

Episode List

Episode One The Rise of the Yarlung Dynasty

- The myth and folklore of early Tibetan kingship and state
 - Nyatri Tsenpo, the mythic first king of Tibet
- The geography of the Tibetan Plateau
- The rise to power of Songtsen Gampo and his military conquests
- The marriage of Songtsen Gampo to the Tang princess Wencheng
 - The first spread of Buddhism to Tibet and the court conversion to Buddhism
 - The myth of the 'Supine Demoness' and the construction of the Jokhang Temple
- The Story of the culture hero Thonmi Sambhota and the creation of Tibetan script and early imperial law
- The death of Songtsen Gampo, his succession, and the impact of his reign
 - The geopolitical situation of Tibet within the context of Inner and East Asia in the 7th century

Episode Two The Height and Fall of the Tibetan Empire

- The reign of Trisong Detsen
 - The formation of the Nyingma sect of Tibetan Buddhism
 - The folklore and history of the culture hero Padmasambhava
 - Śāntarakṣita and the foundation of Samye Monastery
 - The emergence of Islam and its impact on Inner Asia and the Tibetan frontier
 - The economy and culture of the Tibetan Empire at its height
 - Life in Dunhuang and Khotan in the 8th century CE
 - War with the Tang Dynasty and the Zhol Pillar
 - Trisong Detsen's death and the ensuing succession struggle
- The reign of Ralpachen (Trisuk Detseng)
 - The Sino-Tibetan Treaty of 821/822
 - Ralpachen's patronage of Buddhism and its long-reaching effects
 - Langdarma's (Tri 'u Dumtsen) *coup d'état*
 - The assassination of Langdarma by the culture hero Lhalung Pelgyi Dorje
- The collapse of the Tibetan Empire

Episode Three The Dark Age and the Tibetan Renaissance

- The geopolitical situation of Tibet in the 10th and 11th centuries
 - The fall of the Tang and the rise of the Song Dynasty
 - The decline of Indian Buddhism
 - The "Period of Fragmentation"
- The Kingdom of Guge Purang
 - The reign of Lhalhama Yeshe O
 - The cultural and economic impact of Buddhist patronage
 - Tabo Monastery
 - Tholing Monastery
 - The patronage of Buddhist translation projects
 - The culture hero Rinchen Zangpo
- Atiśa and the large-scale patronage of Buddhism
 - The formation of the Sarma (gsar-ma) schools
 - The origins of the Sakya Sect
 - The origins of the Kagyu Sect
 - The concept of 'treasure texts' (gter-ma) and 'treasure revealers' (gter-ston) in Tibetan Buddhism

Episode Four The Sakya Hegemony and the Rise of the Phagmodrupa Dynasty

- The geopolitical situation of Tibet in the 13th century
 - The decline and collapse of the Song and Jin Dynasties
 - The establishment of the Yuan Dynasty
 - The first Mongolian incursions into Tibet in 1239 and their political, economic, and religious repercussions
 - Sakya Pandita (Kunga Gyeltsen) and Godan Khan
 - The concept of the patron/priest relationship (chos-yon)
 - Drogon Chogyal Phagpa and Kublai Khan
 - Mongolian religion in the 13th century
 - Tibet during the Yuan Dynasty
 - The Thirteen Myriarchies and the administration of Tibet during the Yuan
 - Sectarian warfare between the Drigung Kagyu and the Sakya
 - The decline of the Yuan and its effects on the Sakya Sect
 - Inter-clan warfare and the rise of the Phagmodrupa Dynasty
 - Changchub Gyaltsen and the Lang Clan
 - The Red Turban Rebellion and the collapse of the Yuan

Episode Five The Geluk Hegemony and the Ganden Phodrang

- The geopolitical situation of Tibet in the 15th century
- The origins of the Geluk Sect
 - Je Tsongkhapa and the foundation of the first Geluk monasteries and the impact of Geluk monasticism
- Altan Khan and Sonam Gyatso
 - The origins of the title 'Dalai Lama'
- Sectarian conflict and the rise of the Geluk Hegemony
 - The politics of succession through reincarnation
- The death of Sonam Gyatso and the appointment of the 4th Dalai Lama
 - 1618: War between the Karma Kagyu and Geluk
 - War between Gushri Khan and Chogutu Taiji
- The Geluk Hegemony
 - The appointment of the 5th Dalai Lama
 - Reforms under the 5th Dalai Lama
 - The foundation of the Ganden Phodrang
 - The construction of the Potala Palace
 - The unification of Tibet

