Tibetan self-immolations as counter-securitization:

Topgyal, Tsering

Document Version
Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication on Research at Birmingham portal](#)

Tibetan self-immolations as counter-securitization: interdiscursivity, identity and emergency measures

Abstract

This article argues that the Tibetan self-immolations constitute a form of counter-securitization to China's securitization of the 2008 Tibetan uprising. Theoretically, it argues that securitization theory (1) is too focused on the *intra-unit* interaction between securitizing elites and audiences; (2) leaves the *inter-unit* dynamics underdeveloped and (3) fails to recognize the securitised 'other' as an audience. This article theorises the linkage between *unit-level* and *inter-unit* processes by exploiting three concepts: inter-discursivity, identity and emergency measures. Contrary to existing theories, it shows that even unsuccessful securitizing moves can set off counter-securitizations thanks to audience-overlap and inter-discursivity. The Sino-Tibetan interactions around the Tibetan self-immolations uphold these theoretical positions.

Keywords: self-immolations; counter-securitization; resistance; Tibet; China

Tibetan self-immolations as counter-securitization: interdiscursivity, identity and emergency measures

143 Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet since February 2009 to protest Chinese rule over their homeland. What explains their turn to such a painful form of resistance, which is at once a form of *communication* as well as a dramatic political *act*? To be sure, the self-immolations have been interpreted in multiple ways as exemplified by special issues in two academic journals.[1] This article posits the self-immolations as counter-securitization, a specific form of resistance against China's securitization of the 2008 uprising and the decades-long general condition of securitization by the Chinese Party-state. To advance these points, the theory of securitization is developed and deployed here.

How does an issue become a 'security' issue in international relations (IR)? What is the mechanism through which it maintains that status? For those unsatisfied with mainstream theories in answering these questions, securitization has become *the* dominant theory ever since its presentation by the Copenhagen School (CS).[2] However, CS's securitization has met considerable critical attention over the years. This article argues that in the current readings, securitization theory is problematic in three crucial and related senses. First, it fails to recognise that human communities can react to securitization. This has implications for CS' narrow conception of the 'audience'. Second, securitization is too focused on the *unit-level*[3] interaction between securitizing elites and audiences. Third, the *inter-unit* effects of securitization remain under-theorised. Securitization is therefore a good theory of *domestic/intra-group* security politics, but underdeveloped as a theory of *international* security. To address these problems, this article offers a two-level reconceptualization of securitization. The Tibetan self-immolations will demonstrate the need to incorporate the securitised 'other' in the 'audience' and to develop the interactive dynamics of securitization and counter-securitization.

These empirical and theoretical objectives are pursued in six sections. The first section provides an overview of CS' theory and its critiques. The second and third sections develop my own critique that reveals underdevelopment of the *inter-unit* level of analysis. Securitization is reconceptualised to assign greater importance to securitizing moves, *even if unsuccessful*, and 'audience' overlap. We end up with a two-level theoretical framework linking the unit-level and inter-unit dynamics. The fourth section commences the empirical analysis by examining China's securitization of the 2008 uprising in Tibet. The fifth section analyses the self-immolations as a Tibetan counter-securitization using final statements left behind by self-immolators. It will be shown that while the Chinese securitization is motivated

principally by sovereignty and regime-security concerns, the Tibetan counter-securitization is driven chiefly by their identity insecurity. Readers who are not theoretically inclined can rely upon the above summary to skip straight to page 10 for the empirical analysis of the self-immolations.

Securitization and its critiques

The most comprehensive expression of CS' securitization is contained in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*.[4] It is centred upon the application of the concepts of 'speech act.'[5] CS argued that security is a speech act; uttering security elevates a particular issue or development from 'normal' to the 'special' politics of security. As Wæver argued, 'the utterance itself is the act…. By uttering "security", a state-representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means necessary to block it.'[6] The security speech act is productive of a 'a new social order.'[7] While theoretically any issue or development can be securitized, CS privileges state-actors and pressure groups as securitizing actors.[8] CS also assigns an important role to the audience whose acceptance is critical for success. It also identifies three 'facilitating' or 'felicity' conditions which influence the success or failure of securitization: the 'internal' grammar of security (consisting of existential threats and emergency measures) and the 'external' context (social positions of the securitizing actors and the nature of the threat).[9] The speech act, the securitizing actor and the audience, and the three facilitating conditions constitute the basic triology of CS' theory.[10] While CS' version of the securitization is fundamentally a discursive theory, it also claims an 'inter-subjective and socially constructed' label.[11]

Reflecting its success, securitization has been the subject of sustained critique and development. One set of theoretical criticism, coming mainly from the sociological strand of securitization scholars, charges CS of privileging speech and the speech act and ignoring other forms of political communication and securitization.[12] Another set of theoretical critique concern the internal contradictions, tensions and ambiguities inherent in CS' theory.[13] Considerable attention has always been focused on reframing the character and role of the audience.[14] Others point towards the normative and selection biases.[15] Within the existing *intra-unit* parameters, securitization has now become a sophisticated theory. Ironically, this is also its main weakness. It is a useful theory of intra-unit security politics, but it ignores the interactive dynamics across units. This is damaging to the claim of securitization as a theory of 'international security'. It captures the inter-subjectivity within the *unit*, but misses the core

concern of 'International Security'—inter-subjectivity at the *inter-unit* level. The following sections take this critique further.

Privileging unit-level politics, under-theorising inter-unit dynamics

Barring two recent works discussed below, securitization starts and ends with the interaction between securitising actors and audiences within given units. The success or failure of securitization is a function of the balance of socio-discursive power between the actor and the audience, the performative power of the text and the socio-political context. The implications on the putative threats and targets of securitization are under-examined. As Vuori notes, 'The "targets" of securitization, the claimed threats presented in the performatives, are left out of most analysis.'[16] CS does broach this topic briefly though. Embedding securitization into the existing concept of security complexes, CS writes:

> The investigation [of the patterns of security connectedness] proceeds in three steps: (1) Is the issue securitized successfully by any actors? (2) If yes, track the links and interactions from this instance—how does the security action in this case impinge on the security of others, and where does this then echo significantly? (3) These chains can then be collected as a cluster of interconnected security concerns.[17]

Buzan and Waever reproduces this formulation to demonstrate the empirical possibility of Regional Security Complexes (RSCs).[18] However, they do not theorise the interactive dynamics beyond these instructional statements.

Some problems arise out of these instructions. First, there is the problematic assumption that only successful securitizations have inter-unit consequences. Does this mean that only 'emergency' or 'extra-ordinary' steps carry implications for inter-unit 'chains' of securitization? This elides from security analysis an entire class of speech acts that do not cross the 'exceptional' threshold of success. In light of the informatized global reality, it is unsustainable to maintain that discourses or speech acts representing others as 'threats' could have performative power within units, but not across inter-unit relations. Focused as they are on bureaucratic practices, routines, policy instruments and emotions, the sociological theorists of securitization ignore discursive securitization entirely.[19] This research argues that securitising moves that fail to graduate to emergency measures could still set off counter-securitization as a result of inter-discursivity.

From these reflections, another critique of CS' residual traditionalism is possible. Its neglect of failed securitizations in their effort to connect securitization to regional security

complexes implicitly privileges material and physical acts (emergency steps) and underplays the power of language even as they claim to provide a theory based on speech and speech acts. This arises from CS' illocutionary understanding of speech acts as opposed to a perlocutionary interpretation. When the perlocutionary understanding is dominant as in Balzacq's works, it applies only to intended and unintended *intra-unit* consequences, not across units. Only actual security measures adopted after successful securitization are seen as having 'links and interactions' with the security of other units. Even then, CS neither provides a theory to 'track the [cross-unit] links and interactions' nor do they conceptualise the security 'echo' to explore the boomerang effect on the unit which initiated the 'chain-reaction' in the first instance.

Vuori and Stritzel and Chang came closest to unpacking the inter-unit/cross-unit dynamics of securitization.[20] Vuori uses the conflict between the Chinese Party-State and the banned Falun Gong sect to reveal the dynamics of 'counter-securitization': 'How do securitizing moves affect the inter-unit relations of securitizing actors and the claimed threats present in securitization moves?'[21] Employing the concept of 'identity frames,' Vuori demonstrates that the Party-State's relentless securitization of Falun Gong and its leader, Li Hongzhi, drove the sect first to desecuritize and then to counter-securitize the Communist Party and President Jiang Zemin. Thus he escapes the unit-level straitjacket.

However, despite Vuori's aspiration to develop the inter-unit dimension of securitization, his framework is tailored for a specific kind of vertical competition between 'repressive' states and disgruntled social movements. This calls into question its broader application on inter-unit and mixed-unit (e.g. US-Al-Qaeda or NATO-Taliban conflicts) contexts. Vuori's privileging of the illocutionary speech acts sits uncomfortably with his objective of examining *effects* across units, for which a perlocutionary understanding is more suitable.

Finally, Vuori's treatment of desecuritization as resistance is problematic on both theoretical and empirical grounds. In James Scott's theory of 'voice under domination,' the 'art of political disguise' is central to the 'everyday forms of resistance' waged by subordinate groups.[22] His 'weapons of the weak' in political resistance have the same objectives as their more direct and open alternatives, to undermine and neutralise the adversary, not different goals as securitization and desecuritization entail.[23] Balzacq is explicit in differentiating desecuritization from resistance. Noting that resistance involves deliberate application of 'power' and that desecuritization can be achieved 'without tactical or strategic intention' or use of power, Balzacq argues that '[t]o resist is to deliver a counter-force; to desecuritize is [simply] not do securitize in reverse.'[24] Vuori's description of Falun Gong's initial articulations as

desecuritization is empirically problematic. First, the official repression of Falun Gong began only when over 10, 000 Falun Gong adherents gathered in Tiananmen Square to protest a critical article in a Tianjin magazine.[25] Since there was no repression before that, there was no resistance against the Chinese government. Many of Li Hongzhi's books were in fact published by official publication houses and the state media carried both positive and negative coverage of the sect between 1996 and 1999. Furthermore, his sect enjoyed support from sections of the power elite. What was remarkable however is Falun Gong's 'relentless counterattack' against any negative media coverage including 'harassing individual editors and reporters'.[26] Once the official campaign of repression began, Falun Gong just as relentlessly counter-securitized the CCP and Jiang Zemin as evil and traitorous forces. Li Hongzhi's protestations of 'not going political' or not having political ambitions was a continuation of his long-standing desire to stay apolitical for financial and other organisational interests, not a new tactic in his post-1999 'desecuritization' efforts.[27] While securitization can be a form of resistance,[28] desecuritization cannot be seen as resistance as there is no use of 'counter-force'.

