43</sup> As Tsing observes, “Universals beckon to elite and excluded alike.”<sup>44</sup> In exploring such dualities implied by the metaphor of friction, we are able to better understand the relationships between globalization and autonomy.

### **Moments and Friction: Our Approach**

Any study attempting to connect empire with globalization and autonomy will likely invite the criticism that empires have rarely adhered to a grand design. As many studies have shown, empires administered dependencies haphazardly, lacked cultural coherence, and met resistance nearly everywhere.<sup>45</sup> Globalization as a conceptual framework needs similar qualification. How can scholars convey globalization’s incompleteness, offer a sense of the muddled encounters of states and globalization, and capture globalization’s many contradictory consequences for people’s lives, particularly as they bear upon autonomy? Instead of trying to construct grand-scale narratives, we directed our contributors to

begin their essays with a select moment in history that covered an incident, an innovation, a movement, or a round of negotiations related to their research. We hoped that these moments would demonstrate that global encounters that involved the securing or denial of autonomy in specific places inevitably involved friction. We believed that focusing on moments of friction would offer a useful way to explore the dialectic between globalization and autonomy. As Tsing puts it: “Friction makes global connection powerful and effective. Meanwhile, without even trying, friction gets in the way of the smooth operation of global power. Difference can disrupt, causing everyday malfunctions as well as unexpected cataclysms. Friction refuses the lie that global power operates as a well-oiled machine. Furthermore, difference sometimes inspires insurrection. Friction can be the fly in the elephant’s nose.”<sup>46</sup>

Whether globalization stole or burst upon the world, whether globalization transpired in an evolutionary fashion or by convergences resulting in sudden ruptures, we recognized the need to measure certain qualities of global connections over time. These include the actual geographic scope of the connections; the depth of their penetration, both spatially and socially; the speed of transfers of people, articles, and information; and the thickness or tenuousness of the connections. Similar to other globalization scholars, the Portuguese historian Cátia Antunes has identified the key variables as extensity, velocity, and intensity.<sup>47</sup> To this list should be added the global consciousness of agents and degrees of individual and collective autonomy. Using such indices, most of the contributors to this volume would probably agree that appreciable globalization had transpired by the late nineteenth century and decisive globalization had arrived by the end of the Second World War, or the height of the Cold War. After lengthy discussions about periodization, however, we realized that fixing a precise date for the origins of globalization was less important than agreeing to investigate globalization and autonomy using the concepts of historical moments and friction.

### **This Volume's Contributions**

Using the device of historical moments, this book provides a series of windows at different times and places to view the dynamic relationships between two sets of processes: globalization and the loss or gain of autonomy. Such a historical analysis is important if we are to have a deep understanding of these relationships. We also recognize that personal

and collective forms of autonomy are themselves dynamically linked. Our research suggests several tentative conclusions.

First, over the past three centuries, globalization, understood as expanding transplanetary connections, has brought higher levels of interdependence to more places in the world and involved more persons than at any time in the past. Moreover, this interdependence has featured, in one way or another, in the daily lives of more societies and more persons in the world than at any previous time. Finally, over the past half-century, these changes in the levels of interdependence have occurred more rapidly and through more channels than at earlier times. They are generally less constrained by politically defined territorial boundaries than in the past and are characterized by increased openness across the world.

Second, the expansion in the global coverage of interdependence, its importance in the daily lives of people, and the rapidity of the social changes involved are more pronounced in the wealthy countries as a group than between the wealthy countries and those with lesser wealth. As Samir Saul demonstrates in his chapter, what changes over time is not the degree of interdependence between the wealthier societies and the poorer ones, but the ability of some to leave the club of the poor to join the club of the wealthy. Moreover, certain sectors of poorer societies might be incorporated into these relations of interdependence, thereby intensifying the differences between these parts and the given society as a whole. In these respects, globalizing processes can be supraterritorial in the sense that they create new geographies, or what Appadurai calls “process geographies,” which undermine or come to exist alongside territorial or “trait geographies.”<sup>48</sup> In each of these respects, then, globalization processes contribute to deepening fissures between those societies participating in globalization and those sidelined by it. Again, Saul’s analysis of financial globalization at the end of the twentieth century demonstrates this point. Looking at these processes from the point of view of the Maghreb countries, the scholar Yassine Essid’s chapter captures the despair and difficulties originating from this widening gap, particularly when contrasted, for example, with the hope that existed at the time of decolonization and independence.

In researching how autonomy relates to globalization, we concluded that, rather than trying to measure the gain or loss of autonomy in the world, it is more useful to think about changes in the ideas and forms of autonomy. John Weaver’s chapter, which explores the life of a slave woman in South Africa at the beginning of the nineteenth century,

reveals how the European idea of personal autonomy was strongly opposed by commercial and patriarchal interests when it came to the institution of slavery. Still, he shows how the idea that slaves deserved some personal autonomy became planted in people's minds and worked its way, bit by bit, into law, eventually leading to emancipation. Jeremy Stolow's chapter illustrates how imaginaries fuelled by emerging technologies like the telegraph created new spaces in society for women to be autonomous in a personal sense, even if that autonomy turned liberal notions of autonomy on their head. Ironically, autonomy is enhanced for some women when they become the medium for the words of a spirit from the past.

Ideas of autonomy also have staying power. The philosopher Charles Taylor maintains that a modern moral order based on natural rights and a presumption of equality has "undergone a double expansion: in extension (more people live by it; it has become dominant) and in intensity (the demands it makes are heavier and more ramified)."<sup>49</sup> Weaver's findings suggest that such expansion does not take place smoothly but inevitably involves friction. Attempts to implement the Enlightenment notions of individual rights, which circulated in South Africa at the beginning of the nineteenth century, bogged down in the transition between empires. In the end, these emancipatory ideas offered little solace to a female slave cut off from her community. Two centuries later some of these same ideas of personal autonomy anchored the founding of an International Criminal Court. In his analysis of the Nuremberg trials, which articulated the notion of individual autonomy as a global concept, Adrian Jones suggests that the paradigm of thinking enunciated at the trials was finally institutionalized globally with the creation of the court and its early operations in 2002. When applied more broadly, the paradigm on individual responsibility invoked at the trials opened up avenues for individuals to claim rights to social justice irrespective of sex, property relations, and even citizenship in a particular state. So one particular notion of individual autonomy, a thoroughly modern one, has become the focus of a global institution many centuries after the idea was conceived.

