Notes

INTRODUCTION

1 See, e.g., Rogers 2016; based on information from Jianzha County informants, 2019.
2 See Xi Jinping 2017. An earlier goal to eliminate poverty by 2020, which was to have been achieved through the project Alleviating Poverty through Relocation (Ch: Yidi Fupin Banqian), was declared in the Eleventh Five-Year Plan (National Development and Reform Commission 2012).
3 Ptackova 2019.
4 Ptackova 2019.
5 Amdo is “one of the three major ethno-linguistic regions of Tibetan cultural geography, referring to parts of present-day Sichuan, Qinghai, and Gansu provinces” (Yeh 2003a, 499).
6 The term ‘brog pa (high-pasture ones) originally described all Tibetans who live (or used to live) off animal husbandry and particularly differentiates the pastoralists from farmers, who are referred to as rong ba (those from a valley; Ekvall 1968, 3, 49–51). See, e.g., Ekvall 1968, 2; Scholz and Janzen 1982; Gruschke 2005, 17–21; Merkle 2005, 9–10; Manderscheid 2001, 2; Goldstein and Beall 1990.
7 See also Gruschke 2006; Levine 2015.
8 Modernization and orchestrated sedentarization has changed the meaning of the Tibetan term for nomads or pastoralists, 'brog pa, which has gradually acquired a meaning of social affiliation and remains in use even after people no longer practice the activities associated with the status. In most cases, even after two or three generations of life in town, the former pastoral families continue to describe themselves as 'brog pa.
9 See, e.g., Foggin and Phillips 2013.
10 When describing the current development strategy in the West of China, I use the term “Great Opening of the West,” which is closest to the
Chinese term *Xibu da Kaifa*. “Kaifa” means “to open up” or “exploit” but can also be translated as “to develop.” In Western literature, different terms describe this development strategy: “Open Up the West” (Goodman 2004a; Holbig 2004; McNally 2004; Foggin 2008; Yeh 2005), “Go West” strategy or the “Great Development of the West” (Yeh 2003a), “Great Western Development” (Cooke 2003), “Great Western Development Strategy” (Mackerras 2003), “Western Development” (Lu and Deng 2011; Flower 2009), “campaign to develop the western regions” (Halskov Hansen 2004; Bulag 2004), “Develop the West Campaign” (Goldstein, Childs, and Puchung 2010), “Western China Development Programme” (Wang 2006), and “China’s Western Development” (Bauer and Nyima 2009). I use “opening” instead of “development” because it describes more accurately the current undertaking of opening up China’s West for access through expansion of infrastructure and establishment of transportation links with central and eastern China. It is only the provision of this access through “opening” that enables the implementation of further “development” measures. The term “strategy,” in connection with *Xibu da Kaifa*, is also more accurate than “campaign,” as the *Xibu da Kaifa* is more than just a framework for the implementation of concrete programs, and includes the numerous projects that are constantly subject to modification and change during the implementation phase. In Chinese, the term *Xibu da Kaifa* also appears together with the term *zhanlüe* (strategy). The Tibetan expression for *Xibu da Kaifa*, nub rgyud gsar spel chen mo, is also closer to “Great Opening of the West” than “Development of the West.”

In the context of the state-initiated development policy, where the topic of modernization and development projects is mostly referred to in Chinese, I predominantly use Chinese terms. In addition, Amdo, including Qinghai as a Tibetan ethnic area on the border of the Chinese ethnic regions, has been increasing influenced by the Chinese language, which has penetrated into the vocabulary of local people. Since the political disturbances of 2008, although the usage of Chinese borrowings in daily language has decreased, it is still common for the Tibetan population in Qinghai to use Chinese for certain terms, such as days of the week, numbers, certain place names, and especially terms associated with government policy. Some Chinese terms are at least as widespread as the Tibetan terms (see also Schrempf and Hayes 2010). If there is no fixed English expression, Chinese terms for administrative units are used, as many of these were created only under the Chinese administration (see Shabad 1972, 24–56, 319–32). Some of these entities have adopted the local Tibetan names of the area and rendered them in Chinese, while some have not. Also, the terminology of policy programs is predominantly Chinese. Other local names and terms are provided in either
Tibetan or Chinese, depending on the language of common use. Tibetan and Chinese equivalents are presented in parentheses and in the glossary.

The core material presented in this volume was collected during a research period that spans the years 2005 to 2016. The most intensive part of the research was conducted, and the majority of information was collected between 2007 and 2013. Between 2009 and 2011 the research was supported by the project “Range Enclosure on the Tibetan Plateau of China: Impacts on Pastoral Livelihoods, Marketing, Livestock Productivity and Rangeland Biodiversity,” funded by the European Commission. My most recent visit to the Zeku area was in 2017. However, the new program of Targeted Poverty Alleviation, which was introduced in Zeku in 2017, is not addressed in the main body of this volume. The final stage of this book was supported by the Lumina Quaeruntur program of the Academy Council of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

See, for example the speeches made to launch the Great Opening of the West in 1999: Jiang Zemin’s statement of June 9, 1999 (Yan 2001, 1); Jiang Zemin’s statement of June 17, 1999 (Yan 2001, 2); the statement by Prime Minister Zhu Rongji of August 1999 (Yan 2001, 2).

Du 2014, 249.


See, for example Kolås and Thowsen 2005, 17–18.

Zeku Xian Renmin Zhengfu 2007b, 5.

See for example Gruschke 2012; Winkler 2008; Tan 2017.

In 2005 only 4–5 percent of the local population was involved in an occupation other than animal husbandry (Chen 2007, 2; China Statistical Yearbook 2007).

