

Brief Report

Not peer-reviewed version

Sustainable Development and Transformative Change of Tibet in China from 1951 to 2021

[Ruoxin Yan](#) and [Ruishan Chen](#) *

Posted Date: 25 April 2024

doi: 10.20944/preprints202404.1575.v1

Keywords: Development; assistance; inequality; urban-rural gap; Tibet



Preprints.org is a free multidiscipline platform providing preprint service that is dedicated to making early versions of research outputs permanently available and citable. Preprints posted at Preprints.org appear in Web of Science, Crossref, Google Scholar, Scilit, Europe PMC.

Copyright: This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Brief Report

Sustainable Development and Transformative Change of Tibet in China from 1951 to 2021

Ruoxin Yan ¹ and Ruishan Chen ^{2*}

¹ Department of Tourism, Shanghai Normal University, Haisi Road 100, Shanghai, 201418, China

² Department of Landscape Architecture, School of Design, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Dongchuan Road 800, Shanghai, 200240, China

* Correspondence: rschen@sjtu.edu.cn

Abstract: The Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) has been established within the People's Republic of China for more than 70 years since 1951. As with China as a whole, Tibet has experienced a tumultuous history over these past seventy years. Especially since the 1980s, the region has witnessed significant economic development, poverty alleviation, and increased social indicators such as life expectancy and healthcare. This article tracks 16 social, economic, and ecological indicators for the past several decades, as well as levels of economic assistance provided to Tibet by other Chinese provinces and the Chinese central government in an attempt to narrow the development gap between Tibet and the rest of the country. The results show that since 1951, Tibet has developed rapidly, with nearly all the socioeconomic indicators improved, and the speed of change is much faster than other provinces in China; The environmental indicators also show a significant improvement, regarding biodiversity conservation and tree coverage. However, despite progress in many aspects, there remains a big gap between Tibet's indicators and the average level of China, with the biggest gap being the illiteracy rate. Uneven development between regions within Tibet, especially between urban and rural areas, also persists. This helps the government to target the areas in TAR which need to be improved, and leverage resources to reduce inequality and facilitate transformative change.

Keywords: Development; assistance; inequality; urban-rural gap; Tibet

1. Introduction

More than seventy years ago, in October 1951, Tibet transitioned from a largely feudal regime into a socialist regime formally referred to as the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) within the People's Republic of China [1]. The people of Tibet broke free from the fetters of invading imperialism for good, embarking on a bright road of unity, progress, and development with all the other ethnic groups in China [2]. After 70 years, at the 70th Anniversary, the Tibet Autonomous Region celebrated the achievements over the past 70 years, such as poverty alleviation, social equity, and environmental improvement [2]. However, the progress and achievements were not well understood by a large part of the world, especially for westerners who have never been to China and understand its history. It is useful to examine the data on Tibet's trajectory over the past seven decades in order to understand both the development experienced by the region and the persistent disparity exist between TAR and other provinces in China, as well as urban and rural regions within TAR.

TAR has undergone tremendous changes since the 1950s, much like the rest of China. Evidence shows that the livelihood of Tibetans has improved significantly, with TAR's economic growth rates exceeding China's national average [3]. Since 1984, the central government has promulgated policies requiring Ministries and provinces across China to invest substantial funding for infrastructure development in TAR, in an attempt to narrow the region's development gap with the rest of the country. This infrastructure and assistance-oriented development has made great achievements, with the socioeconomic situations greatly improved, and the gap between TAR and other provinces in China is gradually narrowing down [4]. However, many Westerners have voiced opposition, noting

that Tibetans may end up excluded or marginalized by such subsidy-driven development due to a lack of self-determination [5]. Moreover, some scholars also claim that the construction of large-scale projects has degraded environment in Tibet [3,6], ignoring the accessibility and connectivity that these infrastructures bring, and also the environmental improvements because of the policies that try to protect Tibet and the whole Qinghai-Tibet plateau as an ecological barrier [7,8]. It is also need to acknowledge that the gap between TAR and other provinces still exists [9], especially regarding inequality and poverty, and within TAR there are also significant regional differences [10]. The ideology difference between Western and Chinese scholars has made understanding the changes in TAR more difficult, and a thorough examination of the social, economic, and environmental indicators of change in TAR is crucial to objectively understand the development of TAR, and also forming policies for further development.