In short, the past three centuries of globalization have seen the emergence of an idea of personal autonomy — the self-reliant individual who is a bearer of rights. The groups entitled to this form of autonomy have expanded from propertied males to include former slaves, peasants, women, and minorities — in short, the subaltern groups that have

gradually won more rights over time. This expansion is not linear, nor does it take the same form everywhere. Other chapters underline variations in these processes, whether they involve indigenous peoples (Ravi de Costa), the transition of the Ottoman Empire from imperial power to semi-colonized client (Virginia Aksan), the subjugation of Tibet (Timothy Brook), or the control of workers in export-oriented production (Neil White). The legacies of imperialism and colonization shape how personal autonomy comes to be understood in different parts of the world.

Autonomy in the collective sense of self-government has existed in a variety of forms for centuries, if not millennia. Here, too, our book indicates that, when placed in conjunction with globalization, the forms and ideas of autonomy have changed over the past three centuries. In particular, as Anthony Giddens has observed, this period has seen the globalization of the nation-state form of political organization of territory.<sup>50</sup> Gradually, the nation-state has supplanted earlier forms of organization like city-states and, more recently, the territorial subjugation of empires. The American sociologist Saskia Sassen refers to this development as the hierarchy of scales, which ascends from the local, subnational (province, state, canton, etc.), and national to an international system of states.<sup>51</sup> Collective autonomy becomes understood and defined within this hierarchy of scales. This containment of collective autonomy within states, themselves shaped by patterns of imperial organization of territory, is often a violent process when experienced by indigenous peoples, the colonized, and the subjugated.

Several chapters address these issues. De Costa's assessment of indigenous peoples in Australia shows how practices of collective autonomy based on a long-standing cosmology are undermined and often destroyed by discourses of racial inferiority and backwardness. From the point of view of indigenous peoples, and in some other cases that involve cultural or religious minorities, the nation-state itself is a colonizing force. Aksan and Brook show that the matter of autonomy is particularly acute in land-based empires. To control territory, imperial forces need to use force and occupy land in ways rarely needed by maritime-based empires. As the ability to mobilize these forces declined in the Ottoman Empire because of rising nationalism and increasing competition from the Russian, British, and French empires, the empire as a whole entered into a long crisis that culminated in its dissolution. The modern secular state of Turkey was built on its ashes. Tibet's struggle with China,

Brook explains, also demonstrates how empires impose domination and deprive regions of collective autonomy. By contrast, the sea-based British Empire learned to allow some self-rule in its domains, provided that commerce was protected and that certain British institutions remained intact. Finally, White demonstrates how community and individual autonomy, particularly for the working class, changed as globalization intensified. He contrasts the situation of workers in company towns over the course of the twentieth century with the increasing number of workers employed in export-processing zones in the late part of the century. Social welfare policies that initially governed these towns stand in sharp contrast to these zones, which are commonly devoid of any social safety net. White's findings reflect the process, described by the cultural anthropologist Aihwa Ong, whereby states restrict the personal autonomy of citizens and migrants in slices of territories specifically designated to produce commodities for global markets.<sup>52</sup> White's study emphasizes that these limits on autonomy often include the denial of social rights available to citizens inside the same state but outside the export-processing zones.

In short, the depth and form of collective autonomies in a world moving towards the globalization of the nation-state system are by no means uniform from one part of the world, and from one community in the world, to another. The historian Arif Dirlik has explained global modernity as a world in which the institutions of modernity — the nation-state, the market economy, industrialism, and militarism — take root throughout the world.<sup>53</sup> How these institutions take root, however, depends upon the histories of cultural practices in given places, their relations with imperialism and other forms of domination, and the ways in which they engage with global capitalism. The hierarchy of scale — local, subnational, national, international — that is globalized with the nation-state system is explicitly a political one that does not necessarily correspond to patterns of economic relationships. Over the past two centuries, few states have succeeded for very long in sustaining economic autarky. Nor has this hierarchy of scale corresponded very neatly to patterns of cultural relationships, including religious ones. As we know, the boundaries of many nation-states were constructed by imperial powers that often ignored cultural or economic boundaries in the interest of maximizing their own economic plundering.

Contributors that look at the contemporary period argue that the lack of correspondence among political, cultural, and economic geographies

has become more pronounced than ever. Saul's analysis of the possible shift from financial internationalization to financial globalization demonstrates this point well. He argues that over the last hundred years foreign direct investment has come to replace portfolio investment as the spearhead of internationalization. The relative greater importance of foreign direct investment, the transnationalization of firms, and international production has created an economic environment in which nation-state boundaries, particularly in the Global North, are commonly surmounted by economic transactions, as is evident by the use of such phrases as "supraterritorial relationships" or "capital flows." But this phenomenon, he emphasizes, is largely confined to the North. Reversing nineteenth-century patterns, capital now flows mostly to capital-rich countries, as the North-South component of such capital flows is proportionately less than in the past. Admittedly, there are new entrants to the ranks of capital-rich countries such as Japan, South Korea, Turkey, and the Czech Republic, not to mention others on the horizon such as China, India, and Brazil. Nonetheless, the developing world remains marginalized, but in new ways. Capital flows are now mostly a North-North or rich-rich affair, in which developed countries serve more than ever as one another's main creditors and debtors. This economic marginalization of the less wealthy states contrasts sharply with previous phases of international economic relations, most notably the period between 1870 and 1914.

Saul's analysis provides an essential background — autonomy relationships after the First World War — for the more explicitly political focus of other chapters that wrestle with the role of the United States in shaping globalization. Each of these chapters in its own way offers the argument that contemporary globalization in its initial stages was led by the United States to defend its economic interests, which required a more institutionalized and stabilized global economy. Gorman's chapter on the regulation of the radio frequency spectrum presages some of the key battles between the United Kingdom and the United States over institutional arrangements that shaped global economic systems following the Second World War. He shows that the International Radio Conference of 1927 marked a "change from international coexistence to international cooperation and interdependence," wherein nation-states, almost exclusively from the developed countries, came to share collective autonomy. In doing so, they were able to achieve the regulation of what is essentially a "global" commodity, namely, radio spectrum

frequencies. The United States gave precedence to private rights and the interests of private radio broadcasting firms, while the United Kingdom and other European powers viewed the radio spectrum as a public good in which public rights ought to predominate. How the United States won the radio battle foreshadowed how economic globalization would unfold under the influence of US hegemony after 1945.