Chinese territorial administration is divided into six levels. On the first level is the central government (zhongyang), followed by provinces (sheng) and autonomous regions (zizhiqu), prefectures (zhou) or the administrative areas (diqu), counties (xian), townships (xiang or zhen), and communities or villages (cun).

Outside of the Sanjiangyuan area, we can also find new housing settlements, which are said to be beneficial for socioeconomic development to improve the living standards of pastoral households. Other new villages accommodate people resettled from areas disturbed by construction projects such as dams.

CHAPTER 1: CIVILIZING CHINA’S WESTERN PERIPHERIES

Since the Mao era, land without agriculture has been perceived as being “empty, uninhabited and desperately in need of civilization” (Yeh 2013, 63). The same rhetoric appears as part of the current policy (see also Lin 2007, 933–48). For more on the Chinese interpretation of a “backward

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1
Tibet,” see also the *White Paper on Successful Practice of Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet*, issued by the Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, September 6, 2015.

2 Manderscheid 2001, 2. See Kardulias 2015, 3; Hillman 2003, 86.


4 See also Cannon 1989, 164–79.

5 Scott 1999, 82.


7 Appadurai 2005, 10.

8 Golden 2006, 7; Zhao 2010, 419.

9 Zhao 2010, 423.


11 Kreutzmann 2012b, 53.

12 Harrell 1995.

13 The first campaign targeting the western regions was labeled the Distribution of Productive Forces toward the West (Ch: Shengchanli Xiangxi Buju) and was proclaimed during the First and Second Five-Year Plans, 1953–62. The second campaign, promoted during the Third and Fourth Five-Year Plans, was called the Southwest Third Front Construction (Ch: Xinan Sanxian Jianshe). For more information, see Lu and Deng 2009, 13–22.

14 Lu and Deng 2011, 1–2. Since the Communist Party took over in China, the state development strategy has experienced several stages. These can be summarized as “balanced development,” as represented by the period of collectivization and Mao Zedong’s campaigns to gain control over both people and nature (see, for example, Shapiro 2001), followed by the “unbalanced development” of Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms (see, for example, Phillips and Yeh 1989, 112–35), which targeted the regions in the East and encouraged national and foreign investment and led to rapid socioeconomic growth in the coastal areas. The unidirectional focus of investments and development led to the emergence of a growing economic gap between the industrialized urban East Coast and the predominantly rural parts of central and western China (see, for example, Howe, Kueh, and Ash 2003: 25; Cieślik 2013, 26; China Statistical Yearbook 2011). In accordance with Deng Xiaoping’s Two Overall Strategies (Liangge Da Ju; Li 2019) and with the aim of preventing any possible dissatisfaction among China’s population that might be caused by the social and economic imbalances, a supportive program to strengthen China’s West had to be designed. It became known as the Great Opening of the West.

15 According to Ma Rong, in the Tibet Autonomous Region 87.1 percent of the Tibetan population was engaged in agriculture, referring to both the cultivation of fields and animal husbandry, in 1982. In 2000 86.6 percent
of the Tibetan population was still engaged in agriculture in the Tibet Autonomous Region (Ma 2011, 63, table 3.8).

16 Holbig 2004, 335–36.

17 Jiang Zemin chose to add “Great” (Chi: da) to the title Great Opening of the West in order to emphasize that this development would not be conducted on a small scale (Li 2019). This development strategy indeed deserves such a title as it includes a huge number of programs and projects, implemented at all levels, from the supra-regional to the household level.


19 Heath 2005, 193; Guowuyuan guanyu Xibu da Kaifa ruogan zhengce cuoshi de shishi yijian.

20 Goodman 2004a, 320. See also Holbig 2004, 352.


22 Lu and Deng 2011, 5, table 1.

23 Qinghai Sheng Xibu Kaifa Lingdao Xiaozu Gongshe 2005, 82.

24 On the New Silk Road and the Belt and Road Initiative, see, for example, Zhang 2015.


26 Guowuyuan he Gaige Weiyuanhui 2007, special column 3.


28 The major points articulated in Yu Zhengsheng’s keynote speech at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the TAR included additional state support for the building of a well-off society in Tibet; social and economic development in Tibet; building a better new Tibet; and giving people a happier new life. He further stressed the necessity of developing Tibet by focusing on long-term stability and national unity in order to reinforce national security (“Yu Zhengsheng Delivers Keynote Speech at 50th Anniversary of Tibet Autonomy Ceremony,” September 8, 2015; english.cntv.cn).

29 See also Yu Zhengsheng’s keynote speech at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the TAR (September 8, 2015); Guowuyuan guanyu shishi Xibu da Kaifa ruogan zhengce cuoshi de tongzhi 2000, 1, 2.

30 Kolås 2008, 1. To attract more visitors and investors, Xining, the capital of Qinghai, has been promoted as the “summer capital,” offering a mild climate in the summer time to people from the hotter parts of southeast China. In addition, after 2000 Qinghai started to organize many different exhibitions and events, showcasing various skills, crafts and products, such as photography, poetry, carpets, and cheese. Another attraction is the international bicycle race, the Tour of Qinghai Lake, first held in 2001, which is intended to draw attention to Qinghai in the rest of China and abroad. Xining city is now well known, not only as a
gateway to remote Qinghai, but also to the entire Tibetan Plateau, including the Tibet Autonomous Region.