Stritzel and Chang are more precise in interrogating the relationship between resistance and counter-securitization.[29] They conceptualise counter-securitization as a 'specific form of resistance against the securitization process that takes the linguistically regulated form of a securitizing speech act'.[30] Using the post-9/11 NATO-Taliban war in Afghanistan, Stritzel and Chang depict securitization and counter-securitization as elements in an interactive 'political game constituted by moves and counter-moves in a continuous struggle for authority and legitimacy'.[31] Counter-securitization is thus a particular expression of resistance:

> We thus define counter-securitizing moves resisting crucial elements of the securitization process for the purposes of this article narrowly and rather technically as indeed *counter-securitizing in the sense that counter-securitizing moves also follow the ideal-type of the grammar of securitizing speech acts of claim, warning, directive (typically demand)….*[32]

While this is an important conceptualisation of counter-securitization, it leaves a number of questions unanswered.

First, it does not tell us why some securitizations provoke counter-securitizations and others do not. Second, Stritzel and Chang makes a conscious decision to focus on the 'communicative situation of contemporary war' because, they believe, securitization in this situation becomes 'iterative and interactive' and as such lends itself more to counter-securitization. Although this is a significant demonstration of the power of securitization to engage with 'hard' military security issues, this article shows that non-traditional security issues are just as interactive and open to counter-securitization. Third, in concentrating on the 'implementation stage', the point when the emergency measures are activated after acceptance

by the audience, Stritzel and Chang reproduces the problem identified above of completely ignoring the performative power of language before the implementation phase.

Inter-Unit Securitization

By addressing the above critiques, this article develops a two-level theory of inter-unit securitization. This article links the unit-level dimension of securitization to the inter-unit level through three concepts: inter-discursivity, its co-production of identity, and emergency measures.

Inter-discursivity and co-production of identity

While the concept of discourse has strongly influenced critical IR theory, inter-discursivity has largely escaped the notice of most scholars. Judith Butler explicates inter-discursivity thus: 'As historically specific organizations of language, *discourses* present themselves in the plural, *coexisting within temporal frames, and instituting unpredictable and inadvertent convergences* from which *specific modalities of discursive possibilities are engendered*' (emphasis added).[33] Inter-discursivity means interconnections between two or more apparently discrete, across time and space, discourse.[34] These interconnections are productive of new discourses. While existing notions of inter-discursitivity emphasise overlap or 'convergence' between discourses, a more constructivist understanding is possible whereby inter-discursivity involves mutually constitutive relationships between apparently separate discourses. In the process, identities and alterities are also reinforced. '[H]ow we *discursively represent something* also determines how we act toward it and hence *what it will be*' (emphasis added).[35]

Elisabeth Le's study of Russian and Western media coverage of each other buttress the concept of inter-discursivity:

> Anti-Russian, anti-western: these qualifiers have often surfaced in the discourse of Russia and the West about each other, as different "anti-" have also frequently appeared in other relations. This "anti-Other rhetoric" is hazardous, particularly when it finds a place in the editorials of renowned newspapers, because it can eventually develop into a spiral of distrust, dislike and sometimes hate that exacerbates difficulties and helps them escalate into a conflict that is more than just discursive.[36]

Although inter-discursivity is conceptually underdeveloped, there is ample empirical evidence of its existence.[37]

For instance, the mutually vilifying dynamic between the 'China Threat' thesis in parts of the US media and anti-Americanism in Chinese intelligentsia illustrate inter-discursivity very well. The *Washington Post* journalist Bill Gertz was at the forefront of the American

discourse of the China threat. He wrote that '[t]he true nature of Chinese communism' is the same as any authoritarian regime: 'military aggression'.[38] Accusing the Clinton Administration of appeasement, Gertz called for containment policies targeting China.[39] The Chinese anti-America discourse is represented by tracts such as *China Can Say No* and *The Plot to Demonize China* and spin-offs.[40] These mutually vilifying and securitizing discourses feed off each other and shape identities. Gries reveals the discursive co-constitution of identities most eloquently:

> Like all identities, Chinese and American identities are dynamic, *evolving in part through their mutual interactions*…. It is no coincidence that one of the very ugliest of China's anti-American diatribes, 1997's *The Plot to Demonize China,* focuses on real and imagined anti-China schemers in the Western press…. *Chinese nationalists pay close attention to Gertz and other American China bashers. Accordingly, Gertz and others like him have a disproportionate impact on the shape and evolution of Chinese nationalism.*[41]

Similarly, Johnston cautions us:

> "Talk" is consequential for both interstate and intra-state politics during intensifying security dilemmas and strategic rivalries. *[H]ow adversaries are described reverberates in the domestic politics of both sides.* The effect is often the narrowing of public discourse.[42]

The connection between discursive 'narrowing' and policy hardening is a well-studied field.[43]

Discursive co-constitution is helpful to explicate the consequentiality of even unsuccessful securitising moves in inter-unit interactions. Inter-discursivity entails that representational practices, regardless of success or failure in securitization terms, are not self-contained. This is even more problematic if the adversarial camps are sub-units within a larger entity (hostile ethnic groups within one state) or vertically competitive units (states and separatist groups). The discursive overflows are not even inadvertent here. The threatening 'Other' is an unavoidable audience, sometimes by design (e.g. Chinese propaganda and Patriotic Education Campaigns in Tibet). Yet, the 'other' is rarely treated as an audience.

The notion of overlapping audience gains salience as this structural condition enables discursive co-constitution. Since the securitised other is privy to the construction of itself as a threat to be dealt with, often accompanied by derogatory and offensive words and images, this sets off counter-securitizing moves. Discourse in Unit A about Unit B gets picked up by members of Unit B and shapes its discourse about the former and vice versa, entailing practical ramifications for identity and difference. The degree of inter-discursivity (access to rival discourses and audience overlap) and the resultant degree of co-constitution of identity determine whether or not a given securitization will set off counter-securitization.

Emergency measures and 'inter-unit chain reactions'

Once a securitising move gains the acceptance of the audience, the securitizing agent activates emergency measures against the invoked threat. By definition, these measures have far-reaching consequences on 'inter-unit' relations. If the speech act inherent in the securitizing move did not set off a counter-securitization, the implementation of the emergency measures will. CS recognized the latter point when they wrote about 'effects on inter-unit relations' and 'chain reactions' arising from the activation of extra-ordinary measures.[44] The scale of the inter-unit effect is a function of the intensity of the emergency actions. Actions short of war could also have far-reaching consequences, including war. Stritzel and Chang provide compelling evidence of this from securitization. In any case, this phase is the core concern of much of the international security literature. Ultimately, securitization is a 'type of political game constituted by moves and countermoves.'[45]

To sum up, this research proposed two stages along the process of securitization with the biggest ramification for inter-unit security: the initial securitizing move and the actual security measures. It showed in contradistinction to the existing theories that failed securitizing moves can have inter-unit security implications. Vitriolic rhetoric and discursive (mis)representations, even if unsuccessful in unleashing security measures, provoke counter-securitizations. This theoretical reconstruction connects the actor-audience interaction at the unit-level to the inter-unit dynamics.
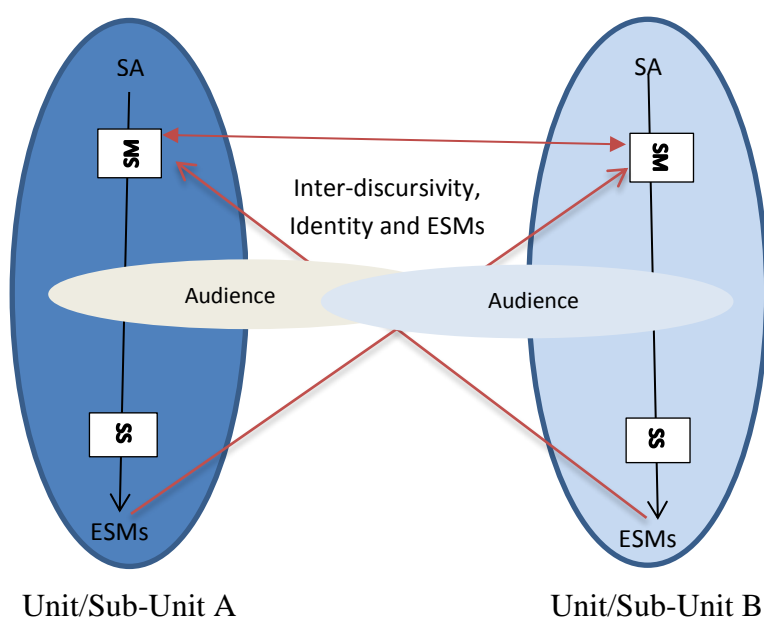
SA	Securitizing Actor
SM	Securitising Move
SS	Successful Securitization
ESMs	Emergency Security Measures

Inter-unit theory of securitization theory

In addition to the degree of interdiscursivity and intensity of the emergency threat, contextual resonance is just as important for counter-securitization to stick as it is for securitization. As Balzacq contends, '…to move an audience's attention toward an event or a development construed as dangerous, the words of the securitizing actor need to resonate with the context within which his/her actions are collocated'.[46] Contextual factors include sectoral (e.g. state or societal security?), social (authority or social capital, and emotional and psychological condition of the audience), political (democratic or authoritarian?), historical ('conditions historically associated with that threat').[47] The socio-political and historical contexts will be given special attention in this article.

Tibetan Self-Immolations, Inter-Discursivity and Emergency Acts

Since 27 February 2009, 143[48] Tibetans inside Tibet have self-immolated, representing a cross-section of the Tibetan population, including three reincarnate Lamas, six students (two female and three male middle school), nomads, farmers, laborers, a carpenter, a blogger, a Thanka (traditional Tibetan painting) artist, a taxi driver, a forestry worker and a former Communist party official.[49] Only eight cases have been reported from Tibet Autonomous Region.[50] Forty nine self-immolators have left behind final testimonies, which are crucial for any effort to understand why they have chosen this form of protest.[51]

Tibetan areas and sites of the self-immolations.[52] (Map by International Campaign for Tibet)

Why did so many Tibetans turn to self-immolation in such a short period of time? The Chinese government has repeatedly and consistently attributed the self-immolations to 'behind-the-scenes orchestration [by the 'Dalai clique'] with a transparent political motive [separatism]'.[53] Wu Zegang, Party Secretary of Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture said that the 'victims [self-immolators] were used by separatists ['The Dalai Lama clique and overseas separatist forces'] to create chaos'.[54] The self-immolations are 'overseas plots'.[55] Tibetan leaders, including the Dalai Lama, portray the self-immolations as a symptom of 'deep desperation' among the Tibetans as a result of 'repressive' Chinese policies.[56] Without condoning or condemning the self-immolators, the Dalai Lama frequently calls upon the Chinese authorities to conduct a 'thorough investigation' of the causes of the self-immolations and learn about their grievances. There is unmistakably clear day light between the official Chinese and Tibetan views on the self-immolations.

