

AU SIS HONORS SENIOR CAPSTONE

Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet & the World

Dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution

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I. Abstract

This project is a continuation of an AU fellowship that was used to create an interactive digital archive of film, interviews, and portraits from the Sino-Tibetan conflict. The capstone builds on an Honors Independent Study Project that culminated in a multimedia exhibition funded by the AU Human Rights Council and presented to the Dalai Lama during his visit to campus in 2010. The project's materials, gathered by the author during her semester abroad in India near the Tibetan border, are from Tibetans and Chinese citizens. The research for the initial project revealed a lack of initiatives that dealt with the political side of the Sino-Tibetan conflict in a non-partisan way, especially in academic institutions that focused on the preservation of Tibetan culture, not conflict resolution. In the spirit of the original project, which sought to promote understanding in a way that echoed the conflict transformation tool of dialogue, this capstone explored the potential of dialogue as a conflict resolution tool in the Sino-Tibetan conflict. The culmination of the capstone is a three part written work that incorporates practical implementation of dialogue techniques: "Sino-Tibetan Conflict Assessment," "Defining Dialogue: Purposes and Effectiveness," and "The Potential for Dialogue in the Tibetan Conflict: Practical Implementation." The third of these sections included three additional parts: posting the multimedia project online; designing a Sino-Tibetan dialogue between Tibetan and Chinese citizens on campus with the aid of AU's Dialogue Development Group; and reflecting on practical implementation and the history and potential of dialogue in the Tibet conflict. The University of Texas at Austin has agreed to host a digital archive of this project, which will massively improve the openness and presentation of the materials, ensuring their sustainability and lasting accessibility.

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Honors Capstone Part I

Sino-Tibetan Conflict Assessment

As of May 2012, at least 35 Tibetans have self-immolated in ethnically Tibetan regions of China according to the International Campaign for Tibet. 34 of the self-immolations occurred since March 2011. As the dissidents burn themselves, they shout demands ranging from freedom of the Tibetan regions from China's control to the return of the Dalai Lama to ethnic Tibet (ICT Fact Sheet). These acts evoke a familiar and grim cycle of ethnonationalist discontent that has been occurring in the Tibetan plateau ever since the Chinese government gained political control over the region in 1959. At this time, Tibet's most revered religious and political leader, the Dalai Lama fled into exile followed by 100,000 Tibetans. These refugees were followed by many more as the years in exile continued (Issues). Despite periodic contact and attempts at reconciliation between the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Chinese government, little progress has been made towards resolution between the two parties (Gyari). Meanwhile unrest in Tibet continues. The graphic nature of the self-immolations speaks to the depth of discontent in the conflict and the urgency of its resolution.

Using elements of Wehr's conflict mapping guide, the following will analyze the Sino-Tibetan conflict and examine the current prospects for resolution (Wehr). This essay will begin with an account of the conflict history and key events in the development of the conflict. The work will continue its analysis by examining the conflict parties, issues, and dynamics. Finally, the work will conclude with an assessment of the potential for conflict regulation.

Conflict History

The relationship between the region of Tibet and China predates Communist China and even the institution of the Dalai Lama. Historically, Tibet refers to the high altitude region of the

Tibetan plateau bordering today's Bhutan, India, Nepal, Burma, and mainland China (Rabgey 61). The region was inhabited by the Tibetan ethnic group. Until the 1950s this region was governed by a theocratic society in which land ownership was concentrated in the hands of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. These monasteries were the centers of power, the most powerful of which was the U-Tsang administrative region headed by the Dalai Lama. He served as the spiritual leader of all Tibetan Buddhism, and the political leader of his region (Snow x).

While the Sino-Tibetan relationship began almost 1,500 years ago, today's conflict is rooted in opposing interpretations of their common history based in the political and religious disputes in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Goldstein 84). At this time, China holds that Tibet became a Chinese protectorate with Chinese representatives stationed in Tibet. The Tibetan government in-exile characterizes this relationship as a patron-priest arrangement where the Chinese emperor committed to protect Tibet in exchange for spiritual guidance (Sperling 22). Today, exiled Tibetans assert that throughout this period Tibet "maintained its own language, officials, legal system, and army, and paid no taxes to China" as proof that Tibet was not under Chinese control. However, the Chinese government combats this assertion with the fact that other areas of China at that time also had similarly distinctive features (Goldstein 84). The degree of China's control of Tibet waxed and waned until 1912 when the Qing dynasty was overthrown, at which time Tibetan officials expelled Chinese troops and officials (Sperling 22).

Tibet's period of independence ended when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came to power and established the People's Republic of China (PRC). Like previous Chinese governments, the CCP considered Tibet to be Chinese territory. They believed that regaining control of Tibet would legitimize the CCP by fulfilling one of the goals of the revolution, "the creation of a strong and unified People's Republic of China" (Zhai 34). In addition to symbolic

significance, Tibet had strategic significance for communist China because of Tibet's position bordering newly democratic India and Tibet's natural resources. For example, Asia's major rivers begin in Tibet (Geography). Indeed, Chairman Mao wrote that, "although Tibet does not have a big population, it has great international significance. We must occupy it" (Zhai 35).

The Chinese government articulated the purpose of its mission as one of liberation, freeing Tibet from a feudal society where the common people were controlled by a dictatorship of cruel monk landlords and western imperialists (Xinhua). Because of Tibet's harsh landscape in the high altitudes of the Tibetan plateau among the Himalayas, strong cultural differences and religion, Mao decided to pursue a policy of gradualism in Tibet. Without this gradualism, he thought the PRC army could easily defeat the Tibetan forces, but governing the region would be difficult (Zhai 34). Therefore, he decided to pursue a strategy of "peaceful liberation" in which the Tibetan rulers would agree to incorporation into the PRC (Melvin 44).

Because Tibet was not unified politically, Mao played on political divisions to begin his campaign. Before the PRC was formally established, he began courting the Panchen Lama, a high-ranking monk whose authority the Dalai Lama disputed. On the day that the PRC was established, the Panchen Lama sent a telegram inviting and welcoming the Chinese army to Tibet. Shortly after the Dalai Lama's political administration sent a letter to Mao asserting that Tibet was independent and requesting that the army halt its march to Tibet (Zhai 35). Mao ignored the administration's missive and welcomed the Panchen Lama's letter.

Once the PRC had been recognized by Britain, India and Pakistan, Mao decided it was time to enter Tibet, and again requested a formal declaration that Tibet was part of China. When the Dalai Lama's administration refused, China invaded Kham, the easternmost province of Tibet in

1950, quickly defeating the resistance from the regional warlords and the Dalai Lama's forces (Zhai 36).

In response the Dalai Lama's administration tried to gather international support by making appeals to England, the United States, and to the United Nations (Snow 44). In the United Nations, Britain found that Tibet could be considered a state, and so it was allowed to bring forward its case. However, Britain thought that the United Nations would not be able to force China to withdraw its troops, and that this would make the fledgling UN lose credibility. It decided to follow India's lead on the issue because it thought that India would be able to support Tibet more effectively than Britain. Moreover, while they feared the spread of communism, Britain and England were concerned that overt British or American support would justify Beijing's entry into Tibet by justifying the Chinese assertion that the Western powers were trying to control Tibet, and that Tibet needed liberation (Zhai 48). However, not wanting to challenge China, India recommended that the issue be dropped, and Britain and the United States followed suit (Goldstein 45).

Once China took control of the western part of Tibet, the United States grew more concerned about increased Communist presence in Asia, but was only able to supply limited material support to the Tibetans (Zhai 48). The Tibetan government was forced to go the negotiating table in Beijing where the Dalai Lama's appointed representative signed the 17-Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet in 1951 which granted China sovereignty over Tibet (Goldstein 84). The agreement also established the Dalai Lama's right to for his administration to govern Tibet until the Tibetan people called for change (Goldstein 85). However, the agreement was not fully implemented, and there was an uprising in Tibet after eight years. As a result the Dalai

Lama fled to India in 1959 along with 100,000 Tibetans where he established the Tibetan government in-exile with the support of the Indian government.

This began a period of almost twenty years with no contact between the Tibetan government in-exile and the Chinese government. In Tibet, Mao “abolished feudalism and serfdom and instituted communes in agricultural and pastoral areas” (Goldstein 86). The CCP created the Tibetan Autonomous Region out of the area that used to be the Dalai’s administration, and consolidated the other Tibetan regions into neighboring Chinese provinces of Gansu, Qinghai, Yunnan, and Sichuan provinces (Cultural Shift). These provinces are administered differently from the TAR. The TAR has greater autonomy. For example, it did not go through as severe of a Cultural Revolution. While the other Tibetan regions not included in the TAR went through the same Cultural Revolution policies as the rest of China. Furthermore Tibetans in the TAR were protected during the 1957 land reforms and the anti-rightist campaign (Womack 453). Currently the majority of the self-immolations have occurred in Tibetan areas not in the TAR such as the Sichuan province. The differences in Chinese policy within the TAR and other Tibetan regions in China may help explain the self-immolations. In India, the Dalai Lama established a democratic Tibetan government and Tibetan refugee communities throughout the country.

In 1978, Deng Xiaoping became the new leader of China, and was more open to contact with the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile. Deng’s administration signaled that the PRC was willing to discuss everything except Tibetan independence (Womack 445). In addition, Deng reversed the policies of the Cultural Revolution in the TAR; new reforms were introduced loosening controls on religion and expression of Tibetan culture.

After the extremes of Mao's leftist policies, Deng hoped to bring legitimacy to China's control of the TAR by facilitating the return of the rogue religious leader who seemed to have been pushed out by Mao's excesses. Deng believed that the Dalai Lama could return to the ceremonial post in the communist party that he was offered in the 1950s (Rabgey 3). In addition, Deng feared that the Soviet Union would seek to influence the Dalai Lama against China. Indeed, "Deng's effort to mend relations with the Dalai Lama was part of a wider campaign to rehabilitate fallen political figures and normalize political life in China" (Rabgey 3). Therefore, if the Dalai Lama was amenable to Deng's offer, the PRC thought that there would be little to lose from reconciliation.

However, after twenty years in exile and no contact with Chinese leadership, the exiles had no wish to return to the 1950s arrangement. The Dalai Lama decided to compromise from his previous demand of independence to one of true autonomy, not the façade of autonomy of the 1950s. This sentiment was further justified for the Tibetans in-exile when Deng Xiaoping allowed the Dalai Lama to send fact-finding missions to Tibet in 1979-80. Deng was confident that the exiles would find improvements in Tibet, but instead they found a desperate and emotional outcry from the people who called openly for independence (Goldstein short 86).

The unrest in Tibet shocked the PRC and demonstrated the extent of policy failures in Tibet (Rabgey 5). To correct these failures, the government began to hold Symposiums on Work in Tibet in 1980 spearheaded by moderate Hu Yaobang (Womack 445). However, the fact-finding mission also made Beijing reconsider how it viewed the Dalai Lama, and if they should view him as threat (Rabgey 5). They wondered if his return to Tibet would legitimize the PRC's control of the region, or if it would spark separatism (Rabgey 5). By 1980, Deng had begun to withdraw from reconciling with the Dalai Lama, publically labeling him a separatist (Rabgey 5).

By 1981, the Chinese government had shifted from its previous openness to being unwilling to talk about the political status of Tibet. Instead Deng's representative sent a proposal discussing only the conditions for the return of the Dalai Lama, not discussing the Tibetan government in-exile or Tibet's political future (Ragbey 7).

Therefore reconciliation between the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Chinese government failed. Beijing wanted the Dalai Lama to live in Beijing in a ceremonial role, while the Dalai Lama thought that reconciliation would mean the restoration of autonomous government in Tibet under his authority (Womack 445). The Tibetan government in-exile refused to accept anything less than true autonomy in Tibet, and the Chinese government would not allow anyone but the CCP to control Tibet. Furthermore, the Tibetans-in-exile demanded a Greater Tibet which would include all ethnically Tibet areas, not just the TAR, the area that the Dalai Lama's government controlled politically in 1950.

When these talks collapsed, the Dalai Lama began an international campaign to garner support for Tibet and put pressure on China (Womack 445). At an international conference in Strasbourg in 1988, he attempted to compromise by officially renouncing his claim to independence, and instead publically advocated true autonomy (Goldstein 87). The Dalai Lama stated that Tibet was illegally occupied by China and asserted that a Greater Tibet should become a self-governing democratic entity under a constitution that granted Western-style democratic rights. China would be in charge of Tibet's foreign policy, but Tibet would control its internal affairs. Some in the Tibetan community were outraged at this change. Particularly in the exile community where exiles had been living opposed to China for the past 30 years. They could not imagine a future living under China's rule. As the Dalai Lama made these international efforts, internally Tibet was wrought with rioting monks in 1987 supporting the Dalai Lama's

actions abroad. The riots reflected badly on China's Tibet policy, and seemed to confirm the Dalai Lama's statements that Tibet was being repressed (Goldstein 87).

