

My Tibetan Childhood: When Ice Shattered Stone

Naktsang Nulo



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In *My Tibetan Chldhood*, Naktsang Nulo recalls his life in Tibet's Amdo region during the 1950s. From the perspective of himself at age ten, he describes his upbringing as a nomad on Tibet's eastern plateau. He depicts pilgrimages to monasteries, including a 1500-mile horseback expedition his family made to and from Lhasa. A year or so later, they attempted that same journey as they fled from advancing Chinese troops. Naktsang's father joined and was killed in the little-known 1958 Amdo rebellion against the Chinese People's Liberation Army, the armed branch of the Chinese Communist Party. During the next year, the author and his brother were imprisoned in a camp where, after the onset of famine, very few children survived.

The real significance of this episodic narrative is the way it shows, through the eyes of a child, the suppressed histories of China's invasion of Tibet. The author's matter-of-fact accounts cast the atrocities that he relays in stark relief. Remarkably, Naktsang lived to tell his tale. His book was published in 2007 in China, where it was a bestseller before the Chinese government banned it in 2010. It is the most reprinted modern Tibetan literary work. This translation makes a fascinating if painful period of modern Tibetan history accessible in English.

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