31 Holbig 2004, 352.
33 See, for example, the 1993 speech by Chen Kaiyuan, party secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region: “An all-out effort must be made to eradicate Tibetan Buddhism and culture from the face of the earth so that no memory of them will be left in the minds of coming generations—except as museum pieces. . . . We must teach and guide Tibetan Buddhism to reform itself. All those religious laws and rituals must be reformed in order to fit in the needs of development and stability in Tibet, and they should be reformed so that they become appropriate to a society under socialism” (statement made by Chen Kuiyuan, Communist Party secretary in Tibet [1992–2000]; Heath 2005, 151). See also Yu Zhengsheng’s keynote speech at the fiftieth Anniversary of the TAR (September 8, 2015).
34 Fischer 2014, 28.
35 See also Fischer 2014, xxx.
36 See, for example, Heath 2005, 216–17.
37 Lu and Deng 2011, 11.
38 See also Yeh 2013, 103.
39 Lu and Deng 2011, 10.
40 Cieślik 2013, 19–34, 26; China Statistical Yearbook 2011.
41 Lu and Deng 2011, 14.
42 Fischer 2014, 152–65; Ma 2011, 212; Fischer 2014.
43 Ma 2011, 191. For a demonstration of the increase in expenditure after resettlement, see Bauer 2015, 212–14.
44 See for example Yeh 2013, 106; Zukosky 2007, 119.
45 Yeh 2013, 231.

CHAPTER 2: THE GIFT OF DEVELOPMENT IN PASTORAL AREAS

1 In Qinghai, the relocation and sedentarization aims of the Socialist New Countryside initiative were predominantly realized as part of the Ecological Resettlement Project (Ch: Shengtai Yimin Gongcheng; Guojia Fazhan he Gaige Weiyuanhui 2007). See also Looney 2012, 204–85; Guojia Fazhan he Gaige Weiyuanhui 2007, special column 2; Beijing Review 2008.
4 Rtse khog rdzong mi dmangs srid gzhung gi rdzong dpon 2007; personal interview with a member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, November 2015. See also Shih 2013.
5 Kreutzmann 2012b, 53–66.
6 See, for example, Goodman 2004b, 379–89; Qinghai Sheng Renmin Zhengfu 2011; Lijia 2005.
7 In order to accelerate poverty alleviation, since 2013 the reported number of poor people is only allowed to decrease and can no longer officially increase (for further details, see Ptackova 2019).
8 Rogers 2016.
9 Zhao 2019.
10 Interview with a member of the School of Economics at Sichuan University, October 2017.
11 See also Yeh 2005, 24.
12 Regarding the sedentarization of Tibetan pastoralists, two terms appear in this book: *resettlement* and *settlement*. The term *sedentarization* is used as a generic term to describe all development measures that aim to shift the center of the pastoralist life to an urban environment, which in Chinese are either called “resettlement” or “migration” (*yimin*) or “settlement” (*dingju*). These two are different. “Resettlement” was originally understood as a temporary measure encouraged through unacceptable living conditions at the original place and can mean a relocation of Tibetan pastoralists even to another province, while “settlement,” by contrast, takes place mainly within the original county, targets the whole pastoral population and is expected to be permanent.
13 Richardson 2007, 6.
14 Zeku Xian Sanjiangyuan Bangongshi 2007a, 6. The resettlement site size limit was suggested after several demonstrations during the resettlements of people from the Three Gorges dam construction area, which was used as a model for the Sanjiangyuan resettlement program (Jing et al. 2007, 197–205).
15 See, for example, the speech of the Chinese premier, Wen Jiabao, February 2005 (Yeh 2005, 10).
16 Yeh 2005, 11. The first environmental law in China was promulgated in 1978; the first Grassland Law was issued in 1985 (Chen 2010, 143–45).
18 One mu is equivalent to 0.0667 hectares. Qinghai Sheng Xumuting 1999, 100. Households classified as such possess fewer than twenty sheep units of livestock per person. In Zeku this situation concerns the majority of the population (Lijia 2005).
19 Wen 2001, 1.
20 Tibetan Plateau 2012; Guowuyuan guanyu shishi Xibu da Kaifa ruogan zhengce cuoshi de tongzhi 2000, 3; 3.
21 The permitted scale of the Returning Farmland to Forest policy is limited by the rule that in the southwestern areas there must remain at least 0.5 mu and in the northwestern areas at least 2 mu of arable field per person to secure a sufficient grain allocation (Zhongguo Gongchandang 2010).
In Qinghai “in 2000 and 2001, 500,000 mu of farmland was returned to forest and grassland in an experimental 16 counties. From 2002 it was planned to plant 2.27 million mu with trees and grass in the Qaidam Basin (where desertification has been most severe) and to retire a further 1.8 million mu of farmland to forest and grassland” (Goodman 2004b, 391).

22 Guojia Fazhan he Gaige Weiyuanhui 2007, article 7.
26 See Behringer 2010.
27 Ho 2005; Harris 2010, 1–12.
28 Richard et al. 2006, 84.
29 See also Goldstein and Beall 1990, 69–71; Goldstein 1996, 2.
30 Miller 1999, 17.
31 Miller 1999, 17. According to my informants in Guoluo Prefecture, taxes have been raised on contracted land and redistributed animals. After the contract period is over, the animals become the property of the herders, but the land remains the property of the state, which can further grant usage rights to individual households. In order to obtain land use rights, pastoral households must pay a tax to the state, which varied between ¥10–¥30 and ¥5–¥10 per mu, depending on the size of the contracted land. Pastoral households from remote and poor areas, defined as such by the township and county government, may sometimes be exempt from paying state land taxes (Qinghai Sheng Zhengfu 2009, Article 4 and 8).
33 Bauer and Nima 2009, 23–33; Guowuyuan guanyu shishi Xibu da Kaifa ruogan zhengce cuoshi de tongzhi 2000, 3.
34 Bedunah and Harris 2002.
35 In such case some sort of compensation must be provided (Guowuyuan guanyu shishi Xibu da Kaifa ruogan zhengce cuoshi de tongzhi 2000, 3). The possession of use rights for the state-owned land remains an essential economic asset in pastoral areas even with the advancing development and modernization.
36 Ho 2005.
37 Yeh 2013, 64–66; Lu and Deng 2011, 19.
38 Miller 1999, 17.
39 See, for example, Shapiro 2001.
41 Former member of the Animal Husbandry Office in Hongyuan, interviewed in October 2009.
The poisoning of the pikas had already begun by 1958 and up to now, in Qinghai Province alone, 208,000 square kilometers have been brought under control, with some areas experiencing several phases of poisoning (China Daily 2004). In Qinghai, according to the Chinese statistics on the elimination of both underground rodents and those living above-ground, during the period of 1982–94 elimination activities were carried out in an area of 129,974 square kilometers (in Zeku County, in an area of 14,701 square kilometers; Qinghai Sheng Xumuting 1995, 80). In 1998 the elimination area in the whole province covered 25 million mu (16,705 square kilometers); in Zeku County 5 million mu (c. 3,378 square kilometers; Qinghai Sheng Xumuting 1999, 117).

