

མ་ཆེན།

Machen

Chinese: Maqin Xian

玛沁县



48.33a

Machen: wide angle view of town (from E)

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roll/neg: 48:33a

subject: wide angle view of town and environs

location: Machen མཆོ་མེན།, capital of Golog མགོ་ལོག་ Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongöñ མཚོ་སྔོན།

[Ch: Maqin 玛沁, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: Machen, like all towns in Golog, is ugly and artificial. In an area where nearly everything is over 4,000m, where nothing grows very well except Tibetan nomads and their animals, there isn't much need for towns. But people and territory require control and utilization, and that is Machen's purpose. Unlike Golog county towns, very little Tibetan has survived here. County population is about 33,000, with a claimed 76% Tibetan majority. In the town, Chinese settlers appear to dominate. The profile of PSB, PLA and PAP is high.
(Viewed from distant east.)

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a. **Machen [Ch: Maqin] (Prefectural Capital)**

i. **Brief description and impressions**

The capital town of Golog TAP is generally known by the name Machen མཁོན་ཁོ་ (Ch: Maqin, 玛沁), though the formal Chinese administrative name is Dawu, or Dawuzhen 大武镇. The Tibetan name Tawo ཏ་འོ་ is also applied to the town and is the source of the Chinese 'Dawu'. The county in which the prefectural capital is located is also called Machen (Maqin). The tangle of names encountered in Chinese naming of Tibetan places offers too many choices: traditional vs. administrative, Tibetan vs. Chinese, sinicized Tibetan vs. Tibetanized Chinese. Confusion easily results. The town's most widely known Tibetan name is Machen and will be the primary name used in this discussion.

The town lies at an elevation of around 3,700 meters within Machen County in the eastern sector of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. It may be reached from Xining by the shorter route running 445 kilometers through the pasturelands of Tsolho, inside the Great Bend of the Yellow River, or the longer route of six hundred kilometers via the Xining-Yushu highway. Another major road via Gade, Darlag and Chigdril connects it to Ngawa, one of the chief trading routes used in the past. Machen, although considered isolated, is in fact accessible within two days of the Provincial capital.

Golog TAP may be divided into two approximate topographic sectors. In the northwest, high grasslands at an average elevation from over 4,000m up to 5,000m stretch to the Yellow River sources area. In the southeast, the Amnye Machen and Bayanhar Ranges enclose a lower but more uneven topography ranging from an elevation as low as 2,500m to over 4,000m. Nomadic pastoralism is the principal economy traditionally practised in both sectors. Fifty kilometers to the north of Machen the Ma Chu (Huanghe/Yellow River) forms the boundary between Golog and Tsolho TAP's.

Machen lies in a river valley so flat that it forms a wide, marshy plain rising gradually to higher treeless slopes and eventually rugged snow mountains. The plain and slopes provide excellent grazing for yaks and sheep.

Approaching Machen via southeast Tsolho, the way passes through a landscape of enigmatic castle-like rock formations, full of legendary significance for local Tibetans.

Chinese publications boast that while Machen was only a wild animal habitat before 1960, it is now a flourishing town¹. In fact the Chinese were aware that humans also inhabited the valley, as they named the town “Dawu” after the Tibetan tribe whose territory it had been², the Tawor Tsowa ཏཱོར་ཙོ་འོ་བ། . Those Chinese references that

admit Tibetans, not only wild animals, also lived in the region assess their presence in terms typically used to justify China’s occupation of Tibetan lands: “For over a thousand years, generations of Tibetans here, in order to open up the Yellow River sources, protect the unity of the motherland, and develop the area’s economic and cultural undertakings, made an outstanding contribution.”³

It is true that no town existed on the site before Machen was built, but like the Tibetans the Chinese have since made their own contribution to the region. In this scenic valley they have, since the late 1950's, constructed a town of such grimness that even prefectural capitals elsewhere in transformed Tibetan areas cannot rival its bleak artificiality.

Machen consists primarily of buildings and compounds strung roughly north-south along a very long main street. [see photo 48:33a, p. 2216] The majority population still appears to be Tibetan, though notably less strongly than in Golog’s county towns. The balance is tipping against Tibetans as more Chinese and Hui enter the area. The exciting, raw frontier aspect of other Golog towns imparted by the presence of visiting nomads is largely absent in Machen. Apparently it is not an important Tibetan trading center, as some county towns are. None of Golog’s new towns are adjacent to monasteries, emphasizing their lack of Tibetan roots. Built largely for the purposes of control and occupation, Machen presents a profile dominated by a conspicuous component of armed force installations. On the eastern outskirts of the town the standard Martyrs’ Cemetery commemorates the sacrifices of those deemed to have died for the cause of building Chinese socialism in Machen.

¹ *Qinghaisheng zhi, shangye zhi (Annals of Qinghai: Commerce)*, p. 81

² *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 64

³ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 1

Although Golog's inhabitants were almost completely Tibetan until the PRC began re-creating the area, the prefectural capital incorporates no genuine Tibetan cultural elements. A handful of herders' dwellings and animal pens, a small new temple or shrine, are the only Tibetan structures in the town vicinity. Even the meagre "nationalities characteristics" features found in Machen are of noticeably poor quality. It is difficult to escape the impression that Machen is entirely a Chinese implant, alien to Golog in appearance and substance.

ii. **Historical background**

The earliest known inhabitants of Golog were the Western Qiang, nomadic pastoralists and formidable warriors who had probably lived there since at least the 2nd millennium BC. Around 312 AD the Tuyuhun, also nomadic herders, reached the Tsongön region from Manchuria. At this time Golog was inhabited by the Tanguts, a people related to the Qiang⁴ and currently allies of the Tuyuhun. In 635 the Tang Dynasty defeated the Tuyuhun in Tsongön and came face to face with the Tibetans, who had been advancing eastwards and had now reached the southwestern borders of the Chinese Empire. By 667 the Tibetans had conquered the Tuyuhun and the Tanguts of Golog⁵, and were settling in many parts of Amdo. A century later the Tibetans also took over the western part of the Tang Empire, so that the territories they controlled stretched from the Gansu region of China into Central Asia.

After the disintegration of the Tibetan Empire in the 9th Century, former imperial officials in Amdo and Kham ruled as independent local leaders. The Mongols forced their allegiance during the 13th Century and their successors in China, the Ming Dynasty, maintained relations with a number of prominent lamas⁶. During the 16th Century the Tümtü Mongols invaded Tsongön, becoming involved in Tibetan affairs and bestowing the title "Dalai Lama" on the leader of the Gelugpa. Other Mongol tribes later invaded Tibet, contributing to the growing concern of the Manchu Qing Dynasty over security in the Tibetan areas west of the Chinese border. In 1721 the Qing sent armies into the Golog area to try to suppress Golog raids in neighboring border areas⁷. Some Golog

⁴ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 12

⁵ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 13

⁶ Turrell V. Wylie, "Lama Tribute Relations", pp. 335-339

⁷ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, pp. 15-16

chieftains received titles from the Qing court from c.1814, but their relations with the Chinese empire were extremely distant and no Chinese officials resided in their territories. During the 1860's the Lhasa Government began to extend its authority more decisively into Golog, Yushu and parts of Kham.

The founding of the Republic of China in 1911 had no political effect on Golog, but trouble was soon to come from Hui warlords, the Ma clan, who had risen to prominence in Qinghai over the last decades and were interested in the strategic and natural-resource possibilities of Golog. War between the Ma clan and the Gologs broke out in 1920, 1933 and 1938. The Ma's last brutal campaign in Golog was so destructive to people and monasteries that many Gologs were forced to flee to Ngawa.

During the Long March in 1936 the Red Army had occupied a temple, Palyül Darthang Dongag Shedrubling

དཔལ་ལྷལ་དར་ཐང་མཛོེ་ཐུགས་བཤའ་སྐབ་གླིང།, in southeastern Golog for a month before turning back towards

Kanlho⁸. After the Communist occupation of Xining and other counties of Amdo in late 1949, Tibetans in Yushu and Golog held out against the Chinese until 1952, when a major annihilation campaign finally defeated them⁹. Communist troops arrived in Golog in August 1952 and began to set up Chinese administration. In 1954 the Golog Tibetan Autonomous Region was formally founded, then changed to the Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in 1955, divided at first into four counties. Machen and Matö Counties were formed in 1958. In 1956 serious unrest had already broken out in Golog as the Chinese tried to impose control and “democratic reforms” in Tibetan areas, and opposition intensified into 1958. The Chinese then took even more extreme measures against Tibetans and their culture, which culminated in the Rebellion of 1959 and the end of any semblance of autonomy for Tibetan areas under Chinese rule. Golog has remained one of the most difficult of all Tibetan areas for the Chinese to control and regulate.

iii. **Current demography**

⁸ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 21-22

⁹ June Teufel Dreyer, “Ch’inghai”, p. 7

Golog TAP is the least populous of all Tibetan TAP's. Official population recorded by the 1990 census was 119,973¹⁰. More recent official statistics show the prefecture's population as nearly static, 121,900 by the end of 1994¹¹, a net increase of only 1.6% over the four years. Annual rate of increase would have been a slight 0.4%, far below Qinghai's provincial rate of 1.55% over the same period¹². In fact, there are ample reasons to doubt the accuracy of provincial statistics and few to support them. That all of Qinghai's component areas show lower growth on paper than the province itself is the end result of such fuzzy demographics accounting¹³. Whatever the real population, Golog is an unpopulated area even by Tibetan standards, with a population density of 1.6 persons/km². Only Tsonub and Yushu are more sparsely inhabited.

In Machen County itself population density is higher than for Golog TAP, at 2.2 persons/km², due to the presence of the prefectural capital. Dawuzhen, one of the most unappealing examples of a Chinese-imposed town in a Tibetan area, is remarkably large considering its remoteness and topographic unfriendliness. The 1990 census gave Machen County's population as 30,718¹⁴, with 76% (23,350¹⁵) recorded as Tibetan and 20% (6,117¹⁶) as Chinese. As with the prefecture, population had barely moved by the end of 1994: 31,200¹⁷, an increase of less than 0.4% annually. For this to be true, Chinese population would have to be declining, just as authorities say it is in the TAR. Visual evidence in the county town would certainly not support such a contention, just as it doesn't in the TAR. If the Chinese residents of Golog, most of whom would live in the county town, had grown at Qinghai's rate, they would have numbered about 6,500 by 1994 - and would still not have included PLA, PAP, government workers on multi-year contracts or 'floating population'. This may be a more reasonable portrayal of Chinese residency. Only selective counting could produce a declining Chinese population.