Episode Six Civil War, the Qing Dynasty, and the Tibetan Plateau in the 18th Century

- The geopolitical situation of Tibet in the 17th and 18th centuries
 - The institution of the Panchen Lamas and its significance
 - The collapse of the Ming Dynasty
 - The foundation of the Qing and its early effects on Tibetan religious and political institutions
- Desi Sangye Gyatso
 - The conspiracy surrounding the death of the 5th Dalai Lama
 - Tibet under the Regency of Desi Sangye Gyatso
 - The appointment of the 6th Dalai Lama and Desi Sangye Gyatso's execution
- The Qing Expedition of 1720-1721
 - The 7th Dalai Lama and the reforms of 1721
 - The establishment of the Kashag
- Polhane Sonam Topgye
 - The 1727-1728 Civil War
 - Tibet under Polhane
 - Reforms, the postal system, and monastic restoration projects of the 18th century

Episode Seven The Decline of the Qing and the British Invasion of Tibet

- The geopolitical situation of Tibet in the 19th century
 - The "Great Game" and European colonial expansion
 - The Opium Wars
 - The political and economic effects of the decline of the Qing Dynasty
 - The administration of Tibet following the withdrawal of the Qing Ambans
- The appointment of the 13th Dalai Lama
 - The 1876 Chefoo Convention (the Yantai Treaty)
- Trade relations with the British Empire and Qing Dynasty
 - The British Invasion of Tibet
 - Francis Younghusband and L. A. Waddell
 - The massacre of Chumik Shenko
 - The siege of Gyantse Dzong
 - The 1904 Lhasa Convention
 - Qing responses to the British Invasion
 - T'ang Shao-Yi and the 1906 Peking Agreement
- Tibet following the collapse of the Qing Dynasty

Episode Eight Tibet from 1912-1950: Modernization and the prelude to invasion

- The geopolitical situation of Tibet following the collapse of the Qing Dynasty
 - The effects of:
 - The formation of the Republic of China (ROC)
 - The rise of Chinese nationalism and the Chinese Civil War
 - The decline of European colonial powers
 - The Indian independence movement
- The 13th Dalai Lama's reforms
 - The modernization and training of the Tibetan army
 - War with the ROC and Tibetan military victories
 - The 13th Dalai Lama's Declaration of Independence
 - The Shimla Convention
 - The McMahon Line
- The 1930-1933 Sino-Tibetan War
 - The appointment of the 14th Dalai Lama
 - The Reting and Taktra Regencies
- The foundation of the People's Republic of China
 - The Tibetan Trade Mission to India
 - The prelude to invasion

Bonus
Episode

Episode Nine The Chinese Invasion of Tibet, the 1959 Uprising, and the Origins of the Tibetan Diaspora

- The Taktra Regency and the role of the 14th Dalai Lama in his minority
- Sino-Tibetan negotiations in Kalimpong, India
- The Chinese invasion of Tibet
 - Chinese state narratives and the mobilization of the PLA
 - The Battle of Chamdo and the surrender of Tibetan forces
 - Partisan movements in Eastern Tibet
 - The enthronement of the 14th Dalai Lama
 - The 1951 Seventeen Point Agreement and its effects
 - 1951-1954: Tibet under Chinese occupation
 - The "Socialist High Tide" and its effects on Kham and Amdo
 - The 1956 revolt in Kham and the effect of the Chinese retrenchment
- The Great Leap Forward and its impact on Tibet
- The 1959 Tibetan Uprising
 - The events of the 10th-23rd of March 1959
 - The Dalai Lama's escape from Lhasa
 - The aftermath of the uprising and the scale of Chinese military reprisals
 - The origins of the Tibetan diaspora
- The re-establishment of the Kashag and the foundation of the Central Tibetan Administration in India
 - A brief look at Tibet and the Tibetan Diaspora today, covering important dates and the events of the late 20th and 21st centuries