See Kardulias 2015.

The Yangzi River, with a length of around 6,300 kilometers, is the longest river in Asia and supplies about 32.2 percent of the Chinese population with water. The Yellow River is the second longest in China (5,464 kilometers) and supplies about 8.2 percent of the Chinese population with fresh water. The Mekong River, with a length of 4,200 kilometers, is one of the most important rivers of southwest China and Southeast Asia.

See the Tibetan poem by Dpa’ dar (Dpa’ dar and Upton 2000, 17).

For the purpose of this volume, I will use the term Sanjiangyuan to refer to the entire administrative area of the Three Rivers’ Headwaters Nature Reserve spreading over 394,500 square kilometers (the original 363,100 square kilometers plus the 31,400 square kilometers added in 2011). The abbreviation SNNR will be used to refer only to the conservation areas of the Sanjiangyuan.

For instance, Qinghai Province invested ¥780 million to establish and protect the Sanjiangyuan area, closing off 5.11 million hectares of pasture and relocating 7,048 households (33,572 people)” (Li 2011, 74).
CHAPTER 3: SEDENTARIZATION IN QINGHAI

1 Ma 2011, 193.
2 The name sTobs ldan (Ch: Duofudun) has remained in general usage among the local population as a description for this area. Therefore, it also appears in this book.
4 Among current research reports, we can also find examples of pastoral societies shifting the base of their livelihoods away from animal husbandry in order to adapt to socioeconomic and environmental or political changes, population growth, globalization or other extra-regional factors. See, for example, Nüsser, Holdschlag, and Rahman 2012, 31–52; Ahmed 2009, 145–51; Dollfus 2004, 200–13; Kreutzmann 2009b.
5 Foggin 2008, 28.
6 In some areas, pastoralists constructed permanent houses on the winter grasslands even before the adoption of the reforms of the central government. See also Gruschke 2005.
7 Qinghai Sheng Xumuting 1995, 70.
8 In 1995 the largest fenced-off areas in Zeku County were in Duokamao and Xibusha Townships. The total length of fencing erected in Zeku County in 1995 was 184,800 meters (in the whole of Qinghai Province 6.2 million meters), with a total investment of ¥1.8 million, of which ¥811,400 was paid for by the pastoralists and the rest by the provincial government (Qinghai Sheng Xumuting 1996, 114–19). The most grass planted was in Ningxiu (475.8 hectares) and Duofudun (413.1 hectares) townships (Lijia 2005, 111–13). Qinghai Sheng Caoyuan Zongzhan 2003, 25–30. For examples of the implementation of the Set of Four project in Golok, see Horlemann 2002, 241–70.
9 For example, in Dangqian village in Maqin County, Qinghai, the government suggested the building of a winter home for each pastoral household in 1980. Until then, the villagers had been accustomed to living in tents and were suspicious of buildings. Therefore, the government decided to test out the houses with five households of ex-prisoners and monks. The test house experiment eventually persuaded the rest of the village that the houses were actually warm and dry and so it was agreed to build one for each household. These houses were built of wood and earth, with financial and material support coming from the government (Tibetan pastoral community leader from Maqin County, interviewed in October 2009).
10 See also Ptackova 2017.
11 Tibetan member of an NGO engaged in environmental protection in Qinghai Province, interviewed in July 2007.
12 Tibetan member of the Qinghai Nationalities Cultural Committee, interviewed in May 2015.
13 For more details, see Ptackova 2017.
14 Foggin 2005, 2; Chen 2007, 37–40.
15 Wang et al. 2010, 444.
16 See, for example, Zha 2014, 1; Wanma 2013, 9. The figures describing the number of involved households differ in these references. On the completion of this relocation project, a total of 10,165 households (56,000 people) should have been resettled, corresponding with the figures provided earlier by Du (2006, 45–46) and Chen (2007, 151). At the beginning of its implementation, the Ecological Resettlement Project declared its intention to resettle 4,965 households (24,000 people) in Qinghai Province, with the aim of achieving a future total of 10,165 resettled households (56,000 people; Tibetan member of the Qinghai Nationalities Cultural Committee, interviewed in May 2007).
17 Chen presents a number of 11,000 people (approximately 2,066 households) scheduled for Ecological Resettlement in the core zones of the SNNR. By the end of 2005, this objective had already been realized, and 11,373 people (1,756 households) had been resettled (Chen 2007, 143).
18 Presentation made by Qinghai Administration Institute leadership member in Halle in December 2009.
19 The official numbers of people affected by the sedentarization projects presented in this book should be regarded as approximate data that simply serve for orientation purposes. Du Fachun (2006, 46) mentions a relocation figure of about eighty thousand Tibetan pastoralists by the end of 2005. This number refers to the total number of people resettled within the Returning Pastureland to Grassland and Ecological Resettlement Projects. See also, Chen 2007, 36–151; Tongren Xian Fagai Ju 2007.
20 As part of these projects, farmers are required to plant trees or grass instead of crops. Land suffering from severe degradation and sloping fields with a gradient of 25 percent or more (Qinghai Sheng Xumuting 1996, 92) are excluded from use and earmarked for protection. Additionally, farmers can decide voluntarily to let other land lie fallow. For each excluded mu of farmland, farmers receive compensation either in cash or grain from the government. The plan for 2000 aimed to implement this policy on 343,505 hectares of land in the West of China (Qinghai Sheng Nongmuting 2008f, 83). During the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2001–2005) the Returning Farmland to Forest Project was implemented on 5.2 million hectares. The afforestation of desolated hills and land has been carried out on 7.6 million hectares so far, the Returning Pastureland to Grassland Project implemented on 19.3 million hectares, and 1.2 million poor people relocated (Guojia Fazhan he Gaige Weiyuanhui 2007, Article 1).
See, for example, Shapiro 2001, 10; Flower 2009, 42; Qinghai Sheng Nongmuting 2008c, 3.