Initially, the Dalai Lama received signs of support abroad and of the success of his campaign. For example, Congress passed an amendment to the Foreign Relations Authorizations Act that stated that "the United States should make treatment of the Tibetan people an important factor in its relations with China, and that China should respect internationally recognized human rights and end violations against Tibetans" and the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (Goldstein 88). As the protests in Tibet in 1988 progressed into riots, China extended an olive branch of sorts to the Dalai Lama by inviting him to visit Beijing as a religious figure. It would have been an opportunity to talk to the Chinese leadership unofficially. However, the Dalai Lama declined. After a fourth riot occurred in Lhasa, Beijing instituted martial law (Goldstein 88).

By 1989, conditions in Tibet and China's relations with the exiled Tibetans were not going well (Goldstein 88). China would not grant internal autonomy to the degree that the exiles demanded, and the exiles were continuing their international campaign which seemed to be exacerbating conditions in Tibet and protests (Goldstein 88). While initially the international campaign convinced China to recommence direct talks, internal politics in China prevented these talks from continuing. In China, moderates on Tibet were being challenged by people who said liberalizing controls on Tibet would only result in more unrest and separatism (Goldstein 88). Hard line policies won and expression of Tibetan culture and religion was again restrained.

Turning away from engagement with the Dalai Lama, China pursued a policy of rapid economic modernization in the TAR. This policy included opening Tibet to the rest of China which brought an influx of Han Chinese to Tibet, establishing infrastructure, and new economic policies so that Tibet could grow (Rabgey 7). Their hope was to increase the economic welfare

of Tibetans in the TAR to create a peaceful and integrated society, such that religion and the Dalai Lama would become less relevant to future generations of Tibetans. In other words, while the CCP understood that there were serious issues in Tibet, it did not see the Dalai Lama or the exiles as the solution. Instead, economic modernization would solve Tibet's woes. Furthermore, with Soviet-Sino rapprochement in the late 1980s, the CCP had even less need to engage with the Dalai Lama. Therefore, in the eyes of the PRC, the Dalai Lama was no longer a "low-cost solution to an outstanding strategic concern, but was rather a destabilizing factor in what turned out to be a quagmire of ethnic tension" (Rabgey 8).

The international campaign brought westerners to the exiles' cause and spurred protests in Tibet; however, it did not achieve its goal of bringing China to negotiation and evening the power imbalance between the weaker exiles and the PRC. Instead it sparked a crackdown in the TAR and the takeover of Chinese hardliners on Tibet policy. These hardliners believed that the Dalai Lama was a separatist, and that China need not engage with him or the exiles. Moreover, support of the exiles in the west seemed like a sign of western attempts to control China (Rabgey 16). Therefore, China held that economic modernization was the key to resolving tensions in Tibet, not engagement with the exiles. As a result, for most of the 1990s the Tibetan government-in-exile and the PRC were at a standoff, although the Dalai Lama did try to pursue communication through informal channels (Rabgey viii).

However, as China was a growing economic force, it began to prioritize cooperative relations with the United States which was a supporter of the Tibetan exiles. Furthermore, the defection of two prominent Tibetan Lamas who had appeared to support the PRC shook China's leadership (Rabgey 20). These leaders had helped legitimize Chinese rule in Tibet. Their defection indicated that China's "efforts to control the Tibetan religious elite had been

unsuccessful” (Rabgey 20). To that end, China reopened unofficial contact with the exiles in 2001. In addition, during the Fourth Symposium on Work in Tibet China discarded the official policy of excluding the Dalai Lama (Womack 446). This contact led to five meetings between the Chinese government and Tibetan exiles between 2002 and 2006. However, these visits were treated as private visits rather than official by the Chinese because “from the Chinese perspective, the Dalai Lama represents an alienated domestic group, neither a government nor a foreign organization” (Womack 446). Again, the talks floundered over the exiles’ call for a Greater Tibet, the Dalai Lama’s wish to unite all of the ethnically Tibetan regions of China into one autonomous province under an autonomous Tibetan government (Womack 447). The Chinese took this demand to be proof that the Dalai Lama was a separatist, and was not serious about talks, or simply grasping for power. From the exiles’ perspective a United Tibetan plateau was the only way to protect Tibetan rights and culture. Indeed, the regions that were not included in the TAR fared even worse during the Cultural Revolution because they lacked even the limited protections afforded by China’s definition of an autonomous region (Womack 453). Additionally, Beijing refused to acknowledge the purpose of the visits, stating that they were private, and that they were unaware of any political purpose (Rabgey 22). This heightened Tibetan fears that the talks were not serious.

In 2005, while keeping the demand for greater Tibet, the Dalai Lama modified his political demands for Tibet, making it clear that he sought no formal political role in Tibet after reconciliation, and that the current Tibetan government-in-exile would be dissolved (Womack 453). Progress in these talks deteriorated in 2008 when riots broke out in both the TAR and surrounding Tibetan regions against the Beijing Olympics. These protests surprised and shocked both the exiles and the PRC because they were led by the youth, many of whom had not

experienced Tibet before Chinese control. These protests further signaled the failure of Chinese policies to relieve tension in the region (Q&A). In 2011, the Dalai Lama stepped down the political leader of Tibet, passing on the role of head of state to Lobsang Sangay, a democratically elected official. The Chinese government has made statements that it will not meet with Sangay (Q&A). Beginning in 2011 Tibetans in the outlying rural regions across the Tibetan plateau began self-immolating. Like the 2008 protests, these actions are led by Tibetan youth, and most occur outside of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (ICT Fact Sheet).

With little contact between Tibetan government-in-exile, and the Chinese government, the two parties are in a state of protracted stalemate. However, self-immolations of the past year indicate that at least some Tibetans in Tibet are experiencing a climate desperate enough to set themselves afire. The fact that the self-immolations have occurred in across the whole of the Tibetan Plateau indicates that this unrest is widespread. The exiles believe that resolution between the exile government and the Chinese government is necessary to resolve the conflict plaguing Tibet. It is unclear whether China will decide that engagement with the exiles will solve its Tibet woes. As for now, it has stated that it does not wish to engage with the new exile head of state (Q&A). If China decides that it does that it does not need to engage the exiles, the two will continue on in a state of asymmetric protracted stalemate.

Conflict Parties.

Primary:

Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)

The Central Tibetan Administration is the democratically elected exile government with an executive, legislative and judicial branch based in Dharamsala, India (Constitution). Until recently, the executive political leader was the Dalai Lama who worked alongside an elected

prime minister. In 2011, the Dalai Lama devolved his political power to the Kalon Tripa in order to “deep[en] the authority of the movement’s democratic government” (New York). Now, there is only one elected executive, the Kalon Tripa, Lobsang Sangay. The Indian government allows the CTA to operate in Dharamsala, establish Tibetan schools, and administer the approximately 128,014 Tibetans in-exile around the world who send in taxes and vote in elections for the government (Tibet in Exile). This number changes as exiles cross the Himalayas into India or Nepal, or return to Tibet (United). The CTA views itself as the government of Tibetans in-exile and Tibetans in Tibet. Its goal is to engage the Chinese government to create true autonomy in Tibet, and secure the return of the exiles (Issues). The government is not officially acknowledged, nor do they have many resources compared to China. They are the weaker party in a protracted asymmetric conflict.

Chinese government

China’s institutional structures for managing Tibet are complex. There is an elite “leading small group” on Tibet, Tibetan units in the United Front, “the Party organ charged with establishing alliances with non-party interest groups,” and party personnel charged with “dealing with Tibetan policy and administration” (Rabgey ix). Therefore, there are various sectors on the government who deal with the country’s Tibet policy. Opinion on this policy is not uniform. As demonstrated in the history section, when moderates have headed the Tibet office, there has been more opportunity for contact between the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Chinese government. Moreover, Tibet is not always the priority in a country as large as China.

In the 1950s Tibet was a symbolic and strategic priority for China. Today, China has invested in Tibet’s infrastructure and growth for years making it even more difficult to loosen control of the region. Ultimately, China’s goal is not to resolve its conflict with the Tibetan-

government-in-exile or the Dalai Lama. Its goal is a stable and prosperous China. Therefore, if engaging with the government in-in-exile seems like the best way to support China's future, then it will do so. If it seems counterproductive to a prosperous and safe China, then this reflects periods when Beijing has chosen not to engage. Thus far the government has refused to engage the new political head of the exile government. Instead it directs its statements on the self-immolations to the Dalai Lama, accusing the spiritual leader of instigating the immolations (Telegraph). It is the stronger party in a protracted asymmetric stalemate with the Tibetan government in-exile.

The Dalai Lama:

Traditionally, the Dalai Lama was the political leader of the U-Tsang province, and during the history of the institution of the Dalai Lama, his political influence sometimes extended beyond this administrative area (Sautman 128). However, he is also the head religious leader of Tibetan Buddhism (Times of India). As the political and religious head and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, the Dalai Lama was given access to world leaders, access that exceeded that of other resistance movements, and helped level the power imbalance between the exiles and China (Key Issues: Tibet). He supports autonomy in Tibet. Although the Dalai Lama has given up political office, he is still viewed as the focal point for Tibet supporters worldwide (Womack 452). In this sense, he still retains political significance even if he is not an official political leader. Because of this, the Chinese often accuse him of being a politician in a religious leader's guise, and still make statements that focus on the Dalai Lama, not necessarily the Tibetan government in-exile (Telegraph). This may be an expression of the Chinese efforts to not acknowledge the legitimacy of the Tibetan government-in-exile, and to keep the debate within the framework of negotiating the return of an exiled religious leader.

Tibetan nongovernmental organizations

There are a number of Tibetan nongovernmental organizations that make up Tibetan civil society, both in-exile and in Tibet. The Tibetan Youth Congress and Students for a Free Tibet groups are the most active organizers of the Tibetan youth. The Tibetan Youth Congress is particularly influential in terms of Tibetan-exile politics in India. The Youth Congress also has chapters abroad, but is most active in India (About TYC). In contrast, Students for a Free Tibet is most active abroad, and seeks to provide a format for non-Tibetans to join and organize for the cause (About Us). Contrary to the stance of the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Dalai Lama both of these groups explicitly support independence, not autonomy. They are active in protesting the Chinese. The Dalai Lama has asked them to refrain from protesting which upsets Chinese leadership, and undermines the Dalai' Lamas credibility.

Tibetans in Tibet and Tibetans in-Exile

It is difficult to judge the conditions and perspective of Tibetans in Tibet. The flow of information in this region is tightly controlled. There have been many technological improvements in the region since 1959 including modern transportation such as the high speed train from mainland China into Tibet. However, it appears that this advancement has not been equally distributed. Rural areas still have low education rates. In addition, support of the Dalai Lama, the head of the Tibetan religion is forbidden (New York). Periodically since 1959, there have been protests in the capital city of Lhasa, notably in 1989 and in 2008. There has been a rise in self-immolations in the past year, mostly occurring in rural regions of Tibet (New York). These actions speak to continued dissatisfaction among the Tibetan people.

Tens of thousands of Tibetans have gone into exile since 1959 (United). Many were born in-exile, and have never seen Tibet. They are stateless. Most are in India. Tibetans in India are

not allowed formal rights such as citizenship, and today it is difficult for them to get formal papers if their parents were not in India before 1979. However, while many enter India without papers, they are generally tolerated and allowed to stay indefinitely (United). The exiles are used to thinking of China as the enemy. Since the Dalai Lama's Strasbourg declaration where he relinquished the demand for independence, there has been a division in the community between those who support the Dalai Lama and exile government's plan of autonomy and those who support independence (Womack 458).

Secondary and tertiary actors:

The Han Chinese

It is difficult to know what the dominant ethnic group in China feels about the conflict given that China is a closed society, and citizens who express views which veer too far away from the views of the Communist government risk consequences. However, Chinese nationalism is prevalent. There is a sense that China has been more than generous with its minority areas by sending in so much funding and committing resources. There has been an influx of Han Chinese into Tibetan regions (Friedman). Tibetan exile sources say that Tibetans and Chinese in Tibet live sharply divided lives and do not interact with one another. They maintain that Tibetans are now second class citizens in their homeland compared to the Han Chinese (Issues).

Machik

Machik is the only nongovernmental organization that is run by Tibetans who were born and grew up in-exile, but operates in Tibet. The organization takes a non-political stance so that China will allow it to work on improving rural conditions in Tibet such as building school and providing health care education (Our Work). It is sometimes met with criticism in the Tibetan community for operating in China. However, through research of Chinese constitutional law and

advocacy, the organization has succeeded in changing official Chinese policy in Tibet such as allowing Tibetan language schools in the region of Kham (Ruth).