Balancing the development and environment is important in TAR, as solely focusing on socioeconomic improvement may be at the price of environmental degradation. In recent years, scholars have increasingly focused on analyzing the socio-economic and environmental changes in Tibet, shedding light on the complexities of its development trajectory. It has been found that the total scale of human activities was relatively small before 1990. The GDP was less than 2 billion yuan and the urbanization rate was below 17%. The influence of human activities on the ecological environment has been smaller. From 1990 to 2000, human activities and their effects on the ecological environment were accelerated when pollution per capita increased. Since 2000, while the scale of human activities has expanded, the impacts on the environment gradually transformed from a net degradation to a net recovery [11]. Studies have found the constraint of Tibet's fragile ecological environment on the development of secondary industries, intending to propose several feasible strategies for balancing ecological protection with industrial and economic development in Tibet [12]. For example, Tibet's tourism economy and transportation infrastructure can bring negative pressure to the ecological environment [13]. While analyzing the coupling relationship between economic development and the ecological environment in Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet, Li proposed policy recommendations such as optimizing industrial structure and strengthening green supervision [14]. These studies all emphasized the need to formulate sustainable development strategies to alleviate the ecological degradation while pursuing socioeconomic development in Tibet.

To further understand Tibet's evolution, additional studies have examined various aspects of its development. From the perspective of sustainable socioeconomic development, it has found that improving education levels can reduce the pressure brought by the annual increase in Tibet's population on local resources [15,16]. While examining the changes in urban economic development and the livelihoods of farmers and herdsmen during the process of urbanization, as well as the impact of urbanization on Tibet's social structure, it has found that Tibet's urbanization development capability faces severe challenges, such as the dominance of traditional agricultural and pastoral livelihood, low population density, limited employment opportunities, fragile environment, and low carrying capacity [17]. Because of the vulnerable environment, there are many uncertainties related to the livelihoods of people in TAR [18], for example, the snow disaster may cause local households to fall back into poverty as many of them in the high altitude depend on grazing [19,20], it would be better to establish a mechanism for sustainable development, such as farming and livestock insurance for farmers and herdsmen [21], and diversifying their livelihood [22].

Tibet's development cannot be separated from the support from China's central government and other provinces. In 2000, the Fourth Plenary Session of the Fifteenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China proposed a Western Development Strategy, using the surplus economic development capacity in the Eastern region to drive the comprehensive socio-economic development in western provinces. This strategy has had a positive impact on various aspects of Tibet, including its economy, infrastructure, and environment. Many eastern provinces and cities have made partnerships with cities in the Tibet Autonomous Region to accelerate local development, and contribute significantly to the local development. Financial, talent and policy support of TAR has become a national system which promoted the economic and social development of Tibet through continuous support and improvement of the assistance system [23,24]. For example, fiscal support

for agriculture has had a positive role in promoting the development of Tibet's agricultural economy [25,26]. However, besides the assistance and support, endogenous power for local development is also indispensable. Tibet's science and technology innovation policies have promoted high-quality economic development in Tibet [27]. The implementation of these policies and measures provides strong support for Tibet's industrial structure adjustment, agricultural economic development, scientific and technological innovation, poverty alleviation, and environment restoration, and promotes Tibet towards sustainable development.

This article examines TAR's economy, society, and ecology through 16 indicators over the past 70 years. Our goal is to provide a rough synopsis of the economic and social development in TAR, especially from the perspective of gaps between Tibet and the rest of China, the extent to which they have narrowed or improved, and if so, what development measures and government policies might have contributed to such changes.