21 Qinghai Sheng Nongmuting 2008b, 16.
22 Yeh 2005, 17–21.
25 In Guinan County, Hainan Prefecture, Qinghai Province, inhabited mainly by Tibetan farmers, semi-pastoralists and pastoralists, local people decide by themselves the size of the area for implementing the Turning Pastureland or Farmland into Grassland policy. The annual compensation consists of ¥20 and 200 kilograms of grain per mu of farmland and of ¥160 per mu of pastureland. The pastureland must remain unused for at least eight years before it can be used for herding again (member of Guinan County Office for Nature Preservation, interviewed in July 2007).
26 Chen 2007, 43.
27 Qinghai Sheng Nongmuting 2008e, 117.
29 Twenty-seven-year-old pastoralist from the Da’e community, interviewed in October 2009.
30 Yeh 2005, 16.
32 Yeh 2005, 23.
33 Qinghai Sheng Nongmuting 2008d, 142. The households affected by the Returning Pastureland to Grassland Project have an obligation to reduce their livestock numbers. Pastoralist households that inhabit the grasslands are supposed to be aware of the grassland capacity rules and adjust the number of animals accordingly. Currently, officially authorized experts measure the local grassland capacity and eventually present the results to local community leaders, who then allot the necessary livestock reduction quota to the pastoralist households. Livestock that overload the grasslands must be sold in the same year in which the Returning Pastureland to Grassland Project is implemented.
35 Qinghai Sheng Nongmuting 2008d, 142.
36 Qinghai Sheng Nongmuting 2008e, 117. In reality this means that even when the pastoralists in Zeku are theoretically not the target of the Grazing Ban Resettlement, they can still be involved in other sedentarization projects, such as the Ecological Resettlement or the Nomadic
Settlement Projects. In Zeku County, the resettlement of pastoralists is taking place under the label of the Ecological Resettlement Project.

37 In several documents, there are project implementation exceptions mentioned in connection with province border regions (see Qinghai Sheng Renmin Zhengfu 2011, 135; Chen 2007). So far, I have been unable to identify the reasons for these exceptions and they remain unclear.

38 Qinghai Sheng Renmin Zhengfu 2011, 135.


41 Chen 2007, 143.

42 Member of Qinghai Nationalities Cultural Committee, interviewed in July 2008.

43 Chen 2007, 144.

44 Du 2014, 266–68. For a similar classification, see also Bessho 2015, 190–91.

45 See Childs, Goldstein, and Wangdui 2010.

46 See Yeh 2013, chapter 2.

47 Zeku Xian Renmin Zhengfu 2007b.


49 Richer households with sufficient income from the grasslands are only willing to participate in the resettlement schemes as long as they assume that they can keep their original pastures in addition to receiving a new house, some hoping to obtain urban residency registration (see Du 2014, 268). The transfer of registration status is, according to my experience, not granted in reality to the relocated households and remains at the original location.

50 In each county is a Sanjiangyuan local government office, responsible for the implementation of livestock reduction measures and pastoralist sedentarization. After this local bureau is informed about the numbers of households to be resettled by the higher administrative level, it must ensure that enough households participate in the project.

51 In 2006, 27,809 middle-aged people were recorded as illiterate in Zeku County. The entire population of Zeku County was 60,733 (Zeku Xian Renmin Zhengfu 2009, 3–4).

52 Obligatory school attendance had already been introduced in 1999. Nevertheless, in countryside areas in particular, school attendance was not strictly enforced. In 2007 the government decided to take action to address the relatively high illiteracy rates in the countryside. From that year, all school-age children had to attend school. They were divided into grades according to their age, regardless of whether or not they had received education previously (government social worker from Yushu Prefecture, interviewed September 2009).

53 See, for example, Gyal 2015.
54 For a discussion on the issue of education among Tibetans, see also Zenz 2014.

55 According to a director of a primary school in Zeku County in 2008, even with compulsory school attendance in China and free primary school education for the children from pastoralist households in Zeku County, in remote rural areas only about two thirds of the children attend school regularly. Each school records the number of school-age children in their statistics, irrespective of whether they actually attend or not, and this is the figure that is reported to the higher authorities. According to a local government report, in 2006, 9,790 children reached school enrollment age. Of these, 95.83 percent actually attended the first class (Rtse khog rdzong mi dmangs srid gzhung gi rdzong dpon 2007, 6).