¹⁰ *China Population Statistics Yearbook 1990*

¹¹ *Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1995*

¹² 1990 population was given as 4,456,946 in *China Population Statistics Yearbook 1990*; 1994 population was 4,740,000 according to the *Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1995*

¹³ see Table 6, p. 59

¹⁴ *China Population Statistics Yearbook 1990*

¹⁵ *Social and Economics Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1993*

¹⁶ *Tabulation on China's Nationality: 1990 Census Data*

¹⁷ *Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1995*

The immediate district of the county town had no connection with Chinese traders before 1950, but their presence has grown rapidly since. Chinese and Hui dominate Machen in terms of commerce and administration, although Tibetans may still compose over half the town population. By 1996, with the growth of commerce and service personnel even in far flung settlements like Machen, the Chinese numbers are surely higher than for 1990. Some Chinese also live outside the town, in mining camps or small settlements like Jungong 军功 on the Yellow River. Chinese numbers are, in any case, consistently understated. From observation it can be said that Hui are the second most numerous non-Chinese ethnic group in Machen, certainly living there in greater numbers than the official count of less than a thousand in 1990¹⁸. Outside main settlements and mining camps, the county population is overwhelmingly Tibetan.

Between 1952 and 1980, the main Chinese component in Machen was the PLA, responsible for laying the groundwork for consolidating Chinese administration and, at a later stage, development. Other Chinese cadres and workers built up the infrastructure of Machen town, worked in Machen's coal mines, and into the 1980's on state farms raising deer. According to the population investigation carried out by Communist work teams in Golog in 1956, Tibetans numbered around 10,600, almost certainly a conservative estimate but not deeply inaccurate¹⁹. Allowing for conservative counting, their growth rate is comparable to that of Tibetans throughout Qinghai Province.

Early Chinese immigration to Machen was therefore a government-controlled transfer of military and labor personnel. Though the intent was described as 'development', the real motive, if effect is an accurate barometer, was occupation and control. With post-1992 economic reforms, even a remote and unlovely town like Machen has been stimulated by commercial possibilities. Town population is reaching a size which constitutes a modest economic base. With reasonable transport connections through Tsoelho and onward to the populous Chinese and Hui districts of Xining and Haidong, increased immigration is assured.

Additional demographic details relevant to Machen can be found in Tables 12 and 23 [see pp. 175 and 1599] and Charts 52 and 52a [see pp. 2212 and 2213]

¹⁸ *Social and Economic Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1992*

¹⁹ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, pp. 63-65

iv. **Control and administrative apparatus**

Machen is a manufactured town, created to serve Chinese plans and policies. Control, administration and exploitation facilities constitute the town to an even greater degree than usual, as there was no organic settlement to offset the newly-imposed Chinese elements. The two generations of Chinese security enforcement, the pioneering PLA and its successor the PAP, occupy the largest combined compounds in the town. The expansive PLA Base remains, but the PLA's capital infrastructure and opening-up function is now completed, and the PAP has taken over civil control and maintenance of infrastructure. The PSB manages law enforcement facilities. Government units handle administration. The Party oversees everything. Structures within Machen unswervingly reflect this framework.

(1) **CCP**

Since Dawuzhen is such an unleavened Chinese installation, its prime control and administrative apparatus is well developed and prominent in the town. The huge Prefectural block, built recently and predictably in neo-imperial architectural mode, looms in the center of town along the eastern side of the main street, containing Communist Party, Government and NPC together. [see photo 49:5a, p. 2245] The Prefectural CPPCC offices lie further north in a separate compound, entered through a gate decorated rather charmingly with snow lions, a concession to the ethnic culture it is supposed to represent in politics.

The county-level premises are no less domineering. Located on the opposite side of the main street and further north, also newly-built in the Chinese neo-imperial idiom, the massive building has collected all county organs of political power under one roof; Communist Party, CCP Discipline Investigation Committee, CPPCC, Government and NPC.

To ensure a supply of reliable cadres, Machen also has a Prefectural Party School, a ponderous grey four-story building near the north end of town decorated with a hammer and sickle on one wall.

(2) **government**

Party, Government and official administrative and finance offices are the most prominent buildings in the town, duplicating the pattern of Chinese development in all capitals of TAP's. Prefectural and County Governments are housed with the CCP in the town's most conspicuous buildings, as listed above.

Administrative offices and infrastructural agencies are distributed throughout the town, and reflect how entirely Machen is the product of its Chinese creators. The County Construction Engineering Company and County Tax Offices share a new building of c.1990 construction. The Prefectural Tax and Finance Offices occupy large premises of the same era next door to Machen's main hotel, the Snowland Hotel, and the Commerce Office is just across the next intersection south. To support government capital construction and exploitation of resources the Agricultural Bank, Construction Bank and People's Bank of China have all built substantial premises. According to official Chinese sources, the Central Government has given Golog TAP a total of 1.14 billion RMB in financial subsidies and funds for construction since its founding in 1954²⁰. The components of claims such as this are rarely clearly itemized, allowing the Government to include costs such as maintaining military and security garrisons as part of its 'subsidies' to the region. Whatever the accuracy of the claim, much of centrally-sourced funding has been spent on creating Machen as a town in China's image.

Numerous transport and highway maintenance units, including a large petrol depot, exist to facilitate movement of personnel and materials between Machen and more mainstream Chinese centers.

(3) **PAP**

Considering that Golog has the smallest population among TAP's in Qinghai Province - only 127,900 people²¹ - armed forces have a heavy presence in Machen. But Gologs have been fierce and persistent resisters of Chinese control, in the past as well as since the Communist invasion, so the Chinese State must feel it still needs military means to ensure control here. The Prefectural PAP compound covers an extensive area along the south stretch of the main road before the town center. The entrance gate is guarded, sloganed, and not signed, and a large grassed area stretches from the gate and front wall back to the compound buildings. A prefectural-level Intermediate PAP Brigade compound stands in front of the PSB Detention Center and opposite the Prefectural

²⁰ SWB FE/2073 G/7 13 Aug 1994 from *Xinhua*, Beijing, in English, 5/8/94

²¹ *China Population Statistics Yearbook 1990*; statistics adjusted to 1994 level at a growth rate of 1.6%/annum

PSB in the center of town, the PAP brigade's function being to guard the prison. PAP sentries guard their compound gate on the main street.

(4) **PSB**

The Prefectural PSB compound stands at the center of town with its associated facilities nearby. The PSB Detention Center is across the main street behind the Intermediate PAP Brigade. Next door is the Prefectural Intermediate Court and courthouse, while the Procuratorate compound is located off a small road running east off the main street. The local Municipal Police Station is located through a small gate on the north side of the Bus Station in the main street.

(5) **known imprisonment and detention facilities**

A substantial jail, signed as the Golog Prefectural PSB Detention Center, stands on the western edge of town close to the Prefectural PSB. An Intermediate PAP Brigade has been assigned to guard it. [see photo 49:12a, p. 2247]

Locals indicated that forced labor was used in some of the town's compounds. Despite the vigorousness of those suggestions, the research team is unable to confirm that information. Though it is highly likely that a prefectural prison which functions as a labor camp is near Machen, none was seen.

(6) **PLA**

The PLA have been major players in securing China's grip on Golog. The PLA had the manpower, arms, vehicles, funds, and political backing necessary to impose Chinese control and development even in a harsh environment with a hostile population. At least until the end of the 1950's, all provincial and prefectural Communist Party secretaries in Qinghai were concurrently PLA political commissars²². PLA participation may also have extended to the county level, as recommended by Peng Dehuai during his visit to Qinghai in autumn

²² June Teufel Dreyer, "Ch'inghai", p. 30

1958²³. In any case an extremely close relationship existed between Party, Army and Government in Amdo's TAP's. The PLA built roads, opened mines, constructed bridges and set up state farms, including the Army Pasture Land (Ch. jun muchang 军牧场) thirty kilometers southeast of Dawuzhen.

The PLA still maintain a very large base in Machen, stretching over an extensive area in the town's southern sector on the east side of the main road. The Base is sub-divided into a number of sectors which may no longer see the level of activity of earlier days. A long red building for PLA administrative headquarters stands at the center-north of the base, probably dating from the 1980's. Sections of the base nearer its southern end have sentry boxes for guard duty, though neither purpose nor level of activity were determined.

v. **Economy**

The *Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1995* provides a prefectural summary of production statistics for Golog and Yushu TAP but no county-level breakdown. The distribution of economic activity throughout the prefecture is thus obscured.

Golog's overall production is, at least according to official prefectural statistics, small. Only Yushu's numbers are lower, and they are lower in primary, secondary and tertiary production. Both prefectures are areas where herding accounts for most of the recorded economy. Primary production made up 166.2 million Yuan, or 56%, of Golog's 295.7 million Y GDP in 1994.²⁴ Per capita GDP in Golog was strikingly higher than in Yushu: 2,426 Yuan compared to 977 Y, or 2.5 times higher²⁵. But the spread in rural per capita net incomes (1992) was not quite so dramatic with Yushu's pastoralists earning 750 Yuan and Golog's 462 Y²⁶, 1.76 times as much. Golog's nomads are substantially better off than those in Yushu, but the government is the real winner, with a much larger share of its GDP staying out of the pockets of locals compared to Yushu. Official sources report that Golog has

²³ June Teufel Dreyer, "Ch'inghai", p. 30

²⁴ *Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1995*

²⁵ *Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1995*

²⁶ *China Nationalities Economy 1993*

substantial gold reserves²⁷, but exploitation of this valuable mineral resource is probably a provincial responsibility and so proceeds do not appear in prefectural statistics. Secondary industrial output for the prefecture (24.6 million Y in 1994²⁸) is curiously low, so much so that it could not account for the handful of factories in Machen's capital town. It may be that the plants are operated as provincial enterprises, thus removing their productivity (and profits) from prefectural accounts. Tertiary sector productivity, often dominated by the administrative, educational, medical, financial, transport and communications activities of local governments totalled 104.9 million Y in 1994, an amount low in comparison with other TAP's, but higher than Yushu. Machen, as the capital county, plays the chief role in areas of tertiary production.

(1) **agriculture**

Valleys in Machen County are too high for agriculture, although barley and potatoes are grown by Tibetan farmers in some pockets of arable land, especially along the Yellow River in the north of the county. Theirs is subsistence-level farming and their per capita net income undoubtedly falls below the 703 RMB claimed for Golog's rural population in 1994²⁹. Farm produce consumed in the town of Machen is trucked in from Chinese agricultural areas far to the north, including Xining.