In this regard, Ronald Pruessen probes the thinking of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the early 1940s as he looked ahead to a postwar world that would prosper under US-led development. An Open Door approach to the world economy demanded, Roosevelt argued, the end of colonialism and the global spread of the liberal democratic nation-state form. In reviewing Roosevelt's ruminations, however, Pruessen detects a strong sense of paternalism and *noblesse oblige* in the president's views on colonial peoples' right to development opportunities and how much autonomy they might be able to handle.

As globalizing processes are supported, if not enforced, by neo-imperial powers, they call into being new ideas and practices of autonomy in several ways. First, the denial, removal, or repression of collective autonomy in societies through US-led globalization can bring the values, advantages, and need for collective autonomy into the social consciousness of subjugated groups. Acting on this kind of social consciousness will vary in form over time as globalization itself becomes more extensive, intensive, and rapid. As Stephen Streeter observes in his chapter, liberal developmentalism, or the idea that other nations could and should replicate the US developmental experience, was forced on much of the Third World by the US-led globalization project during the 1960s. The battle for "hearts and minds" waged by the United States in Guatemala and Vietnam, for example, can be seen as attempts to steer formerly colonized peoples away from alternative forms of globalization. He notes that during the Cold War, US government officials and academics frequently described Third World peoples as "primitive" or "childlike" and in need of uplift by the "advanced" cultures of the West, sentiments that echoed Franklin Roosevelt's paternalism as described by Pruessen. Vietnamese revolutionaries became famous, if not models, throughout the Third World for how to achieve autonomy, especially in places where similar liberation struggles against US hegemony were unfolding.

Yassine Essid also examines the influence of US economic doctrine, but from the perspective of the Maghreb countries in North Africa. He describes how the promise of Third World development made by

President John F. Kennedy in his 1961 speech to the UN General Assembly was never fulfilled. In this respect, US-led globalization demonstrates disturbing similarities with previous imperial experiences, which have shattered alternative forms of globalization that might have preserved collective autonomy. In short, globalization and imperialism seem to be part of the same long, bad dream from the perspective of many so-called developing countries. The political shell of collective autonomy that remains in many of these states becomes controlled by autocratic and corrupt leaders who repress their citizens, sometimes violently, all the while attempting to shape their economies to fit with constantly changing development models.

Fortunately, some globalization processes, when abetted by digital technologies and mass media, can impel, if not compel, the work of the imagination and, through it, novel notions of autonomy and agency.<sup>54</sup> An increasing number of persons in the world are able to challenge the assumptions in official thinking, regardless of whether they are extreme forms of entrepreneurial development or oppressive forms of collectivism. Part of the critical imagination is focused on the realization of collective and personal autonomies in situations where these are denied. Streeter sees national liberation movements as examples of these struggles. Essid observes the growing force of Islamic fundamentalism, a movement that makes effective use of digital technologies and mass media, and sees it as constructing a new global Islam that offers (false) hope to the millions being marginalized by US-led globalization.

Ulf Hedetoft's concluding chapter begins with the meeting of Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev in Iceland in 1986, an event that signalled the beginning of the end of the Soviet empire. His essay connects to the earlier chapters through his argument that the United States placed severe limits on the autonomy of the developing countries by military means and by its design and direction of global financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In the post-Soviet era, he uses the term *neo-imperialism* to describe the ability of the United States to project its power beyond its formal sphere of sovereign authority to curb the collective autonomy of other states, which are induced or coerced into pursuing choices that are consonant with Washington's prerogatives.

By looking through the keyhole of a moment in history, the essays in this book underline the need for histories of globalization processes and of ideas and forms of autonomy. Autonomy has existed in particular

forms for a very long time. Consciousness of autonomy and reflection upon it in a directed way have shorter histories and appear to have arisen with the onset of modernity, which can be identified with the advent of the nation-state or doctrines of development — free market and collectivist. The state and the ideologically opposed doctrines of development have had a deep impact on individuals and communities, so it is no wonder that consciousness of autonomy has emerged most fully with modernity. Consciousness of connections with far away places and the interdependence that arises from such consciousness are phenomena that reach back millennia. Awareness of connections that are planetary and of connections that are specifically transworld is more recent. Historians argue that such consciousness predates modernity, but it is not clear by how long. There is much work to be done to uncover how and when consciousness of globalization and autonomy came into being.

For scholars who are interested in studying the origins of globalization and the implications of globalization for individual and collective autonomy, looking at the past will benefit our thinking about the future. Not only do we benefit from understanding the historical roots of globalization and autonomy, the past is ripe with incidents of friction that, when examined closely, can help us find better solutions to current and imminent global predicaments.

## chapter 2

# Tibet and the Chinese World-Empire

Timothy Brook

THE HISTORY OF GLOBALIZATION since the seventeenth century is usually narrated from the water, not from the land. We regard land as discouraging the propensity to travel and reducing the face-to-face interactions that are essential for maintaining active networks of communication and exchange. Water, on the other hand, enables networks of information to proliferate over distances that once seemed endless and commodities to be shipped in quantities and at speeds that carts and pack animals cannot equal.

This differentiation between land and water is enshrined in the early stories Europeans used to tell about the global spread of capitalism, with Vasco da Gama sailing around Africa and Christopher Columbus crossing the Atlantic. If Europe can be said to have “risen,” it did so on water. Land returns to the story of global capitalism in the nineteenth century with the building of railways and in the twentieth century with the unspooling of highways, both of which supplemented mobility by water. The opening of the new rail line from Beijing to Lhasa in 2006, to noisy official fanfare inside China and protest from Tibetans outside China, shows that these land-based modes of transportation continue to have a place in how contemporary states make the globe accessible. But globalization in the postwar years has been foremost about container ships; trains have dwindled to a supporting role.

This contrast is too stark to reveal all facets of globalization. China was certainly not the landlocked realm hostile to maritime connection

that older histories suggest. Some zealous authors have enjoyed pillorying this stereotype by making Columbus-like claims about the imperial eunuch Zheng He and the fleets he commanded in the Indian Ocean during the fifteenth century. But that is not the only story, nor even the main story, when we look at China through the imperial era, particularly under the Qing dynasty of the Manchus in the eighteenth century. The Qing inhabited a world of military alliances, negotiated sovereignties, and trade networks that extended primarily across land, not water. The Manchus calculated their imperial reach in terms of continents, not oceans, and their projection of power followed land routes rather than water passages.