International Secondary and Tertiary Actors

There are several international secondary and tertiary actors with an interest in this conflict. The United States has had an interest in this conflict since the 1950s when it attempted to aid the Tibetans to prevent the spread of communism. Since, it uses the topic of human rights in Tibet as a way to pressure China. Furthermore, Western romanticism of Tibet and the Dalai Lama and China's hostility to the Dalai Lama creates negative public opinion on China in the United States (Womack 452). Currently, the United States has a U.S. Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, Maria Otero (Secretary Clinton). India is also a secondary actor in the conflict. It allows the Dalai Lama to maintain a shadow government in India which is a source of tension in Sino-Indo relations (United). In 1959, the United Nations issued a resolution on Tibet asserting the right of the Tibetan people to self-determination (United Nations on Tibet). Once China joined the United Nations it lobbied to prevent further substantive action (United Nations on Tibet). Many other government leaders have met with the Dalai Lama and subsequently raised the issue with China such as France, Canada and England (World Leaders).

Issues

Tibet's political status

Both the Chinese government and the Tibetan government in-exile claim sovereignty over the Tibetan plateau. China maintains that Tibet has always been part of Chinese territory whether or not China was always able to enforce that claim (Issues). Tibet forms a part of China's nationalistic goals and identity as a multi-ethnic state. Indeed for China, control of Tibet means the restoration of China's historical glory. The Chinese empire reached its largest

territorial extent under the Qing dynasty, and it is to these borders that the CCP lays claim. Control of this territory also represents a victory over western imperialist attempts to control China which chipped away at China's sovereignty 1800s (China Profile). Therefore, China holds that it is and always has been sovereign over Tibet. It invokes the One China policy against any foreign entity that tries to interact with the Dalai Lama, holding that if other countries treat with the Dalai Lama they are trying to split China because the Dalai Lama is a separatist (Gyari). For China, that the Tibet issue is an internal affair in which outside powers should not interfere (Hu).

In contrast, the Tibetan government in-exile holds that Tibet was a sovereign and independent nation at the time that the Chinese brought troops into Tibet (Issues). The exile government believes that because Tibet was independent of Chinese influence, it has a right to self-determination. Therefore Chinese control of Tibetans affairs is unjust foreign occupation. Furthermore, as the spiritual leader of all Tibetans, the Dalai Lama and the exile government advocate for the right to self-determination and autonomy for the Tibetan people (Issues).

Therefore, the two parties have different and opposing interpretations of history that bring them into conflict. The exiles hold that Tibet was historically independent of China, while China maintains that it has sovereign rights over Tibet. Finally, the conflict places a people's rights to self-determination against the sovereign rights of a multi-ethnic state (Snow ix). It is a question of whether "political units should directly parallel ethnic units" (Snow ix).

The Demand for Greater Tibet

The exiles' demand for a Greater Tibet is one of the biggest points of contention between the conflicting parties. The exile government wants to expand the TAR to include Greater Tibet, the neighboring ethnically Tibetan areas of Kham and Amdo which are currently a part of other Chinese provinces. Under the exiles' demands, all of the Tibetan regions in China would be

combined into one region with meaningful autonomy. This would remove a vast portion of China's territory.

From the exile government's perspective, the demand for Greater Tibet is an effort to protect all Tibetans and Tibetan cultural expressions in China. This effort is especially salient given the unification of the Tibetan identity since exile. Life in exile has facilitated the interaction of Tibetans from all the regions of the Tibetan plateau, and has forged a political identity of one Tibet. Common rule under the Chinese has also forged a more unified Tibetan identity in modern Tibet as Tibetans have become united against a common foe (Womack 453).

In contrast, from the Chinese perspective, this demand seems to indicate that the Dalai Lama and exiles are not serious about reconciliation and still want Tibetan independence from China. If China combined all of the ethnically Tibetan regions in China into one autonomous region, China would be giving up one fourth of its territory (Womack 447). The fact that there are other Tibetan regions in India and other regions surrounding Tibet, further weaken the exiles' right to this demand in China's eyes (Womack 450). It would be financially and logistically difficult for China to institute the level of autonomy that the exiles demand, and it seems to threaten Chinese sovereignty.

Economic situation of people in Tibet

The exile government accuses China of making Tibetans second class citizens in Tibet, and using the region for China's own economic benefit. They hold that China has favored Han Chinese to the detriment of Tibetans, and that autonomy is needed to protect the welfare of the Tibetan people. China has made significant financial contributions to Tibet:

“From 1951 to 1958 the central government provided 91% of the revenue of the Dalai Lama's local government. During the first 40 years of the Tibetan Autonomous Region from 1965 to 2005, the Center contributed almost 100 billion RMB to local finance, and

from 1952 to 1989 the annual increase in subsidy averaged 14%. Perhaps more importantly, more than 100,000 cadres and specialists have been transferred from other provinces to work in Tibet. From 1977 to 1988, almost 3,000 teachers and 2,600 medical personnel were transferred to Tibet. Tibetan students have been accepted on scholarships by higher education institutions in 21 provinces on the condition that they return to Tibet to work for at least 3 years” (Womack 449).

Since the institution of these policies life expectancy has risen in Tibet “from 35.5 years to 67 years” (Womack 449). However, there are indications that development has not helped all Tibetans equally. For example, “the number of adult illiterates in Tibet increased from 1982 to 1990 even as the number of children in school went up” (Womack 450). Tibet has fewer higher education graduates; 2,100 graduates in 2004, while in the city of Chengdu 40,000 graduates from 29 local universities. With the creation of a railroad from mainland China to Tibet, Han Chinese have been brought in to do the modern jobs. This dynamic has created a bifurcated population, “an urban situation, especially in Lhasa, dominated by immigrants, and a broad rural hinterland of ethnic Tibetans that remains agricultural and pastoral” (Womack 450). The economic disparities between Han and Tibetans have created a sense of ethnic cleavage in Tibet (Rabgey ix). The exile government highlights this uneven development as evidence of the injustice that China has perpetrated in Tibet. However, China is aware of the problem and at least in its policy statements is working to correct holding that they will pursue a new “human-oriented, all-round, coordinated, sustainable development” direction (Womack 450-451).

Cultural and religious freedoms

The government in-exile accuses China of repressive policies in Tibet that limit the expression of Tibetan culture and religion in what they term is a “cultural genocide” in Tibet (Guardian). The exiles denounce Chinese practices including the forced housing of nomads into settlements and periodic crackdowns in reaction to Tibetan nationalistic protests (New York). In

addition, the exiles hold that China is repressing Tibetan religious expression. It is illegal for Tibetans to worship the Dalai Lama in Tibet, and the Chinese government instituted a law requiring monks who wanted to reincarnate to obtain approval from the government (Issues). The exiles label this control of religion repression, while the Chinese government holds that it is their historical right to recognize reincarnations (New York). In addition, the exiles denounce these events as human rights violations and the intentional destruction of Tibetan identity (Issues). The Tibetans in-exile also accuse the Chinese of various environmental violations in Tibet. These violations include deforestation, soil erosion, flooding, and extinction of wildlife, uncontrolled mining, and nuclear waste dumping (Issues).

These issues have created a chronic security issue in Tibet for China. In particular, the Dalai Lama acts as a symbol of Tibetan identity and religion for Tibetans both inside Tibet and out (Womack 451). Therefore, if support for the Dalai Lama is illegal in Tibet, then it is as if Tibetan identity is illegal (Rabgey 1). When the Chinese criticize or condemn the Dalai Lama it creates insecurity in Tibet. Suppression of dissidents in Tibet acts as a “two-edged sword” (Womack 451). Indeed Womack states that,

“Demonstrations may be prevented and separatists jailed, but others may be alienated who otherwise might be indifferent. China certainly has the resources for suppression, but no society can protect itself completely from extremists” (Womack 451).

This security issues negatively affects international opinion of China and Tibet’s economy as it limits the tourism that is one of Tibet’s greatest resources (Womack 451). In addition, this dynamic also provides justification for exile groups to continue their advocacy on behalf of Tibetan autonomy or independence.

Dynamics

Currently, the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Chinese government are in a period of protracted asymmetric stalemate. China cannot quell the protests of the exiles, and the exiles cannot force China to grant a greater degree of autonomy or independence in Tibet. However, China does have a greater ability to negatively affect the exiles' interests in Tibet while the exiles have little power to affect China in any material sense. Although China cannot stop the periodic protests on the Tibetan plateau, it has sufficient firepower to quickly end the protests when they occur, and militarize the Tibetan plateau to prevent further protests. For example in light of the recent self-immolations, monasteries are shut down in the Tibetan plateau and foreigners were barred from traveling in Tibet from February 20 to March 31, the months where Tibet has traditionally erupted in protests because of important Buddhist holidays and the anniversary of when the Dalai Lama fled Tibet (New York). In contrast, while Tibetan protests in-exile has damaged China's international standing, and prompted world leaders to urge China to improve its human rights record, these protests have not affected China's material prosperity, such as China's economic relations with other countries. However, the argument could be made that protests in Tibet do affect China in a material sense in that it forces the government to invest resources in quelling unrest and disrupts profits made from tourism.

The protracted stalemate is sustained by a history of mirror-imaging and stereotyping between the Chinese government and the exiles that leads to further polarization. After more than fifty years of conflict, the exiles and the Chinese government have created opposing narratives about the other. China characterizes itself as a liberator and modernizer in Tibet, fighting western imperialists and oppressive feudalism. For example, an article from a Chinese news source recounts the history of Tibet before Chinese control as "dark and barbarous," where

the people were “slaves” controlled by a theocratic elite headed by the Dalai Lama and supported by western imperialists (China). The article interprets key Tibetan symbols and dates as representations of serfdom, comparing the Potala Palace, the traditional residence of the Dalai Lama, to the “bloodiest medieval castle in the middle ages” (China). The article states that the Dalai Lama’s activism in-exile is an effort to return Tibet to a feudal system which he controls. In the face of this oppressive slavery and image of a primitive and brutal society, China becomes the liberator and modernizer, legitimating its actions in Tibet. Indeed, China’s incursion into Tibet in 1959 “emancipated” the slaves from feudalism and western imperialism and brought modern technology to a repressed people, greatly improving the standard of living in Tibet (China). Furthermore, China’s characterization of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan government in-exile as being controlled by western influences, takes away the Tibetan movement’s agency and role of speaking for the Tibetan people. Instead, in condemning the Dalai Lama and Tibetan government in-exile, China is not acting against the Tibetan people, but resisting foreign influence and standing up for an area over which to China, it has traditionally ruled.

In contrast, the exiles speak of an idealized narrative of Tibet before China gained control, making the exiles and Tibetans in Tibet the victim and China the imperialist colonizer. This view tends to negate any positive impact that China may have had towards Tibet. Indeed, the exiles characterize China’s efforts at modernization as cultural genocide, and their fight for true autonomy in Tibet as a fight to protect the cultural rights of all Tibetans, in contrast to China’s assertion that the exiles fight for the return of a repressive regime (Issues). Indeed, the Tibetan Youth Congress website states that “most of the developments in Lhasa [the capital of Tibet] are made at the cost of traditional Tibetan structures” (TYC). The exiles’ understanding of identity and the relationship between Tibet and China cause them to deny that China and Tibet

have any binding mutual ties and assert Tibetan sovereignty and moral right by putting China in the role of imperialist colonizer and oppressor.

This polarization, stereotyping and mirror-imaging contributes to the spiraling of the conflict in a cycle where Tibetan protests both inside and outside of Tibet are met with Chinese military crackdowns where Tibetan religious and cultural expression are curtailed. This cycle has continued for more than fifty years, and is usually led by monks and nuns in Tibet. Recently, the conflict has entered a new phase with the self-immolations which have been occurring regularly for over a year. Never before have protests lasted this long, or been so graphic in nature. They are also led by the youth. Most of the immolators are under the age of thirty years old. This sustained and graphic conflict within Tibet itself poses new security issues for China.

Conclusion: Conflict Regulation Potential

The conflict over the Tibetan plateau has continued for over fifty years, and has its roots in a historical relationship that spans more than a thousand. Since the Dalai Lama fled Tibet in 1959, Tibetans both inside Tibet and out have periodically protested Chinese rule in Tibet. In contrast other Tibetans in Tibet have found roles in the Communist government and pursued higher education scholarships, benefiting from Chinese sponsorship. The question of Tibet's political status is based in competing interpretations of history that might never be resolved as those interpretations form the basis of Tibetan and Chinese identity. To negate them would be to deny those identities. However, in theory resolving the history should not be necessary as the exile government, despite division within the exile community, no longer demands independence. However, the exiles' concurrent demand for a Greater Tibet make the Chinese wary of the exiles' sincerity as creating a truly autonomous region from Greater Tibet would remove one fourth of China's territory. In addition, China's receptivity to these demands has

become further strained by fifty years of stereotyping and the escalation of protests criticizing China's Tibet policy and the resulting military crackdown's in Tibet which in turn exacerbate protests.

