

Commenting on the Terms and Title-Words *Zhong Huá* and *Zhong Guó*

Point No. 1

On the cover of the book *A Collection of Historical Archives of Tibet*, it is written: “Jiang Zemin said, “The splendid historical culture of the Tibetan nationality is an important component of the cultural treasure-house of the Chinese (*Zhong Huá*) nation.” It is also written that China (*Zhong Guó*) is a multi-national country and that the Tibetan nationality is one of the nationality groups within the great family of the Chinese nation. Thus, because the coverage of the term *Zhong Guó* is seen to have been continuously expanded beyond all limits to this day, it has become unavoidable for us to make a brief examination of the original Chinese records to find out about the source of this term and its ambit in the three points of this chapter. For this purpose, we have listed here a chronology¹ of Chinese history. In the Chinese language, *Zhong* means centre or middle, *Huá* signifies beauty, and *Guó* refers to nation.

1) Before about the 11th century BC, that is, over 3,000 years ago, during the Western Zhou dynasty, a tradition emerged of calling only the Chinese kingdom’s capital as *Zhong Guó*. Indeed, *Mao Zhuan*, a contemporary Zhou period work, says *Zhong Guó* means the capital.

2) Again, at about the turn of the eighth century BC, when the period of the Chun Qiu [Spring–Autumn] - Zhan Guo [Warring States] reign began, people who were not ethnic Chinese but who lived in the surrounding areas were called eastern Yi, southern Men, western Rong and northern Ti. In the middle

of all these, it used to be said, was the capital known as *Zhong Guó* of the Han people.

3) Scholar Lu Xi, who emerged in about the beginning of the second century AD, after the beginning of the Han dynasty, speaks of the existence of the practice of demarcating China into eastern, southern, western, and northern regions and of calling the central region as *Zhong Guó* because the king lived there. Because the Huaxia or Han ethnic Chinese lived in the north and south of the lower regions of Machu, these territories were called by such numerous names as *Zhong Guó*, *Zhong Tuo*, *Zhong Yuan*, *Zhong Zhao*, *Zhong Xia*, and *Zhong Huá*. But they were all said to be synonymous.

4) In Chapter no. 146 of *The Annals of Tang* authored by the Song dynasty writer Liu Xiang, it is written: “The territory called Tibet lies eight thousand *li*² to the west of the Tang capital Chang’an. In earlier times, during the Han dynasty, the territory was the habitat of a people called Xi Qiang, with their capital located near Machen Pomra. The name of the kingdom was T’ufa. After the passage of many years, T’ufa came to be pronounced as T’ufan.

Before the Tang dynasty period, during the Zhou and Sui dynasties, no contact could be seen to have developed between any of the principalities of the Qiang people and *Zhong Guó*. The kings of that kingdom are being called the Tsenpo.”³

5) In Chapter no. 141 of *The New Annals of Tang*, dealing with T’ufan Tibetan history and authored by Song dynasty minister Song Qi, it is written: “The people called T’ufan belonged to the Qiang ethnic group. It was made up of about 150 sub-groups. They were settled in the areas of Machu, Tsongchu, Drichu, and

Zungchu. Both the F'a Qiang and Tangmo Qiang groups had no contacts with *Zhong Guó*. They inhabited the region called Shizhi Shui located near Machen Pomra in the western Machu region. ...”

And it continues: “That land is located about eight thousand *li* from the capital of Tang dynasty. It had an army of about 100,000 troops. The kingdom is not only hit by frequent lightning, storm, and hail, but is also subject to heavy snowfall. The summer there is similar to spring in *Zhong Guó*. The place is very cold with its mountains being permanently covered in thick glaciers. The people are subject to little epidemic diseases. The king lived in Parbu Chuan (Yarlung) and Lhasa Chuan. Although having a palace and fort, he prefers to live in yak hair tents. The bigger of such tents could hold hundreds of people. ... Life expectancy was about one hundred years. For clothing, people wore leather and felt. ... The highest ranking officials were decorated with epaulets of finest quality turquoise. Those successively subordinate to him got decorated with epaulets of gold, silver, and copper and were thus distinguished from each other.”⁴

6) Page no. 16 of Chapter 50 of the Chinese historical annals called *T'ungchen*, which deals with relations between Tang dynasty and Tibet, records thus: “Those known as the T'ufan people are descendants of the Qiang people of earlier times. Their territory is situated in southwest of Drugu [a kingdom adjoining today's northern Tibet, Amdo province in the east and Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in the west]. In later periods, it came to be known by the name of Tibet. In the Water-Snake Year that corresponds to 633 AD, Tibet's king Songtsen Gampo despatched an emissary to the Tang capital. Since then contact developed between Tibet and China. There was no evidence of any relationship between them before that. The kings of Tibet were referred to as