2. Materials and Methods

Data for the social, economic, and ecological indicators in this study were obtained from the following sources: China Statistical Yearbook (1951-2022), Tibet Statistical Yearbook(1951-2022), China Population Statistical Yearbook(1951-1987) and China Population & Employment Statistical Yearbook(1988-2022), Central Budget and Final Accounts Public Platform(<https://www.mof.gov.cn/zyyjskgkpt>), and China Statistical Yearbook on Environment(1998-2022). The indicators used in this article were selected to cover basic aspects of society, including population, economic income, transportation, education, medical care, etc., as far as possible), and also based on their connection with the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the overall availability of data. Change of the indicators along with time were presented on the coordinate axis. Information about funding assistance by other provinces in China, as well as major policy initiations on the Tibet work symposium by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China was collected online.

3. Results

3.1. Rapid Development of Tibet

In the past 70 years, most of Tibet's social, economic, and ecological indicators demonstrated substantial progress (Figure 1). Before 1951, 5% of Tibetan elites including local administrative officials, nobles and upper-ranking lamas in monasteries owned 95% of the region's resources and property, leaving only the remaining 5% for the rest of the population [10]. By the end of 2020, extreme poverty was eliminated in TAR and the standard of living has increased substantially. In these 70 years, Tibetan's average life expectancy increased from 35.5 to 71.1 years, and GDP has increased from 129 million CNY to more than 190 billion CNY. Accessibility within TAR, as well as between TAR and other Chinese provinces has also been largely improved. Despite environmental degradation resulting from increased accessibility and development, many ecological indicators, such as the area of nature reserves and the number of endangered species, have shown improvement since the 1980s.