The self-immolations have also received much scholarly attention already. As noted above, two academic journals—*Cultural Anthropology* and *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* [Tibetan Studies Journal]—have dedicated special issues to make sense of these tragic events in Tibet. In these scholarly considerations, the self-immolations have been read as protest against localised repression (nomad resettlement and Patriotic Education Campaigns) and/or resistance against threats to broader 'civilizational preservation' interests (Shakya; Sperling; Berounský; Fischer); mass mediated communication (Makley); demonstration of 'virtuoso' (spiritual) power of Tibetan monks against the military and legal power of the Chinese state (Gyatso); an 'embodied expression of humanity' through 'an unparalleled example of Bodhisattva mind' [self-less offering of one's own body], demonstration of 'ultimate self-discipline' against the 'disciplining biopolitics' of life under Chinese rule (Craig); 'reclamation of sovereignty' over one's body and individual life (Yeh and Litzinger); taking on 'virtuous pain' (Mingyur); a 'social fact in the Durkheimian sense' (Tan); and manifest influence of Chinese popular culture (Barnett). These perspectives treat the self-immolations either as nationalistic *acts* of protest and resistance and asymmetric *contests* over power and sovereignty or forms of *communication* and ritual *offerings*. Each of these perspectives captures and emphasises a different slice of the complex and extended reality behind the self-immolations includes an intolerable trigger (generally state policies and practices), a prior phase of preparation (sometimes writing or recording final statements), the momentary act of setting oneself aflame, an agenda for communication, and intended or unintended effects (the issue of

perlocution). There are two types of communication here: (1) speech act in the form of final statements left behind by the immolators; and (2) Karin Fierke's "'act of speech' in which the suffering body communicates the injustice experienced by a community to a larger audience".[57] The self-immolations should therefore be understood as extended and composite events rather than just discrete instances. Since theory should be as complex as the empirical reality, any study of the self-immolations should be attentive to all these elements. Counter-securitization recognises this complexity.

First, counter-securitization, with its attention to both the performative language and the communicative act, and equally attentive to the prior trigger (securitization) and the consequences (reverse-securitization), provides the framework for synthesising these various elements into one coherent analysis. Second, it brings out the interactive dynamics between Chinese and Tibetan security imperatives much more clearly than the existing understandings of the self-immolations. Third, counter-securitization helps us to understand the self-immolations in terms of a security competition between two insecure communities rather than just through the general prism of repression versus resistance. Fourth, it does so in a way that securityness is not taken for granted and seen as objectively existing prior to interaction, but as a social product of the dynamic and tormented intercourse between the Chinese state and the Tibetans. Finally, counter-securitization imputes a security rationale to the Tibetan actions and articulations vis-à-vis China, which challenges the dominant view of the Tibetan actions as irrational and ethno-nationalistic. The following analysis of the self-immolations reflects these value-additions. It is important to note in agreement with Stritzel and Chang, however, that counter-securitization is just a 'particular expression' and not the entirety of resistance. As such, the Tibetan resistance is more than counter-securitization, but the latter captures the most salient elements of the former.

I.   *China Securitizes the Tibetans*

In March 2008, Tibetans on the Tibetan plateau[58] rose up in the biggest challenge to Chinese rule since the 1950s.[59] Beginning with peaceful protests on the 10th March Anniversary of the Tibetan uprising in 1959 and the next three days, which were put down brutally by the security forces, Tibetans rioted on 14 March in Lhasa and in other towns in the East in the following days. The Chinese government claimed that 18 civilians and one policeman died and 382 civilians were injured on 14 March, 2008.[60] The Tibetan Government-in-exile (TGIE) and rights groups claim that 220 Tibetans were killed, 5600 arrested or detained, 1,294 injured and 290 sentenced and over 1,000 disappeared in the ensuing crackdown.[61]

The consequences were far reaching. Not only did the uprising widen the chasm between Dharamsala, the seat of the Dalai Lama and TGIE, and Beijing, it also disrupted some of China's key foreign relations. The Tibetans attributed the protests to 'deep-rooted resentment of the Tibetan people' under China's 'flawed and repressive policies'.[62] Beijing claimed that it had 'plenty of evidence' proving that the uprising was 'organized, premeditated, masterminded and incited by the Dalai Lama clique'.[63] The securitization of the Tibetan protests by the Chinese is obvious from the speech act contained in the statements of Chinese leaders, their domestic and international propaganda, Patriotic Education Campaigns (PEC), bureaucratic practices such as ethnic profiling and surveillance, Tibet's near-total lock-down and information black-out, and the military and paramilitary crackdown.

President Hu Jintao described the Chinese-Tibetan conflict as 'a problem either to safeguard national unification or to split the motherland'.[64] Wen Jiabao told Fareed Zakaria the same thing on CNN.[65] Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi told a European journalist that the Tibet issue concerns 'China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This is not a religious or ethnic issue'.[66] When the Chinese media started to cover the riots in Lhasa, in a decidedly one-sided propaganda, Chinese netizens commented on *Strong Nation Forum*, a discussion-forum hosted by *People's Daily,* from which the BBC Worldwide Monitoring carried 'a sample of the postings'.[67] It clearly revealed that many ordinary Chinese also interpreted the Tibetan uprising as a threat to 'national security'. The Chinese representations of the Tibetan protests went beyond blaming the 'Dalai Lama clique'.

As soon as the Tibetan uprising began in March 2008, the Chinese officials and media sprang into action to securitize the Tibetan uprising. In official statements and all over the Chinese media, including overseas outlets, the Tibetan protests were characterized as 'beating, looting, smashing and burning', and the Dalai Lama, 'Dalai clique' and hostile 'western forces' were blamed of orchestrating the protests.[68] The Dalai Lama was called a 'terrorist' colluding with Muslim 'terrorists' and the Tibetan Youth Congress 'a terrorist organization much [more] catastrophic than bin Laden's'.[69] Zhang Qingli, then-Party Secretary of Tibet Autonomous Region, said, 'We are now engaged in a fierce blood-and-fire battle with the Dalai clique, a life-and-death battle between us and the enemy'. Any form of Tibetan opposition was invariably labelled 'separatism' or 'splittism' in collusion with 'hostile' foreign forces, most commonly America.[70] As Woeser put it, 'In their eyes, all Tibetans are a threat….Tibetans are the enemies against whom ever stronger defenses must be build'.[71]

However, official utterances and writings (speech acts) are not the only means of securitizing the Tibetans as a group. Reflecting the wider modes of securitization unearthed by

the post-CS theorization, the Chinese authorities also extensively deployed existing and new policy instruments, bureaucratic practices and routines, and images and televisual images in their securitization of the Tibetans.

After the main protests, The government went on the offensive against 'the Dalai clique' by controlling the domestic media coverage of the protests and riots and keeping out foreign journalists,[72] shutting down the communication infrastructure in the Tibetan regions and playing on national TV round-the-clock clips of the Tibetan rioters, especially Tibetan monks, burning and destroying Chinese and state properties and attacking Chinese civilians and filling up the pages of print media with the same stories and screen-grabs. These images were relayed on overseas Chinese media outlets. As Barnett wrote, 'For most people in China, the story of the Tibet uprising starts and ends with what is now called "the 3/14 incident"— what has been portrayed there as the brutal beating and killing of Chinese civilians by rabid Tibetan nationalists'.[73] CCTV, the official Chinese TV network quickly made a documentary titled 'Records of the Lhasa Riots' which was 'ceremoniously released and broadcast on prime time over and over again; it even became available on DVD'.[74] Carrico captures it eloquently:

> This onslaught of images constituted an arguably unprecedented media campaign to consolidate the official line on Tibet. It provided seemingly irrefutable visual proof of a simple narrative imposed upon complex events: *irrational, violent, and threatening "Tibetan separatists" suddenly and seemingly out of nowhere unleashed senseless violence against Han residents interested only in "helping Tibet develop."* Within this presentation, the source of protests had to be found either outside of Tibet proper (i.e., "the Dalai clique") or solely inside the purportedly troubled minds of protestors (i.e., "hooligans"), so as to ensure that they not be found in historical grievances or the current sociopolitical context of occupation.[75] (Emphasis added)

Influenced by such portrayal of Tibetans and their protests in the official media and private channels, Tibetans and Uyghurs became targets of official surveillance and public discrimination in Tibet and the Chinese areas.[76] It was not difficult to convince the Han Chinese audience, which had been primed for securitization through Patriotic Education Campaigns, propaganda, censorship and manipulation of the media, and public education.

Tibetans complained frequently of racial profiling in their own homeland: the security forces stop Tibetans for identity check, letting the Chinese go un-accosted in Lhasa. The Tibetans were also subjected to relentless propaganda through the locale media to 'thoroughly expose and criticize the evil deeds of the Dalai separatist clique in instigating and masterminding the "3.14" incident of serious crimes of beating, smashing, looting' and to besmirch the Dalai Lama's status as a Tibetan Buddhist Lama, champion of Tibetan rights and icon of peace and to reveal his 'reactionary' 'two-faced tactics' of instigating violence to seek

independence while speaking of peace and dialogue.[77] This propaganda directed towards the Tibetans and PEC discussed below show that the Chinese authorities viewed the Tibetans as an audience to be persuaded or coerced into accepting their securitization.