(2) **pastoralism**

Nomadic pastoralism has been the only form of livelihood in Golog since human habitation was first known here, except in a few of the lower river valleys. Most of Machen County is grassland at an elevation of 3700 - 4200 metres. The nomads of Golog and western Yushu are probably the freest of any outside parts of the TAR to pursue their traditional way of life without stifling Chinese interference. In common with the nomads of Ngari and Nagchu in the TAR, they inhabit a landscape so extreme that the Chinese have apparently not set a high priority on curbing them to any great extent. In a region as harsh and challenging to humans as Golog, it is difficult to imagine people other than Tibetan nomads managing to survive unless supported in modern settlements like Machen or the other outposts built since subsumption by China. Tibetan-style pastoralism

²⁷ *China Nationalities Economy 1993*, essay on Golog TAP, p. 109

²⁸ *Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1995*

²⁹ SWB FE/2073 G/7 13 Aug 1994 from *Xinhua*, Beijing, in English, 5/8/94

therefore remains the primary form of production in Golog, and has resisted attempts to revise its organization and practise more successfully than most other animal husbandry areas of Amdo.

Collectivization was incredibly difficult to enforce in Golog, and was indeed delayed for some years after the Communist occupation. The Tibetans of Golog always fiercely resisted attempts by the Chinese to control them. Except in the immediate vicinity of Machen and perhaps at the Army Pasture Land, little grassland in Machen has been fenced, and relatively few nomads have been forced to settle in fixed abodes, as is the favored Chinese policy.

Marketing of their produce has been well organized into the Chinese consumer system, however. The large and gloomy Golog Prefecture Meat Processing Factory lies at the northern end of Machen. The Factory was built between 1979 and 1982, when the Provincial authorities decided to try to inject new impetus into the moribund economy following decades of recurrent natural disasters and destructive political campaigns and policies. The Qinghai Provincial Planning Committee and other government bodies allocated nearly 32 million RMB for the establishment of meat processing facilities in the province's pastoral areas, including Machen³⁰, so that meat products could be more easily transported to Chinese markets. An abattoir is attached, and on the other side of the road is another plant for animal byproducts processing. A leather factory and milk products factory also process products supplied by Golog pastoralists. Traditionally, dairy products have had little importance for Chinese, but as more modern, high-protein diets become commonplace, milk products have become popular. Tibetan areas are foremost as potential suppliers. Demand is rising sharply.

Chinese markets, growing in size and demand for meat, are fully capable of absorbing the produce of Amdo's grasslands. Tibetan pastoralists in Golog are still maintaining their traditional way of life to a great extent. Within that context they are enjoying a high economic level, raising large herds and earning sufficient cash to purchase items such as expensive brocades for traditional clothing and motorcycles to supplement their ponies. However, they do not reap the benefits of the free market trading open to most products. Livestock prices are effectively fixed at below-market levels by the government, as is the case with staple grains. Primary livestock sales are thoroughly dominated by local government enterprises such as abattoirs. A small amount of localized livestock trading is done privately but the current economic environment clearly places the government in charge of the value of pastoralists' herds.

³⁰ *Qinghaisheng zhi, shangye zhi (Annals of Qinghai: Commerce)*, p. 254

A PLA establishment, the Army Pasture Land 军牧场, lies about thirty kilometers southwest of Dawuzhen in the valley of a tributary of the Dawu River. It was raising sheep c.1990, which inevitably involves fencing of pasture and more intensive grazing, practises detrimental to native pastoralists in the area.

Deer farms have been established in at least two places in Machen County, at Lower Dawu 下大武 in the extreme northwestern tip of the county, and north of Dongxieyou 东倾沟, about fifty kilometers northwest of Dawuzhen. These are most likely State enterprises, supplying the valuable medicinal products of musk and deer antlers.

(3) **natural resources exploitation**

Apart from the primary produce of its pastoral sector, Machen contains other natural resources exploited by the State. Along its northern edge are rich forest resources, and a variety of valuable medicinal herbs grow in its forest and grassland areas. Its mineral deposits have been of great interest to the Chinese since the earliest years of their occupation. Rare wildlife such as the snow leopard, brown bear, musk deer, blue sheep and argali sheep inhabit the grasslands and forests of Golog, protected by law but threatened by destruction of their habitat and illegal hunting.

The forests growing along the Yellow River which form the northern boundary of Machen County are virgin growth³¹, and so exceptionally valuable. Machen and Pema Counties together provide the greatest virgin forest resources in Qinghai Province³². Lumber processing was not observed in Dawuzhen, rare in a TAP capital, so logs must be transported northwards or west to join the Xining-Yushu highway. Medicinal plants such as caterpillar fungus, vetch root and snow lotus bring high prices on the Chinese market³³.

Coal was the main mineral resource exploited in Machen when the Chinese began their domination of the region during the 1950's. At least two coal mines operate just south of Dawuzhen, the Shixia 石峡煤矿 and Yematan 野马滩煤矿 Mines. The Yematan Coal Mine is very close to the Army Pasture Land, and the two facilities may

³¹ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 8

³² *China Nationalities Economy 1993*, essay on Golog TAP, p. 109

³³ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 8

be connected. The De'erni Copper and Cobalt Mine 德尔尼铜钴矿 in Machen County also produces a variety of minerals including sulphur, copper, gold and silver, as well as many subsidiary minerals³⁴. The mine, which began operations in 1989, has estimated mineral reserves valued at 6.8 billion RMB³⁵. China is keen to find and exploit rarer mineral deposits under its own administration so that it will not have to import them. This becomes an imperative of increasing importance as China's industrialization and technological development progresses.

(4) **industrial**

Limited industries have been developed in Machen to take advantage of the county's natural and pastoral resources. Pastoral industry plants in Dawuzhen include the Leather Factory, Meat Processing Factory, Milk Products Factory, abattoir, and animal byproducts processing. A large electric power station is located on the western side of the town and presumably supplies the power for these factories and the town. It looks antiquated and almost derelict and may be a remnant of the early phases of development.

Tibetans as well as Chinese must man these factories and so receive wage-paying employment from Machen's industry. Products, however, are destined for Chinese markets. Qinghai Province has been exporting meat products to other parts of China since 1966, and especially since the late 1970's increasing attention has been paid to exploitation of pastoralism in Tibetan areas. From 1981 a succession of commercially managed meat processing plants went into operation in all pastoral areas³⁶. Tibetan pastoralists may sell their produce to these installations at fixed prices, but they control neither the factories nor the markets. Their share of the profits derived from the pastoral industry is therefore far less significant than the profits that accrue to the State.

(5) **commercial and retail activity**

Trading networks existed within Golog and between Golog and other regions prior to the Chinese invasion, but fixed commercial premises were rare. In 1950, or shortly afterwards, there may have been as few as 15 private

³⁴ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 8

³⁵ *Tibet - A Land of Snows*, p. 12

³⁶ *Qinghaisheng zhi, shangye zhi (Annals of Qinghai: Commerce)* p. 255

commercial businesses operating in Golog³⁷. Greater private commercial development, though still on a small scale, began in Golog during the 1980's as economic reforms were adopted throughout China. According to official sources, 245 private businesses dealing in commercial goods, foodstuffs and drinks were operating in Golog TAP during 1984, the smallest number of any prefecture in Qinghai³⁸. In 1984 the Golog and Yushu Prefectural Governments decided to encourage commercial and industrial enterprises and businessmen from Qinghai and other Chinese provinces to come to Golog and Yushu to do business. Preferential policies such as tax exemptions were offered, and private businessmen, companies and itinerant tradesmen began to arrive from various parts of China in larger numbers than ever before in the past³⁹.

Commerce has certainly grown in Golog, and particularly in Dawuzhen, since then. It is overwhelmingly in Chinese and Hui hands. An official source claimed that a network of commerce including 8 State-owned department stores, 10 markets and about 1,000 privately-owned shops existed in Golog in 1994⁴⁰, and numbers of private shops would have risen significantly since then. The largest proportion of them must be in Machen, by far the biggest settlement in the prefecture. The Hui probably run the largest share of shops in Machen, followed by the Chinese and then the Tibetans. The ubiquitous State-owned Nationalities Trade Company stands in the main street offering the usual Chinese manufactures. Chinese tailors occupy a stretch of shops in the main street turning out semi-traditional Tibetan clothing in an array of fabrics - brocade, manufactured woollen cloth and synthetics, and synthetic sheepskin [see photo 44:33a, p. 2249]. Though the goods appear to be popular with visiting Tibetan nomads, linkage between lower cost and lower quality makes them a source of complaint as well. Other Tibetans are unhappy to see items such as Tibetan traditional clothing become part of the Chinese manufacturing economy.

As commercial goods must be trucked in from Chinese and Hui areas further north, transportation is largely a non-Tibetan enterprise in this area. While commerce has not reached the level of development in other TAP capitals, Machen's population growth will assure continued commercial growth, and further integrate Machen into the Chinese economic system.

³⁷ *Qinghaisheng zhi, shangye zhi (Annals of Qinghai: Commerce)*, p. 80

³⁸ *Qinghaisheng zhi, shangye zhi (Annals of Qinghai: Commerce)*, p. 53

³⁹ *Qinghaisheng zhi, shangye zhi (Annals of Qinghai: Commerce)*, p. 82

⁴⁰ SWB FE/2073 G/7 13 Aug 1994 from *Xinhua*, Beijing, in English, 5/8/94

vi. **Educational and medical facilities**

Most of the educational facilities in Dawuzhen provide the “nationalities” stream. The No.2 Nationalities Primary School, Tibetan Middle School and Prefectural Nationalities Normal School all offer a Tibetan language component to primary, secondary and tertiary-level students. A No.1 Primary School, not identified, probably offers the regular Chinese education stream, in a town with a sizable Chinese and Hui population. The Tibetan Middle School and Nationalities Normal School buildings have been painted in red and yellow stripes as a misguided interpretation of “nationalities characteristics”, but in a town as drab as Machen the gesture adds a certain comic relief.

Elsewhere in Machen County the state of educational facilities is likely to be primitive. The official position in 1994, on the 40th Anniversary of the founding of Golog TAP, was that “networks of education, medical care and entertainment facilities have taken shape.”⁴¹ Providing such facilities for a sparse, scattered population in a vast and climatically severe region like Golog involves immense difficulties for any administration. The actual standard of education in Machen’s three “nationalities” stream schools could not be ascertained by the researchers, and the existence of the buildings may be another instance of facade without substance. However, the Tibetan children in this remote region who do attend the schools may derive the benefit of a rudimentary education, including the chance to achieve basic literacy in their own language before moving on to Chinese.

Medical facilities, while in place at a basic level, appear to lag behind educational facilities in Machen and well behind facilities seen in other TAP capitals. The town has a hospital, a birth control clinic (Women’s and Children’s Health Protection Station), and a Tibetan Medicine Hospital. The first two are standard units in a town the size of Machen. Their dreary condition identifies them as installations of at least a decade ago, and a probable low level of service. The prefectural-level Tibetan Medicine Hospital, presumably Golog’s main medical facility for Tibetans, has been constructed in a mock-Tibetan mode in conformity with the pattern for such facilities in TAP’s [see photo 44:32a, p. 2251]. It is the smallest such facility seen in any TAP capital. Although some Tibetans apparently seeking care were seen at main door, the hospital itself evinced almost no outward sign of activity and was already in shoddy condition.