The main reason schools include all children in the statistics is to so they can obtain the full grant from the government, as the amount of money the school receives depends on the number of students they have. When the prefecture or provincial education bureau conducts a supervisory visit, the school head teacher, who knows of the visit in advance, arranges for students from other schools to attend their school in order to make up the required number. As a consequence, when the delegates ask children how they like the school, they sometimes answer that they are not sure yet, as this is their first day.

58 This project also seems to operate in parallel with the Comfortable Housing Project in the Tibet Autonomous Region, as described by Goldstein (2010).
60 Rtse khog rdzong mi dmangs srid gzhang 2009, 2.
61 Rtse khog rdzong mi dmangs srid gzhang 2009, 2.
63 Public announcement, Guoluo Prefecture government, September 14, 2009.
64 In Maqin the household economy is reinforced by the income from the caterpillar fungus collection and trade (for more details, see, for example, Sulek 2011).

CHAPTER 4: DEVELOPMENT IN ZEKU COUNTY

1 Today’s Zeku County used to be under changing or overlapping influence of the Tibetans, Chinese, and Mongols until the thirteenth century, when the Mongols founded here first a so-called Tibetan area controlled by a pacification commissioner and later the administrative unit of Gansu Province (Gansu Xingzhong Shusheng). Zeku County was first
part of an administrative unit of ten thousand households, established south of the Yellow River and later, during the Ming Dynasty, part of a thousand-household unit. In 1762 Zeku switched to the jurisdiction of the newly established Xunhua (T: Ya tsi rdzong) government department and remained a part of it until 1913. In 1929 Tongren County (T: Reb gong rdzong) was separated from Xunhua, and since 1931 Tongren has been under direct jurisdiction of Qinghai. After 1932 rTse khog was shifted to Qinghai as the fourth district of Tongren County. In 1953 Zeku County was created from the fifth, sixth, and seventh districts under the Tongren jurisdiction built by ten Tibetan tribes: the Hor, Rong bo (Ch: Longwu), Bon rgya (Ch: Wangjia), So nag (Ch: Suonaihai), mGar rtse (Ch: Guashenze), dMe shul (Ch: Maixiu), mGon shul (Ch: Guanxiu), dPyi sa (Ch: Xibusha), Ko’u sde ka rong (Ch: Gudegarang) and Khe ru’i chu rnga (Ch: Keriqina; Lijia 2005, 7–13). Between 1954 and 1956 Zeku County was divided into seven districts with their own administrative seats: Heri (Ch: Heri Qu), Suonaihai (Ch: Suonaihai Qu), Duofudun (Ch: Duofudun Qu), Guanxiu (Ch: Guanxiu Qu), Sairi (Ch: Sairi Diqu), Guashenze Township (Ch: Guashenze Xiang), and Xibusha Township (Ch: Xibusha Xiang) (Lijia 2005, 52–65). For more information about Zeku County and its history see also Weiner (2012) or Joseph Rock (1956).

2 See photograph of Zeku by Rock 1956, plate 27.

3 Lijia 2005, 1.

4 Ch: keliyong caochang: grassland that is in use or usable for animal husbandry, meaning that there is a suitable water source in that area. Lijia 2005, 1.

5 Measured by statistical annual cash income. In 2005 the per-capita average income of the pastoralists in Zeku County was ¥1,370, which made Zeku County the second-poorest county behind Dari County with ¥1,359 of average per-capita income (Chen 2007, 2). According to the national statistics from 2008, the Tibetan areas of Qinghai Province still remain the most backward region with the lowest per-capita income of China. The poorest prefectures are Yushu, Guoluo, and the pastoral part of the Huangnan Prefecture with per-capita annual incomes of ¥2,177, ¥2,291, and ¥2,369. The national average per-capita income in 2008 was ¥4,761 (Qinghai Daily, April 24, 2009).


7 Men comprised 48.98 percent and women 51.22 percent (Lijia 2005, 471). The male and female percentage proportions mentioned in this book form a total greater than 100 percent and might thus be inaccurate. The high level of unreliability in relation to population statistics in remote Tibetan areas was noted for example by Andrew Fischer (2014, 87), especially with reference to pre-1982 figures.
The rest of the population consisted of 1,146 Han (2.5 percent), 205 Hui (0.45 percent), 54 Salar, 54 Mongour people, 12 Mongolians, 10 Baoan people, and 7 members of other nationalities (Lijia 2005, 471).

Zeku Xian Renmin Zhengfu 2007a, 3.
Zeku Xian Renmin Zhengfu 2009, 1.

In 1958 the entire county was divided into eleven people’s communes. In July 1962, eight townships were founded: Heri (Ch: Heri Xiang, T: Hor), Ningxiu (Ch: Ningxiu Xiang, T: Nyin shul), Duofudun (T: sTobs ldan), Duohemao (Ch: Duohemao Xiang, T: rDo dkar mo), Xiade (Ch: Xiade Xiang, T: Bya dar), Qiake (Ch: Qiake Xiang, T: Cha gor), Wangjia (Ch: Wangjia Xiang, T: Bon rgya), and Xibusha (Ch: Xibusha Xiang, T: dPyi sa), which were converted back into communes during the period from 1970 to 1983 (Lijia 2005, 52–65). In 2001 Xiade Township was renamed as the town of Zequ (Zequ Zhen). In 2006 Qiake Township was integrated into the administrative unit of Zequ Town.

The first land distribution with land use being contracted to individual households had taken place as early as 1984 (Lijia 2005, 39).

See also Yeh (2003a, 500), who found that after fence construction, disputes among pastoralists over land actually increased.


See the chapter on family planning in Lijia 2005, 480–81.


Sixty-year-old pastoral community leader from Wangjia Township, Zeku County, interviewed in May 2007.