PEC: Tibetans as China's intended audience

In the theory section, I posited that the securitized subject could be an audience for the securitizing actor, intentionally or unintentionally. PEC positions the Tibetans into the role of China's strategic audience. One of the immediate Chinese responses was to blockade the monasteries and step up PEC in all Tibetan regions.[78] Leading an official delegation to Lhasa in 23-24 March, the Chinese Minister of Public Security, Meng Jianzhu, told members of the management committees of the Lhasa monasteries that the Dalai Lama is 'unfit to be a true follower of Buddhism, and called for broader "patriotic education" in TAR'.[79] In a Regulation publicized on 18 July, 2008 by the local government of Kartze TAP, Sichuan, 'Order No. 2 of the People's Government of Kartze TAP' threatened the entire monastic hierarchy with reprisals for anti-Chinese disturbances: monks and nuns who protest and refuse to 'conform' and submit to PEC will be expelled and their residence demolished; reincarnates and senior monks could be 'stripped of the right to hold the reincarnation lineage' for communicating with foreigners or engaging in anti-China protests; monasteries/nunneries where a specific percentage of monks/nuns have engaged in dissident activities will banned from performing Buddhist rituals; and senior Buddhist teachers could face public 'rectification' or imprisonment if they 'tolerated' any protest activity, peaceful or otherwise.[80] Kartze Daily reported that PEC was also being conducted in Tibetan villages and schools.[81] PEC was vigorously conducted in the eastern Tibetan regions of Gansu and Qinghai too.[82] Ordinary Tibetans were forced under threats of imprisonment to denounce the Dalai Lama and declare loyalty and gratitude to the Party.[83] Woeser's update shows that in many cases Tibetan protests were provoked by PEC sessions, which required denouncing the Dalai Lama, a most heart-breaking think for most Tibetans to do.[84]

On 1 April, the authorities conducted PEC inside Dza Wonpo Monastery, Dzachukha County, Kartze, ordering the monks to criticize and denounce the Dalai Lama, provoking a monk-led protest (Woeser, 'Tibet Update 2').[85] On 2 April, PEC was initiated in Ba Chode Monastery, Batang County, Kartze, resulting in clashes and arrests of monks, including the abbot and disciplinarian. On 3 April, PAP and a PEC work unit ransacked Tongkor monastery, Kartze, confiscating mobile phones and throwing the photographs of the Dalai Lama and the monastery's abbot to the ground, and ordered the monks to 'curse' the Dalai Lama. The monks

started a protest joined by lay Tibetans from that area, reportedly resulting in many fatalities.[86] Monks of Pada Sangdruling Monastery in Dzachukha, Kartze, refused to cooperate in a PEC session on 26 April, creating a tense situation.[87] The intensification of PEC in all Tibetan regions fomented great resentment towards the Chinese authorities, creating the conditions for the Tibetan counter-securitization.[88]

Inter-discursivity: Tibetans as China's unintended audience

It was argued above that the securitized subject could discursively infiltrate the securitizer, becoming an unintended audience. This is discursive inter-penetration and audience-overlap. While PEC is an element in the Chinese state's direct and intended communication with the Tibetans, especially those who have been branded as troublesome, there is a discourse among the Chinese about Tibetans which is accessible to the latter. Contrary to the dominant notion of the single self-contained audience in the securitization literature, the Tibetans are privy to the 'private' Chinese discourse about them. This is partly because some elements of the intra-Chinese discourse seep through in their direct communication with the Tibetans through PEC, official statements, education and media. Equally significantly, thanks to education in Mandarin Chinese, more and more Tibetans are fluent in spoken and written Chinese. They are not just privy to, but also capable of interjecting themselves into the discourse. Beijing-based Tsering Woeser, who blogs in Chinese, is exemplary in this respect.[89]

A helpful illustration of the Tibetan penetration of the Chinese Tibet discourse is the case of the CCTV serial 'Secret Tibet', a 46-episode, Chinese language drama about 1930-1940's Tibet, directed by Liu Depin and broadcast on primetime TV beginning in January 2013.[90] This 'historical' drama was marketed as an 'accurate representation' and an 'important source for Han Chinese to understand Tibetan history, culture and religion'.[91] Immediately, it provoked a fire-storm of online Tibetan criticism for distorting Tibetan history and misrepresenting and 'demonizing' Tibetan people and their culture. The film portrayed Tibet and Tibetan society as thoroughly barbaric, cruel and violent, which somehow was also under the rule of Nationalist China. Lhasa-controlled Tibet (the setting of the drama) was *de facto* independent until 1950. Tsewang Thar wrote in his Chinese language blog: 'This TV drama is to ridicule Tibet, insult Tibetans and debase Tibetan culture. You are responsible for the destruction of the relation between Han [Chinese] and Tibetan and the stability of the society'.[92] A group of young Tibetans formed a rap group, satirically named 'Sheep Droppings', and attacked Liu Deping and his team with a rap-song titled 'Respect'. Singing in Chinese, they accused 'fucking Liu Debin' and his '[u]neducated and ignorant, mendacious and deceptive'

cast and crew of 'distorting history…with filthy thoughts and ugly ideas', 'slander[ing] Tibet's thousands of years of history' and 'defaming our people'.[93] Woeser also blogged that 'Secret Tibet' was full of 'distortions and deformities…and very arrogant'. [94] Characteristically, Liu Deping responded by labelling his critics 'contemptible scoundrels' and 'separatists'. Many similar episodes have preceded 'Secret Tibet' and hindered Chinese-Tibetan relations at the popular level. This Tibetan infiltration into the Chinese discourse reinforces the strength of Tibetan identity, consistent with Butler's point about the production of identity and difference through discursive representation. Thar's charge that 'Secret Tibet' destroyed Chinese-Tibetan relations and social stability is illustrative of the security consequentiality of (mis)representing others as violent and threatening long before emergency actions are executed. Existing theories of securitization treat these as inconsequential until and unless they graduate to actual emergency measures.

Of course, in the Chinese response to the 2008 uprising, the representational practices activated a militarized crackdown accompanied by various other security measures.

The Military Crackdown

To the puzzlement of many observers, when the Tibetan protests descended into a riot on 14 March, 2008, the security forces had vacated the entire area. When they did come back, it was a full-scale military operation conducted by the Peoples Armed Police (PAP) and Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). Chinese officials resisted formally declaring martial law, denied the deployment of regular soldiers and rejected the death of any Tibetans. James Miles of the *Economist* reported that Lhasa was effectively under martial law and reported seeing 'numerous…military vehicles, military looking vehicles with tell-tale license plates covered up or removed. And also many troops there whose uniforms were distinctly lacking in the usual insignia of either the police or the riot police. So my very, very strong suspicion is that the army is out there and is in control in Lhasa'.[95] Andrei Chang, a defense analyst confirmed: 'T-90/89 armored personnel carriers and T-92 wheeled infantry fighting vehicles appeared on the streets as the 149th Division of the No. 13 Group Army under the Chengdu Military Region was dispatched to Lhasa'.[96] He also observed that the soldiers were 'all wearing the "leopard" camouflage uniforms specifically designed for mountain warfare operations' of the 149th Division.

In Lhasa, a number of Tibetans were killed by the security forces.[97] But large scale protests also took place in other parts of Tibet on 14 March: Toelung Dechen and Chushul, Samye and Shigatse in Utsang (TAR), Sangchu (Gansu) and Dzoge, Lithang and Sershul

(Sichuan).[98] On 16 March, prisoners were paraded through the streets of Lhasa in military vehicles. Despite the heavy military presence, protesters lingered on in and around Lhasa and the death toll mounted on the Tibetan side. TGIE claims that over 80 Tibetans died on 14 March and 160 by the end of March in Lhasa.[99] Using police photos and the ubiquitous surveillance cameras, the authorities began to issue daily 'Most Wanted Lists' and text messages were sent to all mobile users in Tibet directing them to inform on protestors. The security crackdown in Lhasa and Eastern Tibet included brutal raids into homes and monasteries during which photographs of the Dalai Lama and other revered Lamas were trashed and trampled upon, arbitrary detentions, stepped-up surveillance in monasteries, and permanent police stations inside monasteries, intensified PECs during which monks and nuns were forced to renounce the Dalai Lama, building walls around monasteries to keep monks in and pilgrims out and banning of religious activities.[100] These measures were buttressed by an escalating security budget in the Tibetan regions. Between 2002 and 2009, per capita annual spending on internal security in Ngawa County in Sichuan province, the epicenter of the self-immolations, had increased from three times to five times the average security budgets of the non-Tibetan counties in that province. Within the same period, Ngawa experienced a 619 percent increase in public security spending.

In essence, China securitized and waged war on the Tibetans, laying the ground for a multifaceted Tibetan counter-securitization.

II.   *The Tibetans counter-securitize*

The brutal crackdown in 2008 has failed to stabilise Tibet. The Tibetans have responded to China's repression through 'non-cooperation movements; boycotts; White Wednesdays (*lhakar*) during which people eat Tibetan food but no meat, speak Tibetan and wear Tibetan clothes; vegetarianism; abandonment of monasteries by nuns and monks to escape from the new rules; demonstrations in support of the Tibetan language; coded radical poetry; and self-immolations'.[101]

That the self-immolators were reacting to the Chinese crackdown in 2008 is clear from the time-line. The first ever self-immolation as a political protest inside Tibet happened on 27 February, 2009, almost a year after the 2008 uprising.[102] Monks from Ngawa prefecture, where it happened, said, 'In 2008, they beat, arrested, crippled, and killed us Tibetans without a second thought. Many of us came to realize through this experience the need to resist the Chinese government for what it was doing to our people…. 2008 was a wake-up call for us. It changed us'.[103] Tibetans first resorted to self-immolations because China's hyper-securitized

practices in Tibet after 2008 had left no other option for the Tibetans. [104] As Woeser wrote, 'In such a stifling environment, there is no longer any space for popular protests to develop.'[105]

The self-immolators are reacting not just to the brutal security and surveillance operations and bureaucratic practices, but also to the discursive content of PEC, state propaganda and locale media coverage. Some of the later self-immolations were partly provoked by the Chinese state's relentless securitization and wilful misrepresentation of the earlier self-immolators and their acts of resistance. Chinese officials and state-media framed the self-immolators as 'terrorists', 'separatists', 'splittists', 'criminals', psychological and sexual deviants, sociopaths, cult members, or failures in academic and marital lives.[106] For Yeh, the Chinese government labels the self-immolations as terrorism because of the need for 'constant mobilization of threat' to maintain control over Tibet.[107] To accentuate the threat-level, they portray the self-immolations as organised by hostile overseas forces. To ensure that these representations stick with their audience, CCTV broadcast five special programmes on the self-immolations amounting to two hours of airtime, which were then replayed several times. In another instance of Tibetan penetration of a Chinese discourse, Tibetan intellectuals, writing in both Tibetan and Chinese, countered these representations by glorifying the self-immolators as 'national heroes' (*mi-rigs gi dpa-wo).*[108] The Chinese representation of the self-immolators were accompanied by further escalation of the security measures in place since Spring 2008, wherever self-immolations happened, aggravating local conditions and provoking more self-immolations. Analysis of the testimonies left behind by a number of the self-immolators bears these out.

