



The Fourteenth Dalai Lama's speeches in Tibetan: a literary corpus embracing modernity and history

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This paper considers the views of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama on contemporary issues concerning Tibet and Tibetans, as articulated in speeches made by him in the Tibetan language over the last forty years. Since leaving Tibet, Tenzin Gyatso's innumerable addresses and talks in Tibetan to a host of audiences have covered a wealth of topics. Over the years, a considerable amount of that material has been published from India, usually as booklet anthologies, or has appeared as verbatim accounts in Tibetan language newspapers. Their content mostly concerns topical issues of the day, ranging from pronouncements on weighty affairs of state through to basic social and educational issues confronting the Tibetan diaspora. Thus, we read of a wealth of political, religious and secular discussion informing the many strands of the Tibet Question – for example, the excesses of the Cultural Revolution and Panchen Lama controversies – as well as comment on simple daily life, like planting flowers to improve the environs of McCleod Ganj shanties. Naturally, he provides his own (sometimes forthright) views on many aspects of these Tibetan equations, often adding his own glosses on the matters in hand. Over time, that burgeoning literary corpus has come to form a record of both significant and humble elements and events, which in its own right may be characterised as a valuable account that is both modern and Tibetan – and embraces history.