



Tibet: An Unfinished Story

Lezlee Brown Halper, Stefan Halper

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Tibet's enduring myth, animated by the tales of Himalayan adventurers, British military expeditions, and the novel, *Lost Horizon*, remains an inspirational fantasy, a modern morality play about the failure of brutality to subdue the human spirit. Tibet also exercises immense "soft power" as one of the lenses through which the world views China.

This book traces the origins and manifestations of the Tibetan myth, as propagated by Younghusband, Madam Blavatsky, Himmler, Acheson and Roosevelt. The authors discuss how, after WW2, Tibet-- isolated, misunderstood and with a tiny elite unschooled in political-military realities --- misread the diplomacy between its two giant neighbours, India and China, forlornly hoping London or Washington might intervene. China's People's Liberation Army sought nothing less than to deconstruct traditional Tibet, unseat the Dalai Lama and "absorb" this vast region into the People's Republic, and Lhasa succumbed to China's invasion in 1950.

Drawing on declassified CIA and Chinese documents, the authors reveal Mao's collusion with Stalin to subdue Tibet, double-dealing by Nehru, the brilliant diplomacy of Chou en Lai and how Washington saw-sawed between the China lobby, who insisted there be no backing for an independent Tibet, and Presidents Truman and later Eisenhower, who initiated a covert CIA programme to support the Dalai Lama and resist Chinese occupation. It is an ignoble saga with few, if any, heroes, other than ordinary Tibetans.

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Doris Brown:

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