Ultimately, both the exiles and China hope for a peaceful and prosperous Tibet. Indeed, China is aware of many of the issues that the exiles raise such as the socio-economic situation of Tibetans in Tibet, and the government is working to correct them. In cases of stalemate, parties usually are brought to the negotiating table when "neither benefits from hostility" and so frustration brings them to negotiate where they will have to manage their differences because "neither side can simply overcome the other" (Womack 443). Therefore the costs of conflict drive the parties to negotiation, and "bitter experience of the futility of stalemate underwrites the stability of the ensuing normalization" (Womack 443). In cases of asymmetric stalemate, the weaker party may feel the costs of the stalemate more acutely because "the weaker side is often in a situation of mortal threat in which its identity or even continued existence is at risk" (Womack 452). Therefore, the weaker side is "likely to remain more aware of the cost of hostility and to be more sensitive to the possibility of normalization" (Womack 452).

Although the two parties have been in contact several times in the past fifty years, it has been more than two years since the exile representatives met with the Chinese government (Gyari). Therefore, while the exiles, as the weaker party, continue to advocate for resolution of the conflict, the will on the Chinese side seems to have dried out. While the exiles cannot ignore China if they want to resolve the dispute, China feels that it can ignore the exiles. While, the parties are in asymmetric stalemate, the costs of conflict have not been so great as to bring them to negotiation. Indeed, China has vacillated back and forth from if it thinks engagement with the Tibetans in-exile will solve its Tibet problems. At times it has chosen to not engage with the

exiles because China's ultimate goal is a peaceful China, not resolving the conflict. Therefore if China does not think that the Tibetans in-exile are relevant, then the conflict between the two will remain in stalemate.

Currently, China has refused to engage with the exile government. When referring to the unrest in Tibet and abroad, China lays the blame with the Dalai Lama. In this way, China depoliticizes the conflict by refusing to engage with the exile government and referring to the Dalai Lama as a rogue spiritual leader who promotes separatism amongst his followers. Therefore, as long as China does not feel that the exiles are essential to the stopping the unrest in Tibet, resolution of the conflict between the exiles and China is unlikely to occur and the stalemate will continue. Given the importance of Chinese relationships with other countries abroad, it is unlikely that a third-party would intervene in this dispute without China's agreement, especially given that China holds veto power on the United Nations Security Council. However, it is unclear as of yet how China will react to the continued threat of public and news-grabbing immolations. China may choose to engage with the exiles, or the polarization between the groups may be too wide. It is possible that groups like Machik who are able to engage with the Chinese government in Tibet to create policy change may help dispel stereotypes and create a more favorable situation in Tibet. With China feeling the strain of regulating a Tibet in conflict, this may be an opportunity for the exiles to engage China, and signal that they are sincere in their desire to help.

Honors Capstone Part II

The Purposes and Effectiveness of Dialogue in Resolving Conflict

Thus far, little progress has been made by the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Chinese government towards resolving the dispute that causes periodic violent conflict in the Tibetan region. To examine the potential of dialogue in this dispute, this work will assess the purposes and effectiveness of dialogue in resolving conflict. This section will highlight what is unique about dialogue, how it functions, and when its use is appropriate by comparing dialogue to negotiation and mediation, the two most common conflict resolution methods employed in the Sino-Tibetan conflict. This work will demonstrate where dialogue intersects and differs from these methodologies as well as its limits and the challenges practitioners may face. First this work will briefly discuss an overview of negotiation and mediation, and then explore dialogue in greater detail, contrasting the method with negotiation and mediation throughout.

Negotiation

Negotiation is a tool used to resolve conflict and opposing interests peacefully (Pfetsch 4). Because negotiation is interdisciplinary and used in many walks of life from business to psychology and market haggling to power politics, it is difficult to define a unified theory of negotiation (Druckman 112). Therefore while there is no one theory of negotiation, there are several theories that approach negotiation from different perspectives (Pfetsch 7). One of the most used definitions of negotiation comes from William Zartman,

“Negotiation is a process of combining conflicting positions into a common position, under a decision rule of unanimity, a phenomenon in which the outcome is determined by the process” (Nikolaev 4).

This definition highlights several important elements of negotiation. For one, negotiation is used when there are parties in conflict with opposing positions and interests. Negotiation is a

process of creating a consensus by which they resolve those opposing interests to come to a position that they all agree upon. Creating this consensus usually involves a “process of exchange” and communication (Nikolaev 4).

Negotiation can occur among top-level leaders, midlevel leaders, and at a grassroots level among local leaders and individuals (Lederarch 146). The negotiations can be direct negotiations between disputing parties, or they might use a third party mediator (Druckman 164). Mediators are often used when negotiations occur in an international setting (Pfetsch 8).

Goals of Negotiation

While the goal of negotiation is ultimately to create resolution that is accepted by the various sides involved, the immediate goals of negotiation are determined by the stage of the conflict they are occurring in and the parties involved. At different stages of a conflict the negotiating parties’ goals may range from preventing or stopping violence when a conflict is escalating to building durable peace once the initial conflict has been resolved (Saunders 486). If the conflict is especially divisive such that it prevents the parties from agreeing to begin the negotiating process, smaller tactical objectives can pave the way for the larger goals of conflict resolution through negotiation. These tactical objectives may be goals such as working to building understanding and breaking down false stereotypes, or coming to an agreement about the structure that the negotiation should take (Nikolaev 5). Indeed, the more the conflict involves fundamental issues such as values and survival, rather than more superficial elements such as resource distribution, the more difficult it may be to bring the parties to negotiate (Pfetsch 6).

Defining Success

Success in a negotiation will be defined in part by the goals in a conflict, and the type of conflict.

Short-term vs. Long-term: The success of a negotiation can be defined by how long-term and short-term goals are prioritized. If the negotiation does not involve deep-seated interests or existential concerns, the conflict may have more short-term goals of completing the terms of an exchange transaction. Sometimes, settling for short-term goals which may look good politically may be to the detriment of long-term goals such as a durable peace because the deep-seated issues are not addressed (Freeman 103).

Agreements vs. relationships: Depending on the type of conflict, the negotiation may have the goal of building relationships among parties who will be in contact with one another for a long time, or simply coming to an agreement among parties for whom the negotiation might be a one-time transaction. Especially if the conflict involves deep-seated issues, improving relationships can help in the long-term result, and can pave the way for the agreement (Laue 302).

Win/lose vs. win/win: Many people believe that negotiation is a zero - sum game or that “success for one side is measured by how much the other side is losing” (Kelman 89). However, if one party appears to have won everything at the other party’s expense, “the loser will have strong incentives to turn to a renewed campaign of violence in pursuit of political objectives” (Hampson 218-219). Success can also be defined as a win/win scenario in which a negotiation “can be mutually beneficial without being equally beneficial” (USIP Negotiation 14).

Competitive Bargaining vs. Collaborative Problem solving: Although there are many strategies of negotiation most either fall into a competitive bargaining framework or a collaborative problem-solving framework. Negotiation is often viewed in terms of competitive bargaining, as when someone haggles over the cost of an item (Hopmann 451). The parties in a competitive bargaining scenario make their initial demands, and define for themselves their best alternatives,

which, if they fail to achieve the best case alternative, they will walk away from the negotiation (Hopmann 446). Negotiation manifests as a “sequence of bids and concessions until a decision acceptable for all the involved parties is reached” (Nikolaev 5).

In this case parties clearly state their positions, but are reluctant to discuss their needs for fear that the other side may use it to their advantage as it is a zero-sum scenario where every gain is made at the expense of the opposing party (Kelman 89). This method is also called confrontational negotiation or hard negotiation where each side attempts to gain “unilateral advantage” (Pfetsch 36). In some cases, for negotiating parties, hard negotiation appeals because it seems as if it can achieve the most favorable results with the least concessions. However, it increases the risk that no agreement will be had (Pfetsch 37).

In contrast, collaborative problem solving, or integrative negotiation is a method in which the negotiating parties “face the problem as a joint problem” (Marks 17). According to Terrence Hopmann, “the goal of negotiation from a problem-solving perspective is to solve common problems that the parties face in order to benefit everyone” (456). In other words the negotiation is not viewed as a conflict between two groups that needs to be solved, but “as a common problem confronting all parties that must be solved” (Hopmann 456).

In order to come up with a common solution, the collaborative approach requires that the parties share information about their interests and needs more freely than they would in the competitive bargaining approach. Parties will view this sharing as risky because it may allow the other party to gain advantage, and it may be risky, but sharing each other’s needs may reveal solutions that may not have been perceived through competitive bargaining. Most importantly, each side must attempt to listen and fully understand the needs of the other side “not for altruistic purposes but out of necessity to respond to the other party’s concerns in order to get one’s own

needs met” (Babbitt 366). However, parties may not choose integrative negotiation because they believe that it may “increase the chances of achieving a settlement but miss the opportunity of gaining a favorable result” (Pfetsch 37).

The decision of whether to participate in hard or soft negotiation is often determined by the balance of power between negotiating powers. If there is an asymmetrical relationship, the stronger party may choose competitive bargaining or hard negotiation because as the stronger party they have the leverage to achieve the most favorable result. However the weaker party may be forced to choose soft negotiation and make compromises. In a symmetric relationship, each party can mirror the other party’s hard or soft choice. (Pfetsch 37-38).

Mediation

As with negotiation, mediation occurs in a variety of contexts and settings from international conflict to conflicts between individuals. Generally speaking, mediation refers to third party intervention in conflicts to resolve a dispute. Many definitions exist for mediation that touch on the outcomes or the processes of mediation. Bercovitch’s definition combines both of these aspects:

“[mediation is] a process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties’ own negotiations, where those in conflict seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an outsider (whether an individual, and organization, a group, or a state) to change their perceptions or behavior, and to do so without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law” (Bercovitch 168).

Mediation is a form of negotiation where instead of direct negotiations between parties in the conflict, a third party is enlisted to help facilitate the conflict resolution process. The mediation is noncoercive and nonbinding as the help is accepted by conflict parties; it is not forced upon them (Bercovitch 168). Therefore, mediation is voluntary, and the conflict parties have “the freedom to accept or reject mediation or the mediator’s proposals” (Bercovitch 169).

When to use mediation

Mediation is usually used when parties in a conflict have reached a stalemate in a “long, drawn out, or complex” conflict (Bercovitch 172). The parties no longer want to bear the costs of the conflict such as loss of life and resources, and are ready to cooperate or break the stalemate. Therefore effective mediation needs “consent, high motivation, and active participation from the conflict parties” (Bercovitch 172). If these factors are not present, or the conflict parties are not sincere in their desire to seek mediation and resolve the conflict, then mediation is less likely to be successful. Conflict parties may also want a mediator to monitor and bear witness to an agreement, or help influence the other party (Bercovitch 174).

Who mediates?

Mediators are often neutral third parties that are trusted by the all of the conflict parties to provide fair mediation. They could come from a range of experiences including government officials, religious figures, states, or organizations (Bercovitch 172). However, it is important to note that, whether they are aware of it or not, mediators bring their own assumptions, interests, and agendas to the conflict, and become a party to the conflict itself (Bercovitch 168). Mediators expect to gain something from the successful resolution of the conflict whether it is a more peaceful world for their interests, or increased access to leaders.

Mediator roles and strategy

What the mediator does and the success of the mediator’s actions is dependent on the conflict context (Bercovitch 168). Indeed, Bercovitch states “what mediators do, can do, or are permitted to do in their efforts to resolve a conflict may depend, to some extent, on who they are and what competencies they bring to bear” (168). Additionally, it depends on “who the parties are, [...] what is at stake, and the nature of [the conflict parties’] interaction” (Bercovitch 168). Styles and

methods of mediating vary greatly by both the different types of conflicts and mediators who are mediating. A mediator may be passive or very active. Mediators “choose strategic behavior they believe will facilitate the outcome they seek to achieve” (Bercovitch 175).

In sum, mediation is an extension of negotiation. When parties in a conflict do not feel like they can negotiate directly, they may call in a third party to help facilitate the negotiation as a mediator. Mediators often aim to achieve an integrative or problem-solving approach rather than hard, distributive bargaining.

Dialogue

The process of dialogue as defined by the field of conflict resolution can be applied to conflicts large and small (Yankelovich 12-13). The term “dialogue” is used widely today, but in terms of conflict resolution it has a narrowly defined meaning and purpose. According to Daniel Yankelovich, dialogue is an interaction distinct from debate and discussion, a “highly specialized form of discussion that imposes a rigorous discipline on the participants” (Yankelovich 16). In contrast to mediation and negotiation, the purpose of dialogue is not to resolve a conflict. Instead, dialogue can pave the way for conflict resolution by creating a way for disputants in a conflict to understand each other’s perspectives and deeply felt convictions. Successful dialogue humanizes the other in a conflict, bringing a level of respect and liking that was not there previously (Isaacs 92). This new found respect can create a space for the resolution of a conflict, as it can allow for new types of thinking when one does not feel as threatened or compelled to staunchly defend one’s position. As Yankelovich says, the potential benefits of dialogue are immense:

“long-standing stereotypes dissolved, mistrust overcome, mutual understanding achieved, visions shaped and grounded in shared purpose, people previously at odds with one another aligned on objectives and strategies, new common ground discovered, new

perspectives and insight gained, new levels of creativity stimulated, and bonds of community strengthened” (Yankelovich 12).