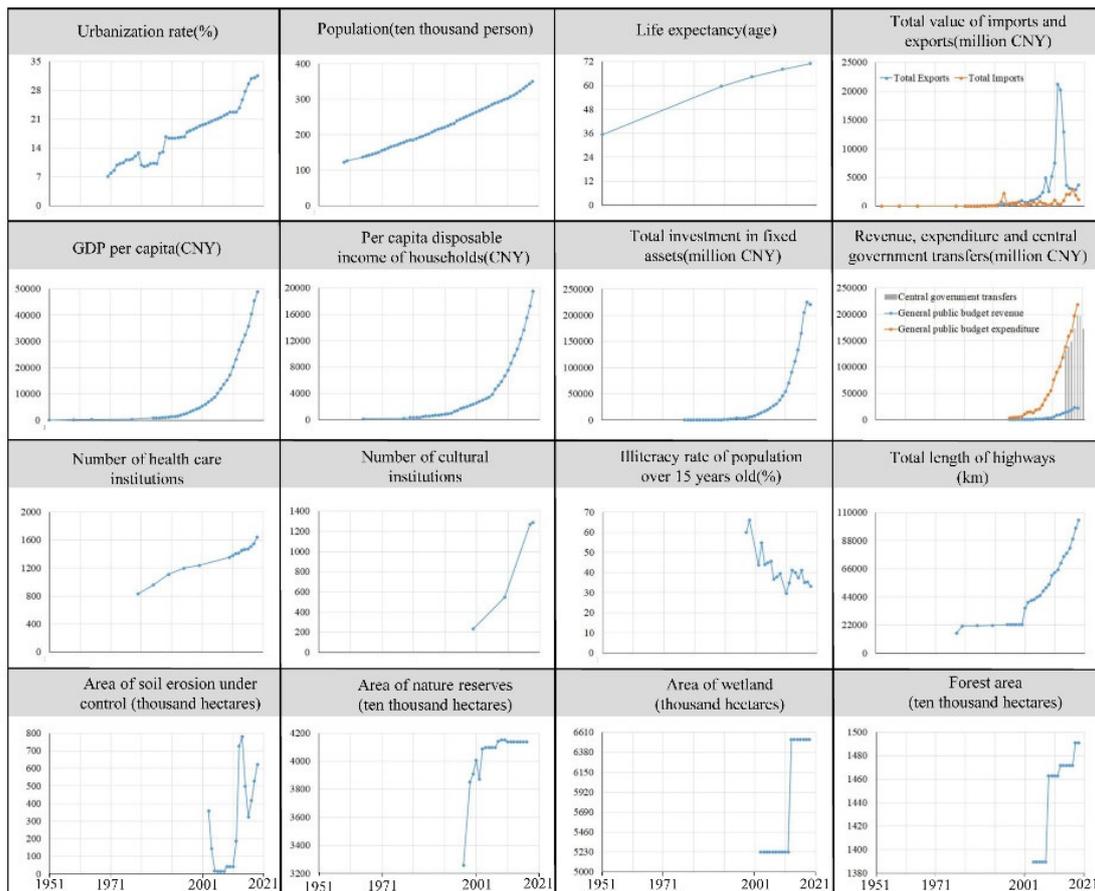


Figure 1. TAR's social, economic and ecological trends from 1951 to 2021.

Tibet has also shifted from its traditional reliance on agriculture and animal husbandry towards diversified industries, with emerging tertiary industries now serving as one of the main drivers of its economic growth. By the end of 2020, the tertiary industry in the Tibet Autonomous Region had accounted for a remarkable 50.1% of its GDP. Benefiting from Tibet's abundant tourism resources and unique ecological conditions, the cultural tourism industry in Tibet is rapidly flourishing. In 2019, TAR realized tourism revenue of 55.928 billion yuan, with tourism revenue accounting for 32.94% of its GDP, indicating an overall upward trend in comprehensive development. In terms of energy development, Tibet is also making significant progress. While actively promoting sustainable and green energy utilization to protect its fragile ecological environment, Tibet made remarkable achievements in 2019, with the proportion of renewable energy consumption in Tibet accounting for 88.7% of the total electricity consumption, and the proportion of non-hydropower renewable energy consumption accounting for 20.9%, ranking first and second respectively at provincial level [22]. The rapid development of these emerging industries not only boost Tibet's economic growth but also provides more employment opportunities for residents, thereby promoting comprehensive socioeconomic development.

Over the past 70 years, TAR has seen significant environmental improvement initiatives. These efforts have focused on various areas such as conservation, afforestation, wildlife protection, and national parks. Many policies and projects were implemented to protect TAR's unique ecosystems, including the establishment of nature reserves and protected areas, pushing forward conservation programs for endangered species such as the Tibetan antelope, snow leopard, and Tibetan wild yak. There are 47 nature reserves in TAR in 2024, with an area of 0.41 million km², around 33.68% of the total area [28]. The forest and grassland coverage rates are 12.31% and 47% in 2021, respectively, and the natural environment is gradually improving. With these environmental restoration policies and projects, the number of endangered species has greatly increased [29,30]. Especially for the animals like Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsoni*), Tibetan wild ass (*Equus kiang*), Tibetan gazelle (*Procapra*

picticaudata), blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*), wild yak (*Bos mutus*), and brown bear (*Ursus arctos pruinosus*) [31–33]. The number of Tibetan antelope has recovered from less than 70,000 in the 1980s and 1990s to around 200,000 by 2015 and has since surged to around 300,000 in 2021 [33,34].

3.2. Causes of Development in Tibet

Much of this development has occurred alongside significant central fiscal transfers of payment and assistance from other Chinese provinces [15]. Central fiscal transfers of payment largely made-up TAR's revenue and expenditure gap compared with the rest of China, accounting for 90% of the region's total governmental expenditures (198 billion CNY) in 2019 (see Figure 1). The central government has also issued a series of policies to encourage China's more developed provinces and cities to provide TAR with funding assistance, technology transfer, infrastructure investment, industry building, talent support, and so forth since 1994, on the third meeting on work in Tibet (Table 1). Moreover, each city within TAR has built assistance partnerships with one or more other provinces (or cities) of China. For example, Guangdong Province invested 430.71 million CNY in the Tibetan city of Nyingchi in 2018 to improve its industrial structure, education quality, and medical facilities. Shanghai has more than 30 years of partnership relation with Shigatse city, and has contributed to knowledge and technology transfer, capacity building and training, infrastructure investment, resources donation, and leaders exchange and communication. From 1994 to 2020, approximately 50 billion RMB was invested in more than 10,000 projects in TAR by other provinces and cities, which has greatly contributed to local development.