Tsenpo. Relatives of the king were referred to as *Shang* while officials in positions of power were called *Lon*. There was no practice of calling them by their actual names. Songtsen Gampo was a heroic person. He had an army of several hundred thousand troops under his command. Smaller kingdoms on all four sides lived in fear and awe of him.”⁵

7) On page no. 143 of *A Brief History of the People Living in China's Frontiers*, compiled and edited by Zhou Kuan Tan, which deals with Tibet, it is recorded: “Chapter no. 1. Regarding the name ‘Tibet’, during the Tang and Song dynasties, it used to be called T’ufan. During the Yuan dynasty, it used to be called both T’ufan and Sh’ifan. During the Ming dynasty, Tibet was called by the name of U-sitsang. During Manchu dynasty, Tibet was initially called T’ufan, but later came to be referred to as U-Tsang and eventually Xizang. Before the period of Tang dynasty, nobody inside China knew anything about the territory called Tibet. At that time Tibet was in a period of development. Relationship with Tibet began during the Tang dynasty.”⁶

8) In Part Four of Section Three of the book *A Brief History of the Chinese Nation, Volume II*, written by Fan Wen Len, it is stated under the title “T’ufan Tibetan Nation”: “Chapter 1. The Qiang people, living to the west of China, were a nomadic race in earlier times. ... The main habitat of the Qiang people was in the area of the western Lake (Tso-Ngonpo). From the year 265 to 317 AD, son Tu’u Ku Hun, Drugu, of chief Hriku of the local ethnic group inhabiting the Liu Tung (Eastern Manchuria) led a group of seven hundred families to emigrate westwards and settled in the area of Po Han (at Amdo Kachu in the Ningxia-Gansu region). Their descendants conquered the area’s Qiang principalities and brought

them under their rule, and thereby established the new kingdom of Drugu. In 618 AD, the Drugu kingdom broke into two — east and west — parts. Gradually the Drugu people got assimilated into the Qiang people.”

Likewise, it is stated: “One faction of the Qiang people left the Tso-ngon [Qinghai] region and spread out in the direction of U-Tsang. Another faction, after having moved out and settled within and outside the borders of Sichuan, gradually set out towards the U-Tsang region of Tibet. They gradually spread and diversified far and wide in the vast region to the west of China. During the Tang dynasty period, the splintered Qiang principalities were united and became one big kingdom called Tibet. It is thus revealed that the emergence of the nation called Tibet to the west of China was a majestically brilliant culmination ushered in through a process of civilisational development.”⁷

9) The sections dealing with histories of Tibet in the old and the new annals of Tang dynasty, and the *T'ungchen* reveal in their explanation of Tibet and its internal principalities in the old days that in the seventh century AD the Chinese knew it by the name of T'ufan. During that period Songtsen Gampo launched a military campaign in the Domey region and brought under his rule the principalities of Minyak, Sumpa, etc., of the Qiang people who inhabited them since ancient times. After that, it came into contact with China.⁸

10) In the Chinese annals titled *Ha'u Han Hru*, it is stated that during the ancient Han period in the BC years, the principalities in the Domey region of Tibet were referred to by the Chinese as Qiang. And it says the Qiang people lived mainly in the Machu, Tsongchu, Drichu, and Zungchu river valleys.⁹

A careful scrutiny of the Chinese archive materials cited in the above ten sections reveal that:

i) The name *Zhong Guó* was, over three thousand years ago, used briefly, during the Zhou dynasty, to refer to the kingdom's capital. The extent of its coverage was restricted only to the capital region. And it emerges as extremely clear that the term did not cover within its ambit peoples of other ethnicities living in the capital's neighbourhood. After Zhou dynasty, through the successive periods of the Qin dynasty, Han dynasty, the Three Kingdoms period, Jin dynasty, the Sixteen Principalities period, South and North dynasties, the Sui dynasty, Tang dynasty, the Five Kingdoms period, the Ten Kingdoms period, the Song dynasty, Yuan dynasty, and Qing dynasty, the term *Zhong Guó* was never used to refer either to the capital or the country. In view of this, the question obviously arises: would it be true to claim that the name *Zhong Guó*, used only briefly three thousand years ago, to refer to a specific place in China, and not even to the whole of China, now also applies to Tibet, which is located many thousands of *li* from it, and that the Tibetan people are but a component of the great family of the Chinese nation?

ii) Not only did the people of the Zhou dynasty period, who were the ones to use the name *Zhong Guó*, did not include Tibet within the ambit of the term, but people during it and in the Sui dynasty period were explicit that there was no contact between the people of the Qiang principalities and China. Documents cited in sections 4 and 5 above make this very clear. And the document cited in section 7 above says that before the Tang dynasty period, no one in China knew anything about a territory called Tibet. Do not these show with great clarity the fact

that Tibet and China were totally different from each other? Would it, therefore, not be a wild talk to claim that two places which never even had a contact with each other were one and integral parts of each other?