⁴¹ SWB FE/2073 G/7 13 Aug 1994 from *Xinhua*, Beijing, in English, 5/8/94

A Hygiene and Animal Health compound occupies a large area along the western side of the main street, as might be expected in such a heavily pastoral region. It looks dismal and of limited activity. Veterinary stations were supposedly set up in pastoral areas under Qinghai Province in the earliest years of the Chinese occupation⁴², but Tibetan herders resisted all Chinese attempts to control them and the early veterinary stations could not have flourished. The compound in Machen appears to date from the late 1970's, when the stagnation that had affected Qinghai Province's pastoral regions began to lift following the adoption of more energetic and rational policies.

Machen also has a Prefectural Cadres' Retirement Center.

vii. Culture

Inside Machen town, only the scantiest attention has been paid to the culture of the people that the capital of the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture is supposed to represent. Tibetan cultural sites are non-existent except for a very small, probably newly-built temple on the eastern outskirts of the town. A few public buildings have been decorated with slight Tibetan flourishes, but at an even cruder level than in other TAP's. Except for a few herders' dwellings just beyond the town fringes, there is no traditional housing in Machen. As most Gologs traditionally live in tents and do not develop fixed neighborhoods, this is not surprising. The Chinese have therefore constructed a town entirely of their design: Machen's dilapidation and grimness is their responsibility.

Chinese-style cultural installations include the Masses Art Gallery, the cinema, the Sports Stadium and the Culture Hall. The new Masses Art Gallery incorporates some "nationalities characteristics" into the building structure but not into its function or contents. The place showed no sign of function other than as a karaoke, and magazine and video shop. The small, innocuous Cultural Palace north of the County Government is noteworthy only in its irrelevance to "culture" in any form. Some karaokes, popular among both Chinese and Tibetan residents, occupy premises in the main street, but culture or entertainment beyond these is difficult to find in Machen. The prevalence of such Chinese-style entertainment shops seemed higher than in most other TAP capitals.

⁴² June Teufel Dreyer, "Ch'inghai", p. 8

No bookshop, including a standard State-owned Xinhua Bookshop, was seen in Machen. If there really is no Xinhua Bookshop, the Tibetans of this TAP capital have not been provided with public access to any books in their own language.

Tibetan residents of Machen have to a large extent adopted modern dress. Tibetan nomads, who live on the cold, windswept Golog grasslands, retain their traditional dress. They do, however, patronize the Chinese tailors in Machen who make chubas out of non-traditional materials in many cases [see photo 44:33a, p. 2249]. Tibetans complain, accurately, about the low quality of these garments, but are prepared to buy them because of their relatively low cost and the ease of a quick commercial purchase while visiting town.

viii. **Religion**

Machen contains only one religious facility within the town site, a small Tibetan temple that stands on the eastern edge of the town. It appears to be newly built and little more than a shrine. The vicinity of Machen town was not an important religious site before the Chinese occupation and subsequent construction of the town. In 1958 Machen County had six gönpas housing 1,568 monks. All were closed in the religious persecution of 1958, except Ragya Gönpa རྒྱུ་དགོན་དགའ་ལྷན་བཀྲ་ཤིས་རྒྱུང་གནས། which enjoyed a brief life between 1962 and its

closure during the Cultural Revolution⁴³. Ragya Gönpa was founded in 1769 on the orders of the 7th Dalai Lama and had almost 900 resident monks in 1958. In c.1990 there were officially 484⁴⁴.

Machen's other gönpas are Nyingma establishments, originating from tent gönpas set up in the early years of the 20th Century among the nomads of the area. In 1958 about 670 monks were attached to these gönpas, all of which were closed down. After the religious reforms of 1978, monk numbers had risen to around 400 in c.1990 according to sources published in Chinese⁴⁵.

⁴³ *Bright Mirror of Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Qinghai*, p. 20

⁴⁴ *Bright Mirror of Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Qinghai*, p. 149-150

⁴⁵ *Bright Mirror of Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Qinghai*, pp. 293-295

Monks are not prominent on the streets of Machen. The pattern of town-building which had been prevalent in many Tibetan areas, in which a Tibetan town whose economy was based primarily on farming grew up around a large, fixed monastery, did not occur in Golog. Even if monasteries fixed their locations, pastoralists did not. Towns of any description were relatively alien to Golog. When the Chinese began installing their own during recent decades, they included no provision for Tibetan religion.

ix. **History**

(1) **history of ethnic presence and changes**

Tibetans first arrived in Golog early in the 7th Century, when the armies of King Songtsan Gampo spread from Central Tibet towards the east and north across the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. At this time Tsongön composed the greater part of the Tuyuhun Empire, while tribal confederations of Qiang and Tanguts occupied the regions further south, including much of Kanlho, Kham and Golog. All these people had clashed with the Chinese along the northern and eastern edges of the Amdo region whenever the Chinese attempted to expand westward. The Tanguts, whose territory centered on Golog, were nomads who raised yaks, horses, sheep and camels on the pastures of Golog, northern Ngawa and parts of Kanlho⁴⁶, and were closest to the advancing Tibetans. In 631 they even made an alliance with the Tang who had established a garrison at Songzhou (Tib: Zungchu) on their southwestern border⁴⁷, although they were vassals under the Tuyuhun Empire at this time. The Tibetans nevertheless rode through the Tangut territory and reached Songzhou in 638, threatening the Chinese and demanding a Chinese princess as a bride for their King. Princess Wencheng, who was selected to marry King Srongtsan Gampo, passed through Golog on her way to Lhasa in 641.

Tibetan power in the region increased, and by 667 they had defeated the Tanguts of Golog. Golog thereafter came under the imperial administration of the military government of Machu (Madröm)⁴⁸. Non-Tibetan tribes within the boundaries of the Empire were gradually absorbed by the Tibetans, so that few traces of their separate

⁴⁶ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 12

⁴⁷ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 13

⁴⁸ Geza Uray, "Khrom", p. 313

ethnic identities remained other than some place-names⁴⁹ and a presence within regional folk sagas⁵⁰. When the Tibetan Empire collapsed during the 9th Century, officials of the Machu administration remained in ruling positions in Golog until the ascendancy of the Mongols in the 13th Century, when all Tibetan rulers were granted high-level titles under Mongol overlordship. Present-day Golog tribes were known to be living in the Pema district at this time⁵¹, from where they gradually spread out to wider areas. Golog's oldest monastery, the Jonang establishment of Akyonggya Gönpa Dongag Shedrubling ཨ་ཡོང་གྲུ་དགོན་པ་མདོ་སྤག་པ་ཉན་སྐྱབ་གླིང་། dates from

this period⁵². From some time around 1400, Golog formed part of the kingdom of Ling⁵³, remnants of whose forts are still to be found in Machen and Darlag, but after the mid-17th Century the region appears to have reverted to the control of independent chieftains.

Chinese records first mentioned the name “Golog” during the reign of the Qing Emperor Kangxi (r. 1662-1722)⁵⁴, when Chinese forces had gone into Golog to try to suppress the Gologs’ plundering of the Sino-Tibetan border regions⁵⁵. The Golog chieftains had dealings with both the Qing and Lhasa governments during the 17th to 19th Centuries, but remained autonomous. Tibetan Buddhism flourished, however. Over fifty monasteries were built in Golog before 1900, with connections with other religious institutions in Lhasa, Kham and Amdo. Golog’s historical importance as a thoroughfare for traffic from Kanlho and Ngawa into Central Tibet increased as trading, cultural and religious networks built up during the 19th Century.

Serious interference into the Golog region came not from the Chinese but the Hui warlord Ma clan of Qinghai, who had attained *de facto* power in the eastern part of the Province since the early days of the Chinese Republic. In 1917 the warlord Ma Qi invaded Sangchu and secured the submission of the Tibetans on the Kanlho border. The Gologs opposed his armies however, and attacked the armed gold-prospecting expeditions he sent to Amnye

⁴⁹ *Anduo zangzu shilüe (Brief History of the Tibetans of Amdo)*, p. 17

⁵⁰ R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, p. 30

⁵¹ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 42

⁵² *Bright Mirror of Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Qinghai*, p.387

⁵³ R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, p. 79

⁵⁴ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 15

⁵⁵ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, pp. 15-16

Machen in 1920. In retaliation Ma Qi launched 2,000 heavily-armed troops against Golog, killing many Tibetans, plundering their herds and forcing their leader to flee to Kham. As Golog had been under the influence of Lhasa since the mid-19th Century, the Golog leader sought assistance from the Lhasa government's officials in Chamdo, but undeterred the new warlord Ma Bufang sent further armies into Golog. This time hundreds more Tibetans were killed and a garrisoned administrative post was set up by Ma Bufang in a monastery, Palyül Darthang Dongag Shedrubling དཔལ་ལྷུང་དར་བུ་མཆོད་སྤྱུགས་བཞུགས་སྡོད་, in Chigdril. Ma's concern in Golog at this time

was to build a strategic defense line against the Red Army who were active in Northwest China, to exploit Golog's gold and pastoral resources, and control trade and commerce in southern Amdo and adjoining regions. In 1938 the Gologs again tried to expel Ma Bufang, destroying his garrison at Palyül Darthang Dongag Shedrubling. The 2,000-strong cavalry sent by Ma to punish the Gologs razed five monasteries and killed and injured over 2,000 local people. Many Gologs fled to Ngawa to escape the oppression of Ma's soldiers⁵⁶.

By 1942 Ma Bufang was increasingly collaborating with the Guomindang to fight the Communists. In that year a Guomindang official was allowed into Golog, still under Ma's control, to make a local investigation which counted 13,100 households (about 65,000 people) in the region⁵⁷. This figure accords with population counts made by the Communists in 1956, and may be taken as a fairly accurate estimate of the Tibetan population in Golog prior to the Chinese occupation. When the Communists invaded Golog and began to impose alien control, historically unprecedented numbers of Chinese entered the region. Thousands of soldiers, cadres and workers were involved in China's early phase of entrenchment in Golog. With the framework for Chinese settlements such as Machen in place and an infrastructure of roads, electric power and telecommunications constructed, the stage was set for increased exploitation of Golog's resources. After 1984 immigration for this purpose was specifically encouraged by the Golog and Yushu Prefectural Governments⁵⁸. By official statistics, 12% of Golog TAP's population is now non-Tibetan⁵⁹. The non-Tibetan - Chinese and Hui - population of Machen County is 25% of the total⁶⁰. These figures do not include military personnel or immigrants without permanent residence status.