This continental versus maritime difference underlies the profound divergence in the state systems that have come into being in Europe and China. I will seek to capture this divergence by contrasting the concepts of world-system and world-empire. In a world-system, expansive states interact within a field of competing sovereignties; in a world-empire, one expansive state strives to monopolize all sovereignty. Since the seventeenth century, European nations have constituted a world-system on the basis of technologies of trade and political communication facilitating maritime expansion. Qing China, pursuing a different model of political authority and economic enlargement, constituted a world-empire. This contrast, like that between land and water, is too stark to express the full complexity of the historical reality of globalization. Nonetheless, I shall invoke these concepts later in this chapter to make better sense of the policies that the Chinese state, then and now, has pursued with regard to Tibet.

### **Tibet in the World**

Tibet today is the great paradox of the contemporary global condition. It is a polity without national status in the global nation-state system, an economy with few external ties in an era of global economic integration, and a restricted zone in an age of unprecedented international travel. It is a community whose members live all over the world, a culture whose religious and moral practices have found new soil in other cultural traditions, a place that exceeds its boundaries. The region called Tibet is relatively inaccessible, yet knowledge of Tibet's saga is nearly universal. In geographical reality, it is cut off from the world; in virtual reality, it is thoroughly global.

Inside the Tibetan Autonomous Region (the official designation of the portion of Tibet that the Chinese government allows to retain that name), the same sense of paradox prevails. The region is distant from everywhere and environmentally foreign to the Chinese heartland to the east, yet it is rife with signs of foreign influences. Lhasa, the city that spreads out around the foot of the Potala, the Dalai Lama's now empty residence, exists in an economic and political regime much like what prevailed in the China of three or four decades ago, when a closely watched and desperately underfunded society wilted under the military surveillance of the Communist state. Only the diversity of the clothes that some Tibetans wear on the streets of the old city recalls Lhasa's former status as an Inner Asian hub, rather than as it is today, an outpost of Chinese colonialism. In towns outside Lhasa, the presence of commercial China is also ubiquitous, from the casino-style leisure facilities of Shigatse, home of the Panchen Lama (the lama who is second in authority to the Dalai Lama), to the knock-off merchandise shops in Gyantse, to the starkly divided city of Tsetang, where Stalinist wedding-cake architecture and a busy network of undercover police impose a mode of state colonization indifferent to the squalor of the Tibetan neighbourhoods. At first glance, Tibet might look like a place that globalization has not touched, a place whose isolation makes it attractive to tourists and seems to justify China's intervention. Yet that judgment ignores Tibet's historical openness to outside forces. It also neglects the fact that China would not be remaking Tibet according to Chinese needs and policies were that country not pursuing the opportunities offered to it in the current phase of globalization.

China has used Tibet's comparative continental isolation to justify its own presence as a liberating force. According to the liberationist discourse underlying this justification, Tibet has been a closed and backward place in which the majority suffered under "feudal" oppression until the Chinese arrived to modernize Tibet and bring it into the present. Closure versus opening is the polarity structuring this logic, but that polarity assumes that continentality equals isolation. Although Tibet has not been easily accessible to the outside world, Lhasa has for centuries been a significant nexus of trade in the connections that stretch across Inner Asia. The first Portuguese Jesuits who gazed at the Himalayas in the 1620s were aware of the networks that ran from India up through Lhasa and on into northern and eastern Asia. They knew Tibet not as an impasse but as "the door that opens onto all of Tartary [Mongolia],

China, and many other pagan monarchies.”<sup>71</sup> It would be almost a century before the first Jesuit set up a mission in Lhasa. When he got there, Ippolito Desideri reported that the city in the late 1710s was “densely populated, not only by natives, but by a large number of foreigners of divers nations, such as Tartars [Mongols], Chinese, Muscovites [Russians], Armenians, and people from Cascimir [Kashmir], Hindustan, and Nepal, all established there as merchants, and who have made large fortunes.”<sup>72</sup> Tibet was not a mountain retreat lacking contact with the outside world but a realm through which economic and political integration linked trade and people in South Asia with Inner and East Asia.

Connections made over land tend to be more vulnerable to control than those over water, especially where topographical conditions are harsh. It is perhaps surprising, then, to discover that the continental space of Inner Asia has, historically, exhibited a peculiarly fluid quality. It has been invaded, armed, and claimed, often simultaneously by several parties seeking, alternately, war or truce as conditions of change. The historian Peter Perdue describes this “unboundedness” of Inner Asia as “the great indeterminacy of the cultural characteristics and territorial borders of this zone, which resulted in constant competition by empires, religions, and cultural groups to define and control it.”<sup>73</sup> Less so than the trading networks that laced the world’s oceans, continental trading networks were vulnerable to political and military control and more likely to be interrupted and broken as the balance of power among continental peoples shifted. What Perdue calls “the great plasticity of the landscape” defied fixity and territorialization until the eighteenth century, when Russia and China brought to bear resources that no competitor could match and incorporated Inner Asia into their two political empires. This gradual fixation of territories and borders would impede Tibet from becoming a distinct political entity in the modern era.

### **Tibet and China**

The formation of a political unity among the scattered ethnic groups inhabiting the Tibetan massif in the sixth century marked the emergence of Tibet as one of the six great empires — alongside the Chinese to the east, the Turks to the west, and the Arabs, Greeks, and Franks further west — of the late medieval world. The Tibetan empire fractured into independent principalities in the ninth century, though not before its cultural transformation by Buddhism, which crossed the Himalayas from

India in the seventh century.<sup>4</sup> Tibet thereafter would not regain the political stature or military capacity of its early empire, but the religious authority of Tibetan Buddhism grew to become its major strategic resource. The religious authority of key Tibetan leaders gave them power to shape outcomes at many key points in Tibetan history: in the mid-thirteenth century, when one Buddhist monk (Phagspa) became Khubilai Khan's advisor in Mongol-ruled China; at the turn of the fifteenth century, when another (Tsongkhapa) rebuilt Tibetan monasticism; and in the mid-seventeenth century, when yet another (the Fifth Dalai Lama) managed to play off the many polities that recognized him as the highest earthly manifestation of Amitabha Buddha to manoeuvre Tibet into political equality with Manchu-ruled China. Religious authority was the only resource Tibetans could use to assert their autonomy vis-à-vis their neighbours, as is still the case today. This religious dimension explains why the globalization of Tibetan Buddhism since the 1970s had political consequences for Tibet that no one could have foreseen when the Fourteenth Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959.