Table 1. Symposium on work in Tibet held by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

Meetings	Main guides and measures
The 1st symposium, 1980	<p>①Under the unified leadership of the central government, Tibet fully exercises the right of regional ethnic autonomy. ②Proceeding from the current difficult situation in Tibet, implementing a recuperation policy to reduce the burden on the masses. ③Implementing special flexible policies in all economic policies to promote the development of production. ④The large amount of state-supported funds for Tibet should be used to develop agriculture and animal husbandry, and to meet the urgent daily needs of the Tibetans. ⑤It is necessary to vigorously and fully develop the science in Tibet on the premise of insisting on a socialist orientation. ⑥Implementing the Communist Party's policy toward ethnic cadres correctly, and strengthening the close unity of Tibetan and Han cadres. ⑦It announced a policy of exemption from taxation and purchase within 3 to 5 years in Tibet. ⑧Since 1981, the central government's subsidies to Tibet have increased at a rate of 10% per year based on the 1980s. https://www.xzdw.gov.cn/zlk/zth/201109/t20110920_61380.html</p> <p>①The central government required 9 provinces or cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Shandong, Sichuan, and Guangdong) and the relevant Ministries (the Ministry of Water and Electricity, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, and the State Building Materials Bureau) to build 43 small and medium-sized projects to meet Tibet's urgent needs, accordance with the requirements of Tibet. These projects include power stations, hotels, schools, hospitals, cultural centers, and small and medium-sized industrial enterprises, with a total investment of 480 million CNY, a construction area of 236,000 m² and a total of 19,000 workers. ②Putted forward that the main tasks of Tibet work for a long period are: developing energy and transportation industry vigorously; further reducing policy constraints to promote the development of agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, and ethnic handicraft; improving education and the development of culture and art; continue to opening-up and strengthening internal exchanges; attach great importance to and do a good job in national unity, united front, and religious peace; earnestly train ethnic cadres and improve their ideological and work standards. http://2011.cma.gov.cn/ztbd/20110104/20110526/2011052609/201105/t20110530_94819.html</p>
The 2nd symposium, 1984	