This article builds upon Woeser's careful content/thematic analysis of forty nine final statements left behind by self-immolators. Her findings are summarised in the table reproduced below.

	Themes articulated by self-immolators	No. of final statements addressing this theme	No. of individuals involved	% of sample
1	Taking action	15	17	37.0%
2	Praying for the Dalai Lama	13	14	30.4%
3	Showing courage and responsibility	12	13	28.3%
4	National identity and solidarity	11	11	23.9%
5	Promoting Tibetan independence	10	10	21.7%

6	Protests against the government and demands for change	9	9	19.6%
7	Unable to bear life	8	8	17.4%
8	Protecting the national language	6	6	13.0%
9	Drawing international attention to Tibet	3	3	6.5%

Woeser, *Self-Immolations in Tibet,* pp. 25.

Woeser captures the relative frequency of the key themes contained in the statements, but some of the themes can be collapsed into others so as to enhance their relative significance. First, 'Protecting the national language' can be incorporated into 'National identity and solidarity'. For the Tibetans including the self-immolators, contrary to the deconstructionist analysts, what constitutes Tibetan identity and makes them distinctive from the Chinese are cultural markers like Tibetan language, Buddhism, dress, food and so on. If references to Buddhism are included, 'National Identity' will be even more prominent. Second, 'Protests against the government and demands for change' can be collapsed into 'Taking action' or vice-versa. The category for 'Showing courage and responsibility' could also be incorporated into 'Taking Action.' In fact, all the self-immolations are acts of securitization and/or resistance against the Chinese state. These methodological tweaks are reflected in the analysis that follows.

That the self-immolations have been a reaction to the climate of fear created by the securitization of Tibetan life, especially after 2008, which are seen as existential threats to the survival of the Tibetan nation, and that self-immolation is an extra-ordinary act after exhausting all other means is clear from the words of Tashi Wangchuk, a young Tibetan shop-keeper from Qinghai province, as told to the New York Times.

> So many people have self-immolated. I can understand them now because we have very few ways to solve problems. *No one wants to live in an environment that's full of pressure and fear*. In effect, there is *systematic slaughter of our culture*. In politics, it's said that *if one nation wishes to eliminate another nation, first they need to eliminate their spoken and written language*. Normally we dare not discuss it because *many phones are tapped and we don't know where the surveillance devices are. They can arrest you under any name* and there is no way to appeal since the legal system is imperfect. Since 2009, *more than 140 people have self-immolated…. I believe they also saw culture disappearing* and other cultural problems…. Have I ever thought about self-immolation as an option? If this [efforts to take legal action in Beijing against provincial governments who enforce education policies which privilege Chinese and undermine Tibetan language education] comes to an end and I'm locked up and cannot proceed with what I'm doing and they force me to say or do things I don't want to say, *I will choose suicide [self-immolation?]*.[109]

Tashi travelled all the way to Beijing to take legal action against local authorities and to attract the attention of the Chinese media. These are upheld by the words of many Tibetans who

actually committed self-immolations. It is clear from below that the Tibetans are responding to both the Chinese representational and security practices and the physical acts of state repression.

Designation of Threat

Counter-securitization begins by identifying threats to important values in the securitizing language and actions of an adversary. The securitized strikes back at the securitizer in kind. The Tibetan self-immolators leave no doubts as to who/what poses the main threat to their identity: China's discursive and (mis)representational practices and repressive policies. Tamdin Tso's case is illustrative of the former. After her self-immolation, Tamdin's father recollected:

> What triggered her self-immolation seems to be what happened about one month ago, when she went to Rebkong town with me and saw the posters which were distributed by the new local leader, Jiangshu Cheng, banning His Holiness the Dalai Lama's picture and telling people to publicly protest separatists and their activities. She was visibly angry and felt very sad to see those posters.

Regarding the latter, Gudup, a 43-year-old writer who self-immolated on October 4, 2012, wrote, '[Tibet] is now tainted with red blood, where military crack downs are unceasing. We, sons and daughters of [Tibet], will win the battle through truth, by shooting the arrows of our lives, by using the bows of our minds.'

Nine statements explicitly point out China as the source of threats and the target of their protest. Nyangkar Tashi puts it bluntly, 'I self-immolate to protest against the Chinese government!' Lhamo Kyap, a herdsman in his 20s who self-immolated on 20 October, 2012, told a friend over the phone in the morning, 'China does not let us leave in peace'. Gudup, wrote:

> His Holiness Dalai Lama advocates for a non-violent middle-way policy for the right to Tibetan autonomy. Six million Tibetans have been following His Holiness' teaching. But the CCP shows no support. Instead, they arrested and tortured those who demand Tibetan's rights. *They defame Dalai Lama and when anyone does not recognize Tibet as part of China, they will disappear or be assassinated.*

Even when they do not mention China or the Chinese explicitly, it is clear from implication that they hold the Chinese state and its agents responsible for creating the conditions that drove them to commit self-immolations. As Woeser wrote, each self-immolation is 'a deeply symbolic act of protest and demand for change.'[110]

The Value of Tibetan Identity

> *My people have no freedom of language. Everybody is mixing Tibetan and Chinese [language]…. Where is my Land of Snow [Tibet] going, friend? Where is my Land of Snow going?….* [This is] for the sake of Tibet. We are in the Land of Snow. *If we don't have our freedom, cultural traditions and language, it would be extremely embarrassing for us. We must therefore learn them. Every nationality needs freedom, language and tradition. Without language, what would be our nationality? [Should we then] call ourselves Chinese or Tibetan?*

These are the haunting words of Ngawang Norphel as he lay dying under the care of the monks of Zhilkar monastery (Yulshul TAP, Qinghai), after his self-immolation with Tenzin Khedup on 20 June, 2012. A seven minute cell-phone video of Ngawang's conversation with the monks of Zhilkar monastery has been uploaded onto Youtube.[111] Despite being severely disfigured and visibly struggling with his words, Ngawang's fear for Tibetan national identity could not be expressed more strongly.

As I have demonstrated elsewhere,[112] the Tibetan resistance is fundamentally driven by identity insecurity (i.e. fear for the survival and reproduction of their identity). If the capacity to excite the emotion of fear is crucial for the practices of securitization, as Rythoven posits,[113] Tibet could not be a more fertile territory for securitization, given the memories of six decades of Chinese assault on Tibetan culture and identity.[114] Tibetans also have political, ecological and economic insecurities, but identity security appears to be the predominant concern.[115] The self-immolators also directly or indirectly portray the Chinese policies and practices as posing existential threats to Tibetan identity. As we can observe in Woeser's thematic analysis above, just 'national identity', even if we exclude associated values such as language, Buddhism and traditions, received more frequent mention than the political value of 'independence' in the final statements. If the final statements expressing concern for national language are incorporated into the 'National Identity' category, we get an aggregate of seventeen statements out of forty nine (35 percent), making it the most common theme across the statements. If we count references to the repression of Tibetan Buddhism and other traditions, this category will be even more pronounced.

Nyankar Tashi, a nomad who self-immolated on 24 November, 2012 in Tongren County, Qinghai Province, left behind a letter, which stated in part that 'My wish is that six million Tibetans will learn their mother tongue, wear Tibetan clothes and be united'. Tenzin Kedhup and Ngawang Norphel self-immolated together in Chindu County, Qinghai Province on June 20, 2012 after recording their final message. They said, '[We] do not have the ability to help Tibetan's religion and culture…. [W]e have to be united and protect our nation'. Sonam, a 24-year-old student and Choephak Kyab, a 25-year-old student burned themselves near the monastery of Dzamthang, Sichuan Province, on April 19, 2012. In their joint statement, Sonam

and Kyab asserted, 'The Tibetan nation is distinct from the others as it has its own religion and culture…. If you [Tibetans] feel sad for us,... learn and keep alive our culture and traditions'. Nangdrol, an eighteen year old student who carried out his self-immolation on 19 February, 2012, advised the 'Men and women of Tibet' to 'wear Tibetan clothes if you are Tibetan. Moreover, you must speak Tibetan. Never forget that you are Tibetan'.[116] Tulku Sobha, a reincarnate Lama who self-immolated on 8 January, 2012, also left behind an audio message, urging fellow Tibetans:

> You must unite and work together to build a strong and prosperous Tibetan nation in the future. This is the sole wish of all the Tibetan heroes [who self-immolated]…. You must maintain unity and strength. Give love and education to the children, who should study hard to *master all the traditional fields of [Tibetan] studies. The elders should carry out spiritual practice as well as maintain and protect Tibetan language and culture by using all your resources and by involving your body, speech and mind.*[117] (Emphasis mine)

Clearly, the protection of Tibetan identity or what they believe to be the markers of Tibetan identity is one of the key objectives. The Tibetans feel that they lack the freedom to practise and reproduce these elements of their identity. As Tenzin, a 23-year-old herdswoman who self-immolated on 7 November, 2012, wrote in a note to her father, 'Father, being Tibetan is so difficult….'

The self-immolators' multiple audiences

The communicative aspect of self-immolations has been captured well in the existing literature.[118] As noted above, self-immolations contain two forms of communication, speech acts and acts-of speech, each with separate, overlapping audiences. These two forms of communication have different intended audiences. The speech act, with its grammar of security contained in the final statements or post-immolation words of survivors—designation of threat to important values and exhortation toward action such as strengthening unity and reinforcing cultural practices (e.g. learning and speaking Tibetan, wearing Tibetan clothes, eating Tibetan food etc.)—is clearly intended for the Tibetans audience. The quotes above from the final statements reveal this relationship between the self-immolators and the Tibetan community. These parting words of the reincarnate Lama Sobha are illustrative:

> United, young [Tibetans] should treasure and acquire the ten traditional sciences [of Tibetan learning]. The old should prevent the decline of their long accustomed [Tibetan] language.[119]

Thanks to the intrusive network of surveillance and Tibetan collaborators, the Chinese authorities are quick to penetrate the Tibetan discourses, which explains the incarceration of many Tibetan writers and singers.

