

An Analysis of the Reasons for the Miserable Life of Tibetan Serfs under the System of Political and Religious Unity

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Abstract

In the history of Tibet, serfdom is a history that cannot be ignored. In the early days of serfdom, there was rationality. The poor natural environment of Tibet made its population scarce, fixed its labor force on the land and promoted the development of agriculture, which was in line with the productivity level of Tibet at that time. However, with the development of serfdom, especially when the administration and religion are integrated in Tibet, serfdom is bloody and inhumane for serfs. The author analyzes the reasons from different aspects, hoping to explain the tragic reasons of his life. The paper is divided into the following parts. The first part: the birth and development of serfdom. This part expounds the rationality of serfdom and the development process of the whole serfdom, hoping the readers have a general understanding of this history. The second part: the reasons for the miserable life of serfs in the period of the integration of politics and religion. This part mainly includes three aspects: first, the high interest makes many Tibetan aborigines lose their land and become slaves; second, the harsh laws and hierarchy make serfs have no shelter, and the use of the law becomes the privilege of the ruling class such as serf owners; heavy taxes, many serfs have to pay a wide range of taxes from birth to death, making serfs have a high share. They can't turn over; the fourth is extreme mental control, which makes almost all serfs dare not resist and can only endure and accept their miserable life.

Keywords

Tibet, serfdom, cause.

1. Introduction

Tibetan serfdom is a dark and savage social system based on feudal land ownership and serf's dependence on serf owners. Anyone who has a little knowledge of this history knows the cruelty of this system. However, serfdom began in the 10th century, was generally established in the 13th century, and continued to the early days of the founding of the people's Republic of China. It was abolished during the Tibet democratic reform movement in 1959. Such an unreasonable system can last for such a long time. I would like to express my personal opinions on some of these factors here.

2. Conditions and Development of Serfdom

First of all, because of the geographical barrier formed by the early human migration, Tibet is a relatively independent source culture, with independent languages, characters, and even the physiological structure of Tibetans are somewhat different. After all, they are naturally resistant to plateau reaction. The geographical location determined the early isolation of Tibet. In the south, it was blocked by the Himalayas. In the north, it was connected with Xinjiang. In the East, there were many broken rivers. Moreover, the altitude of Tibet was very high, the air was thin, and it was always regarded as a very wild place, with very little contact with the

outside world. These bad conditions make the Tibetan aborigines develop alone in a very long historical period, and they have no advantages. And because of the low average temperature, strong light and low rainfall, the consequence is that since ancient times, Tibet has been sparsely populated, and it is difficult to get food, and basically no foreign population has entered Tibet, increasing the labor force in Tibet.

In the 6th century A.D., the Yalong tribe began to develop into a slave system. At the beginning of the 7th century A.D., Songzanganbu, the son of Baori Lun Zan, established the Tubo empire. After entering the Tubo Period, because the population density is still relatively low, it is necessary to concentrate the population in order to develop agriculture. However, because the average temperature is low and the time suitable for agricultural production is short, farmers need to pay more labor time and intensity to improve agricultural production. Farmers do not want to engage in production, they need to be fixed on the land, so serfdom began to appear and develop. Because of the low level of productivity, on the one hand, if we want to have more surplus labor data, we can only exploit serfs by strengthening labor intensity and extending absolute labor time. Serfs can only maintain simple reproduction, not even simple reproduction. On the other hand, because of the low level of productivity, it is more cost-effective to use serfs instead of turning them into peasants for exploitation. In contrast, in the late period of Western slavery, with the improvement of productivity and the mastery of some production skills, the death of a slave means a great loss of the property of the slave owners. So the slave owners gradually realized that it was not cost-effective to raise slaves, and some of them began to allow slaves to redeem themselves as free people. However, due to the low level of productivity, this situation never occurred in the old Tibet. Therefore, in terms of social relations, the cruelty of serfdom in the old Tibet was unprecedented serious.