-
- The 3rd
symposium,
1994
- ①It is proposed that the acceleration of Tibet's development must rely on the support of the state and focus on improving the system, supplemented by special financial subsidies. ②62 construction projects with a total investment of 2.38 billion CNY in support of Tibet from the whole country have been implemented. ③Calling on all provinces, cities, and central Ministries across the country to vigorously support the construction of Tibet, and implement the policy of "corresponding support, accountability, and regular rotation".
https://www.xzdw.gov.cn/zlk/zth/201109/t20110920_61382.html
- The 4th
symposium,
2001
- ①117 construction projects directly invested by the state have been identified, with a total investment of approximately 31.2 billion CNY, which are mainly used for agriculture and animal husbandry, infrastructure construction, science and technology education, the construction of basic government-related facilities, and ecological environmental protection and construction. ②70 construction projects directly invested by other provinces and cities have been identified to support Tibet, with a total investment of approximately 1.06 billion yuan. ③Strengthening ethnic unity and cultural exchanges among all ethnic groups, and protecting freedom of religious belief. Strengthening the management of religious affairs, cracking down on separatist criminal activities carried out by religion, and actively guiding Tibetan Buddhism to adapt to the socialist society. ④Caring for grassroots cadres and improving their political and professional qualities. The majority of cadres, especially leading cadres, must go deep into the grassroots, among the masses, and serve the people of all ethnic groups wholeheartedly.
https://www.xzdw.gov.cn/zlk/zth/201109/t20110920_64761.html
- The 5th
symposium,
2010
- ①Effectively guaranteeing and improving people's livelihood. Vigorously improving the production and living conditions of farmers and herdsmen, solving the employment problems of zero-employment families and people in difficulties, and building a social security system covering urban and rural residents. By 2012, the new rural social endowment insurance system in Tibet would be realized. ②Speeding up the development of social undertakings. Priority is given to the development of education. Free food, clothes, and accommodation for farmers and herdsmen's children, from primary school to high school. Further improving the medical system in farming and pastoral areas based on free medical care, and gradually increasing the national subsidy standard and security level. Supporting the publication of excellent Tibetan language books and audiovisuals to strengthen the protection and inheritance of Tibet's material and intangible cultural heritage. ③Supporting infrastructure construction, including improving the comprehensive transportation system, strengthening energy construction, water resources utilization and protection, and accelerating the improvement of digital. ④Speeding up the development of characteristic industries and enhancing Tibet's self-development capabilities. ⑤Improving ecological environmental protection, especially the construction of ecological environment in key areas, and accelerating the establishment of a long-term ecological compensation mechanism.
http://www.npc.gov.cn/zgrdw/npc/xinwen/szyw/zhbd/2010-01/23/content_1535846.htm
- The 6th
symposium,
2015
- ①Emphasizing people must insist the leadership of the Communist Party of China, insist the socialist system and the system of regional ethnic autonomy. ②Taking the improvement of people's livelihood and national unity as the starting point and goal of economic and social development, vigorously promoting the economic and social development of Tibet and other Tibetan areas in Qinghai Province, Sichuan Province, Gansu Province, and Yunnan Province. ③The focus of Tibet's work must be on maintaining and strengthening national unity. ④The central government's concern and national support must be closely integrated with the hard work of the cadres and masses of all ethnic groups in Tibet, and the work in Tibet must be done well while coordinating the domestic and international circumstances. ⑤The whole country should work with Tibet to achieve a well-off society, efforts should be made to ensure and improve people's livelihood.
<http://www.scio.gov.cn/zhzc/8/1/Document/1445992/1445992.htm>
-

Educational assistance is also a key initiative in TAR, including establishing new schools in TAR and sending outstanding teachers from other provinces to TAR, and also setting up schools for Tibetan students in eastern cities such as Beijing and Tianjin [35]. Since 1985, Inner Tibet junior high school classes have been established in 20 secondary schools in 13 provinces and municipalities nationwide, and Inner Tibet senior high school classes have been established in 30 secondary schools in 20 provinces and municipalities. Additionally, starting in 2020, Inner Tibet vocational classes have been launched in 12 economically developed regions in the eastern and central parts of China, such as Tianjin and Hebei. This provides an important platform for cultural exchanges between Tibet and the other parts of China [36].

Since May 13, 2019, Tibet has further increased its financial investment in medical and health care with the help of other provinces. The government is actively strengthening grassroots medical infrastructure construction, increasing public medical and health equipment, and introducing and cultivating professional medical personnel. With the construction of medical centers in the Tibet Autonomous Region, the coverage rates of township and village health centers have reached 94.4% and 42.4%, respectively [37].

3.3. Indicators Need to Be Improved

Despite the reduction in economic and social disparities between TAR and the rest of China, a significant gap nonetheless remains between TAR and the average level of China, and uneven development within TAR also has persisted (see Figure 2). Uneven development of course characterizes China as a whole. After the reform and opening up of China's economy in 1978, economic development in coastal areas far exceeded that in western provinces, including TAR [38]. This gap between eastern coastal and western inland China is expanding [39]. Especially regarding GDP per capita, and illiteracy rate. In TAR, the urban-rural gap is also greater than China as a whole, as illustrated in Figure 2(D).