William Isaacs describes dialogue as the “art of thinking together.” It is an interaction in which a group of people comes together in a genuine effort to understand the point of view of another, “thinking together” rather than “thinking alone” as they would by holding on to their own views without understanding the views of opposing parties (Isaacs 28). Yet, it can also mean that while the parties to the conflict might respect each other, they may still fundamentally disagree. In this case, other conflict resolution tools such as mediation and negotiation may be needed. The following will go into more detail about what elements can make dialogue successful, and what pitfalls can arise, contrasting dialogue with negotiation and mediation throughout this work.

Background on the referenced works

The narrow definition of dialogue explored in this paper is heavily based on experience rather than theory, and this work therefore focuses less on the theoreticians and more on those authors who describe and analyze their experiences conducting dialogue in the field. Specifically, while other authors are mentioned, this work emphasizes the three books: *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together* by William Isaacs, *The Magic of Dialogue: Transforming Conflict into Cooperation* by Daniel Yankelovich, and *Intergroup Dialogue: Deliberative Democracy in School, College, Community, and Workplace* by David Schoem and Sylvia Hurtado. The authors come from different perspectives. William Isaacs comes from a theoretical perspective in the vein of David Bohm, stressing his views of fragmentation, that people view life as separate from one another when really there is a coherence and interconnectivity to the world. It is into this “wholeness” that dialogue taps (Isaacs 2). He offers strategies for successful

dialogue based upon these theories, drawing upon his experience as a facilitator and researcher of dialogue at MIT. Yankelovich focuses on the practicalities of what makes a successful dialogue, and its potential for transforming American society which he believes is becoming increasingly segmented. Finally, Schoem and Hurtado's work focuses on several case studies of dialogue conducted between groups divided by issues and cultures in the United States. All of the authors focus on dialogue in the United States, with Isaacs and Yankelovich focusing on the business world, and Schoem and Hurtado focus on community groups. Their experiences with using dialogue to build relationships among conflicting groups enhance the examination of dialogue in contrast to mediation and negotiation.

Dialogue compared to other forms of communication

As defined in conflict resolution studies, dialogue is a unique form of communication, distinct from debate or discussion. Most dialogue practitioners believe that debate is the opposite of dialogue (Yankelovich 38). Indeed, in debate, the goal is to win the dispute and defeat the opponent (Yankelovich 38). A dialogue cannot be won by some participants and lost by the rest. In a dialogue, all the participants strive for mutual understanding, and if this is not achieved, then they have lost together. Yankelovich states that, "the worst possible way to advance mutual understanding is to win debating points at the expense of others" (Yankelovich 38). Therefore in a dialogue, groups in conflict must not argue their points, but express them with the hope that they will be listened to with understanding, and that they in turn will listen with understanding. They must avoid, "listening to detect soft spots in the other's position so that they can convert them," as one would in a debate (Yankelovich 39).

In debate there is a different understanding of how each group should relate to the other. Groups assume that "there is a right answer and [they] have it," while in dialogue, the

participants assume that “many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can craft a solution” (Yankelovich 39). Moreover, in debate the goal is to win by finding flaws in the opponents position and making counterarguments, while in dialogue, the goal is to “explore common ground” by listening to understand empathize with the other’s experience (Yankelovich 39). In dialogue, instead of searching for weakness, one searches for “strength and value in each other’s positions” (Yankelovich 40). Instead of “defending assumptions as truth” as in a debate, in a dialogue participants reveal “assumptions for revaluation” and “reexamine all positions” (Yankelovich 39). Therefore, a debate ends with trying to identify the winners and the losers, while a dialogue ends with acceptance of the others’ views even if one disagrees and being open to new possibilities. (Yankelovich 40).

The mindset present in debate often is an element of competitive bargaining negotiation where the purpose of the negotiation in bargaining is to win the negotiation at the expense of the other party who is viewed as the opponent. In competitive bargaining, as in debate, the different parties staunchly defend their positions, and try to win at the expense of the other group. Joint-problem solving negotiation comes closer to dialogue than competitive bargaining in that it holds that the problem can be solved together and mutual gains can be achieved, rather than one party achieving gains at the expense of the other, the same zero-sum mentality present in debate. In joint-problem-solving, the parties try to understand the other’s concerns and needs to see how to create a solution that serves all parties. Rather than looking at needs and interests to find a solution, dialogue goes deeper than this by trying to understand the root causes of emotions of the conflict as well as needs and interests, not to solve the conflict, but to build trust and understanding. By letting go of the need to find a solution, participants in a conflict are given the space to focus on understanding the other. Once this trust is established, the parties can search

for a solution in a more conducive environment of trust (Isaacs 92). Therefore, in exploring needs and interests through joint problem-solving there could be moments of dialogue where participants let go of assumptions and feel empathy for those whom they considered their opponents. That dialogic moment, where participants listen to understand, could be the moment that creates the space of trust which allows the joint problem-solving to succeed. However, these moments of dialogue may not always arise. Especially for conflicts that involve issues such as resource distribution and do not touch on deep-seated conflict or hate, it may be easier to joint problem-solve without dialogue. The stakes are not as high, and each group does not feel that the other threatens their survival. However, in existential conflicts where the parties feel like their very survival is threatened by the other, long standing hatreds and distrust may impede the joint problem-solving process because each group may fear that revealing their needs and fundamental interests may give the other group tools to use against them (Kelman 89). In these cases, it may be useful to incorporate dialogue in the negotiation joint problem-solving process. Dialogue would precede the discussion about solutions to build trust and understanding. Dialogue also intersects with negotiation when relationship-building is a goal for a successful negotiation. When parties will need to work with each other in the future, the negotiation may involve relationship building. Dialogue is an ideal tool to build relationships.

When not dialogue, joint problem-solving may involve discussion rather than debate or dialogue. Yankelovich writes that discussion also differs from dialogue by three distinctive features. When all of these features are present discussion becomes a dialogue which is able to transform stereotypes and promote understanding (Yankelovich 41). Without these features, the communication is not dialogue. These features, discussed below, are the key to what makes a successful dialogue.

1. Participant Equality

While outside of dialogue, there may be differences in status, in the dialogue all participants must treat each other and be treated as equals (Yankelovich 42). This equality is necessary so that each person's perspectives is respected and given equal weight and right to be voiced. Without this equality, participants may not feel comfortable enough to share their views and experiences, and so will not be able to listen and understand. Yankelovich writes that in "dialogue there is no arm-twisting, no pulling of rank, no hint of sanctions for holding politically incorrect attitudes, no coercive influences of any sort, whether overt or indirect" (Yankelovich 42). Having people of varying status in a dialogue may make this equality difficult, but Yankelovich holds that it can be done so long as within the dialogue all participants agree beforehand to act as equals, and listen to all participants with the intention to understand. Each person must have an equal right to be understood (Yankelovich 42). This requires a large amount of trust to be built among the participants to get to a point where people of mixed rank feel comfortable enough to share with one another. Additionally, in conflicts where the parties have asymmetrical power relationships there may be differences between the groups' expectations of the dialogue. In an asymmetrical relationship, the dominant group might be motivated by curiosity to meet the other, while the weaker group, might expect greater policy changes. This was the case in Abu-Nimer's study of Israeli-Jewish dialogue groups. He found that,

"Arabs are more oriented in their goal of convincing Jewish participants to change their political attitudes, while the Jewish participants avoid such output and are more concerned with the enjoyment of the encounter, or the "fun" of the contact, or learning about the "mystical" Arab culture" (Abu-Nimer 126).

The difference in expectations could result in a sense of failure after the dialogue is completed. More alarmingly it raises questions as to a dialogue's effectiveness in resolving conflict. Does

the trust that is achieved result in political change in an asymmetrical conflict? This drawback should be considered when conducting dialogues in asymmetrical conflicts. The same difficulty with asymmetry occurs in negotiation and mediation. When there is a power imbalance between the negotiating parties, the stronger party has the ability to dictate the terms and format of the negotiation process. Often, the party which is “weaker” in terms of military or material resources will attempt to correct the power imbalance through other means such as taking the moral high ground (Pfetsch 37-38). A willingness to work with the opposing party is essential to both dialogue and a successful negotiation.

2. Empathetic Listening

Yankelovich holds that most successful dialogue begins with a “gesture of empathy” (Yankelovich 43). In order for a dialogue to happen, “participants must respond with unreserved empathy to the views of others” which will allow them to understand where their fellow participants are “coming from and why they [feel] the way they [do]” even if they do not agree (Yankelovich 43-44). However, reaching this level of openness and empathy among divided groups can be difficult, as the different groups in the dialogue will want to defend themselves and their positions. Yankelovich observes that it is almost always someone from an opposing side who is willing to give ground by emphasizing with another’s view that begins to build the trust and the spirit of mutual understanding (Yankelovich 54). Isaacs holds that this process involves more than empathy. According to him, successful dialogue involves a sense of “impersonal fellowship” each participant is able to enlarge their sense of themselves and advocate for the whole (Isaacs 103). Therefore, empathy is the key to mutual understanding.

Once the participants feel that others understand and empathize with their positions and needs, they can begin to work on solutions for the conflict.

Feeling empathy for the opposing party especially between groups with a history of violent conflict and longstanding grievances is one of the greatest challenges of dialogue and where dialogue can fail when this hate and mistrust overcomes the group's willingness to explore commonalities (Yankelovich 17). Sometimes, groups may not be able to suspend their judgments to truly listen to one another. Yankelovich also calls this the "clash of subcultures," when groups come from different frameworks of thinking, and must learn how to understand each other's framework. Depending on how large and emotionally charged the perceived differences are between groups, this difference in subculture may prove an obstacle to the successful dialogue (Yankelovich 62). To combat this scenario, William Isaacs recommends focusing on the underlying interests, "interests and not positions" (Isaacs 373). In some of these cases, transference or the "process of projecting onto others feelings originating in earlier experiences" may be at work (Yankelovich 86). When groups are not able to acknowledge and question their assumptions about the other, they fall into the trap of transference, and simply act out old interactions based on past experiences, rather than thinking of the dialogue as a new opportunity (Isaacs 59). Even when trust exists, they may still fall into what Yankelovich describes as "transference distortions" (Yankelovich 86). To address transference, Isaacs's recommends that participants learn to be present and notice what they are feeling, connecting what they think with the experiences that lead them to think it (Isaacs 92-94). According to Isaacs, one of the main blocks to dialogue when participants form conclusions and do not test them (Isaacs 95). He suggests a practice that he calls, "listening from disturbance," or looking for

evidence that disconfirms one's point of view (Isaacs 95). This practice is part of a larger strategy of increasing self-awareness to enhance the effectiveness of dialogue.

Historical conflict and grievances can also impede the negotiation process. When groups in a historical dispute move to negotiate it is because the costs of violence and conflict have become too great. Therefore, the groups seek to come to a mutual agreement, perhaps with the aid of a facilitator. The costs of the conflict may provide sufficient motivation to make for a successful negotiation or a dialogue. Empathy is needed for dialogue, and to a certain extent, it is needed for negotiation, especially in joint problem-solving. Groups need to understand and have an awareness of what are the needs of the other to come to an agreement in negotiation. If they empathize with those needs by understanding and accepting the process by which the other party had come to value those needs, the negotiation may be even more successful. In dialogue, groups must seek to understand not only the needs of the other, but the perspective and motivations of the other and how those ways of being developed through learned experiences. In both of these cases, if grievance overcomes motivation for empathy and committing to the negotiation or dialogue process, then these attempts will fail. In order to create empathy for negotiation, a dialogue process preceding negotiation could be useful.

3. Addressing Assumptions

In hand with empathy, dialogue practitioners hold that participants must examine and express their fundamental assumptions about the other and the conflict in order to reap the benefits of dialogue (Yankelovich 44). They must explore the reasons why they feel the way they do, and share them with the group. Once shared, these assumptions “are not to be dismissed out of hand but considered with respect even when people disagree with them” (Yankelovich 44). For

example, if a participant feels judgmental about something another has said, he should examine why he feels judgmental. What beliefs and values inform that judgment? David Bohn, a dialogue theorist and physicist, holds that it is these assumptions that promote misunderstanding and isolation between groups and people, stating that, “when your deepest-rooted assumptions about who you are and what you deem most important in life are attacked, you react as if you are being attacked personally (Yankelovich 45). Therefore, one of the biggest differences between discussion and dialogue is this “process of bringing assumptions out into the open while simultaneously suspending judgment” (Yankelovich 45). Indeed, Isaacs calls this “polarization held in a climate of respect” where “no one tries to convince the other of his position, and all try to understand what is happening without resorting to blame” (Isaacs 113). Isaacs holds that the participants must learn the principle of suspension, or how to suspend their opinions and the certainty that lies behind them to truly listen to other’s positions without judgment (Isaacs 135).