Religious authority, like any source of power, works to the benefit of the political leadership that invokes it to assert autonomy, but it can also expose its holder to challenges from the political ambitions of states that covet that authority and the territory it controls. Tibet found itself in this position early in the eighteenth century when, through a complex sequence of political and military events involving many state entities, it came under East Asian political suzerainty, a condition that continues to define its relationship to the world. The chief winners in this sequence of events were the Manchus, a Tungusic people from southern Siberia who consolidated their conquest of north China in 1644 by installing their great khan as the emperor of all China, thereby initiating the Qing dynasty. The main losers were the Zunghars, a powerful confederacy of Mongols that controlled Turkestan (now Xinjiang) to the far northwest of Tibet. It was not a loss they were content to bear, and their challenge early in the eighteenth century would lead to the event at the heart of this chapter, the Manchu invasion of Tibet in 1720.

Between the Manchu winners and Zunghar losers were four other groups. On the Manchu side were the Khoshots, a western Mongol confederacy based in Kokonor, northeast of Tibet, who asserted great influence in Tibet throughout the seventeenth century before being forced to throw their lot in with the Manchus. Squeezing the Zunghars from the other side were the Cossacks, whose movement into Siberia brought

the Russian and Qing empires into contact and led in 1689 to the signing of the Treaty of Nerchinsk (using Jesuit negotiators, who finalized the treaty document in Latin), which divided up Inner Asia.<sup>5</sup> Then there were the Tibetans. They found themselves constantly having to negotiate with external powers that were eager to patronize their religious leaders, who had undisputed spiritual authority throughout most of Inner Asia. Finally, there were the Chinese, who come into this story principally as the foot soldiers who were recruited or pressed to serve the Manchus campaign into Tibet in 1720. “China” would only come into the equation after 1911, when the Republic of China that replaced the Qing dynasty declared its authority over all the Manchu empire, the consequences of which are still shaping Tibet’s history.

The Manchu invasion of Tibet in 1720 was one of a series of interventions imposed on Tibet by external patrons through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many Tibetans actually welcomed this intervention because it ended a seventeen-year period of occupation (most recently by the Zunghars [for three years] and before them by the Khoshot Mongols) and brought twelve-year-old Gesang Gyatso, the Seventh Dalai Lama, to Lhasa. The politics of religious succession and Mongol suzerainty conspired to place Gesang Gyatso in Lhasa, where, ironically, he would not have gone had the Manchus not transported him there.

The Manchu occupation began well enough. Galbi, the Manchu commander of one of the two invading armies, records the army arriving with the Dalai Lama on 16 October 1720: “The Dalai Lama, proceeding westward, arrived at his residence in Tibet. Both lamas and laity showed their support and bent to his authority. Jubilant shouting shook the heavens and Sanskrit chants echoed over the land as people prayed for the [Manchu] emperor’s limitless longevity and celebrated the consolidation of our realm.”<sup>6</sup> Even the Italian Jesuit Desideri, who was no friend of the previous occupiers of Lhasa and had good reason to oppose a change in secular leadership, had to admit, in his characteristically backhanded way, that the new Dalai Lama was given a “rapturous reception by these superstitious people.”<sup>7</sup>

Rapture over the Dalai Lama’s restoration arose from two sources. One was delight that this boy, the highest manifestation of the Buddha on earth, had returned to the place where he should reside; the other was satisfaction that the Zunghar occupiers were forced out. Yet Tibetans were understandably cautious as to whether the Manchus would simply replace the Zunghars as military conquerors, just as the Zunghars had

replaced the Khoshots, thereby continuing the shadow of protection/occupation under which Tibetans had lived since the sixteenth century. Their fears were soon justified. Eight years later, when the Dalai Lama began to demand political autonomy for Tibet, his Manchu patrons forced him into exile. Only in 1735 did the Manchus permit his return, though with a much reduced political status. The current half-century exile of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama is but the latest in a series of ruptures between successive Dalai Lamas and patrons in Beijing stretching back to the 1720s. Each rupture has resulted from the irreducible conflict between the Beijing-centred state, striving to assert exclusive territorial control of a grandiose national geo-body, and the aspirations of local authorities in Lhasa, striving for autonomy from external patrons.<sup>8</sup>

### Religion and Diplomacy

The origins of the Manchu occupation of Tibet go back to the relationship that Mongol rulers established with high Tibetan lamas since at least the time of Genghis Khan in the twelfth century. Tibetan lamaism is a unique form of shamanistic Buddhist practice that helped to consolidate Tibetan culture after its political empire crumbled in the eighth century. A lama or “superior master” was one who had achieved the wisdom of the Buddha but deferred his own entry into nirvana so that he could assist others in attaining the same salvation. After the twelfth century, when Tibet fell under the sway of Genghis Khan’s Mongols, the high lamas enjoyed unrivalled spiritual authority throughout Inner Asia. Even after the empire of Genghis’ descendants crumbled in the mid-fourteenth century, lamaism continued to exert huge religious authority throughout Inner Asia until Islam partially eclipsed Buddhism in the nineteenth century.

The spiritual perfection of a lama posed a theological problem for Buddhists: what happened to him after he died? Did he end his mundane existence by entering nirvana, thereby relinquishing his vow to aid all who continue to suffer in ignorance? Or did he return to continue his work? The solution for some high lamas, developed in the fifteenth century, was self-willed reincarnation. According to this doctrine, the lama could continue to re-enter the cycle of rebirth until the task of enlightening the entire world was completed. Institutionally, this solution entailed a shift in how the highest lamas of Tibetan Buddhism, including both the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama, were selected. No longer

did monasteries fill vacancies at the upper level of the religious hierarchy by electing a mature monk from a group of able candidates. Instead, the deceased's reincarnation became the successor. That reincarnation had to be discovered among children (usually but not exclusively boys) born within a year or two of the lama's death. The search was often controversial, with competing clerical and aristocratic factions promoting different candidates. Once the church hierarchy agreed on a particular incarnate, it set to work instructing him in the teachings of Buddhism and fashioning him into the religious leader he had to become. Succession by reincarnation kept the upper echelons of Tibetan society from becoming entirely closed, but it also made Tibet vulnerable to manipulation from outside political forces.