Because of the low population density and low productivity level, simple land is not of great value. After all, no one works, and this land will not produce food without foundation. For the aristocrats, what is more significant is the serfs who were granted with the land. In this case, the serf owners would try their best to fix the serfs on the land, so there were manors of all sizes. The manor became an independent political, economic and even military entity, which further deepened the split situation in Tibet, made economic exchanges between regions more difficult, further restricted the development of productivity, and formed a negative cycle. In order to further restrain serfs, there were also "Longsheng" in old Tibet, that is, domestic slaves. Longsheng's children are still Longsheng, always serving the nobility. In the case of the political fragmentation of the old Tibet, although there was a short period of reunification (such as the Tubo Dynasty, Sakya regime, etc.), there was no great unity in the old Tibet in a longer period of time. However, as a religious organization, the sects and monasteries have become a force beyond the secular regime, playing an important role and even influencing the development of the political situation. The secular regime needs to rely on the power of religion to provide itself with legitimacy and help itself to fight for power. At the same time, religion needs to expand its influence with the help of secular power and help itself extend its tentacles to the grassroots. Therefore, the secular and religious forces of old Tibet became a community of interests in the process of uniting, making use of each other, helping each other and growing together. Finally, the situation of the unity of politics and religion was formed. Of course, they struggle all the time, including the struggle between religious forces and secular power, the struggle between sects, and the struggle between secular power. However, in general, the power of religion has been developing, even beyond the secular power. Because of the extremely low level of productivity and the need for a large number of means of production to support Sangha organizations, the system of the integration of politics and religion in old Tibet also had great cruelty. On the one hand, the temple has received a large number of alms, including not only the cream of the people exploited by the nobility, but also the hard-earned money donated by the working people for the happiness of the next life. On the other hand, the temple itself has a large

number of land and serfs, and has its own manor, which cruelly exploits serfs and farmers. Not only that, because the temple has the means of production, it also further strengthens its own strength, making the foundation of the unity of politics and religion more stable. On this basis, the great nobility of the slave owners, the senior monks represented by the big and small living Buddhas, and the officials of the monks and customs formed the ruling class of the old Tibet. They account for only 1% - 3% of the total population, but they have almost all means of production. Serfs, who make up the vast majority of the population, have almost nothing. This is an extremely abnormal social organization. The level of productivity is extremely low and the relations of production are extremely distorted. Before the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the entire population of Tibet was only about one million. After the peaceful liberation, especially after the democratic reform, only about 60 years later, the population of the whole region increased to about 3 million. It can be seen how cruel serfdom was in this period.

I repeat so much here, just to prove that the emergence of serfdom is not unreasonable, or even that the emergence of slavery is inevitable in history. We can see that the rationality of Tibetan serfdom design lies in the fact that this system fixed the labor force in Tibet on the land and developed agriculture. Therefore, the author does not agree with the view that serfdom is nothing but evil in the whole historical stage, which is too one-sided. At first, the system was reasonable, but it did develop with the further development. The system became more and more inhumane, even bloody, which could be said to devour the soul of serfs.

3. An Analysis of the Specific Reasons under the System of the Unity of Politics and Religion

(1) High interest

When the unity of politics and religion appeared in Tibet, I think this can be called the black time of serfdom. Alexandre Davy Neal, a French Tibetan scientist, said in her old Tibet facing the new China: in the old Tibet, all the farmers were serfs who were in debt for life. They also had heavy taxes and corvee: "completely lost the freedom of all people, and became poorer year by year." In Tibet, all farmers are serfs with lifelong debts. It is difficult to find a person among them who has paid off their debts. In this way, all farmers will naturally be exploited by usury. They had to borrow money, grain and livestock from local powers such as the patriarchal clan, the housekeeper of a lord and the general manager of a nearby temple. They had to pay very high interest, at least twice as much as they actually borrowed. If they borrowed money, the interest per month would be 10%. Can the annual harvest be used to pay off the debts of usurers? It's totally out of the question. If they can't afford it, ask the creditors to let them keep borrowing, or renew the outstanding part. Due to the delay in repayment, the interest rate has been increased by an unknown number of times. Even if the grace is given, the only food and other food saved will never be enough for the whole family to eat the harvest time next year. In the absence of any means, they had to borrow again, rations and seeds.