On the other hand, the 'act of speech' is directed more towards the Chinese, communicating 'a message of resistance to foreign interference or occupation' towards a perpetrating 'other'.[120] It is an intense expression of protest, denouncement, defiance and at once reclamation of sovereignty over individual body and life from the oppressor: an unequivocal act of resistance.[121] The graphic images and videos rhetorically 'suspends' and 'postpones' death as well as 'implicate several distinct audiences with a shared sense of responsibility'.[122]

Shakya characterises the Tibetan turn to self-immolations as a 'change in the language of protest'.[123] Drawing upon Verdery's 'political lives of dead bodies', Makley suggests that the Tibetan self-immolations are 'situated forms of communication (where the burning body becomes a primary medium versus, as in suicide bombers, a crucial weapon)' in retaliation to the 'extreme states of siege, where state narratives dominate all public speech' and Tibetans lack 'access to words'.[124] Tang Danhong called the Tibetan self-immolations 'a language of intense pain, an intensely painful denouncement–a way to communicate the extent of the atrocity they endure'.[125] Here, the Chinese are the target audience of 'protest', for expressing 'grievances' or for 'denouncement'. Indeed, there was a sharp spike in self-immolations around the 18th Party Congress of the CCP on 8 November, 2012. On the day of his self-immolation, Lhamo Kyab reportedly asked his friend over the phone when the Party Congress was going to be held.

It is also possible that the international community is an audience for a few of the self-immolators to highlight perceived Chinese violations and to seek some kind of international intervention. The point here is that the self-immolators have different audiences for different purposes.

Facilitating contexts

As McDonald argues, studying the historical and socio-political contexts is crucial for understanding why 'particular discourses of security…become possible' and why certain societies are more receptive to particular representations of threat.[126] In the Sino-Tibetan encounter, the contextual factors are nothing but propitious for the counter-securitization to stick. This author has charted elsewhere over six-decades of security competition between the Chinese state and the Tibetans in the form of the insecurity dilemma.[127] It was also shown that

throughout these historical periods, the all-consuming driver of Tibetan resistance was their identity insecurity.[128] During his fieldtrips, Tibetologist Germano observed in Tibet a 'deep, abiding cultural depression among … the educated youth and religious elite to nomads and villagers'.[129] A siege mentality has been a constant feature of Tibetan life whereby their identity is ravaged by wave after wave of Chinese cultural and political onslaughts. The first self-immolators were monks and nuns, including reincarnate lamas, who enjoy considerable social capital and spiritual authority in Tibetan society. The lay self-immolators are instantly lionised after the event by the Tibetans as 'heroes' [དཔའ་བོ་/དཔའ་མོ།] conferring social capital upon them posthumously. Tibetans face another contextual factor in the form of the balancing act that they have to perform in resisting the intolerable repression, which also forecloses other forms of protest and redressal, but also practising nonviolence that Buddhism and the forceful teaching of the Dalai Lama demands off them. These historical and socio-political contexts makes self-immolation a painful, yet suitable form of resistance, facilitating the interpretation of the self-immolations contained in this article.

Self-immolation as emergency action

Besides being a form of communication, self-immolation also constitutes the implementation of an emergency 'act' designed to counteract the perceived threat. It is an act of resistance both against China's general policies and more specifically against its securitizing moves after March 2008. In lieu of the destructive power of wars, self-immolation relies upon its shocking effect. To the extent that visual securitization has theoretical purchase, self-immolation is especially effective in the age of advanced and ubiquitous visual and social media.[130]

Fifteen statements by seventeen immolators claimed to be 'taking action', which should be understood as either protesting the Chinese government, communicating a threatening development to the Tibetans or to exhort them towards some defensive actions against the threat. Some of the self-immolators say pointedly that they were burning themselves to protest Chinese rule. Gudrup wrote, '[I]n order to let the world know about the real situation in Tibet, we have to radicalize our peaceful action…by lighting up our bodies'. Tenzin Khedup wrote, 'For the sake of our Tibetan nation… we choose self-immolation. We want to tell all the Tibetan youth, swear to yourself… we have to be united and protect our nationality'. Tamdin Thar, a 64-year-old herdsman, who self-immolated on 15 June, 2012, wrote in a short verse: '[To] Protect the Tibetan State/I self-immolate'. Nyangkar Tashi simply wrote, 'I self-immolate to protest against the Chinese government!' They have chosen to self-immolate to

jolt the Tibetans into national consciousness, to force the Chinese authorities to make concessions or to galvanise international support for the Tibetan cause. While they have been successful in strengthening Tibetan identity and unity, they have been less successful in the latter two aims. Even the Dalai Lama has questioned the political effectiveness of the self-immolations.[131] Yet, it is an ongoing phenomenon and the efficacy of political movements can only be judged in the *longue durée.*

Conclusion

This article advanced a number of theoretical and empirical arguments. Theoretically, it argued that securitization theory is (1) too focused on the *intra-unit* interaction between securitizing elites and audiences; (2) leaves the *inter-unit* dynamics underdeveloped and (3) fails to recognize the securitised 'other' as an audience. Taking the existing critiques into account and building upon these critical observations, securitization was reconceptualised to recognise that securitizing moves (even if unsuccessful) have unpredictable inter-unit consequences inasmuch as human collectives can react to their representation as threats. By incorporating the 'other' as an 'audience' and exploiting the concepts of inter-discursivity and discursive interpenetration, the *intra-unit* security politics between the securitizing actor and its audience is connected to the *inter-unit*, that is *international security,* dynamics. This opens up space for failed securitizing moves to have international security ramifications, challenging the dominant understanding in the literature that only successful securitizations can have international 'chain-reactions'. As such, a two-level theoretical framework that takes the unit-level interaction between the actor and audience seriously, but also integrates the inter-unit dynamics into the framework, is devised. Securitization thus truly becomes a theory of international security.

The framework developed here is superior to the existing versions of 'counter-securitization'. It has broader applicability than Vuori's conceptualization, which is restricted to vertical competitions, while compared to Stritzel and Chang, my framework is equipped to explicate why some securitizations provoke counter-securitizations and others do not.

With this framework, this article demonstrated that the Tibetan self-immolations constitute a counter-securitization. This counter-securitization is principally, but not exclusively, driven by the acute sense of identity insecurity gripping a large section of the resident Tibetan population inside Tibet. The Tibetan resistance is shown to have a security

rationale, contrary to the general acceptance in the existing literature that it is driven by nationalist emotions.

The interactive theory developed here has broader applications for China's conflicted relations with other regions like Xinjiang and Hong Kong. Although China's problems in Tibet, Xinjiang and Hong Kong have their own particularities, they share the broad commonality that Beijing's sovereignty and regime-security-minded securitization of the regional issues are met with identity-minded local counter-securitizations. Separate articles are necessary, at the least, to do justice to each of these regional dynamics. Any takers?

---

[1] Carole McGranahan and Ralph Litzinger, 'Self-Immolation as Protest in Tibet', *Fieldsights - Hot Spots, Cultural Anthropology Online*, April 09, 2012, http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/93-self-immolation-as-protest-in-tibet*;* Katia Buffetrille and Francoise Robin, 'Tibet is Burning. Self-Immolation: Ritual or Political Protest?' *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines*, No. 25, (December 2012).

[2] Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, (1998). Unless otherwise specified, all attributions to CS will be in reference to this seminal book.

[3] True to CS' standing as a widening perspective in security studies, 'units' include the state, but also other 'political units' that 'act according to the political logic of governing large groups of people': empires, ethnic groups, religious groups, linguistic groups, churches and businesses. Units can be diverse and overlapping and securitization can take place both horizontally between like units and vertically between units and sub-units. Buzan *et al.*, *Security,* pp. 47 and 144. In the parlance of Sino-Tibetan relations, the interactions can be conceptualised as taking place both horizontally between the Tibetan and Chinese nations (cross-unit) or vertically between the Chinese state and the Tibetans (unit vs. sub-unit). Of course, the dynamics and processes

of securitization and counter-securitization works just as well for the more familiar domain of inter-state politics.

[4] Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup, Pierre Lemaître and Ole Wæver, eds. *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, New York: St Martin's, (1993).

[5] John L. Austin, "Performatif-Constatif," in Cahiers de Royaumont, Philosophie, No. IV, *La Philosophie Analytique*, Les Editions de Minuit, 1962. Translated in 1963, "Performative-Constative" by G. J. Warnock, in C. E. Caton ed., *Philosophy and Ordinary Language*, University of Illinois Press.

[6] Ole Wæver, "Securitization and Desecuritization" in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (Ed.) *On Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, (1995), pp. 55.

[7] Balzacq, Thierry, "The Three Faces of Securitization: Political Agency, Audience and Context", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 11, No. 2, (2005), pp. 171-201.

[8] Buzan *et al*, *Security*, pp. 40-41.

[9] Buzan *et al*, *Security*, pp. 32-3.

[10] Holger Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 13 No. 3, (2007), pp. 362.

[11] Buzan *et al*, *Security*, pp. 31.

[12] McDonald, Matt, "Securitization and the construction of security" *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 14 No. 4 (2008), pp. 568-70; Williams, Michael C. "Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics", *International Studies Quarterly,* Vol. 47, (2003), pp. 511–53; Hansen, Lene "The politics of securitization and the Muhammad cartoon crisis: A post-structuralist perspective" *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 42, No. 4-5, (2011), pp. 357-369; Huysmans, Jeffrey "What's in an act? On security speech acts and little security nothings" *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 42 No. 4-5 (2011), pp. 371–383; Huysmans, Jeffrey, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU*, London: Routledge, (2006); Didier Bigo, "Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease", *Alternatives,* Vol. 27 No. 1, (2002), pp. 65; C.A.S.E Collective, "Collective Critical Approaches to Security in Europe: A Networked Manifesto", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 37 No. 4, (2006), pp. 458; Thierry Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization: Origins, Core Assumptions, and Variants," in *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve*, (Ed.) Thierry Balzacq, London: Routledge, (2011), pp. 4-6; Sarah Leonard, 'EU border security and migration into the European Union: FRONTEX and securitisation through practices', *European Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2, June 2010, pp. 231-254.

[13] McDonald, "Construction of security", pp. 575-7; Stritzel, "Towards a theory of securitization", pp. 366-7.

[14] Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securization", pp. 184-6; Stritzel, "Towards a theory of securitization", pp. 363; Vuori, Juha A. "Illocutionary Logic and Strands of Securitisation–Applying the Theory of Securitisation to the Study of Non-Democratic Political Orders" European Journal of International Relations Vol. 14, No. 1 (2008), pp. 65–9; Salter, Mark B. Securitization and Desecuritization: A Dramaturgical Analysis of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority. *Journal of International Relations and Development* 11 (2008), pp. 321-349.