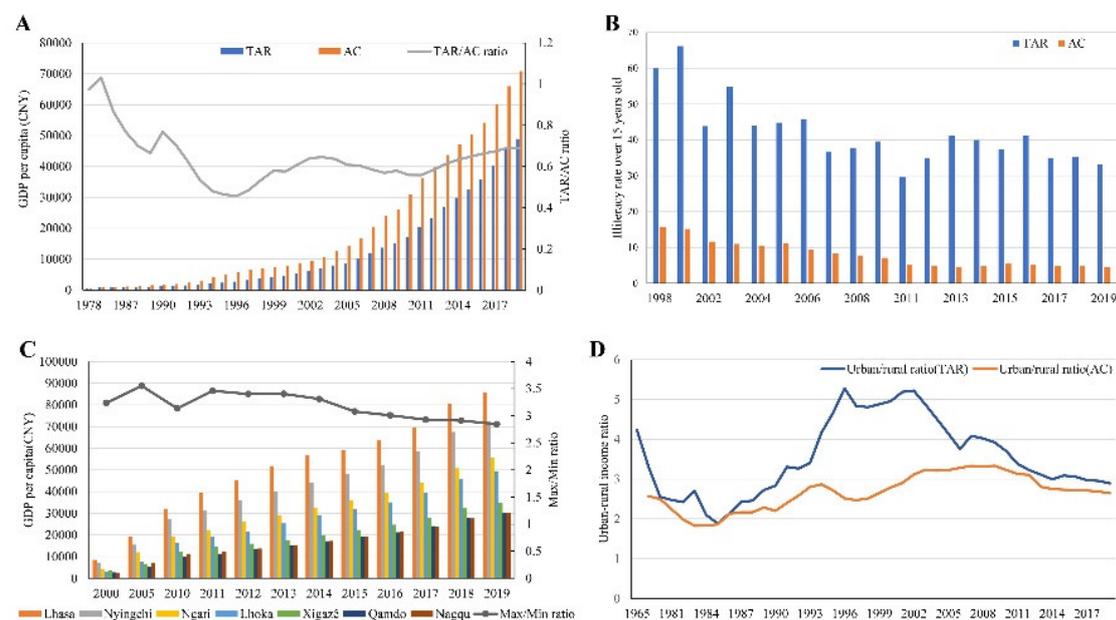


Figure 2. Development disparity between TAR and AC and within TAR. Disparity between TAR and AC in (A) GDP per capita and (B) illiteracy rate over 15 years old. (C) Uneven development between provinces within TAR. (D) Urban-rural gaps in TAR and its comparison with AC.

TAR has developed substantially over the past 70 years, especially over the past three decades, with the help of policies for Tibet development. This economic growth has had positive effects on other aspects of development. For example, investment in medical care and improvement of living standards have played an important role in expanding life expectancy, especially in the harsh

environments of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Literacy rates have improved, but remain low compared to the rest of China.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

Significant social, economic, and ecological progress has been achieved in Tibet in the past 70 years, extreme poverty has been eradicated, life expectancy and GDP have increased significantly. Ecological indicators such as areas of soil erosion under control, number of nature reserves, rates of wetland and forest coverage have also improved. This progress is largely attributed to substantial fiscal transfers from the central government and aid from other provinces.

As a result of China's redistribution policy of overcoming regional uneven development, TAR's development is highly dependent on external support [40], potentially undermining the region's development autonomy [3,41]. This approach, as discussed nationally, is intended to strengthen national unity while achieving the modernization of Tibetan society [42]. Some agree that this approach has helped establish a basic framework for socio-economic development in TAR, which can further promote TAR's own productivity [43], while others maintain it makes Tibetans more dependent on external assistance at the expense of their own autonomy and self-determination [5,44]. The debate elicits strong views on either side, yet this model of developmental assistance is unlikely to change anytime soon.