In addition, while in other conversations, participants may be reluctant to bring their assumptions forth for fear of being vulnerable and judged, in dialogue, participants must be “uninhibited in bringing their own and other participants’ assumptions into the open, where, within the safe confines of the dialogue, others can respond to them without challenging them or reacting to them judgmentally” (Yankelovich 45). The different parties to the conflict come from different subcultures, “webs of shared beliefs, perceptions, customs, and styles” (Yankelovich 64). Yankelovich relates how when “two subcultures encounter each other on specific issues, misunderstanding is almost inevitable because there is never enough time or opportunity for each subculture to understand the folkways of the other” (Yankelovich 64). He states that dialogue is the most efficient way to create understanding, and that it is best to avoid stereotyping by subculture and to “focus on conflicts between value systems, not people” (Yankelovich 70).

Bringing to light one's assumptions allows the participants to probe deeper into the conflict, revealing misunderstandings and obsolete assumptions about the other that block resolution (Yankelovich 55). It is important to examine one's own assumptions before calling out those of others which can raise tension if people feel attacked (Yankelovich 66).

This process of airing assumptions does not necessarily occur in direct negotiation between parties or mediation. Specifically, in competitive bargaining, bringing one's assumptions to light may hinder the bargaining process, and would probably not occur because parties defend their assumptions. In joint problem solving, while mutually beneficial arrangements are examined, assumptions are not necessarily examined unless it happens informally. Finally, a mediator if he or she decides to initiate dialogue may ask conflict parties to explore their assumptions.

Structuring a Dialogue

Although dialogues occur spontaneously in many settings whenever two or more people in a conflict actively listen with empathy to understand the other's motivations, dialogues can be used intentionally as a tool of conflict resolution. Properly structuring a dialogue can help avoid some of the pitfalls examined in the previous section. Some of the most common planned dialogues are corporate retreats, but dialogues are also used to help resolve international conflict such as the Seeds of Peace Program which helps create understanding between Palestinian and Israeli youth (Yankelovich 91). To plan a successful dialogue, some of the following factors must be considered.

1. Format

One of the most important format rules that researchers stress is that dialogue and decision-making should be kept separate because decision-making necessarily involves questions of

power and leverage that interfere with the equality and acceptance necessary for dialogue (Yankelovich 15). In this way, dialogue differs from negotiation and mediation whose purposes involve decision-making to resolve conflict. Decision-making can be a reason to initiate dialogue and decision-making often follows dialogue (Yankelovich 56).

Additionally, another consideration to make is whether the planned dialogue should have a facilitator. As in negotiation and mediation, depending on the severity of the conflict and the state of the relationship between the parties, a third-party facilitator who the groups feel that they can trust may be necessary (Yankelovich 125). Schoem and Hurtado state that a facilitator is always necessary because a skilled and trained facilitator is essential to the process when the issues involved are complex and touch deep emotions and tension (Schoem and Hurtado 12). Yankelovich holds that ideally a skilled facilitator will make it so they are no longer needed by being “heroically unobtrusive and passive” and intervening only when needed, as the participants build relationships with each other, learning to work together without the aid of a facilitator (Yankelovich 127). In mediation, a facilitator might be more active, as his or her goal is to bring resolution of the conflict.

A final formatting question is how to arrange communication between participants. The most common form of dialogue is a face-to-face dialogue where participants meet for a certain number of times and hours to participate in the dialogue. This format is what the authors of the texts write about the most, stating that face-to-face interaction helps facilitate the feeling of trust needed in dialogue. However, both Yankelovich and Isaacs have posited that the internet might be a possible format for engaging in dialogue given its ability to connect people no matter where they are. Yankelovich states that the Internet opens “new possibilities for citizen-leader interaction.” However, he adds that a drawback to using the Internet is that it is not available or

user-friendly to all, but to a “college-age minority” for the most part. Additionally, it may be too impersonal for dialogue (Yankelovich 164). Isaacs also thinks that the Internet has the potential to enhance dialogic processes by improving people’s capacity to listen and process what is being. He writes that when one speaks to someone via email or video, one “must choose to process what is being said” (Isaacs 391). Additionally, he thinks that the tools provided by the Internet are an unexplored territory and potential for dialogue (Isaacs 391). In contrast, Schoem and Hurtado hold that using the internet as the main vehicle for dialogue is not an option as face-to-face contact is essential. However, they state that it may be useful as a supporting tool (Schoem and Hurtado 9).

Yankelovich offers a final option for dialogue through the television which he calls proxy dialogue. He writes that television is one of the only universal mediums, and might be a way to transfer the positive effects of dialogue to the masses. Proxy dialogue would be a television program that broadcast a dialogue between a variety of people and opinions about an issue that concerns many, such as social security. By watching a dialogue between people who represent their views, and others who hold contrary views, yet seeing these people in the context of an empathetic dialogue, the effects of understanding may be spread to television watchers (Yankelovich 165).

2. Length

Deciding how long to make a dialogue depends on the scope of the dialogue’s objectives. Yankelovich writes that, “dialogue that must bridge an enormous gap of mistrust and cultural misunderstanding [...] may go on for years” (Yankelovich 119-120). Indeed, Isaacs tells of a dialogue between the managers and workers in a steel mill for which he, as facilitator, had to

remove all timetables, and allow the dialogue to go on for as long as it needed. When there are more commonalities and shared understanding among groups, then a shorter dialogue may be necessary. The more divided the group, the longer the dialogue will need to be (Yankelovich 124). Generally, the same guidance follows for negotiation and mediation. If the groups in conflict are discussing something that does not involve long-standing conflicts, values, or grievances, the negotiation will be shorter. When existential issues are involved, the negotiation can take years.

3. Size and composition

Although seemingly obvious, dialogue is richer when it includes participants who disagree with one another (Yankelovich 107). Additionally, researchers vary on how many people should be in a dialogue. Schoem and Hurtado hold that a dialogue group should be a small size of 12 to 18 people (Schoem and Hurtado 7). Yankelovich mentions that other researchers state that 12 to 24 people are best (Yankelovich 41). He says himself that dialogue is easier with twelve to thirty people (Yankelovich 159). Other forms of dialogue via the internet or television may involve more people.

The feasibility of bringing together conflict parties in great numbers over a long period of time when the dialogue concerns a political conflict and involves political leaders is another question. In part, the size of a group will be determined by the conflict party, and the restraints that they may have on their availability and willingness to commit to a dialogue or negotiation.

4. Ground rules and expectations

Dialogue asks a lot of its participants in terms of sharing with people with whom they have a conflicted relationship. It is important to establish ground rules and expectations because they help create a space where people feel safe to share (Isaacs 373). For example, some of these ground rules could be a commitment to confidentiality, and to listening without judging (Schoem and Hurtado 9). Another ground rule should be set to create a space of equality meaning that each person has a right to speak and be listened to. Although this does not mean that everyone must have an equal speaking time, or that people should be cut off if they are taking more time to speak than others (Yankelovich 126). Expectations could also be set to help the dialogue. Participants can be told that the purpose of dialogue is to share their values and that “where appropriate [they should] express the emotions that accompany strongly held values” (Yankelovich 71).

Other Pitfalls and limits to dialogue

Alternatively, there might be certain individuals who may prove disruptive to the dialogue, and may cause it to fail, although failure can often be avoided. For example, a dialogue may not progress because of participants who “hold back” and do not participate because they do not feel comfortable. One possible solution would be conducting some sort of ice breaker to create a bond and increased comfort among the participants (Yankelovich 130). Other common problems include “showboating” and “aria singing,” and contrarianism (Yankelovich 139). In showboating and aria singing, participants who engage in these behaviors prioritize expressing their views, over listening to others. In showboating, the impulse is to show off, while in aria singing the participant may feel compelled to push the interests of their constituents, rather than engage fully in the dialogue (Yankelovich 139-142). Contrarianism manifests in those who always seem to adopt a contrary view, which can be disconcerting to participants, but can also

enrich a dialogue (Yankelovich 140). For all of these possible disturbances, simply allowing these participants to have their say should help these impulses subside. In the cases where the participant does not stop “showing off” in the case of showboating, it may be that that person is not meant for dialogue, and the other participants must “wait patiently until they play themselves out” (Yankelovich 139). Isaacs adds that it is important to integrate people disruptive to the dialogue, such as those “on a warpath” else they may destroy the dialogue process. Again, allowing them to have their say, and acknowledging that they were listened to may help (Isaacs 130).

Participants may also have problems with listening without hearing, and feeling the need to prematurely move into action (Yankelovich 130). In order to promote true listening, participants can be encouraged to reflect back what they hear by repeating what they understood to the person who is speaking. That person can confirm or add to what was repeated to make sure their intention was understood. If someone in the group is pushing for premature action, simply checking in with the rest of the group to see if they too are ready to act, can curb premature action. A final individual problem which can spread to a group is the impulse to score debating points. When people respond to the impulse of trying to win a debate, tension may rise in the group, chipping away at the safe dialogue space. To relieve this tension, others may try to take a side, which lessens the tension for them, but increases the pressure for others to take a side and “reduces the space in which new understanding can emerge” (Isaacs 130). To address this, Isaacs suggests encouraging the group to not react to the tension, but notice it and dissect it. Finally, a dialogue may fail because it was “simply not done well” as facilitating and participating in a dialogue takes special skills that some may not have or develop (Yankelovich 17).

Conclusion

Dialogue occurs in other conflict resolution methods, and in many other formal and informal situations. For example, when conducting the collaborative problem-solving discussed in the negotiation section, the participants must be willing to be vulnerable by sharing their interests and core needs. An understanding of these needs by each side is needed for an integrative negotiation. This process of sharing could easily turn into dialogue whether it was meant to or not. Dialogue has great potential for resolving conflict, and exploring and subsequently dispelling misunderstandings and judgments that characterize international conflict. However, the graver the conflict is, the more difficult it may be for dialogue to be effective. It seems that participants in a dialogue where they feel that the opposing side threatens their survival, may have trouble feeling empathy for the other side or stop trying to strategize and gain any advantage. Perhaps here is where the skill of the facilitator who can reframe the goal of both parties as one is crucial. The problems of authority and the neutralizing of status that must happen in a dialogue may be difficult to conduct in a dialogue for an international conflict. Furthermore, can the effects of dialogue be sustained once people return to their home communities? This appears to be one of the greatest challenges for those in protracted, deep-rooted conflicts.

Additionally, dialogue does have its limits. For one, it is difficult to bring the effects of dialogue to the larger community (Isaacs 114). Schoem and Hurtado warn that intergroup dialogue can be used for negative purposes, especially when the parties in the conflict have an asymmetric power relationship. Groups in power may advocate intergroup dialogue “to encourage groups to focus strictly on the dialogue rather than on substantive, structural issues; to emphasize talk above, and in place of action” and “in order to delay or cool out protest and civic participation” (Schoem and Hurtado 6). Indeed, as noted by Abu-Nimer, parties in asymmetric

relationships may come into a dialogue with different expectations which can result in a sense of failure after the dialogue is complete (Abu-Nimer 126). In contrast, negotiation when sincere, presents an attempt to solve the conflict itself, rather than quell protest. However, if negotiating parties are not sincere, negotiation too can be simply a tool to cool partisan protest.

The works on dialogue discussed in this paper focused on dialogue within the United States, and not on international conflict. Although these lessons bear on conflict in general, further reading on dialogue in international conflict may help answer some of the questions above. Additionally, these works focused on dialogue from a participant's standpoint, highlighting the mindset the participant would need to effectively engage in dialogue. These works did not discuss the specifics of how a dialogue is run from beginning to end. Further study of the process from the facilitator's perspective would show how one can organize and conduct a dialogue. Finally, this paper did not go too deeply into the more theoretical side of dialogue

Honors Capstone Part III

The Potential for Dialogue in the Sino- Tibetan Conflict: Practical Implementation

The Tibetan conflict has continued for over fifty years with little resolution between the exiles and the Chinese government. The Tibetan exiles are spread across the world, and according to the BBC, 2500 cross the Himalayas into exile every year (Ingleton). Some Tibetan sources estimate this number to be as high as 3000 Tibetans who go into exile each year (Free Tibet). The conflict in Tibet is in a period of escalation. This year has seen one of the greatest waves of self-immolations in history with at least 34 Tibetans self-immolating across the Tibetan plateau (ICT Fact Sheet). China has reacted with an international public relations campaign accusing the Dalai Lama of instigating the deaths (Telegraph). The Chinese government has not met with the Tibetan government in-exile since 2010 (Gyari). Indeed, since the Dalai Lama relinquished his political role, the Chinese government has refused to meet with the new Tibetan political leader, the democratically elected Kalon Tripa (Q&A). Instead, the Chinese government directs its comments to the Dalai Lama, refusing to acknowledge the authority of the Tibetan government in-exile.