[15] McDonald, "Construction of security"; Floyd, R. "Can securitization theory be used in normative analysis? Towards a Just Securitization Theory" *Security Dialogue* , Vol. 42 No. 4-5, (2011): 427-439; Lene Hansen, "The Little Mermaid's Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School", *Millennium,* Vol. 29 No. 2 (2000): 285–306; Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic"; Vuori, Juha A. "Religion Bites: Falungong, Securitization/Desecuritization in the People's Republic of China" in Thierry Balzacq (Ed.) *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve,* London, Routledge, (2011), pp. 186–211; Claire Wilkinson, "The Copenhagen School on Tour in Kyrgyzstan: Is Securitization Theory Useable Outside Europe?" *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 38, No. 1, (March 2007): 5-25; "The Limits of Spoken Words: from meta-narratives to experiences of security" in Thierry Balzacq (Ed.) *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* London, Routledge, (2011), pp. 94-115.

[16] Vuori, "Religion bites".

[17] Buzan et al, *Security*, pp. 42-3.

[18] Buzan, Barry and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2003), pp. 73.

[19] Balzacq, Thierry, 'The "Essence" of securitization: Theory, ideal type, and a sociological science of security', *International Relations,* March 2015, pp. 8-19; Balzacq, 'A Theory of Securitization'; Huysmans 'What's in an act?'; Huysmans, *The Politics of Insecurity;* Bigo, 'Security and Immigration'; Leonard, 'EU border security and migration'; Rythoven, Eric Van, 'Learning to feel, learning to fear? Emotions, imaginaries, and limits in the politics of securitization', *Security Dialogue,* (27 May, 20015), pp. 1-18.

[20] Vuori, "Religion bites'; Holger Stritzel and Sean C. Chang, "Securitization and counter-securitization in Afghanistan", *Security Dialogue,* 2 September, 2015, pp. 1-20.

[21] Vuori, "Religion bites", pp. 186.

[22] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts,* New Haven and London: Yale University Press (1990), pp. 136-82.

[23] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*; James C. Scott, "Everyday Forms of Resistance", *Copenhagen Papers,* Vol. 4, No. 89.

[24] Thierry Balzacq, 'Editor's Note', in *Contesting Security: Strategies and Logics ,* New York and London: Routledge,(2015), pp. 19.

[25] Yuezhi Zhao, "Falun Gong, Identity, and the Struggle over Meaning Inside and Outside China" in Jamers Curran and Nick Couldry (Eds.), *Contesting Media Power: Alternative Media in a Networked Society,* Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield (2003), pp. 215-16.

[26] Zhao, "Falun Gong, Identity…", pp. 214-15.

[27] Michael J. Greenlee, "A King Who Devours His People: Jiang Zemin and the Falun Gong Crackdown: A Bilbliography, *International Journal of Legal Information,* Vol. 34, No. 3 (2006), pp. 557-9.

[28] Gary T. Marx, "Security and surveillance contests: Resistance and counter-resistance" in Balzacq T (ed.) Contesting Security: Strategies and Logics. London: Routledge, (2015), pp. 15–28.

[29] Stritzel and Chang, "Securitization and Counter-securitization".

[30] Stritzel and Chang, "Securitization and Counter-securitization", pp. 5.

[31] Stritzel and Chang, "Securitization and Counter-securitization", pp. 2.

[32] Stritzel and Chang, "Securitization and Counter-securitization", pp. 5. Italics added.

[33] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, (London: Routledge, (1999), pp. 184.

[34] Shaimaa El Naggar, "Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity in the Discourse of Muslim Televangelists: The Case Study of Hamza Yusuf", *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines,* Vol. 6 (1), pp. 81; Reisigl, M. and R. Wodak, "The Discourse Historical Approach" In R. Wodak and M. Meyer(eds.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, London: Sage, (2009), pp. 91-93.

[35] Jennifer Sterling-Folker, (Ed.), Making Sense of International Relations Theory, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Reinner Press, (2006), pp. 158.

[36] Elisabeth Le, *The spiral of 'anti-other rhetoric': discourses of identity and the international media echo,* Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins Publishing, (2006), pp. 162-3.

[37] John A. Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2009); Thompson, William R., "Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (December 2001), pp. 557– 586.

[38] Bill Gertz, *The China Threat: How the People's Republic Targets America*, Washington, DC: Regnery Publishers, (2000).

[39] Gertz, *The China Threat,* pp. xi, xii, xiii, xiv and 198.

[40] Song Qiang et al, *Zhongguo keyi shuobu (China can say no)*, Beijing: Zhonghua gongshang lianhe Chubanshe, (1996); Li Shiguang and Liu Kang, *Yaomohua Zhongguo de beiho (The Plot to Demonize China),* Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshue (1996).

[41] Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics and Diplomacy*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press (2005), pp. 31).

[42] Alastair Iain Johnston, "How New and Assertive is China's New Assertiveness" *International Security*, Vol. 37, Issue 4 (Spring 2013), pp. 8.

[43] Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (1992); Murray Edelman, *Political Language: Words That Succeed and Policies That Fail*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, (1977); Karin Fierke, "Links across the Abyss: Language and Logic in International Relations," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (September 2002), pp. 331–354.

[44] Buzan *et al*, *Security,* pp. 26.

[45] Vuori, "Religion bites", pp. 190-1.

[46] Balzacq, *Securitization Theory,* pp. 13.

[47] Mcdonald "Construction of security"; Wæver, Ole 'The EU as a security actor: Reflections from a pessimistic constructivist on post-sovereign security orders', in Morten Kelstrup and Michael C. Williams (eds) International Relations Theory and the Politics of European Integration: Power, Security and Community, pp. 250-94, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 252-3; Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization"; Buzan *et al, Security*, pp. 31-3.

[48] This number does not include Thubten Nyandak Rinpoche (Reincarnate Lama) and his niece Atse who died in a fire, which has been seen as self-immolation by some sources. It also does not include the self-immolations that took place in India and Nepal.

[49] Paul Mooney, "Immolations in Tibet: The Shame of the World", *Forbes Asia*, 28 October, 2013.

[50] This is significant because what Tibet is geographically is one of the two key issues at the heart of the Chinese-Tibetan conflict and dialogue.

[51] Tsering Woeser, *Self-Immolations in Tibet: The Shame of the World,* Translated by Kevin Carrico, Verso (Forthcoming, 2015). It was previously published in Mandarin Chinese and French as *Immolation au Tibet, La Honde du Monde* (Immolations in Tibet, the Shame of the World), Paris: Indigène Éditions, 2013.

[52] Also see Al Jazeera's combined timeline and map for useful information on the self-immolations both inside and outside Tibet, which is available here: http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2013/03/2013391733355459.html (Accessed on 02/12/2013).

[53] Xinhua, "Political motive behind self-immolations in Tibetan-populated regions", March 7, 2012.

[54] Xinhua, "Political motive behind self-immolations".

[55] Xinhua, "Self-immolations in Tibetan area linked to overseas plots: scholar", (6 December, 2011).

[56] Damian Grammaticas, "Who is fanning Tibet's flames?" *BBC*, (7 November, 2011).

[57] Karin Fierke, *Political Self-Sacrifice: Agency, Body and Emotion in International Relations,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2013), pp. 37-38.

[58] The geographical spread of the uprising included not just the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), but also the Tibetan areas incorporated into the neighbouring provinces of Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan.

[59] Tsering Topgyal, "Insecurity Dilemma and the Tibetan Uprising in 2008," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 20, No. 69, March, 2011: 183-204; Smith, Warren. Jr., *China's Tibet? Autonomy or Assimilation,* New York and Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008.

[60] People's Daily, "18 civilians, 1 police officer killed by Lhasa rioters," (22 March, 2008); "Appalling March 14 riot in Lhasa," (26 March, 2009); "Calls from netizens to cite TYC as terrorist organization" (10/04/2008); available at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90882/6390139.html

[61] Central Tibetan Administration [Tibetan Government-In-Exile];"Fact Sheet: Tibetan Deaths under China's Crackdown since March 2008," (20 March, 2009); Voice of America, 'Dharamsala condemns Chinese court's death sentence for riots', (9 April 2009).

[62] Private Office of the Dalai Lama, "Press Release from the office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama," (14 March, 2008); International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), "Tibet at a Turning Point: The Spring Uprising and China's New Crackdown," Washington, DC, (6 August, 2008); Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, "Uprising in Tibet 2008: Documentation of protests in Tibet," Dharamsala, India, (2008).

[63] China Daily, "Dalai-Backed Violence Scars Lhasa," (15 March, 2008); "Riots Aimed at Derailing Games: Wen," (19 March, 2008); Xinhua, 'Wen: "Cultural Genocide" in Tibet Nothing but Lie,' (18 March, 2008).

[64] China Daily, "Hu: Tibet problem entirely internal issue of China," (12 April, 2008).

[65] Cable News Network (CNN), "Transcript of interview with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao," (29 September, 2008).

[66] BBC World Wide Monitoring (BBC WWM), '"Full text" of Chinese foreign minister's news conference," (12 March, 2008).

[67] BBC WWM, "Chinese media break silence on Tibet riots," (15 March, 2008).

[68] Xinhua, "Uphold rule of law, protect the people, safeguard stability", (22 March, 2008); Xinhua, "Dalai clique is mastermind and instigator of incident of violent beating, smashing, looting and burning in Lhasa", (30 March, 2008).

[69] People's Daily, "Calls from netizens to cite TYC as terrorist organization" (10 April, 2008); Renmin Ribao, "TYC a terrorist organisation more catastrophic than bin laden's [sic]" (10 April, 2008).

[70] Ta Kungpao, "The eight-power allied forces are behind Tibet independence" (9 April, 2008); Ta Kungpao, "riots in Tibet connected with the United States" (9 April, 2008).

[71] Woeser, *Self-Immolations in Tibet,* pp. 50.

[72] James Miles of *The Economist* was in Lhasa since 12 March. After his expulsion on 19 March, no other foreign journalists, including from Hong Kong, were allowed into Tibetan areas.

[73] Robert W. Barnett, "Thunder from Tibet," *The New York Review of Books*, Volume 55, Number 9 (29 May, 2008).

[74] Tsering Woeser, "CCTV's Explanation for the Tibetan Self-Immolations," *High Peak, Pure Earth* (18 June, 2012); available at http://highpeakspureearth.com/2012/cctvs-explanation-for-the-tibetan-self-immolations-by-woeser/.

[75] Kevin Carrico, 'Chinese State Media Representations' Fieldsights - Hot Spots, Cultural Anthropology Online, April 08, 2012, http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/109-chinese-state-media-representations. Also, see Kevin Carrico, 'Tibetan Buddhist Self-Immolation', *Oxford Handbooks Online,* August 2015.