The Dalai Lama lineage was established in the sixteenth century under Mongol patronage. The greatest of this lineage was the fifth incarnation. The Great Fifth (1617-82), as he is affectionately known, was a deft diplomat who used the patronage of Gushri Khan, the leader of the Khoshot Mongols, to defeat his religious and secular rivals linked to the Panchen Lama (both his teacher and rival) and consolidate his position as Tibet's supreme religious authority. When Gushri Khan retired to his homeland in Kokonor on the border with northwest China in 1642, he granted the sovereignty of Tibet to the Great Fifth. The rise of the Manchus to imperial authority in Beijing two years later suddenly posed a new challenge to the Great Fifth. The Manchus recognized his spiritual authority, yet the Fifth managed to evade any posture of submission. In a delicately orchestrated diplomatic visit to Beijing in 1653, the Dalai Lama recognized the reigning Manchu emperor as an incarnation of the Buddhist deity Manjusri. In return, the emperor appointed the Dalai Lama the Buddhist ruler of the empire. This exchange of titles represented more than appeasement: it was a political exchange in which each leader acknowledged and agreed to respect the authority of the other. The Great Fifth saw the relationship as a way of asserting Tibet's desire for autonomy against Mongol encroachments, while the emperor used the Dalai Lama to block the aspirations of Mongol leaders who might seek to draw Tibet into an alliance against the Manchus.

The arrangement outlasted both men, but it disintegrated in the next generation. The agent of its undoing was Gushri Khan's grandson, Lhazang Khan. Lhazang seized the Khoshot succession in 1700, claimed for himself the coveted title of Genghis Khan, and then asserted his right to reassume his grandfather's patronage of the Dalai Lama, now the Sixth.

Finding the Sixth Dalai Lama not to his liking, he deposed him and immediately produced a replacement Sixth in 1707. His choice was unpopular, rumour having it that the new Dalai Lama was actually Lhazang's son. When the first Sixth perished on his way into exile in Kokonor, the plot unravelled, for if the first Sixth was indeed the real Sixth, then the Seventh was on his way.

Lhazang Khan took these actions in oblique defiance of the Manchus. When the Qing emperor, Kangxi (1662-1722), heard about this new Sixth, he remarked at court that Lhazang Khan was not to be trusted. Still, he had no strong reason to challenge him so long as the Khoshot leader showed appropriate deference. Besides, the cost of intervening in so distant a region was prohibitive, especially because the Manchus' main concern at the time was the growing power of another Mongol confederacy, the Zunghars, further west. Emperor Kangxi sent a Manchu official to Lhasa in 1709 to investigate the succession and size up the political situation.<sup>9</sup> The emperor decided not to regard the replacement of the Sixth as a threat to Manchu dominance and duly acceded to the installation of the second Sixth in 1710. Three years later, however, he extended special honours to the Second Panchen Lama (1663-1737), hoping that he might serve as a counterweight to the Dalai Lama (a policy of divide and rule that Chinese governments have used down to the present).

Lhazang Khan's gamble did not pay off. The popularity of the deposed Sixth produced the expected result: his rebirth as the Seventh. Less than two years after the first Sixth's death, Gesang Gyatso was discovered in Kokonor, the region where the Sixth had died, and was recognized as the next reincarnation. The first Sixth was having posthumous revenge on Lhazang Khan by coming back as the Seventh. This birth opened an opportunity for Lhazang's rivals among the Khoshot Mongols to challenge Lhazang's power in Tibet. Competing Dalai Lamas put the Manchus in an awkward position: should they support the status quo in Tibet, or should they strengthen their own hand by backing the challenger? Like many imperial powers, they carefully prevaricated. Rather than burden themselves with a candidate whom they might later have to renounce, they continued to acknowledge the second Sixth in Lhasa while extending patronage to the new Seventh in Kokonor. What was at stake, after all, was not the correct theocratic candidate, but the authority of the patron.

## The Zunghar Threat to the Manchu Empire

The instability of lama succession attracted the attention of another confederacy of western Mongols, the Zunghars. Their power, like that of the Khoshots, was eclipsed in the seventeenth century by the rise of the Manchus.<sup>10</sup> By 1715 a new Zunghar leader, Tsewang Rapten (1697-1727), was able to rebuild the Zunghar empire and become a contender for supremacy in Inner Asia. To legitimize his claim, Tsewang turned, as so many other contenders had, to the religious authority of Tibet. The confusion over the status of the Sixth Dalai Lama was an ideal pretext to intervene. Tsewang sent agents to Lhasa to convince Tibetan elites that he would get rid of Lhazang Khan and the Khoshots for them. To throw Lhazang off his guard, Tsewang gave Lhazang his sister in marriage and invited Lhazang's eldest son to marry his adopted daughter. Emperor Kangxi was rightly suspicious. When he heard about the son's marriage, he cynically observed that Tsewang Rapten was "using his love for his son-in-law as a pretext to keep hold of him." "Is it possible," the emperor wondered aloud, "that things can stay as they are without anything happening?"<sup>11</sup>

Three years later Tsewang Rapten dispatched six thousand soldiers into Tibet under his cousin, Tsering Dhondup (d. 1743). The main army moved south through mountainous terrain to avoid detection, but a mobile unit of three hundred men was sent to Kokonor to kidnap the Seventh Dalai Lama. The plan was to use him to break the Khoshot hold over Tibet. The bid to capture the Seventh failed, which meant not only that the Zunghars had no political capital to bring with them to Lhasa but also that they were directly threatening Manchu authority. Tsering Dhondup pushed on to Lhasa, killing Lhazang Khan and driving out the Khoshots. His soldiers then pillaged Lhasa and despoiled the surrounding region, nullifying any possibility of Tibetan support.<sup>12</sup> Deposing the Khoshot's second Sixth Dalai Lama was a pointless gesture when the Zunghars had no Seventh to replace him. So the Khoshot occupation simply became a Zunghar occupation. Nothing changed except the disruption of the careful balance that the Manchus thought they had achieved among the Mongol confederacies. By directly thumbing their noses at the Manchus, the Zunghars were about to draw the Manchus into Tibet for the first time.