iii) In 1912, *Zhong Huá Min Guó* [Republic of China set up by the Guomindang], which had nothing to do with *Zhong Guó* that arose three thousand years ago during the Zhou dynasty period and of which Tibet was never considered a part, was founded; and in 1949, *Zhong Huá Renmin Gung Hua Guo* [the People's Republic of China] was established. If it is to be claimed that in both these instances the name *Zhong Guó* was employed only because it was in general usage to refer to the entire nation of China during those periods and Tibet could be considered part of it, the claim is exceedingly improper. Tibet was not something that newly emerged after 1912; it had existed for three to four thousand years before that, separated by thousands of kilometres from China to its west, on a high plateau.

The Tibetan people who inhabited it was traditionally referred to by the Chinese as Qiang. They were totally different from the Chinese in every respect, whether in terms of their attire or language or customs and in other respects. How, therefore, could such a radically different people be suddenly construed as a part of *Zhong Guó*, which is a newly coined name for China in the 20th century? This is nothing but a totally baseless, empty talk about a nation created to suit one's whim.

iv) Again, it might well be stated to be untrue that from the Qin and Han dynasties — after Zhou dynasty — to the Tang, Song, Yuan and Qing dynasties, the term *Zhong Guó* was never used to refer either to a Chinese capital or the Chinese

nation as a whole, and that the documents cited in sections 3, 4, 5, and 8 above, in fact, mention it. Regarding this, it may be pointed out that the respective authors of these different works used the term only for the purpose of examining whether or not there were any kind of relationships between the ancient Zhou dynasty and Tibet. They do not at all show that the name *Zhong Guó* was used to refer to China during the periods in which these works were written.

For example, scholar Lu Xi who emerged after the beginning of the Han dynasty and writer Liu Xiang of the Song dynasty period have, in their works, used the term *Zong Guó* to speak about a period during the Zhou dynasty. The reality was that both during the Han and Song dynasty periods China was never called by the name of *Zhong Guó*. If it was called so, the annals of those periods should record them; but they do not at all.

v) Does not the recordings in Tibetan, Mongolian, Chinese, and Manchurian scripts in the book clearly indicate that these four entities are totally different from each other in terms of their races, languages, cultures, costumes, customs, and in every other respect? If in that way they are indeed different peoples, how could the Tibetan culture be only a component of the Chinese culture?

vi) Again, without any discussion as to whether the cultures of the Mongolian and Manchu peoples are part of the culture of the Chinese people, what was the reason for claiming that the Tibetan culture is a component part of the Chinese culture?

vii) The Tibetans, Mongolians, and Manchurians are not peoples that newly emerged in later periods, but have existed

as neighbouring countries of China since ancient times. So, in which document is it written, by whom, and at what time, that these and the other peoples within today's People's Republic of China had been known by the collective names of *Zhong Huá* people and *Zhong Guó*? What proof exists that such collective names, if they existed, had been commonly accepted and used?

viii) To summarise, the obvious conclusion one can draw from an examination of the annals in the Chinese archives is that whatever early, middle, or later periods one looks at in regard to the use in China of the term *Zhong Guó*, not an iota of evidence could be found to prove that it had been used as being inclusive of Tibet or Tibetans. Claims designed to suggest that the culture of the Tibetan nationality is an important component of the cultural treasure-house of the *Zhong Huá* people; that *Zhong Guó* is a country with a vast territory and multi-ethnic population; and that the Tibetans are but a component ethnic group within the big family of the *Zhong Huá* people, and the like have no basis in reality. Rather, they are obviously inspired by an expansionist ideology.

Point No. 2

Li Teiying has written: "Authentic documents, historical witnesses." As such, there should be no reason for dispute if one seeks the truth from historical evidences. However, it can never be proper to use falsehood as evidence and in the following pages we invite readers to scrutinise each of our examinations of how truth or falsehood has been employed in the book being critiqued here.

Point No. 3

In the book's Foreword it is written: "*Zhong Guó* is an ancient, vast and multi-national country and as part of *Zhong Huá*, the Tibetan people's role has developed through history." Regarding this, we would like to point out two things:

1) As to when the terms *Zhong Guó* and *Zhong Huá* came into being and their ambits, we have already dealt with them briefly in our analysis in Point No. 1 above and leave that to suffice for the present purpose without repetition;

2) The underlying basis for the comment that "as part of *Zhong Huá*, the Tibetan people's role has developed through history" is the period of the Yuan dynasty. This being the case, we offer our explanation concerning it in the next point.