The meetings that have occurred since 1959 when the Dalai Lama fled Tibet represent the parties' attempts at direct negotiation and relationship building. The Chinese government has met with representatives of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government in-exile several times in official and unofficial talks without a mediator. China has insisted that the conflict is an internal affair, and brooks no outside interference including the aid of an international mediator (Gyari). The Tibetan government in-exile reported that the most recent round of negotiations in the early 2000s began favorably with the two sides agreeing on goals. Initial talks began with the two

groups agreeing on smaller measures so that they could discuss more difficult topics (Gyari). However, the rise of protests in Tibet in 2008 raised tension in the negotiations and mirroring doubts on both sides as to the sincerity of the other party led to the breakdown of talks in 2010 (Gyari). Currently, the two groups are in a protracted asymmetric stalemate sustained by stereotypes and seemingly mutually exclusive demands that prevent resolution.

Dialogue is a tool of conflict resolution which can dispel long-standing stereotypes. It can help create understanding, empathy, and respect between conflicting groups which can allow the groups to successfully resolve the conflict (Isaacs 192). It seems that the conflict resolution practice of dialogue has never been a part of the meetings between representatives of the exiles and Chinese leadership, nor have there been any groups using dialogue techniques between Tibetans and Chinese citizens. However, it is important to note that because a successful dialogue functions by creating a safe and private space where participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences, it is possible that dialogue processes have occurred, but were not publicized. Publicizing a dialogue between Chinese citizens and Tibetans could negate the positive effects of dialogue by destroying the trust built between participants when the process becomes subjected to public scrutiny and judgment (Isaacs 373). Therefore the question that arises is whether dialogue can help resolve this long-standing conflict. This work is a personal reflection which will explore the potential for dialogue in the Tibetan conflict. It will incorporate the previous examinations of dialogue as a conflict resolution technique, and the Sino-Tibetan conflict analysis. In addition, this paper will incorporate my experiences implementing dialogue techniques: first with an examination of the potential for dialogue in an online setting, and second with designing a dialogue between Tibetan and Chinese citizens at American University.

In many ways, dialogue seems the ideal conflict resolution tool to use in the Sino-Tibetan conflict. Dialogue in conflict resolution is a structured process where conflicting groups come together usually led by a facilitator with the goal to try to truly understand and empathize with each other's perspectives. While conflicting groups do not have to agree with each other, they do have to be willing to listen to understand (Isaacs 92). Therefore, the goal of a dialogue process is not to find a solution to the conflict. This process helps build trust, relationships and respect between groups in conflict. This trust can be used to resolve the conflict later. Therefore dialogue is a tool for relationship building that can break down stereotypes and build trust. The more divided the groups, the longer the dialogue process will be (Yankelovich 124). Negotiations between the exiles and the Chinese government have been at a stalemate for the past two years, blocked by the lack of trust created by fifty years of estrangement. Indeed, each side is suspicious of the other's motivations and misinterpretations abound. For example, the Tibetan demand for a Greater Tibet in which all Tibetan areas on the Tibetan plateau would be combined into one autonomous province is seen as proof of the exiles' separatism and lack of sincerity by the Chinese government because it would remove one fourth of China's territory and would require a dramatic shift in China's infrastructure to accomplish (Womack 447). In contrast, the exiles see a Greater Tibet as the only way to truly protect Tibetan cultural and religious expression. Therefore, dialogue could be the ideal tool to help break down the misperceptions and stereotypes present in the Sino-Tibetan conflict which have blocked the conflict resolution process. Indeed, dialogue asks participants to explore the roots of their positions and opinions of the other. In sharing the basic interests that underlie group's stances and opinion of the other, new understanding can be reached as participants discover that their assumptions about the other

might not be completely accurate (Yankelovich 39). Therefore dialogue might have an important place in the Sino-Tibetan conflict.

The apparent applicability of dialogue to the Tibetan conflict was the premise for exploring the practical implementation of dialogue techniques in this conflict. The impetus for this capstone was a 2011 fellowship which I was granted to create a human rights digital archive to preserve exhibition I had created from original film, photographs, and interviews I had collected from Tibetan refugees and Chinese citizens. The purpose of the exhibition was to explore the human perspective of this conflict through interviews with a diverse group Tibetan refugees and Chinese citizens. More details on this project are in Appendix. When the project was exhibited in 2010, it received positive responses from both Tibetans and Chinese citizens. I wondered if the underlying value of the project touched on the conflict resolution technique of dialogue where one attempts to listen and understand conflicting perspectives without judgment.

This capstone was created to see if a more thorough understanding of dialogue as a conflict resolution process would reveal its applicability for the conflict. My original idea was to use the online forum I was posting a human rights archive as a platform for dialogue. However, after researching dialogue, it became apparent that a public online forum would not be appropriate. Dialogue functions in part by creating a safe and private space where participants understand and feel that they can share and that the other members of the dialogue are there to try to understand and empathize with their perspectives even if they cannot agree (Isaacs 373). Subjecting this process to public scrutiny could put more pressure on participants to act with hostility if they know that others are watching them. While it could be possible to adapt a private online forum to dialogue, face-to-face contact was still preferable because much is communicated through body language and atmosphere. Research also revealed the importance of

an experienced dialogue facilitator. It takes skill and experience to be an effective dialogue facilitator. Facilitating a dialogue without experience and skill could exacerbate already high and volatile tensions in groups with deep-seated conflicts. Therefore, I also discovered that it would not be appropriate for me to facilitate a dialogue, especially one online at this time. Please view the Appendix for more information on the online archive.

Following the advice of my capstone advisor, I moved my efforts to exploring the potential for a dialogue to be held at American University (AU) through AU's Dialogue Development Group (DDG) which runs six-week long dialogues on a variety of topics each year. After submitting a proposal for the dialogue, DDG agreed to advise me on the design of the dialogue and train me as a co-facilitator. The dialogue would be an independent practicum with informed volunteer participation. It was designed to encompass two weeks: two sessions which would last three and a half hours each. Six participants would participate. It was planned that three would be Tibetans representing the "Tibetan perspective," and three would be Chinese, representing the "Chinese perspective." The two sessions, and the small size of the participants were selected both because it would have been the first dialogue group of its kind at AU, and because it would be easier to find a smaller number of participants.

I sent out the application across campus through the international student services office, the Peace and Conflict Resolution department, and to Tibetans and Chinese students who I knew. It was important to emphasize that the dialogue would be anonymous. The positive responses I received were from personal contacts, and they expressed concern for anonymity. In the end, there were not enough participants for a dialogue. Towards the end of the recruitment period, I was contacted by the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy (IMTD) to discuss a similar dialogue that they were creating which would focus on Tibetan and Chinese young professionals in

Washington, DC during the summer. IMTD was also having trouble with recruitment, and had been recruiting since December, a longer period of time than the DDG Sino-Tibetan dialogue. Please view the Appendix for more information on the DDG dialogue.

This practical experience highlights some of the difficulties that may be presented by using dialogue in the Tibetan conflict and that arise when using dialogue in asymmetric conflicts like the Sino-Tibetan conflict. In conflicts that involve long-standing resentment and violent conflict, it may be difficult to bring participants together. In the case of AU's dialogue, some Tibetan students and Chinese citizens may have had family still in Tibet or China. They might fear that there would be repercussions, and those fears may be justified given China's assertion that the conflict is an internal affair. Any action that may seem to support what it considers to be Tibetan separatist activities would be met with disapproval. This difficulty in bringing students together in a country that is miles away from China and Tibet, may indicate that at this time it would be even more difficult to bring parties together who are closer to the conflict.

Indeed, although the rewards can be great, dialogue is often more challenging when conducted between parties with long-standing grievances because it is difficult for groups to empathize with one another. In dialogue, participants share their experiences and examine their assumptions to discover the causes of their opinions about each other and the conflict. When listening to each other share it is important that participants work to empathize with one another even if they do not agree. Empathy allows participants to understand and respect how and why another person has reached his or her position. That newfound respect can allow groups to reexamine the conflict in a new light and discover new ideas for resolution (Yankelovich 43-44). In existential conflict, it may be difficult for participants to empathize with each other or to stop trying to gain partisan advantage knowing that the other party has harmed them and could do so

again (Kelman 89). In this case, it is up to the facilitator to establish ground rules and expectations that define what dialogue is, and what it is not. Dialogue is listening with empathy and the intention to understand. It is not debate where one listens to gain advantage of the other. The facilitator can also work to highlight common goals between the participants and reframe the dialogue in terms of those commonalities. In addition, a longer dialogue process would be needed in which participants gradually build trust until they can speak about the more divisive issues in civility. The necessity of a longer dialogue process raises logistical difficulties in conducting dialogue among leaders of conflict parties who are often separated by distance and busy schedules.

While it may be hard for participants to empathize with one another given the history of grievance, the inequality inherent in asymmetric conflict raises even more significant obstacles for Sino-Tibetan dialogue. Even if there are status differences outside of the dialogue, inside the dialogue all participants must agree to treat each other as equals who have an equal right to be heard (Yankelovich 42). If this equality is not established, participants may not feel comfortable sharing, and so the dialogue will not succeed (Yankelovich 12). However, in an asymmetric conflict like the Sino-Tibetan conflict, there are very real disparities in power between the exile government and the Chinese government. The Chinese have the power to affect conditions in Tibet, and block the exiles from reaching their goals. Therefore, if exile leadership and Chinese leadership were to participate in a dialogue, this inherent inequality could hinder the dialogue process. Tibetan participants might feel that sharing with the Chinese government representatives might give the Chinese an advantage over the exiles.

Indeed, Schoem and Hurtado point out that in asymmetric conflicts, the stronger party may use dialogue to their own advantage by focusing on the dialogue to delay substantive talks

on the conflict resolution (Schoem and Hurtado 6). Moreover, Abu-Nimer highlights the difficulty of differing expectations when using dialogue in asymmetric conflicts. He observes that the weaker party often has higher expectations for the results of the dialogue than the stronger party. For example, the stronger party may be interested in learning about the perspective and culture of the weaker party, while the weaker party hopes for substantive political change (Abu-Nimer 126). If dialogue does not create a climate where the conflicting parties can later discuss the resolution of the conflict, then this process may result in a sense of failure. Therefore, it would be important to frame the dialogue in the context of the conflict and its resolution, defining expectations.

Despite these pitfalls, given that the currently progress in resolving the conflict is blocked in part by stereotypes and grievance, it may be important to involve dialogue in the resolution process. In this case, the costs of the conflict would have to drive the parties to a sincere effort at conflict resolution. Participant equality would have to be established and enforced by ground rules and a facilitator. If the dialogue had a narrow focus of examining stereotypes, this might reduce the risk that participants could use the information gleaned in a dialogue against one another. The facilitator would have to be trusted by both parties. Given the Chinese moratorium on involvement of people who are not Tibetan or Chinese in the negotiations, perhaps a facilitator team of a Chinese facilitator and Tibetan facilitator would be appropriate. Yet, these facilitators would have to establish trust between each other first. However, although dialogue between the leadership in the conflict may have a place, given the current climate between the two parties, it does not seem possible at this time as the costs of conflict are not so great as to bring China to reengage with the exiles.

A dialogue between Chinese citizens and Tibetans living in Tibet or elsewhere may be more feasible because it would be easier to establish participant equality. The participants would not have access to power or decision-making. A dialogue process between these groups could help dispel stereotypes and grievance at a grassroots level. This will be especially relevant if the leadership is able to resolve the conflict at a political level. As there is a substantial population of Han Chinese living in Tibet at this time, dialogue could be essential to the reconciliation process between Han and Tibetans in Tibet.

Appendix

A. Capstone advisors and other supportive collaborators

Many grateful thanks to:

Dr. Reina Neufeldt, *Assistant Professor, Peace and Conflict Resolution, SIS*- Dr. Neufeldt's current research is in ethics and peacebuilding. She will help me develop the philosophical underpinnings of this project by guiding my research in conflict resolution methods and by strengthening my understanding of this conflict through a peace and conflict resolution perspective. Dr. Neufeldt will work with Professor Davies to determine my grade and she will record the final grade.

Dr. Bill Davies, *Assistant Professor, Department of Justice, Law and Society, SPA*- Professor Davies was my Independent Study Advisor for a six credit Honors Independent Study Project, and as such has been a guiding force for the project, helping it evolve and grow from the very beginning. Professor Davies brings his experience studying International Law to bear, helping me to both articulate and understand the many issues that were involved in the Tibetan Conflict. In this phase of the project he will help me edit the texts for the project, develop the human rights archive, and distribute the archive. Professor Davies will work with Dr. Neufeldt to determine my grade.