## The Manchu Occupation of Tibet

The Manchu invasion of eastern Tibet the following year, 1718, became a fiasco. Misjudging Zunghar tactics, underestimating their military power, and failing to mobilize Tibetan support, the Manchu army was almost entirely annihilated. The second invasion two years later would not repeat these mistakes. The linchpin for gaining Tibetan support would be the adoption of the Zunghars' original strategy: bring the Seventh Dalai Lama to Lhasa and install him on his rightful throne in the Potala. This move seemed to require accepting that the child Seventh was indeed a true incarnation, though the Manchus remained carefully uncommitted as long as possible. Yinti (1688–1755), widely regarded as Kangxi's heir apparent and acting as his father's representative in Kokonor, told the boy as late as April 1719, "I don't know whether you are the real Dalai Lama or not, but since everyone regards you as such, I am willing to pay homage as though you were the real Dalai Lama." The boy was alert to the delicacy of this prevarication. "You need not trouble yourself," he replied. "I cannot receive your obeisance anyway, because your father is an incarnation of the bodhisattva Manjusri, which makes you a bodhisattva as well. How could a bodhisattva bow to the Dalai Lama?"<sup>13</sup> The young Seventh could play the politics of imperial prevarication just as well as Yinti.<sup>14</sup>

The second invasion succeeded. The Zunghars readied themselves against the combined Manchu-Mongol force bringing the Dalai Lama from Kokonor to the northeast, but they were unprepared to fight a second army, led by General Galbi, coming from the southeast. Galbi's army crushed its opponents and took Lhasa before the first army arrived. "The fleeing mob of bandits scudded like clouds from morning to night without finding any place from which to escape, and so we gained complete victory with nary an arrow lost," declared one Manchu commander. "On the day the soldiers entered Tibet, Tibetans young and old lined both sides of the route, bowing and bearing food and drink to welcome the kingly army. Drawing up his reins, the General [Galbi] declared his Majesty's benevolent pacification. The tribesmen danced and the roar of their joyful shouts shook heaven and earth."<sup>15</sup> The Zunghars attempted a bold countermove by trying to grab the Dalai Lama from the Manchus before they reached Lhasa, but Tsering Dhondup's remaining force of four thousand soldiers did not have the strength to fight its way to the Dalai Lama. According to Desideri, "after heavy fighting, the Zunghars

were defeated and that insolent usurper general, Tsering Dhondup, fled with a handful of followers toward the great western desert.”<sup>16</sup> Galbi describes his defeat by noting that “Tsering Dhondup, depleted in food and arms and at the extremity of exhaustion, slunk away like a rat.”<sup>17</sup>

The installation of the Seventh Dalai Lama in Lhasa ended the Zunghar occupation of Tibet and effectively sidelined any future Mongol claim to exclusive patronage of the Dalai Lama. Manchus supremacy in Mongolia, not Tibet itself, was the Manchus’ main concern because an unsecured Tibet was simply an invitation for Mongolian adventurism and empire building. The Dalai Lama’s installation did not yet entail the absorption of Tibet into the Qing empire. The emperor and the Dalai Lama still related to each other as patron to holy man, not sovereign to vassal, although the Dalai Lama’s power was much diminished in reality. Only in the nineteenth century, however, would Tibet be fully incorporated into the political structure of the Qing empire. But the Jesuit Desideri saw the future. “After nigh twenty years of tumult and disaster,” he noted at the end of his account of his mission, Tibet “was thus subjugated by the emperor of China in October, 1720, and here his descendants will probably continue to reign for many centuries.”<sup>18</sup>

Tibetan elites imagined their relationship with the Manchus differently. They accepted Manchu patronage as a condition of being free of Zunghar patronage, but they hoped the change in patrons would enhance their autonomy. When the Manchus reduced their military presence in 1722 by cutting the garrison to 1,900 soldiers for economic reasons, Tibetans interpreted this as a normalizing move that would eventually release them from Manchu control. The Manchus, however, had no intention of allowing Tibet to slip into other hands. A Khoshot attempt to stage a comeback in Tibet in 1723, allegedly with the Dalai Lama’s blessing, provoked a brutal response from the Manchus. “The war was one of the bloodiest,” notes a modern scholar. “All who made a stand were killed. All the provisions and property of the people had disappeared. All the lamaseries were destroyed or burned down. The depredation of the country was wicked and ruthless, the destitution of the people tragic.”<sup>19</sup> When a powerful pro-Manchu aristocrat from the Panchen Lama’s region was assassinated five years later, a second invasion was launched and the Dalai Lama was forced into exile for several years.<sup>20</sup> It is a pattern that would be repeated many times down to the most recent Chinese military invasion in 1959.

## World-Systems and World-Empires

The history of Tibet since the 1720s has been a struggle for autonomy, sometimes overt, but usually submerged, first against the Manchus and then later against Chinese claims to superior authority in secular and religious affairs. Attempts to form alliances with other powers to counter the Manchu/Chinese claim, including with the British in India in 1910, have consistently failed to solve Tibet's geopolitical conundrum: how to assert autonomy against a state that, since the eighteenth century, has regarded all such claims as a direct challenge to its authority, not just in Tibet but throughout Inner Asia and East Asia.

The Chinese Republic emerged when Chinese revolutionaries overthrew the Manchus in 1911. As heir to the Manchu empire, the Chinese state, then as well as today, conceives of its territorial sovereignty as a world-empire. This conception is fundamentally at odds with the conventions of Westphalian statehood. It is also indifferent to claims for regional autonomy by non-Han-Chinese peoples living within the old Manchu imperial borders. Tibetans in 1911 understood that Manchu suzerainty had collapsed, which allowed them to reclaim their autonomy, but this was not an expectation that the new Chinese Republic was willing to tolerate. From the Chinese perspective, any devolution of power along ethnic lines had to be stoutly resisted for the same reason that the Manchus invaded Tibet: a challenge to the authority of the imperial centre in any one region can only be interpreted as implying a challenge to authority throughout the realm. Such a challenge must be countered; even mild federalism is inconceivable.

To grasp the particularity of the Chinese state's concern with its authority over Tibet, consider two alternative models for understanding the configuration of economic and state power within a large system: a world-system of multiple states or a world-empire. A world-system of multiple states is a system of production and exchange within which states and firms compete for power. Immanuel Wallerstein, who pioneered world-systems analysis, maintained that the capitalist world-system formed in the sixteenth century through a process of European expansion across the oceans.<sup>21</sup> Despite the recurring urge to control zones of supply and demand by annexation and colonization, states in this system have more often accumulated wealth through networks of exchange (however coercively enforced) than through direct control by colonization or military occupation.