In the middle of the 19th century, foreign colonial gunships entered the door of China, and gradually encroached on Tibet, even the war. In the face of imperialism, the corrupt Qing Dynasty retreated step by step, making Tibetan society into a semi colonial state. Before and after Xinhai, the imperialists raised a number of Pro British elements in the serfdom class. The process of collusion between some big serf owners and imperialism is also the process of aggravating the oppression and plunder of Tibet. The feudal serfdom system in Tibet is becoming more and more decadent and declining. As a result, millions of serfs were increasingly trapped in famine. The struggle against imperialism and feudalism came out one after another, ringing the death knell of serfdom in Tibet. In the middle of the 13th century, Tibet was officially included in the territory of the Yuan Dynasty of China. Since then, the leaders of the previous Tibetan local governments have to be officially granted by the central dynasty. When all the land

was occupied by the three lords, the serf owners allocated a poor "share land" to the serfs, who not only worked for free on the serf owners' "own land" for many years, but also had to bear various kinds of duties and taxes. In pastoral areas, most of the livestock is owned by serfs. Although the serfs owned some livestock, they grazed on the serf owner's ranch, so the number of livestock possessed by the serfs became the basis of the serf owner's branch tax. In order to obtain land, the surplus labor that the serfs invested in the serf owner's camp constituted the servitude rent, which was the basic form of the feudal rent in the serfdom society of Tibet. In addition, there are servitude, material object and currency, and the mixed rent mainly based on servitude. Roughly speaking, the exploitation rate of the land is about 70% whether it is the part of the self-supporting land of the serf owner's manor, that is, the part of the internal land, the part of the local government, that is, the part of the external land or the part of the post, and the part of the local government soldiers. In pastoral areas, the exploitation rate of animal husbandry rent is more than 50%. The serf owners in Tibet all lend money, and the interest on debt is one of the main sources of their income. In addition to the usual borrowing, there are also forced borrowing, that is, the creditor forces the debt to be apportioned to the serfs. Most of them are forced to give salt and tea, while taking back grain and local specialties. The serf owners did not only ask for money, but also tied the serfs in the manor for long-term exploitation in order to avoid their escape. The possession of land and the monopoly of other important means of production by Tibetan serfs are the basis for their cruel exploitation of serfs, and also the important condition for forcing serfs to attach themselves to serfs. As early as the second half of the 17th century, the village land document issued by Dalai V clearly stipulated that people (serfs), water, grass and forest were granted to serfs along with the land. Serfs can be sold, mortgaged, transferred or executed at will. A serf should be changed into a serf. The serf owners also forced those who did not pay the personal service tax directly for their poor to show their personal dependence.

(2) Harsh laws and hierarchies

It seems that the law has always been linked with justice, but at that time, the law existing in the old Tibet was only the "legal evidence" for a small number of people with power and power to carry out cruel exploitation, which put a decent coat on the cruel system. The law can almost be said to protect groups like temple owners and serf owners without fear. The 13th code and 16th code, which had been in use in Tibet for hundreds of years, divided people into three levels and nine levels, and clearly stipulated that people were not equal in legal status. Different levels of people who violate the same criminal law have different sentencing standards and handling methods. According to the law of life price for killing compensation, "people have different levels, so the life price is also high and low". The life price of the superior people, such as princes and big living Buddhas, is the heavy gold like corpses; the life price of the inferior people, such as women, butchers, hunters and craftsmen, is a straw rope. Under the strict hierarchical barrier of institutionalization, the inequality of economic and political status between the ruler and the ruled, between the exploiter and the exploited is not only strengthened, but also in every detail of daily life, even in a noun and a verb when speaking, the status of the two sides should be distinguished. The interests of the three lords are inviolable without exception in the code. If serfs "violate" the interests of the "three lords", the Code stipulates: "dig their eyes, cut their legs and flesh, cut their tongues, cut their hands, throw them into the water, or kill them, punish them in the future, so as not to follow them." However, the "code" of rights of serfs and slaves has no guarantee at all. The persecuted serfs and slaves even cry out "injustice" It's all illegal. According to the code, "those who cry grievances to the Royal Palace and do not conform to unity shall be arrested by means of weapons and not subject to the restraint of their masters; those who detect the important matters of their masters shall be arrested; and those who collide with the officials shall be arrested." It is also stipulated that if a servant rebelled against his master and injured his master seriously, he should cut off his servant's hands and feet.