⁵⁶ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, pp. 20-22

⁵⁷ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 19

⁵⁸ *Qinghaisheng zhi, shangye zhi (Annals of Qinghai: Commerce)*, p. 82

⁵⁹ *Social and Economic Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1992*

⁶⁰ *China Population Statistics Yearbook 1990*

Less than a hundred Chinese and Hui may have been living in Golog prior to the Chinese invasion⁶¹. Golog Tibetans now have less control over their territory than at any time in the past thousand years.

(2) history of political control

During the Tibetan Empire, Golog was administered under the Machu military governorship⁶², with officials appointed by the court in Lhasa. Once the Empire disintegrated, powerful officials of the former imperial administration became independent local rulers, facilitating the development of Tibetan culture and religion in these outlying domains. By the time the Mongols invaded the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau in the 13th Century, Golog and the other regions of Amdo and Kham had been firmly Tibetan in control and culture for six hundred years.

As was their practise with autonomous rulers in the outlying regions of their empire, the Mongols bestowed prestigious titles on the Tibetan chieftains. Tibetans of Golog and the rest of Amdo fell under the section of the Mongol administration designated Tibetan Region Pacification Office Chief Military Commands of Hezhou and Western Sichuan⁶³ in the dynastic records. The Mongols in fact exercised slight, if any administrative functions over them, since the Gologs were nomads and records show that the Mongols collected taxes only from agricultural households in their Central Tibet administration⁶⁴. By the reign of the last Mongol Emperor of China, Central Tibet too had reverted to *de facto* independence⁶⁵. Part of Golog fell within the Tibetan kingdom of Ling from at least 1400⁶⁶ and for perhaps two centuries thereafter until the expansion of the kingdom of Dege⁶⁷. The Ming Dynasty, who succeeded the Mongols in China in 1368, had no influence or political presence in Golog, although there was a period of intervention from the Qosot Mongols during the 16th Century⁶⁸.

⁶¹ *Qinghaisheng zhi, shangye zhi (Annals of Qinghai: Commerce)*, p. 80

⁶² Geza Uray, "Khrom", p. 313

⁶³ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 14

⁶⁴ Luciano Petech, "The Mongol Census in China," p. 234

⁶⁵ Luciano Petech, "The Mongol Census in China," p. 236

⁶⁶ R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, p. 79

⁶⁷ R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, p. 83

⁶⁸ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 15

The reign of the 5th Dalai Lama saw the expansion of Gelugpa and Central Tibetan influence in the peripheral Tibetan regions, including Golog. The 5th Dalai Lama sent representatives to Golog and Kham after 1676⁶⁹, and at least two Gelugpa gñepas were built in Golog. Control of the Gologs nevertheless proved difficult for anyone who tried. Their raiding and plundering were so troublesome to the Chinese border regions that soldiers were sent into Golog in 1721 to try to subdue them, a critical move as the Qing Dynasty was concurrently intervening in affairs in Lhasa⁷⁰. The Gologs continued to raid into the Chinese colonies set up in Chuchen (Jinchuan) during the reign of Emperor Qianlong (1736-1796)⁷¹. Around 1808 two Golog chieftains rebelled against Lhasa's interference in their quarrels with local Mongol tribes, and troops sent by the Tibetan Government spent two years in Golog trying to subdue them⁷². In 1814, in return for help against Mongol raiders in Yushu, the Qing rewarded a Golog chieftain with an official seal of office⁷³. In the 1860's, however, the Lhasa Government made renewed efforts to strengthen its control in Golog, Yushu and Kham. By this time Qing imperial influence had greatly weakened, and was soon further sapped by the Moslem Rebellion that raged for over ten years in the northwestern segment of their empire as well as Yunnan Province.

In the last years of the Qing Dynasty the Chinese warlord Zhao Erfeng established direct Chinese administration over some of the Tibetan principalities in Kham, and may have attempted to intervene in Golog also⁷⁴ if he had not been killed by revolutionaries just after the founding of the Chinese Republic. But the powerful Hui warlord clan, the Ma, who had gained authority over part of northern Amdo, also wished to extend their control to Yushu⁷⁵ and the resource-rich Golog area. Their troops and the Gologs were engaged in several bitter conflicts over the next two decades. When Ma Qi sent soldiers to mine gold in the Amnye Machin Mountains in 1920 the Gologs attacked his caravans, killing almost all the soldiers and Ma's official appointed to collect taxes in Yushu. Ma's reaction was swift and harsh, and in 1921 the Golog resistance was crushed. Golog chiefs then made

⁶⁹ Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History*, p. 122

⁷⁰ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, pp. 15-16

⁷¹ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, pp. 17

⁷² *Cambridge History of China*, vol.10 pt. I, p. 94

⁷³ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 17

⁷⁴ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 18

⁷⁵ Eric Teichman, *Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet*, p. 98

political alliances with both the Lhasa Government and other Tibetan leaders in Kanlho⁷⁶, but Ma Qi's successor and clansman Ma Bufang dispatched troops into Golog again in 1933. In 1935 Ma Bufang's army set up a garrisoned administrative office at the Tibetan Buddhist monastery, Palyül Darthang Dongag Shedrubling in Chigdril, hoping to defend the area against penetration by the Red Army and commandeer trade and commerce in the region. After a group of Golog tribes destroyed the garrison he had set up at the Tibetan monastery in 1938, Ma sent a force of 2,000 cavalry to exact a savage revenge. Troubles and interests elsewhere diverted his attention from Golog afterwards, so that by the time Ma and the Guomindang had been defeated in Xining by the Communists in 1949, the Golog tribes had recovered their positions.

Faced with the Communist occupation of Xining and the Tibetan areas to the north in September 1949, the Gologs again defended their territory against new invaders for over two years. Only a major campaign launched against them in 1952 overcame their resistance⁷⁷. In July the Golog Work Group of the Northwest Military Government Committee, consisting of several hundred soldiers and cadres, left Xining and arrived in Golog in August. The Golog TAR was formally founded on 4 August 1954, though demoted to the status of a TAP in 1955⁷⁸. As Chinese control procedures broadened, Tibetan areas experiencing the "democratic reforms" and increased Chinese immigration that Chinese control brought became increasingly restive. The motorable road connecting Xining with Yushu, which passed through Golog, had already been completed, enabling increased penetration of Chinese personnel and supplies. Opposition to the Chinese presence had been particularly strident in Golog from the beginning, and broke into open revolt in 1958. Extreme repression followed, including increased immigration, collectivization and the closing of virtually all Tibetan monasteries in Amdo and Kham. The two counties of Matö and Machen, added to Golog TAP in 1958, must have been intended to increase points of Chinese control.

By 1996 the devastation suffered in pastoral areas like Golog after years of Chinese control has demonstrably lessened. However, Chinese control and management of pastoralists' resources has increased. Chinese and Hui immigration has increased. Golog, traditionally one of the most independent-minded regions of Tibet, keeps intensified sinicization at bay because landscape and climate are so unattractive to Chinese settlement, and because the nomads still strive to maintain their traditional lifestyle to a greater extent than most other Tibetans.

⁷⁶ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 21

⁷⁷ June Teufel Dreyer, "Ch'inghai", p.7

⁷⁸ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 22

But the pattern of Chinese colonial development in Golog, and its aims, are the same as in other Tibetan areas.

x. **Special emphasis, problems, other factors unique to this site**

Golog has been culturally Tibetan for over a thousand years, inhabited exclusively by people leading a nomadic pastoral lifestyle. The only fixed settlements were a small number of monastic sites, or dwellings belonging to herders and the small communities of farmers who cultivated riverine pockets. Historically no Chinese officials resided there in permanent administrative offices or garrisons. The Hui Ma clan's invasion and seizure of Palyül Darthang Dongag Shedrubling during the 1930's for the purpose of bringing Golog into their Qinghai administration represents the first and only successful attempt by non-Tibetans to govern Golog with on-site officials. The Communist Chinese invasion was the next successful attempt.

Until the 20th Century then, Golog's remoteness, climatic severity, and the wildness of its people protected it from outside domination. With modern communications and Chinese determination, this is no longer the case. The prefectural capital Machen resembles all other such Chinese-authored installations. It has been constructed to facilitate Chinese settlement, commerce and resource extraction. The model works, as the growth of Chinese towns throughout Tibetan areas shows. Compared to more accessible and climatically mild locations like Chabcha or Regong, Machen is less attractive to Chinese migrants, and is unlikely to spur equally intensive Chinese population growth. However, compared to the complete absence of Chinese settlement within Golog in the past, Machen and the county towns of Golog represent totally new developments. They are the entirely artificial creations of a program to concretize the area within a Chinese mould. Pastoralism, as practised by the Tibetans there, remains the basis of Golog's economy. Market structure in Golog has been designed by the Chinese State to encourage development of production while appropriating a disproportionate share of the benefits for China. The Tibetans of Golog, despite their relative success at retaining a traditional way of life, have had that way of life forcibly subordinated to an external control mechanism. Even the natural protections afforded by Golog's environment have not shielded them from that.

xi. **Summary comment**

More inaccessible and more difficult to subdue than anywhere else, Golog was the last of the Tibetan areas in Amdo to be occupied by the Chinese. A Chinese infrastructure, which exhibits many colonial attributes, is now firmly in place and operating efficiently. Chinese migrants and manufactures come into the area, and Tibetan products and resources go out. But the dismal artificiality of the prefectural capital, Machen, asserts the alien nature of that infrastructure. Machen and the other Golog county towns were built to achieve control and integration, not to promote the region's autonomy.

Sites tagged on photographic panoramas not accompanying text report

Panorama labels:

Machen/Maqin

(main panorama, from E)

frames 49:0a-11a, A3

Abattoir
Agricultural Bank
animal byproducts processing
Bus Station
CCP Discipline Inspection Comm.
Cinema
Commerce Office
Construction Bank
County Communist Party
County Construction & Engineering Co.
County CPPCC
County Government
County NPC
County Offices
County Tax Offices
Culture Hall
Electrical Power Station
Highway Offices, Vehicle Insp.
Hospital
Hygiene, Animal Health Offices
Leather Factory
Market
Martyrs' Memorial
Masses' Art Gallery
Milk Products Factory
Municipal Police Station
Nationalities Normal School
Nationalities Trade Co.