A world-empire rests on a different logic of accumulation. In such a structure, there is a single political authority. The competition for resources and power within the system is carried out between the single state and its own agents or subunits, not with other states. Within a world-empire, high military expenditure tends to produce constant revenue hunger. The state and the imperial household try to accumulate wealth outward by extending the borders of the empire and inward by devolving revenue collection through tax farming, which invariably drives the imperial state to the lowest level of accumulation. The best way for a world-empire to achieve a higher efficiency of accumulation is to exploit a more efficient fiscal administration in its territories, as the Manchus did after they conquered China in 1644.

How the multiple-state world-system and world-empire, respectively, perceive threats constitutes one of their key differences. An adept hegemon in a multiple-state world-system can potentially tolerate the loss of a node in its network of accumulation by reconfiguring the network away from that node (at least in theory; most hegemons are inept when dealing with challenges to their power). A world-empire is much less flexible because its regime of control depends on dominating the full range of its territory. A threat to that territory becomes a threat to the entire system because its own sovereignty is not only absolute but also unbounded. A world-empire is a single realm — “all under heaven,” in the Chinese usage — rather than an entity within a multiple-state system. As such, it acknowledges only its own sovereignty, which it regards as legitimately extensible to any contiguous territory, as security or its need for access to resources dictate. The capitalist world-system, shaped as it is by European historical experience, accepts that a world-system legitimately consists of many states, not one state. Hence the attention given in the Westphalian model to state-to-state power relations, which in the contemporary world-system is enshrined as the principle of inviolable state sovereignty.

The concept of inviolable sovereignty belongs to our modern image of the world. The historical reality of multiple-state systems has been different, with states coming into being, shifting boundaries, and disappearing through their interactions with other states. The institutionalization of state sovereignty and the claim of autonomy attached to it were not fully instituted until the nineteenth century, which is somewhat late in the history of the capitalist world-system. The concept remains an important fiction of the international order today.

China is a fierce defender of the inviolability of state sovereignty on the international stage, but only for existing states. China's defence of its foreign policy arises from a different historical experience, not that of a state within a multiple-state world-system but of a world-empire that has had to reconfigure itself in a multiple-state system without relinquishing either its imperial possessions or its imperial presumptions with regard to conquered territories. China is not the only imperial successor state to deny the right of territories — acquired earlier through military force or colonial subjugation — to negotiate other terms of association. This denial underpins China's refusal to negotiate Tibetan autonomy and China's insistence that it has the right to develop Tibet in accordance with China's national strategic and economic goals.

### **Tibet in the Global Present**

The invasion of Tibet by the People's Liberation Army in 1950 enacted the claim of the People's Republic of China that it had the right to inherit the Manchu imperial realm. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama had no choice but to accept a Seventeen Point Agreement that surrendered Tibet's independence in return for a guarantee of limited autonomy. Unable to bear the limitations of autonomy that Chinese encroachments brought on them, Tibetans rose in 1959 with disastrous results, and the Dalai Lama fled to India. Despite succession crises and policy changes in China, the Chinese government has been unwilling to negotiate with the Dalai Lama to deal with the problem of failed autonomy. An energetic global campaign to bring Tibet's plight to world attention has made Tibet the world's best-known stateless nation and the Dalai Lama the most respected religious leader in the contemporary world. The Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 confirmed his symbolic stature in the global community, to the considerable annoyance of the Chinese government. Despite this widespread publicity, however, the Tibetan Government-in-Exile has still not been recognized as the legitimate government of a sovereign Tibet. Foreign state leaders are willing to meet the Dalai Lama, but none is willing to bring the case of Tibet before any international body. Tibetans in the twenty-first century face the sentence of being a "national minority" within China and a virtual nation outside it.

Tibet's dual status expresses a paradox of globalization: the global integration of economic and cultural networks has created and destroyed

nations without actually abandoning the principle of state sovereignty. The global economy today is largely indifferent to matters of sovereignty, which neoliberals accept only to the extent that it does not unduly restrict capital accumulation. In this context, Tibet's inability to achieve autonomy cannot be blamed solely on China; the entire global system is complicit in the persistence of China's world-empire. Water may have been the capitalist world-system's preferred medium of expansion, but land continues to define China's relationship to its own empire. And so the impairment of Tibetan autonomy continues as Chinese state enterprises pursue development schemes geared to national growth and international trade that grind away at customs inside the region traditionally inhabited by Tibetans. At the same time, outside Tibet, globalization is undercutting the capacity of Tibetans to sustain a Tibet-based cultural identity in the diaspora and threatens to consign them to the museum of extinct world cultures.

The "foreign occupation" of Tibet, as the Fourteenth Dalai Lama calls it, shows no sign of ending.<sup>22</sup> The only certainty is that there will be a search for the incarnation of the Fifteenth Dalai Lama after the Fourteenth dies. This search will pit Tibetans seeking greater autonomy against Chinese leaders anxious to hold onto their world-empire. Both sides will fight over how the incarnation is to be recognized. Already the Chinese government has declared that unauthorized reincarnations of the Buddha are not permitted, an ironic trace of Manchu religious practice and utterly meaningless to Tibetans. The struggle to prevent Tibetan autonomy has thus obliged the government to insist that it alone has the authority to announce to the world the next reincarnation of the Buddha, which at least some Communists must find odd.

The struggle over reincarnation will sit at the core of the coming political struggle within the Chinese world-empire. However strange it may seem to those who are used to other ideologies of empire and resistance, the reincarnation issue at least alerts us to a key observation: the rules governing the accumulation of power and the assertion of authority in this part of Eurasia are not reducible to those that govern change elsewhere in the capitalist world-system, though the outcome will be a matter of little consequence to that system. For Tibet does not exist apart from that process any more than it exists apart from Chinese aspirations to continental power. At the same time, however, without the current phase of globalization, the Dalai Lama would not enjoy his immense

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reputation as the most respected voice of wisdom and non-violence among world leaders. Tibetans abroad would be just one more ethnic diaspora facing annihilation — though the executor of that fate may not be China as much as globalization itself.