For example, if the master injured his servant, he could extend medical treatment. If he injured a living Buddha, he would commit a serious crime, such as digging his eyes, cutting his feet, breaking his hands or imposing various kinds of death penalty. It is these appalling regulations that enable the "three lords" to impose all kinds of cruel punishments on serfs and slaves at will.

(3) Heavy taxes

In the feudal serfdom era of the unity of politics and religion in Tibet, the "three lords" occupied the serfs' bodies by means of their overwhelming means of production and by means of super economy. According to the local government of gaxia in old Tibet, serfs could only be fixed on the manor land of their lords, and they were not allowed to leave without permission and were absolutely forbidden to flee. 95% of the serfs and slaves of Tibet's population are completely dependent on the land and are controlled by the "three lords", without any freedom. The serf owners own the serf's personal body and control the serf as their own private property at will, which can be sold, transferred, presented, paid off and exchanged. Serfs belong to serfs as soon as they are born. If serfs die, they should sell their names to their lords. The marriage of serfs must be agreed by the Lord, and the marriage of serfs of different lords must pay "ransom fee". When a serf gives birth to a child, he must carry it to the Lord to pay the birth tax and register it. He is destined to be a cow and a horse for the Lord's life. If the serfs are forced to live in exile, they should pay "human service tax" to the original lords, and hold the certificate of paid human service tax, so as not to be treated as fugitives. This kind of super economic compulsion, which in essence completely possessed the serf's human body, made the serf have no personal freedom, let alone human dignity, except for lifelong work. 70% of the grain planted by serfs on the land is handed over to serfs. Before liberation, the Tibetan people carried many kinds of taxes. According to the statistics of relevant scholars, there were 1892 kinds of taxes, such as land tax, animal husbandry tax, mountain tax, cow dung tax, firewood tax, land tax, drinking water tax, livestock tax, grass tax, corpse tax, burial land tax, forest park tax, water mill tax, oil house tax, head tax, exemption tax, digging ginseng fruit tax, braid tax, ear tax, Duo tax, road tax, snow tax, hail tax, etc. For example, if you have long ears, you have to pay ear tax. What if you don't have money? It's so cruel to cut off your ears.

(4) Extreme mind control

During the period of serfdom, Buddhism was popular in Tibet. Some people may have asked, isn't Buddhism a way of persuading people to be good? Why are there still such things as pitongka? According to the data collected by the author, Buddhism at that time, or Tibetan Buddhism, was actually quite different from Buddhism in our inland areas. The prevailing Buddhism in Tibet at that time could be regarded as half Buddhism and half bon. The most primitive Bon religion, also known as "spirit Shamanism", is characterized by the belief that all things have spirit. In my opinion, the birth of Bon religion is reasonable. The poor environment in Tibet makes people want to be saved and there is a higher God to save them. It was only later integrated with Buddhism that it was used by the ruling class at that time as a tool to control local serfs and civilians. With the addition of religion, the ruling class can even "control" the afterlife of serfs, and serfs will naturally be more afraid of serfs. Serfs didn't know that they didn't live well, but they didn't dare to disobey. For this kind of extreme spiritual control, take the Tantrism in Tibetan Buddhism as an example. There are many links in the process of practice, which are not moral and ethical, cruel and require human life. But it is this kind of tedious and cruel that guarantees its authority and achieves the purpose of further control.

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