PAP Intermediate Brigade
People's Bank
Post Office
Prefectural Cadres' Retirement Centre
Prefectural Communist Party
Prefectural Communist Party School
Prefectural CPPCC
Prefectural Government
Prefectural Intermediate Court
Prefectural Meat Processing Factory
Prefectural NPC
Prefectural PLA Base
Prefectural PLA Headquarters
Prefectural Prison
Prefectural Procuratorate
Prefectural PSB
Prefectural PSB Detention Centre
Prefectural Tax & Finance Offices
Provincial Highway Offices
Snow Mountains Hotel
Sports Stadium
Tibetan Medicine Hospital
Tibetan Temple
to Gade, Darlag, Pema
to Xining
Women's & Children's Health Protection Station

AREA OBSCURED BY RIDGE:

Water Supply Company*
Tibetan Language Middle Sch*
Prefectural PAP [large base]*
Petrol Company*
No.2 Nationalities Primary Sch*
Municipal Highway Office*



roll/neg: 49:5a

subject: section of town center with Government, Party, etc.

location: Machen མཆོད་ཆེན།, capital of Golog མགོ་ལོག་ Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongöñ མཚོ་སྔོན།

[Ch: Maqin 玛沁, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: Though all of Golog TAP's administrative seats suffer aesthetic constraints imposed by high elevation and harsh climate, Machen comes closest to being an eyesore. The entire town is ranged along one lengthy street. At the center of this frame is the largest and most important building, the combined offices of the Prefectural Government, Communist Party, NPC and CCP Discipline Inspection Committee. The Prefectural Tax and Finance Office is across the street and to the left.

(Viewed from distant east.)

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<u>roll/neg:</u>	49:12a
<u>subject:</u>	Prefectural PSB Detention Center
<u>location:</u>	Machen མཆོད་ཆེན།, capital of Golog མགོ་ལོག་། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongöñ མཚོ་སྒྲོན།
<u>approx. date:</u>	[Ch: Maqin 玛沁, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai] winter 1995/1996
<u>comment:</u>	So closely do the walls match the barrenness of surroundings that the Prefectural PSB Detention Center almost escapes detection. A PAP brigade and the Prefectural PSB adjoin. County PSB is opposite. Prison facilities in Golog TAP are remarkable given a 1994 population level of about 128,000 and Machen county's population of 33,000. The towns are imposed; they look out of place because they are. (Viewed from the distant east.)
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roll/neg: 44:33a

subject: Chinese tailor producing Tibetan chubas

location: Machen མཆོ་ཆེན།, capital of Golog རལོ་ཁོ་ལོ། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongön རོ་ཆོ་སྤོན།

[Ch: Maqin 瑪沁, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: Machen is over 4,000 meters elevation but hosts a surprisingly high number of Chinese settlers. No grain or vegetables are produced locally. Xining is far away, 445km, at least 16 hours by bus. The town does not seem to be a popular trading center for local Tibetans. But Chinese are here in growing numbers, possibly sufficient to form a self-contained economic community. Tibetans complain of the poor quality of faux-Tibetan goods - yet they buy them, citing the higher costs of good quality, traditional Tibetan goods.

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roll/neg: 44:32a
subject: Prefectural Tibetan Medicine Hospital
location: Machen མཁེན།, capital of Golog མགོ་ལོག་ Tibetan Autonomous
Prefecture, Tsongön མཚོ་སྒྲོན།
[Ch: Maqin 玛沁, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai]
approx. date: winter 1995/1996
comment: Most of Machen's facilities were run down, with only minimal signs of activity or function. This prefectural Tibetan hospital, presumably Golog's main medical facility for Tibetans, was one of the most meagre seen anywhere. It was, however, in keeping with Machen's attempt at being 'Tibetan'. Considering Golog's population is reportedly the second most Tibetan (88%, behind Yushu TAP with an official 96% in 1990), the paucity and shoddiness of facilities built for Tibetans is unacceptable.

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དར་ལག་

Darlag

Chinese: Dari Xian

达日县



roll/neg: 47:18

subject: wide angle view of the town and environs

location: Darlag Dzong དར་ལག་རྫོང་།, Golog མགོ་ལོག་ Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongön མཚོ་སྒྲོན་

[Ch: Dari Xian 达日县, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai Province]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: Darlag is another high-altitude (over 4,300m) herder's town. Population density in the county is only 1.4 persons/km². Total population in 1994 was about 23,000, based on official statistics, with 6.5% Chinese. Even if all the Chinese live in town, that proportion appears too low. Despite the town's role as a purpose-built control center, local Tibetans have proved adept at maintaining their identity. (Viewed from the south/southeast.)

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d. **Darlag Dzong [Ch: Dari Xian]**

i. **Brief description and impressions**

Darlag དར་ལག་རྫོང་། (Ch. Dari Xian 达日县) embodies the starkness of the Chinese colonial installation in ‘nomad’ regions. It is one of the most quintessentially pastoralist areas visited, a high territory of 16,160 square kilometers at an average elevation over 4,400 meters, watered by the upper reaches of the Ma Chu (Yellow River) and separated from Yushu by the wall of the Bayankala mountain range. The vast majority of the population are Golog pastoralists, grazing yaks across the harshly beautiful landscape of broad grassed plateaux and snow mountains. Chinese settlements are confined to the county town, one or two transport posts, and a few lonely daoban. Even the county town remains crude and undeveloped, a trading center for local Tibetans as much as a Chinese control and administrative post. Surrounded by the Golog TAP counties of Matö, Pema, Chigdril, Machen and Gade, and adjoining the historically Golog region of Serthar in Kartse TAP, Darlag has held out against Chinese inroads as determinedly and so far successfully as has been possible anywhere under the Chinese administration.

The raw frontier town of Darlag (Chinese administrative name Jimai 吉迈) most closely resembles its neighbor Gade, only on a somewhat larger and seedier scale. As a trade and transport node linking the extremities of Golog TAP with each other and with the Xining-Yushu Highway, Darlag receives enough cross-traffic to draw the more vagrant and mercenary elements that usually characterize such way stations. Lying south of the center of Golog TAP, Darlag receives traffic from the Xining-Yushu Highway 190 kilometers to the northwest, then feeds it south towards Pema or northeast towards the prefectural capital Machen via Gade. It is not a prominent situation within the whole Amdo communications network, but towns are few in Golog and Darlag filled with more activity than most. Hui and Chinese manage commerce and transportation, Tibetans supply the abattoir and provide the streets with color and energy. But it is of a piece with all other Chinese colonial fixtures in Tibetan areas in terms of its structures and their purposes.

Darlag’s similarity to Gade and Matö begins with its layout: the familiar T-shape, of which the highway forms the main east-west street, bisected by another very long street running north-south. Along the north side of town the Ma Chu (Yellow River) flows towards the northeast, crossed by a concrete bridge designated the Second

Bridge on the Yellow River¹. Crinkled bare hills often iced with snow line the Ma Chu's wide meandering course. The town, a low-rise spread on a flat valley between two banks of hills, creates little more than an impression of geometric debris in the harsh immensity of the landscape [see 47:18, p. 2296].

On closer inspection, the town's rough austerity and shabbiness come into sharper focus. Large dilapidated compounds stretch back from muddy streets, essentially indistinguishable one from another no matter what their function. More animals than vehicles utilize the streets; yaks tied up outside shops, flocks of sheep driven to the abattoir, horses tethered to telegraph poles and guarded by Tibetan mastiffs [see photo 114:10, p. 2322]. Most activity takes place at the T-junction, a cross-section of Tibetan society in Darlag today: wild-looking pastoralists, monks, leather-jacketed town Tibetans and modern Tibetan girls attached to government work units sporting Chinese winter fashions [see photo 44:26a, p. 2320]. Hui run most of the restaurants and truck stops, Chinese and a few Tibetans manage the shops. Crudely modern buildings front the T-junction area, but none have been erected in the latest era of mirror glass and tiled façades. Only the Government and Party complex has warranted such distinction, a familiar new 4-story block rising from a mundane sea of barracks.

At the end of the highway street stands the town's principal and virtually sole production unit, the County abattoir and meat processing works, a focal point for pastoralists bringing their animals to the town. Dismal transport compounds compose the eastern sector at the town's approach from the bridge. Schools, human and animal medical facilities, an isolated Martyrs' Cemetery, a cinema, a couple of banks, and standard security units including a fortress-like jail complete the pattern seen in every pastoral-area town. Standardization rather than autonomy springs to mind.

ii. **Historical background**

Originally a territory of the Western Qiang and then the Tanguts, Darlag became part of the Tibetan Empire by conquest in the 630's. It subsequently remained a Tibetan cultural and political entity, characterized by the determinedly independent nature of its Golog population. External intervention began in the first half of the 20th Century when the Ma clan attempted to impose control over trade and gold resources in Golog, resulting in

¹ The First Bridge on the Yellow River is just south of Matö where the Xining-Yushu Highway crosses the Yellow River.

widespread destruction of Tibetan life and property including in Darlag. The Communist occupation of Golog began in 1952, strongly resisted by the Gologs especially during the Tibetan revolt in Amdo in 1958.

iii. **Current demography**

Darlag's demographic configuration is very similar to Gade's. Data from the 1990 census recorded county population as 21,539² of whom 92.5% (20,029) were Tibetan³ and 6.5% (1,326) Chinese⁴. Authorities depicted population growth as negligible from 1990 through 1994 (21,700⁵), with a net increase of less than 200 persons.

While Tibetans are a clear and obvious majority in the county, Chinese numbers are certainly higher than the 1,326 revealed in the 1990 census - a level which could not have increased if more recent references have validity. As a transportation node the Darlag county town has attracted many more itinerant traders than Gade, whose presence will receive no official recognition but impact the economic and social fabric of the town nevertheless. The Hui, participating in the commercial sector of Darlag even more conspicuously than the Chinese, likewise remain only partially visible in Chinese population figures, counted officially as a mere 1% (184 people⁶) of county population.

Additional demographic details relevant to Darlag can be found in Tables 12 and 23 [see pp. 175 and 1599] and Charts 52 and 52a [see pp. 2212 and 2213]

Remote high-elevation towns in the Tibetan areas consistently attract the fewest Chinese immigrants, since everything about them is repellent to Chinese customs, sensitivities and traditional livelihood except for their limited commercial opportunities. But it does not take more than a few thousand Chinese to tilt the demographic balance dramatically away from Tibetan dominance, and only a few hundred to redirect a local economy. The Chinese granted autonomy to Tibetans on the basis of their demographic precedence in certain areas, a factor

² *China Population Statistics Yearbook 1990*

³ *Social and Economic Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1992*

⁴ *Tabulation on China's Nationality: 1990 Census Data*

⁵ *Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1995*

⁶ *Social and Economic Statistical Yearbook of Qinghai 1992*

already under threat and indeed surpassed in many Tibetan areas after less than 50 years of the Communist occupation. Economic control by Chinese policy and Chinese on-site presence easily undermines Tibetan autonomy without Chinese drowning them by numbers.