[76] A Tibetan language blogger *Lha-mo Sgrol-ma* (Lhamo Dolma) posted this on her blog. The post with readers' comments is available at http://www.tibetabc.cn/u/lamaozhuoma/archives/2008/2008930224950.html; A translation of this blog-post "A Day of Pain" is available at http://www.highpeakspureearth.com/search/label/Discrimination. Tsering Woeser, "An Owner and His Pet: Tibetan/Han Relations," (24 June, 2008), available at http://woeser.middle-way.net/2008/06/blog-post_24.html. English translation is available at http://www.highpeakspureearth.com/2008/12/owner-and-his-pet-tibetanhan-relations.html.

[77] Warren Smith, Jr., *China's Tibet? Autonomy or Assimilation,* Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, (2008), pp. 114-127.

[78] Smith, *China's Tibet*?, pp. 61-9.

[79] Maureen Fan, '"Patriotic Education" Campaign: China Moves to Tighten Control over Religion in Tibet,' *Washington Post*, (26 March, 2008); International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), 'Mass detentions of monks, suicides and despair as enforced condemnation of Dalai Lama provokes dissent,' (29 April, 2008).

[80] Tibet Daily [བོད་ལྗོངས་ཉིན་རེའི་གསར་ཤོག] "Measures for dealing strictly with rebellious monasteries and individual monks and nuns: Order No. 2 of the People's Government of Kartze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" [དཀར་མཛེས་བོད་རིགས་རང་སྐྱོང་ཁུལ་མི་དམངས་སྲིད་གཞུང་གི་བཀའ་ཆང་ཨང་གཉིས་པ།] (18 July, 2008); the Tibetan original is available at http://zw.tibet.cn/news/xz_news/ttxw/200807/t20080718_413324.htm.

[81] Congressional Executive Commission on China, "Party, Government Launch New Security Program, Patriotic Education, in Tibetan Area," (5 may, 2088); available at http://www.cecc.gov/pages/virtualAcad/index.phpd?showsingle=102948.

[82] ICT, *Tibet at a Turning Point: The Spring Uprising and China's New Crackdown*, Washington, DC, (6 August, 2008), pp. 73-5.

[83] ICT, *Tibet at a Turning Point,* pp. 75.

[84] Tsering Woeser, "Tibet Update (1)" "Tibet Update (2)" "Tibet Update (3) April 15-27" "Tibet Update (4) April 29-30" " Tibet Update (May 1-6, 2008) " and "Tibet Update (May 9, 2008)" *China Digital Times,* http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2008/03/tibet-update-march-22-and-23/ (Accessed on 13 May, 2008).

[85] Woeser, "Tibet Update 2".

[86] Woeser, "Tibet Update 2".

[87] Woeser, "Tibet Update, May 1-6, 2008".

[88] The Economist, "Lhasa under siege", (17 March, 2008); Edward Wong, "50 Years after Revolt, Clampdown on Tibetans", *New York Times*, (4 March, 2009); "On Foot in the Mountains of Mystical Yunnan", *New York Times,* (5 April, 2009).

[89] Woeser, http://woeser.middle-way.net/.

[90] Oiwan Lam, "Tibetans Outraged by Chinese TV Drama on Tibet" (29 January, 2013).

[91] http://ent.qq.com/a/20130117/000340.htm; accessed on 12/09/2014.

[92] Tsewang Thar, http://www.weibo.com/2132057784/zg0S7jN6Q; accessed 12/09/2014).

[93] Sheeps' Dropping, "Respect", Translation by High Peaks, Pure Earth; http://highpeakspureearth.com/2013/to-the-cast-and-crew-of-tibets-secret-tibetan-rappers-demand-respect/ (accessed on 12/9/2014).

[94] Woeser, 'What is the Secret Behind "Secret Tibet"?' (5 February, 2013).

[95] CNN, "James Miles interview on Tibet", (20 March, 2008).

[96] Andrei Chang, "Analysis: Controlling Tibet Part 1," *Kanwa Defence*, (2 July, 2008); available at http://www.upi.com/Security_Industry/2008/07/02/Analysis-Controlling-Tibet-Part-1/UPI-88751215000000/2/.

[97] Barnett, "Thunder from Tibet"; Tsering Shakya, "Interview: Tibetan Questions," *New Left Review*, (51 May-June 2008b).

[98] ICT, "Tibet at a Turning Point", pp. 19-23.

[99] TGIE, "Fact Sheet".

[100] Human Rights Watch, "China: End Crackdown on Tibetan Monasteries: Heavy-Handed Security Exacerbates Grievances, Desperation", (October 12, 2011); Edward Wong, "In Occupied Tibetan Monastery, a Reason for Fiery Deaths", (2 June, 2012).

[101] Katia Buffetrille, "Self-Immolation in Tibet: Some Reflections on an Unfolding History", *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 25, (Décembre 2012), pp. 3.

[102] The first Tibetan self-immolation as a political protest happened in New Delhi in 1998. Thupten Ngodup burnt himself when the Indian police broke up a fast-unto-death protest organised by the Tibetan Youth Congress.

[103] Woeser, Tibetan Self-Immolations, pp. 4.

[104] Carrico, 'Tibetan Buddhist Self-Immolation', pp. 4.

[105] Woeser, *Self-Immolations in Tibet*, pp. 18.

[106] Woeser, *Self-Immolations in Tibet,* pp. 40-48; Joint Statement by the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and the Ministry of Public Security of the People's Republic of China, "Opinion on Handling Cases of Self-Immolation in Tibetan Regions in Accordance with the Law," December 2012.

[107] Emily Yeh, "On "Terrorism" and the Politics of Naming" *Fieldsights - Hot Spots, Cultural Anthropology Online, April 08, 2012, http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/102-on-terrorism-and-the-politics-of-naming.*

[108] ནགས་ཚང་ནུས་ལོ [Naktsang Nulo] ཧྲེ་ཧོར་བློ་བཟང་ཆོས་འཕེལ་སོགས་ཀྱི་དྲི་བར་ལན་འདེབས་པ། [Responding to the questions of Hrehor Lobsang Choephel and others] མཚོ་སྔོན་དྲ་བ [Qinghai Tibetan Website] ༢༠༡༣ ༡ ༡༥ [15 January, 2013]; English version is available at http://highpeakspureearth.com/2013/a-tibetan-intellectual-naktsang-nulo-shares-his-thoughts-on-self-immolations-in-tibet/; Tsering Woeser, 'How CCTV's Propaganda Film Depicts the Tibetan Self-Immolators' http://woeser.middle-way.net/2012/07/cctv.html (11 July, 2012).

[109] Tashi Wangchuk, A Tibetan's Journey for Justice, Documentary, Produced by Jonah M. Kessel, Sarah Li and Edward Wong, (28 November, 2015; New York: New York Times); available at http://www.nytimes.com/video/world/asia/100000004031427/a-tibetans-journey-for-justice.html?smid=fb-share (Accessed on 29/11/2015). Emphasis added. Also see the associated article: Edward Wong, "Tibetans Fight to Salvage Fading Culture in China", 28 November, 2015.

[110] Woeser, *Tibetan Self-Immolations*, pp. 28.

[111] MissingVoices77, "Ngawang Norphel attempted to self-immolate on 20 June 2012", (25 June, 2012); available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jW13KfVt8Y (Accessed on 8 November, 2015).

[112] ANONYMIZED

[113] Rythoven, *Learning to feel, learning to fear?*

[114] Tsering Topgyal, 'The Insecurity Dilemma and the Sino-Tibetan Conflict', PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, (2012).

[115] John Whalen-Bridge, *Tibet is Burning: Buddhism, Protest, and the Rhetoric of Self-Immolation*, Palgrave Macmillan (2015).

[116] The self-immolations of Nangdrol, Sonam and Kyab were captured on video. This video and the self-recorded audio message of Sonam and Kyab can be accessed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=MdjEDm6zH6g (Accessed on 03/12/2013).

[117] Pictures taken after Tulku Sobha's self-immolation and his audio message can be accessed on the website of the Beijing-based Tibetan writer, Woeser: http://woeser.middle-way.net/2012/01/blog-post_28.html.

[118] Whalen-Bridge, *Tibet is Burning*; Stephen John Hartnett, '"Tibet is Burning": Competing Rhetorics of Liberation, Occupation, Resistance, and Paralysis on the Roof of the World', *Quarterly Journal of Speech,* (10 Jul 2013).

[119] Kirti Monastery, India, [འབྲས་ཡུལ་ཀི་རྟིའི་ཆེས་པ་གྲྭ་ཚང་], *Historical and Documentary Record of the Self-Immolations, 1998-February 2012* [རང་ལུས་མེར་སྲེག་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཡིག་ཚགས་ཕྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༨ ནས་༢༠༡༢ ཟླ་ ཚེས་༢ བར་], དེབ་ དང་པོ་/གཉིས་པ་/གསུམ་པ་ [Volumes 1, 2 and 3], Dharamsala, India, (2012).

[120] Fieke, *Political Self-Sacrifice*, pp. 107.

[121] Fierke, *Political Self-Sacrifice*, pp. 102.

[122] Michelle Murray Yang, "Still Burning: Self-Immolation as Photographic Protest", *Quarterly Journal of Speech,* Vol. 97, No. 1, (2011), pp. 1-25.

[123] Tsering Shakya, "Self-Immolation, the Changing Language of Protest in Tibet", *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines*, No. 25, (December 2012): 19-39.

[124] Charlene Makley, "The Political Lives of Dead Bodies" *Cultural Anthropology Online*, (April 09, 2012).

[125] Tang Danhong, "Fire Between Dark and Cold", *China Digital Times* (9 January 2013); available at http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2013/01/tang-danhong-fire-between-the-dark-and-the-cold/ (last accessed 14 June, 2014).

[126] McDonald, "Construction of Security", 573.

[127] ANONYMIZED.

[128] ANONYMIZED.

[129] David Germano, 'Re-membering the Dismembered Body of Tibet: Contemporary Tibetan Visionary Movements in the People's Republic of China', in Melvyn C. Goldstein and Matthew Kapstein (eds.), *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet: Religious Revival and Cultural Identity,* Oakland, CA: University of California Press 1998: 55.

[130] Lene Hansen "Theorizing the Image for Security Studies: Visual Securitization and the Muhammad Cartoon Crisis", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 17, No. 1, (2011) pp. 51-74.

[131] BBC, "Dalai Lama questions wisdom of self-immolations", 18 November, 2011.