Mr. Sonam Peter, *Global-LAB trip coordinator*- A native Tibetan, Mr. Peter was the in-country coordinator for Ms. Ezzell's first trip to India. Since, he worked with Ms. Ezzell to plan and help lead the American University Alternative Break trip to India. He is currently acting as an in-country contact with the Tibetan refugee community in India.

Mrs. Tiffany Pineda- Mrs. Pineda accompanied me to India in the spring of 2008 to conduct the first round of interviews with Tibetans. She was the filmmaker of the documentary that formed part of the multimedia exhibition that was the first part of this work. Tiffany will help me plan the design of the digital archive, and as well help prepare the documentary and transcripts for online publication. Finally, as she lives in Austin, she will serve as a point of contact with the University of Texas library and can help transfer materials there.

University of Texas Human Rights Archivists- The University of Texas has an active Human Rights Center which heads the Human Rights Documentation Initiative (HRDI). This initiative is an online database of human rights documentation. The HRDI has agreed to host the digital archive.

Link: http://www.utexas.edu/law/centers/humanrights/get_involved/archives.php

B. The Digital Archive

Background Information

The digital archive was born of an exhibition which explored the human consequences of international legal conflict through film, photographs and interviews with Tibetans refugees and Chinese citizens. The project examined multiple perspectives on the conflict through first-hand narratives. The interactive digital archive will be used to create a sustainable format through which people may access the Tibetan and Chinese stories and research materials. Like the exhibition, viewers will be able to access the portraits of the interviewees along with excerpts and the full texts of their interview. This will be a way for other researchers to access the academic material of the interviews. The interactive format of a digital archive will also help to personalize the conflict just as the multimedia exhibition itself did.

The process of transferring the original project to the digital archive is ongoing. It involved completing the Institutional Review Board process at American University, creating and sending out consent forms to interviewees, writing transcripts of interviews, and transferring video, audio, and photographs to the online archive. The University of Texas at Austin libraries administer the Human Rights Documentation Initiative (HRDI). They have agreed to host the Tibetan and Chinese exhibition materials. Currently, we are waiting on the receipt of the final consent forms from India for final posting.

Link: http://www.utexas.edu/law/centers/humanrights/get_involved/archives.php

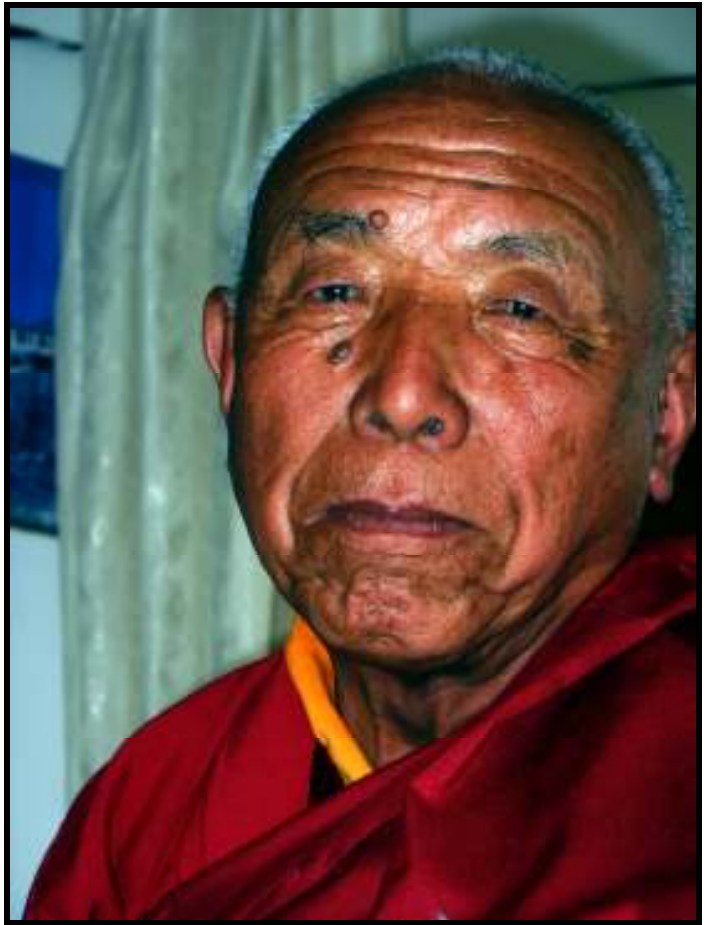
Example Multimedia Materials to be converted into Digital Archive:

Gen Tenzin-La

“Kindness actually means that we all our born from a family and everybody, not this lifetime but previous life and after death we all are connected or dependent, so through this we can gain some kind of love, affection, kindness to each other, brotherhood, sense of brotherhood.”

“Why we are giving so much of faith in His Holiness was that he has done nothing, no harm at all, not this time but 14 Dalai Lama since from the first Dalai Lama. All his work devoted to the good or the right path not on the other one, negative...waging war or bloodshed. All kind and peaceful. That is why people love the Dalai Lama.”

“They come everywhere. And during that time, Tibet was so small in population, China big population. And they have a very good source of war ammunition, like artillery, rifles. But the Tibet have some *heart*. And even though they don't have weapons. They used to fight with Tibetans. Many of the Tibetans died on the spot. It was beyond imagination to fight with China.”



Consent form:

**Donation of Interview to the Archival Project:
Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet & the World**

Catherine Ezzell from American University and Tiffany Pineda, researchers for the Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet & the World Project interviewed me on the _____ day of _____, 20__ for a project about the Tibet-China conflict and the cross-cultural ties among human beings. Today, I freely and voluntarily donate the audio, visual recording(s) and written transcript of the interview to the Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet & the World Project which is sponsored by the American University Summer Scholars and Artists Fellowship.

Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet & the World Project, and its successor organization if any, may use, publish, and distribute these materials as excerpts or in their entirety, for any educational purpose without further consent from me, effective the _____ day of _____, 20__. I understand that the Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet & the World Project intends to distribute these materials to American University and/or the Human Rights Documentation Initiative (HRDI) at the University of Texas, and to other public or private schools, colleges, universities, religious entities, research organizations or institutions, public libraries, and individual researchers for educational use as the project deems appropriate. The results of this project will be coded in such a way that the respondent's name and personal contact information will not be attached to the final form of this study.

The purpose of such distribution is and will be to make the materials widely available to the public as a Human Rights Archive for the Bonds of Interdependence Project, who may cite portions of the materials for educational use. The purpose of this project is to reveal both Tibetan and Chinese perspectives of the Tibet-China conflict as well as examine cross-cultural ties among human beings. I understand that I will not receive financial or other compensation for the donation of this interview, for any of the video, audio, or written records of the interview or pertaining to the interview. The researcher does not perceive more

than minimal risks from my involvement in this study, excepting some psychological discomfort due to personal experiences being disclosed.

Questions about the Study

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Catherine Ezzell
School of International Service
Society

American University
Ce8833a@american.edu
Email Address: Davies@american.edu

Dr. Bill Davies

School of Public Service, Justice Law and

American University

Telephone: (212)885-2319

Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject

Dr. David Haaga
Chair, Institutional Review Board

American University

(202)885-1718

dhaaga@american.edu

Matt Zembrzuski

IRB Coordinator

American University

(202)885-3447

irb@american.edu

Printed name of donor

Location of signing

Signature of donor

Date

Donor's date of birth

Donor's place of birth

Street address of donor and city

State and zip code (if in U.S.), Country (if outside of U.S.)

Consent to Web Publication

The Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet & the World and the Human Rights Documentation Initiative (HRDI) of the University of Texas Libraries, and any non-commercial, non-profit, educational successors to these organizations, may publish the materials that I have donated to the Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet and the World Project on their websites. These materials shall be open and available to the public.

I understand that web or online publication will make the interview potentially available to anyone in the world with access to the Internet, and that the Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet & the World Project, UT Libraries, and I will be not able to control the uses to which my image or words may be put. I understand that neither my name nor my personal contact information will be made available to the public.

Printed name of donor

Location of signing

Signature of donor

Date

Donor's date of birth

Donor's place of birth

Street address of donor and city

State and zip code (if in U.S.), Country (if outside of U.S.)

C. The Sino-Tibetan Dialogue

Dialogue Proposal for the Dialogue Development Group:

Ellie Ezzell

Capstone Dialogue Proposal

Advisor: Dr. Neufeldt

Bonds of Interdependence: Tibet and the World

In 1949, the Chinese entered the Tibetan plateau on a mission of “liberation” to free from what the Chinese considered an imperialistic British presence and an oppressive monastic feudal system. After defeating the Tibetan’s initial military resistance, the Chinese presence in Tibet grew over the next ten years, but was met by increasing unrest in the Tibetan people culminating during 1959 Tibetan uprising. During these protests, the Dalai Lama, the temporal and spiritual leader of the Tibetan people fled to India where he was granted asylum. There he helped build the Tibetan government-in-exile, and a refugee community which maintains a level of autonomy in India through its own school and government systems. Thousands of Tibetans cross Himalayas by foot every year to join this community. Yet, for over fifty years, the Tibetan people have been divided with little communication with the Tibetans or Chinese living in Tibet, and many Tibetans born in Exile who have never seen their homeland (BBC Religion).

Despite years of talks between the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Chinese government, little progress has been made towards the resolution of the conflict or the return of the refugees. Tibet, as the exiles from fifty years ago knew it, has changed drastically through modernization and an influx of a Chinese populace who outnumber Tibetans in Tibet, and who have been there for half a century or have been born in Tibet (BBC Country Profile). It is clear that whatever resolution of the conflict occurs will need to treat the issue of the Chinese who have made Tibet their home.

Additionally, emotions run high on both the Tibetan and Chinese side of the conflict. Both sides accuse each other of being the cause of the problem, and many Tibetans flee to India after being held in Chinese prisons for subversive activity. As the diaspora community has spread across the globe, so has this tension, evidenced by the world wide protests by Tibetan groups before the Beijing Olympics in 2008 (Washington Times). The recent self-immolations in Tibet give testimony to the fact that unrest exists both inside and outside of Tibet (VOA).

This tension has even spread to college campuses across the United States where Students for a Free Tibet students groups promote Tibetan independence from China, and condemn the Chinese involvement in Tibet (Students). Until recently, American University had its own chapter of Students for a Free Tibet. The AU student group is now working to change the club name to “Students for Tibet,” holding the view that mutual understanding between Chinese and Tibetans is necessary for the resolution of the conflict, and to give members the room to take their own stance on the conflict. Members have varying amounts of knowledge about the conflict.

Using dialogue techniques to promote understanding across groups can create a climate of mutual respect and understanding where the process of resolving the conflict can begin. Dialogue on the Sino-Tibetan conflict can begin on grassroots level between three different groups within the American University student body: Tibetans, Chinese citizens and interested American University

students. A dialogue among these groups could help inform the participants, dispel stereotypes, and create bonds across groups who normally do not associate with one another in the hopes that these effects can help create a space where the conflict can be resolved.

Dialogue Application that was distributed:

China and Tibet: Exploring the Divide

Spring 2012 Dialogue Participant Application

This dialogue will meet for **two** sessions on, **Tuesday, March 27, 2012 & Tuesday, April 3, 2012**
5:30-8:00 PM

With the unrest in Lhasa before the Beijing Olympics in 2008 and the self-immolations of this year, the conflict in Tibet remains just as divisive an issue as when it began half a century ago. The media frequently reports on the Chinese authorities and the Tibetan-government-in-exile condemning each other, but are there more viewpoints to explore than these two? Can we understand the feelings that motivate the various parties involved? This dialogue invites you to explore your personal experiences within this topic, while listening to the experiences of others, in an effort to reflect and gain greater understanding in an open and safe space.

*Groups meet for two and a half hours for **2 weekly sessions, Tuesday, March 27, 2012, Tuesday, April 3, 2012, 5:30-8:00 PM.** Attendance at both sessions is **MANDATORY.** Please do not apply to this dialogue unless you understand this commitment.*

This dialogue will be facilitated by a team of trained DDG staff and students, with faculty supervision.

What is Dialogue?

While a dialogue can mean many things, DDG defines it as a sustained, collaboratively structured conversation where participants from one, two, or more “social identity groups” speak from their personal experience and explore both the differences and the common ground that exist among them. In dialogue, we are interested in *listening to understand* rather than serial monologuing, which can happen in discussion, or listening to gain advantage, which typically happens in debate. In dialogue, we do not try to convince others of our points of view; there is no emphasis on winning, but rather on learning, collaborating and creating new and shared understanding.

Dialogue Application:

First Name: _____ Last Name/ Family Name: _____

—

E-mail: _____ Contact Number: _____

Year of Birth: _____ Race/Ethnicity: _____

Religion: _____ Place of Birth: _____ Citizenship: _____

1. What brings you to participate in this dialogue? What's most on your mind when it comes to the theme of Tibet?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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