The high pastoral region of Darlag may seem remote from either of these dangers at present, as indeed it is in the countryside. Inside the county town, however, raw frontier settlement though it is, non-Tibetan economic dominance already prevails. Most shops, restaurants and transport hostels are run by Hui and Chinese, with Tibetan participation lagging behind. While Tibetan pastoralists drive their herds into the county abattoir at the end of the town, trucks remove the processed products to Chinese markets under State-regulated pastoral industry policy. There is no alternative. The county town is the economic nerve center of the county. What happens there - who makes and manages the economic process - defines the direction of local livelihood, surely a mainstay of “autonomy” under socialist ideology.

iv. **Administrative and control apparatus**

All of Darlag’s administrative and control units are located along the town’s north-south street. County Government, Communist Party and CCP Discipline Inspection Committee have recently been re-housed in a replica of the power quarters seen in the majority of “autonomous” county towns throughout Tibetan areas - 4-story blocks of superfluous grandeur with Chinese neo-imperial roof trim. The CPPCC still appears to inhabit a ramshackle compound further along the street containing a couple of old red-washed buildings, which has nevertheless been given a large new gate, perhaps in anticipation of future interior renovation. Economic support units have been unevenly updated. The tax office still occupies a little brick premises next door to the roomier Post Office compound, whereas the People’s Bank and Agricultural Bank, together in a large compound of original socialist buildings, have also been upgraded to the extent of a big new gate.

Control units occupy separate locations spaced along the government street. Opposite the mouth of the town’s only side street are the Court and Procuratorate. South of this intersection, adjacent to the Bank compound and opposite the primary school and cinema is the County PSB compound, behind which stands the PSB Detention Center. Slogans on a barrack wall within the PSB compound suggest that the jail’s PAP guard unit has been garrisoned there as well [see photo 47:20, p. 2310]. The jail is an archetypal Golog detention facility. A walk-

around stone wall encloses two cell blocks, overlooked by turret guard towers on two corners. Its toy fort-like aspect does not disguise the grimness of life for inmates [see photo 47:20, p. 2312]. The main County PAP compound lies near the south end of the street next door to the CPPCC, consisting of a large grassy yard in front of typical rows of barracks.

No PLA facility was located, but Beijing jeeps carrying army officers were seen driving around town, probably on an inspection tour from the prefectural base at Machen.

Vestiges of Golog's caravan-raiding past cling to travel in Darlag, where the prevalence of road blocks suggests continuing security concerns. A transport inspection camp stands at the turnoff to Gade ten kilometers north of the Darlag county town, and a PAP inspection post guards the bridgehead into the town.

v. **Economy**

Darlag's economy rests almost exclusively on the pastoral industry. The formula for its exploitation is the same all over Amdo: local Tibetan pastoralists bring their animals to the county-run abattoir, and the meat, fleece and hides are shipped to Chinese markets via Xining. Darlag's abattoir is large and active [see photo 47:24, p. 2318]. Nomads camp with their herds outside the facility while Tibetan employees work inside. In a touching but paradoxical gesture of Buddhist compassion, Tibetans have erected a screen of prayer flags outside the abattoir wall [see photo 44:23a, p. 2316]. The Darlag facility deals more with yaks than sheep, in contrast to the abattoir in Matö where sheep are the main animals slaughtered. The greater suitability of Darlag's extreme high pasturage for yaks rather than sheep should help preserve many of the Darlag pastoralists from forced settlement, a practise particularly prevalent where intensified sheep-grazing is possible. Although many of the compounds in the southwestern sector of the county town are forced pastoralist settlements, few appear to exist in the countryside. Like the western reaches of Yushu TAP, where pastoralists still lead a traditional nomadic existence, much of Darlag is simply too intimidatingly harsh even for the Chinese to consider enforcing settled pastoralism.

Darlag's only other industrial facility also relates to the pastoral industry; a leather goods factory located at the end of the side street above a river running into the Ma Chu. The compound contains two buildings but no signs of machinery. On the highway street two large open spaces with sheds provide market facilities for livestock and

produce, while the Grain and Oil Office next door handles the essential grain supplies for the county - most importantly for the town.

The State contribution to commercial supplies consists of a large recently-built Nationalities Trade Store and extensive office compound opposite. The Nationalities Trade Store near the busy T-junction offers an assortment of Chinese manufactures and foodstuffs, but commercial activity is livelier outside and in the smaller shops along the highway [see photo 44:26a, p. 2320]. Tibetans gather here to trade hides, coral, amber and fox pelts. The latter are a common supplement to nomad income in Darlag, a region famous for its high grasslands wildlife and medicinal plants. No trade in endangered animal skins was observed here. Smaller shops are run mainly by Chinese but a few Tibetan shopkeepers, or shop workers, also operated businesses. The Hui are particularly prominent in the commercial life of Darlag, catering to passing traffic and visiting nomads with restaurants and accommodation. Hui restaurants are popular with Tibetans since they serve hearty beef and mutton dishes, and consequently are more common in the pastoral towns than pork-oriented Chinese eateries. Transport hostels, also dominated by the Hui, provide accommodation at a level in keeping with the rough nature of the rest of the town.

Turning high-elevation pastoralism into a market-driven industry, as the Chinese have done, has the advantage of immediate income for Tibetans, but alters the focus and control of the pastoralist economy. Under present conditions economic “autonomy”, even for majority of the relatively independent Golog nomads, is an empty phrase. Chinese market forces and controls, although in Darlag combined less with forced settlement policies than most other pastoral regions, still guide pastoralism into a form that serves Chinese requirements. From the beginning of their occupation of Tibetan areas, the Chinese emphasized development of the pastoral industry as a high priority. Within China Proper no large pastoral areas existed, nor were the Chinese themselves a herding people. Control of the Tibetan grasslands, and the Tibetan pastoralists, was imperative if China was to satisfy its protein-hungry domestic market from so-called domestic sources.

With such an aim, the Chinese cannot allow economic autonomy to the Tibetan pastoralists. Development schemes - forced settlement, market control, expanded transport networks - all aim to secure the Tibetan pastoral regions as an animal husbandry base to serve Chinese needs, not Tibetan. Productivity from the pastoral regions as such is low: only 166.2 million Yuan as GDP earnings for the whole of Golog TAP in 1994, the second lowest primary productivity for a prefecture in Qinghai Province [see Table 13, p. 184]. The Chinese nevertheless wish

to ensure that it flows in a Chinese-oriented direction. Official economic statistics show that it does. While the per capita GDP for Golog TAP was 2,426 yuan in 1994⁷, the 1992 rural per capita net income was only 750 Yuan⁸ [see Table 9, p. 127]. This discrepancy, in a prefecture where most GDP derives from pastoral-industry primary production and almost all the rural population are pastoralists, illuminates the economic equation in Tibetan pastoral areas.

vi. **Educational and medical facilities**

Darlag has standard school and medical facilities for a county town. A primary school stands opposite the PSB in the government street, and a middle school at the end of the south end of the street next to the CPPCC compound. Tibetan-medium education is probably provided in such a dominantly Tibetan area, but the thrust of the system will be to educate compliant “Chinese” citizens.

The County Hospital, a large concern of uncertain functionality, consists of a two-story c.1980's addition to two older low-rise buildings, located down the side street leading to the leather factory. Opposite, Hygiene and Epidemic Control, a unit often found in herding areas, must be oriented towards the veterinary needs of the pastoralists. Like the Hospital it appeared more comatose than active.

vii. **Culture**

A visit to the Darlag county town, filled with hardy chuba-clad nomads and their animals, proves the continuing vitality of Tibetan culture and values in this part of the world. Tibetans, not Chinese, command the streets of the town, where the quite considerable numbers of Chinese residents seem to stay indoors most of the time, aliens in this rough frontier settlement. The Tibetans there treat them as such. These pastoralists visit the town for their own purposes, then ride away to their own encampments in the vast wild Darlag terrain, apparently untouched by the Chinese presence and administration. Relative to Tibetans in more settled situations, this is true. Tibetan

⁷ *Statistical Yearbook of China 1995*

⁸ *China Nationalities Economy 1993*

cultural practises diminish in proportion to concentration of Chinese population and economic patterns, not because these more settled Tibetans resist assimilation less, but because they have no choice but to conform under the pressure. The nomads still live furthest from the Chinese reach and so can preserve not only the outward but more importantly the inner aspects of their culture more fully than Tibetans elsewhere.

Chinese “cultural” facilities in the town include an old cinema-cum-People’s Auditorium, and some pool tables. Tibetans, not Chinese, patronize the latter. The Hui in the town as ever maintain their own customs and society. In energy and visibility, Tibetans clearly dominate, though their specific cultural centers, the monasteries, lie removed from the Chinese purpose-built control installation of the county town. In time, the town will become more, not less, Chinese, as economic immigration gradually increases and the Chinese aim of expanded development in the “animal husbandry bases” progresses⁹. In the absence of any genuine autonomy in the Tibetan areas, even such quintessentially nomad regions as Darlag can be integrated into the Chinese order eventually.

viii. **Religion**

Although Gade County is a region of vigorous religious activity, no evidence of this is seen in the vicinity of the county town. In Darlag, by contrast, monks form a strong component of the street crowd [see 44:26a, p. 2320], and Buddhist emblems mark many points around the town, most notably the wall of prayer flags outside the county abattoir [see photo 44:23a, p. 2316] and a tall maypole of prayer flags commanding the town and Ma Chu river valley from the hills to the northwest [see photo 47:25, p. 2314]. Permanent monastic foundation came late to Darlag, where tent gōnpas previously travelled with the clans to which they were attached, as was a common practise in pastoralist regions. During the later 19th Century, however, a surge of permanent monastic building began, lasting until the early Chinese occupation period. Before the religious persecutions of 1958, a total of ten monasteries had been built in Darlag, housing over 2,000 monks. Nine have been revived since 1980, only one small Gelug monastery remaining unrestored, though only around 1,000 monks, half Darlag’s original community, have been allowed to join the monasteries. As in Gade, the Nyingmapa exert the most pervasive influence in Darlag, having founded seven monasteries between 1880 and 1958. The Gelugpa were also active during this period, founding two monasteries¹⁰.

⁹ FBIS-CHI-93-003 6 Jan 1993, p. 43, from *Xinhua*, in English, 6 Jan 1993

¹⁰ *Bright Mirror of Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Qinghai*, p. 19

Darlag's most famous Nyingma monastery, influential throughout Golog, the Tralinggön Tashi Chödanling ཁྲ་གླིང་དགོན་པ་གྲ་ཤིས་ཚེས་ལྷན་གླིང་།, lies 19 kilometers from the present county seat. Founded as a tent gönpa in

1880, it was extended in the early 20th Century and grew rapidly into a community of 500 monks by 1958, patronized by Kathog Gönpa in Payül and maintaining branch gönpas in Darlag and Pema. It suffered serious harm in 1940 when Ma Bufang's troops occupied the monastery and killed and injured many of its monks. Due to its influential position in the area the Golog Work Committee also occupied it in 1952, using it as a base and support facility from which to set up a Communist organization. The Chinese closed the monastery and expelled its monks in 1958, but in 1980 restoration began with donations from local monks and lay people. It now has 350 monks and functions as a vital religious and cultural center within the Darlag region¹¹.