See also, Singh 2009, 65–8.

Ch: *cao kulun*; comes from a Mongolian word that means “surrounded land.” Parts of the land are fenced by off using branches, grass, wooden pillars, earthen walls or iron wires. Such fenced-off land is used for the protection of degenerated grass, to grow grass or to graze animals.

Chen 2007, 43.

As a response to the degradation of local grassland and diminution of grassland vegetation, the government ordered a reduction of livestock and people inhabiting grassland areas (Ch: *yikexue ding xu; yi kexue ding ren*).

In 2008, according to a Tibetan member of the Qinghai Nationalities Cultural Committee, the grassland capacity was usually calculated as 8–15 sheep units per mu. The exact number of households to be resettled during a specified period of time at a given location identified in government resettlement plans had to correlate with grassland capacity.
research evidence, which was used to set resettlement quotas for each region.

24 Listed in the Zeku Xian Sanjiangyuan ziran baohu qu 2003–2006 nian yidi banqian banqian xiangmu shishi qingkuang huibao. These households shall obtain government subsidies as part of the resettlement process. According to the government’s vision, they should be able to return to the grasslands and keep a stipulated amount of livestock after a period of ten years.


26 See also Yeh 2013, 91.


30 Zeku Xian Sanjiangyuan Bangongshi 2007b.

31 328 households in Zhigeri village in Ningxiu (Zeku Xian Fazhan he Gaige Ju 2007, 4); Rtse khog rdzong mi dmangs srid gzhung gi rdzong dpon 2007.


33 Zeku Xian Renmin Zhengfu 2007b.

34 Rtse khog rdzong mi dmangs srid gzhang 2009.


36 Rtse khog rdzong mi dmangs srid gzhang 2009.

37 A Tibetan member of the Zeku County government, interviewed in May 2007.

38 Sheep unit (Ch: yang danwei), unit used to measure the amount of livestock in relation to the grassland capacity. Four sheep units equal one cow unit (“Qinghai Lageri hezuoshe fazhan shengtai xumu jiyue hua jinying diaocha,” Nongmin Ribao, November 2, 2016, http://grassland.china.com.cn/2016-11/02/content_9128414.htm.


41 Richardson 2007, 65.

42 Du 2009.
Sixty-five-year-old pastoralist from rMa stod from the resettlement site in Tongde, interviewed in June 2008. For similar findings, see also Bessho 2015.

Lobsang, a resettled pastoralist from rMa stod in Tongde resettlement, age sixty-seven, interviewed in June 2008.

Tashi, a resettled pastoralist from rMa stod in Tongde resettlement, age twenty-five, interviewed in June 2008.

**CHAPTER 5: SEDENTARIZATION OF PASTORALISTS IN ZEKU COUNTY**

1 Zeku Xian Renmin Zhengfu 2007b; Zeku Xian Sanjiangyuan Bangongshi 2007b.

2 Between 2006 and 2007, it was planned that 851 households would be resettled in the entire area of Huangnan Prefecture: 86 households from Henan County and 765 households from Zeku County. Another document by the National People’s Congress indicates the same number of households to be resettled in Zeku County (765), but the number of people it includes is different (3,559 people; Zeku Xian Renda Changweihui 2007). The document *Huangnan Zhou Sanjiangyuan Shengtai Yimin gongzuo jingyan yu silu* (2007, 2) identifies 765 households with 3,620 people. The total population of Zeku’s core zone was 16,389, whereas local grassland capacity could only sustain 12,292 people (2,235 households). Therefore, it was decided to relocate the excess 745 households (4,097 people; Zeku Xian Sanjiangyuan Bangongshi 2007a, 4).

3 Rtse khog rdzong mi dmangs srid gzhung gi rdzong dpon 2007. The report of the National People’s Congress identifies that only forty-four households were to be resettled in the resettlement site in Zeku County town, and for seven households there was no fixed resettlement location (Zeku Xian Renda Changweihui 2007, 1).

4 Zeku Xian Renda Changweihui 2007, 4.

5 See also Zha 2014.

6 Tsering, a twenty-seven-year-old pastoralist from sTobs ldan, assigned to resettle in Tongren, interviewed in June 2009.

7 Dorje, a thirty-two-year-old pastoralist from sTobs ldan, assigned to resettle to Tongren, interviewed in June 2009.

8 Nima, a thirty-eight-year-old pastoralist from sTobs ldan, assigned to resettle to Tongren, interviewed in June 2009.

9 Tibetan village representative and local government member, age fifty-nine, interviewed in August 2007.

10 Two female pastoralists from Maixiu, Drolma, age seventy, and Tsering Lhamo, age thirty-three, interviewed in June 2008.
11 Female resettled pastoralist from STobs ldan, aged twenty-six, interviewed in June 2008.
12 For security reasons, I do not provide the real name of the community here.
13 The local school was built with private help. In 2011 this school was closed down by the government, together with other village schools in Zeku County.
14 Sandrub, thirty-nine-year-old pastoralist from the rGyal bo pastoral community, registered for resettlement to Duofudun Town, interviewed in June 2009.
15 Sandrub, thirty-nine-year-old pastoralist from the rGyal bo pastoral community, registered for resettlement to Duofudun Town, interviewed in June 2009.
16 Dorje, thirty-two-year-old pastoralist from the rGyal bo pastoral community, registered for resettlement in Tongren Town, interviewed in June 2009.
17 Norbu, forty-eight-year-old pastoralist from the rGyal bo pastoral community, registered for resettlement in Zeku Town, interviewed in June 2009.
18 For similar observations from other Chinese areas, see, for example, Lora-Wainwright 2014.
19 Du 2014, 247; Yan and Fei 2009, 7.
20 Dorje, thirty-two-year-old pastoralist from the rGyal bo pastoral community, registered for resettlement to Tongren Town, interviewed in June 2009.
21 Kelsang, thirty-nine-year-old pastoralist from the rGyal bo pastoral community, registered for resettlement to Duofudun Town, interviewed in September 2009.
22 Tsampa, thirty-eight-year-old pastoralist from the rGyal bo pastoral community, registered for resettlement in Duofudun Town, interviewed in September 2009.
23 Due to the sensitive situation and limited access during 2008 and 2009, some of the interviews had to be recorded with my local colleague.
24 Interviews with settlement inhabitants, July 2013.
25 Norwe, thirty-year-old pastoralist from the rGyal bo pastoral community, registered for resettlement in Duofudun Town, interviewed in July 2013.
26 Zeku Xian Fazhan he Gaige Ju 2007, 4.
29 Dawa Tsering, sixty-one-year-old pastoralist from the Ningxiu resettlement site, interviewed in June 2008.
30 Zeku Xian Renmin Zhengfu 2009, 8–9.

