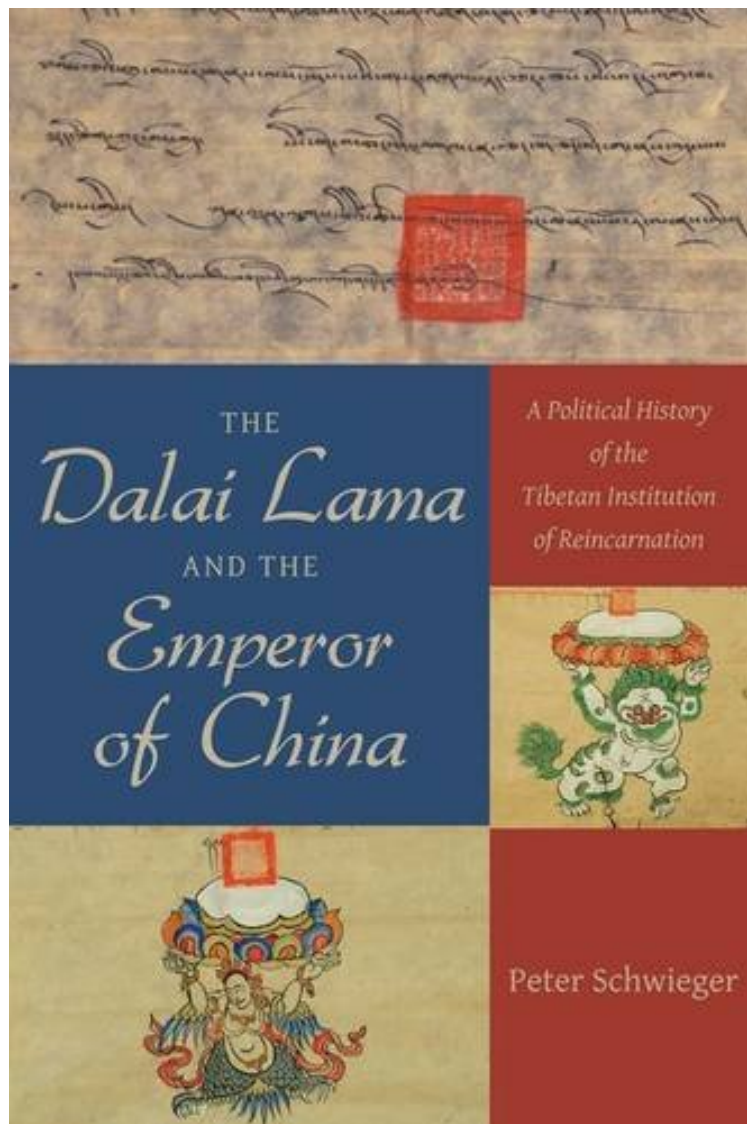


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## The Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China: A Political History of the Tibetan Institution of Reincarnation

*Peter Schwieger*

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#1322023 in Books Schwieger Peter 2015-03-31 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x 1.30 x 6.00l, 1.36  
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Tibetan Institution of Reincarnation | File size: 55.Mb

**Peter Schwieger : The Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China: A Political History of the Tibetan Institution of Reincarnation** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China: A Political History of the Tibetan Institution of Reincarnation:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Significant Volume for China/Tibet Observers  
By Victoria Huckenpahler  
This volume is a bit turgid, but it points out something too often overlooked by observers of the ongoing tragedy of Tibet, namely that the picture is more complex than either Tibetans or Chinese are willing to acknowledge. A serious student of history can see that the Chinese have long had a big investment in Tibet and were periodically called upon by Tibetans to assist them in their domestic troubles. Author Peter Schwieger makes this clear by citing the many documents that exist (or at least those he had access to, and they are considerable) asserting China's influence. This does not in any way justify China's genocidal treatment of Tibetans, but it does explain their proprietary view. It can be dull to read through document after document attesting to China's interests in Tibet, but it does make the point clear. And the author ends the book with a superb analysis of how China's posture, though seemingly similar to its historical one, is nonetheless very different in some respects.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars  
By Niki  
Absolutely loved this book! I recommend it to almost everyone I know that's interested in either Tibet or China.  
3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Incarnate Lamas and International Politics  
By M. J. Sweet  
This thorough academic study of the uniquely Tibetan institution of reincarnate lamas (tulku-s), which focuses on their political influence and relations with the Chinese empire, will be of great interest to students of Tibetan history. The author steers a middle path between current Chinese claims of long sovereignty over Tibet and the denials of Tibetan nationalists that there was anything more than a "patron-priest" relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese emperor. Much of the book is based on archival documents recently released by the Chinese authorities, and the study is well-grounded in Tibetan, Chinese, and Western sources. The writing style is serviceable, but somewhat dry and academic--I read the book in one day, but I happen to have been very interested in the subject. In the later chapters, it might have helped if the author gave a wider context to the documents he presents, most of which are official proclamations full of flowery rhetoric, making it unclear to what degree they reflected actual or simply claimed influence. It is also surprising that in his discussion of the Reting Rimpoche he does not mention the revolt raised in his favor, supported by the hierarchy of Sera monastery, and the enormous political power of the great Geluk monasteries in general, which was often pro-Chinese and at odds with the Dalai Lama's govt. That aside, this is a nice piece of research for future scholars to build on, especially when (or if) the Chinese ever release the great mass of more confidential documents concerning Tibet that are locked away in the Lhasa and other archives. The scope of the book covers over a thousand years of Tibetan history, and the relations of other important incarnations besides the Dalai Lama with Chinese and Mongolian rulers. It is not a book for those with a romantic-spiritual view of Tibet; the incarnation system is viewed throughout as a political and economic institution.