The restoration of only half Darlag's pre-1958 religious community mirrors the pattern found in almost all Tibetan areas. Gade, with almost as many practising monks now as before the Chinese occupation, represents an exception. Its most influential order in Gade, the Jonang, would be considered by the Chinese as the least politically-conscious among the Tibetan Buddhist orders.

ix. **History**

In ancient times the Golog was occupied by the Western Qiang, a nomadic pastoral people who appear in Chinese historical records over two thousand years ago. By the time of the Tibetan conquest of Amdo in the 7th Century, descendants of a branch of the Western Qiang, the Tanguts, inhabited Golog and regions further east as allies of the Tuyuhun, who ruled an extensive empire reaching across Northern Amdo from Kanlho to southern Xinjiang. By the 630's the Tibetans had conquered the Tanguts, and in 663 also the Tuyuhun, whose territories they subsequently incorporated into the Tibetan Empire. Darlag and the rest of Golog remained a Tibetan political, cultural and demographic entity from this period onwards, ruled by fiercely independent tribal chieftains who brooked no interference from any forces outside the region. Religion and culture linked the Gologs to other Tibetan territories, but no-one controlled them other than their own chieftains.

¹¹ *Bright Mirror of Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Qinghai*, p. 288

During the first half of the 20th Century the Hui Ma clan, who had taken de facto control of Qinghai under the auspices of the Chinese Republican Government, made attempts to control and exploit the Golog region, a remote but strategically important territory with gold and trade resources. The Ma leaders launched several armed campaigns against the Gologs, who suffered severe reprisals for their resistance to the Hui colonization schemes. In 1938 Ma Bufang's troops destroyed the Golog stronghold of Palyül Gönpa in Chigdril, then attacked and destroyed Darlag's largest monastery, the Tashi Chödanling in 1940, killing many of its monks and forcing the rest to flee.

Ma Bufang's activities in Golog diminished under the pressures of the civil war in China 1945-1949, and ceased when the PLA captured Xining in September 1949. The Communists did not reach Golog until 1952, but a Golog Work Committee of cadres and soldiers arrived there in August and began to establish a Communist administration over the nomads, imposing changes slowly at first but accelerating the collectivization of herdsmen after 1956. Gologs resisted immediately¹², open revolt against the Chinese occupation and collectivization policy breaking out in 1958 over the whole of Amdo. Once the revolt had been suppressed, monasteries were closed, monks forced to return to lay life, collectivization proceeded and severe punishments were meted out to Tibetans suspected of involvement in the revolt. Darlag had been formally declared a county in 1955, but its northern sector was amputated in 1958 to form part of the new Machen County¹³, a move to increase administrative control over the hostile Golog areas.

According to a survey carried out by the Chinese in 1955, Tibetans in Darlag were divided into nine main independent clans, which were in turn sub-divided into many smaller ones. The survey placed the Tibetan population then at around 15,000¹⁴. In the Golog TAP as a whole, the Tibetan population has doubled in the period 1955-1990¹⁵, whereas Darlag's Tibetan population, according to Chinese sources, had risen by only 5,000 over the same period. It may be that Darlag's failure to grow at the prefectural rate of increase is due to the inclusion of some Tibetans formerly under Darlag County into Machen County, created in 1958. Reliable Chinese sources do not, however, suggest this. Severe decimation of the Darlag population during the Tibetan revolt and later periods of trouble therefore raises itself as a probable explanation.

¹² June Teufel Dreyer, "Ch'inghai", p. 23

¹³ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, p. 22

¹⁴ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, pp. 48-54

¹⁵ *Guoluo zangzu shehui (Tibetan Society in Golog)*, pp. 233-234

x. **Summary comment**

Darlag's county town at present is a crude colonial infrastructure overlaid on a Tibetan pastoral region. 'Development with Chinese characteristics' has so far been rudimentary, though the Chinese control presence is well-established. In many respects pastoralists still dominate Darlag and it remains an area unattractive to Chinese immigration - environmentally hostile and lacking exploitable resources apart from those that derive from the pastoral industry. In remote pastoral regions the Chinese control system is cruder, but not fundamentally different, than in more demographically and economically assimilated Tibetan areas. The robust nomad presence does not equal autonomy.

Sites tagged on photographic panoramas not accompanying text report

Panorama labels:

Darlag/Dari

frames 47:10-17, 8pc

Agricultural Bank
Bureau of Meteorology
Bus Station
CCP Discipline Inspection Comm.
Cinema
Communist Party
County Abattoir
County Court
County CPPCC
County Government
County Hospital
County PAP
County Prison
County Procuratorate
County PSB
Grain & Oil Office
Hygiene & Epidemic Control
Leather Factory
Livestock Market
Market
Martyrs' Memorial
Meat Processing Factory
Nationalities Trade Co.
Nationalities Trade Store
People's Bank
Post Office
Primary School
School
Tax Office
to Machen & Xining
to Pema/Banma & Matö/Maduo
Yellow River (Huanghe)



roll/neg: 47:20

subject: PSB Detention Center and PSB compound

location: Darlag Dzong དར་ལག་རྫོང་།, Golog མགོ་ལོག་། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongön མཚོ་སྔོན།

[Ch: Dari Xian 达日县, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai Province]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: Darlag's County PSB fronts onto the mainstreet. The empty courtyard on the right is for entry. Buildings to the left appear to be police offices and residences, but slogans have a martial ring: ***"The good soldier does not practise war."*** 宜兵不习武 and ***"[...] strives to carry out his duty to the utmost."*** ?? 尽义务. PAP guards could be domiciled there as well. In the foreground is the PSB Detention Center. The gate at upper left is for the primary school; the cinema is across from the PSB courtyard.

(Viewed from the south/southeast.)

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roll/neg: 47:23

subject: detail of PSB Detention Center

location: Darlag Dzong དར་ལག་རྫོང་།, Golog གོ་ལོག་ཁོང་། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongön མཚོ་སྔོན།

[Ch: Dari Xian 达日县, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai Province]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: Darlag's local jail has two cellblocks. The smaller has six missing chimneys, perhaps indicating six cells. The larger block has eight chimneys, only one of which is active (chimney pipe and snow melt). Conditions are sure to be extremely harsh. Golog pastoralists had a reputation for ferocity and were notoriously unwelcoming to outsiders. While inexplicably good humored about resultant hardship, nomads appear to regard Chinese more as aliens than masters. Jail design may be one effort to tame them.

(Viewed from the south/southeast.)

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roll/neg: 47:25

subject: Machu River and prayer flags

location: Darlag Dzong དར་ལག་རྫོང་།, Golog མགོ་ལོག་། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongöñ མཚོ་སྔོན།

[Ch: Dari Xian 达日县, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai Province]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: Darlag lies near the banks of the Machu (Huanghe/Yellow River), one of Amdo's principal defining features. This view faces upriver; the river descends from a source beyond Matö. From Darlag it flows east, north and then west, looping through or along Kanlho, Ngawa, Malho and Tsolho before turning eastward once again to the northern end of Malho, through Haidong and onward to Lanzhou. Here in the upper reaches of the Yellow River, whatever the appearance of the towns, the land and people are Tibetan.

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44:23a

Darlag: county abattoir, northwest edge of town

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roll/neg: 44:23a

subject: County abattoir, viewed from street

location: Darlag Dzong དར་ལག་རྫོང་།, Golog གོ་ལོག་ བོད་ལོ་ལོ་། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongön བོ་རྫོང་།

[Ch: Dari Xian 达日县, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai Province]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: All Golog county towns have government-run abattoirs. In the name of development, the Chinese have tried to transform high-altitude grazing into an industry. Since there are so few consumers in Golog, production is destined to be 'export' driven. Darlag's abattoir is on the northwestern fringe of the town. Tibetans work inside slaughtering, gutting and butchering the animals. Outside, in an act of Buddhist atonement, Tibetans have erected prayer flags along one section of the wall.

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roll/neg: 47:24
subject: County abattoir, viewed from above
location: Darlag Dzong དར་ལག་རྫོང་།, Golog མགོ་ལོག་ Tibetan Autonomous
Prefecture, Tsongön མཚོ་སྒྲུང་།
[Ch: Dari Xian 达日县, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai Province]
approx. date: winter 1995/1996
comment: Darlag's only town industry is the County abattoir. Tibetan attitudes toward the plant are mixed. Many complain that the Chinese take 'our animals'. Yet there is no shortage of animals being driven to the gate. Nomads drive motorcycles and wear chubas made of fine brocades. While commercialism has its say, Buddhist prayer flags add a note of compassion. Tibetans have placed the flags along the exterior wall at precisely the spot where the animals are put to death. Perhaps the next life will be better.

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44:26a

Darlag: street life at main intersection

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roll/neg: 44:26a

subject: street scene at Darlag's only corner

location: Darlag Dzong དར་ལག་རྫོང་།, Golog གོ་ལོག་ཁོང་། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongön མཚོ་སྒྲོན་

[Ch: Dari Xian 达日县, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai Province]

approx. date: winter 1995/1996

comment: Despite Darlag's physical construction and layout, which have nothing Tibetan about them, Tibetans remain the most vibrant presence. At the only intersection, created by Darlag's T-shaped configuration, Tibetan men gather. Most wear traditional Tibetan clothing. They speak Tibetan and barter over Tibetan goods. They are powerful, robust people, made even tougher by the adversities of Golog's climate. The tenacity with which they cling to their language and customs seems almost defiant. Many Chinese also live here, but they seem to avoid the streets.

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roll/neg: 114:10

subject: street scene along main street

location: Darlag Dzong དར་ལག་རྫོང་།, Golog མགོ་ལོག་། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tsongöñ མཚོ་སྔག་།

approx. date: [Ch: Dari Xian 达日县, Guoluo 果洛 TAP, Qinghai Province] winter 1995/1996

comment: The contrast between imposed towns and indigenous people seems most stark in pastoralist areas. Tibetan nomads, despite having their world ‘turned upside down’, have managed to retain more Tibetan traditions than farmers or townsfolk. As poverty recedes in remote areas and Tibetans become consumers again, their preferences are more visible. However drab the streets in a town like Darlag, energy and color ride into town with nomads and their ponies, and ride out again when they head back to the hills.

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