32 Rgyalo, pastoralist from the Heri resettlement, interviewed in September 2009.

33 Dondrub, pastoralist from the Heri resettlement, interviewed in September 2009.

34 Chen 2007, 143.


36 Leader of the Hor pastoral community in the Heri resettlement, interviewed in September 2009.

37 See Ptackova 2015.

38 Henan Xian Fazhan he Gaige Ju 2007, 1–2.

39 Interviews with resettled Henan pastoralists, August 2007.

40 Similar developments were also observed by Urgenson and colleagues (2014, 489) in parts of Jiuzhaigou, in northern Sichuan.

41 Henan Xian Fazhan he Gaige Ju 2007, 2–3.

42 See also Kardulias 2015, 2.

43 Tibetan member of Zeku County government responsible for grassland distribution and settlement constructions, interviewed in October 2009.

44 Zeku County civil servant, interviewed in December 2011.

45 For their remote locations and lack of comfort the small community schools are not popular among better qualified teachers. Usually, mainly teachers who have grown up in pastoral areas return to their home village to work. To become a teacher, applicants with a bachelor’s degree or a minimum dazhuan (vocational college) qualification are allowed to participate in government examinations for a certain prefecture or county. If they pass the government examinations, they will be employed as teachers. Teachers are required to complete a special teacher training program. However, the selection of the subject they teach does not seem to be bound to a particular qualification. Such circumstances have contributed to the lower quality of education in primary schools in remote Tibetan areas when compared with the Chinese average (see Rui and Mei 2009). Places where minority languages are spoken and bilingual education allowed (such as in Tibetan autonomous areas of Qinghai) have an even more difficult situation because the children have to follow a bilingual education program. In Zeku County all schools were Tibetan schools when the research was conducted. The teachers used the Amdo Tibetan language to teach students in all subjects, except the Chinese language. The children started with Tibetan and Chinese language lessons in the first grade, with English added in the third grade. Accordingly, their Chinese was often not as good as that spoken by Han children, for example.
Houses constructed in Zeku County since 2010 as part of the Nomadic Settlement Project, whether or not they are in a settlement near the pastoralists’ grasslands or in town, are easy to distinguish. They have a small plate on each door, stating that they are part of the Nomadic Settlement Project. The year of construction is also identified.

See Ptackova 2015.

See also, for example, Bessho 2015, 204.

“Jiakuai Zangqu You Mumin Dingju Gongcheng jianshe,” Qinghai Daily, April 24, 2009, http://xz.people.com.cn/. Construction of animal sheds has recently become part of various governmental modernization programs. Together with fencing, house constructions, and grass planting, it was included, for example, in the new Set of Four program of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan, which was completed in 2010 (Tongren Xian Fagai Ju 2007, 8).

Tibetan member of Zeku County government, responsible for grassland distribution and settlement constructions, interviewed in October 2009.

CHAPTER 6: AMBITIOUS OUTCOMES AND ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

1 See, for example, Cencetti 2014; Du 2014; Fischer 2014; Foggin and Phillips 2013; Gruschke 2012; Zukosky 2007.
2 Fan et al. 2013.
3 In the statistics of per capita net annual income of rural households in 1990–2016, the rural population in Qinghai remains among the poorest in the PRC (with ¥559.78 in 1990, ¥5,364.38 in 2012, and ¥8,664.4 in 2016). Statistics of productive fixed assets in rural households, however, show Qinghai among the first three (1998) or first nine (2012) regions respectively with the biggest value in livestock (¥21,919.34 per household; China Statistical Yearbook 1999–2017; see also Fischer 2005, 55).
4 Chen 2007, 147.
5 See, for example, Cencetti 2013; Foggin and Phillips 2013; Fan et al. 2013; Du 2014.
6 Kolås 2008, 126. See also Zimmermann 2014.
7 For more details concerning the caterpillar fungus economy, see, for example, Gruschke 2012; Winkler 2008, 2010; Sulek 2010.
9 Zeku Xian Sanjiangyuan Bangongshi 2007a.
10 See, for example, Nyima 2014.
11 Yeh 2014, 235.
12 Foggin and Phillips 2013, 1.
13 See, for example, Cencetti 2014; Yeh 2014.
14 Tibetan member of the Qinghai provincial government, interviewed in May 2015.
15 Du 2014, 250.
16 See also Gyal 2015.
17 See also Ptackova 2016.
18 Thirty-year-old former pastoralist from mGo log, interviewed in September 2008.
19 Fan et al. 2013.
21 See also, Humprey and Sneath 1999, 1.
22 Foggin and Phillips 2013, 6.