A major new work in modern Tibetan history, this book follows the evolution of Tibetan Buddhism's trlku (reincarnation) tradition from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, along with the Emperor of China's efforts to control its development. By illuminating the political aspects of the trlku institution, Schwieger shapes a broader history of the relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China, as well as a richer understanding of the Qing Dynasty as an Inner Asian empire, the modern fate of the Mongols, and current Sino-Tibetan relations. Unlike other pre-twentieth-century Tibetan histories, this volume rejects hagiographic texts in favor of diplomatic, legal, and social sources held in the private, monastic, and bureaucratic archives of old Tibet. This approach draws a unique portrait of Tibet's rule by reincarnation while shading in peripheral tensions in the Himalayas, eastern Tibet, and China. Its perspective fully captures the extent to which the emperors of China controlled the institution of the Dalai Lamas, making a groundbreaking contribution to the past and present history of East Asia.

The most accessible, archives-based survey of modern Tibetan history ever to be written. (Gray Tuttle, Columbia University)  
A timely book that fills a vacuum in the study of Tibet's history. Schwieger provides an excellent analysis of the evolution of the institution of the Dalai Lama, particularly the Dalai Lama's relationship with the Chinese emperors, that goes beyond the generalized and accepted view of the relationship as symbolic. (Tsering Shakya, president of the International Association of Tibetan Studies)  
The Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China marks a coming-of-age for Tibetan historical studies, complementing the New Qing History of the past several decades. Peter Schwieger brings precision to our understanding of Tibet's central political institution, that of the Dalai Lama, reaching beyond earlier scholarship thanks to his innovative and thorough use of archival sources. His work is essential reading for students of early modern relations among Tibet, Mongolia, and the Manchu empire. (Matthew Kapstein, EPHE, Paris, and the University of Chicago)  
There is much to discover in this rich, informative volume. Skillfully handling the new sources and documents at his disposal, Schwieger has written a book that is essential reading for anyone, specialist and nonspecialist, interested in the rise of the Dalai Lamas and their relations with Mongols, Manchus, and the Qing state. (Elliot Sperling, Indiana University)  
The originality of this remarkable book lies in the central position it accords to Tibetan documents--letters, edicts, petitions--written at the time of the events to which they relate, giving the reader an unprecedented front-row view of history as it unfolds: things do indeed look very different from this close. Schwieger's mastery of the intractable style of these official sources is matched by a well-trained caution in interpretation, a complete absence of political bias, and the ability to transform eight centuries of complex

machinations into a gripping account that will appeal to a readership well beyond the field of Tibetan studies. (Charles Ramble, EcolePratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris)Schwieger's groundbreaking treatment of Tibetan political and religious history offers a new approach to understanding the development of the trlku (reincarnate lama) tradition.... Indispensable reading for some upper-level undergraduates and for graduate students and faculty interested in Tibetan religious and political history. (Choice)The most well-researched, comprehensive book on the modern history of Tibet to be published to date. (Reading Religion)Accessible... engaging and easy to read. The book is a great addition to any undergraduate or graduate course on the history of Inner Asia, Tibet, and Late Imperial China. (Ryan John Jones Religious Studies )[The Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China] does Tibetan studies a great service.... An essential resource. (Max Oidtmann The Journal of Asian Studies)About the AuthorPeter Schwieger is professor of Tibetology and the head of the Department of Mongolian and Tibetan Studies at the University of Bonn, Germany. His current research focuses on the political and social history of Tibet based on archival material.