Despite outside assistance, TAR has yet to reach China's national average development levels and also has yet to address widening uneven development within the region [44]. Several factors, political and geographic, exacerbate the dynamic, including growing geopolitical tensions, especially between China and India, and extreme environmental conditions given the altitude and landscape of the territory [41]. Located in the core of the Qinghai-Tibet plateau and at the western edge of China, TAR has many high-relief mountains and low-lying rivers, which contribute to environmental extremes and inaccessibility. The Chinese government has focused on the redistribution of wealth to avoid uneven development between eastern provinces and western provinces of China, this may create an atmosphere of dependency that further contribute to low efficiency and low economic returns [3]. On top of this, the uneven distribution of financial support sent to urban and rural areas within TAR [43] has the potential to further exacerbate uneven development rather than ameliorate it [45]. Reaching China's goal of common prosperity for everyone is likely to require not only economic redistribution but also a serious examination of the atmosphere of dependency that has been created by financial transfers and further leverages the opportunities for sustainable development and self-development.

Tibet still lags behind the national average in development, and the issue of uneven development persists. For example, there is a big gap between the illiteracy rate over 15 years old between Tibet and the average of China. The illiteracy rate is still higher than 30% in Tibet, but it is lower than 10% in China as a whole in 2019. There is also a big disparity between cities in Tibet, especially between the capital city of Tibet and other cities. It is necessary to target the indicators that need to be improved, for example, the illiteracy rate, to facilitate the transformative change of Tibet.

External support may undermine its development autonomy, exacerbated by political and geographical factors. To achieve the goal of common prosperity, it is necessary to carefully examine the dependency created by fiscal transfers and fully use the resources for local development. The external support should also be multi-dimensional, for example, education and knowledge transfer, and targeting for long-term sustainable development. Recent assistance by other provinces has gradually gone beyond the financial assistance, and leveraged resources for inclusive development in Tibet.

Funding: None.

Data Availability Statement: Data is contained within the article.

Acknowledgments: None.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

1. Goldstein, M.C.; Rimpoche, G. *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State*; Univ of California Press, 1989; Vol. 1; ISBN 0-520-06140-3.
2. Full Text: Tibet Since 1951: Liberation, Development and Prosperity - Xinhua | English.News.Cn Available online: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-05/21/c_139959978.htm (accessed on 14 April 2024).
3. Dreyer, J.T. Economic Development in Tibet under the People's Republic of China. In *Contemporary Tibet*; Routledge, 2017; pp. 129–151.
4. Hasmath, R.; Hsu, J. Social Development in the Tibet Autonomous Region: A Contemporary and Historical Analysis. *International Journal of Development Issues* **2007**, *6*, 125–141, doi:10.1108/14468950710843398.
5. Yeh, E.T. *Taming Tibet: Landscape Transformation and the Gift of Chinese Development*; Cornell University Press, 2013; ISBN 0-8014-6978-3.
6. Yeh, E.T.; Wharton, E. Going West and Going out: Discourses, Migrants, and Models in Chinese Development. In *The Geoeconomics and Geopolitics of Chinese Development and Investment in Asia*; Routledge, 2018; pp. 12–41.
7. Fan, Y.; Fang, C. Measuring Qinghai-Tibet Plateau's Sustainability. *Sustainable Cities and Society* **2022**, *85*, 104058, doi:10.1016/j.scs.2022.104058.
8. FU, B.; OUYANG, Z.; SHI, P.; FAN, J.; WANG, X.; ZHENG, H.; ZHAO, W.; WU, F. Current Condition and Protection Strategies of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Ecological Security Barrier. *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences (Chinese Version)* **2021**, *36*, 1298–1306, doi:10.16418/j.issn.1000-3045.20210919001.
9. Xu, Z.; Chau, S.N.; Chen, X.; Zhang, J.; Li, Y.; Dietz, T.; Wang, J.; Winkler, J.A.; Fan, F.; Huang, B. Assessing Progress towards Sustainable Development over Space and Time. *Nature* **2020**, *577*, 74–78.
10. Grunfeld, A.T. *The Making of Modern Tibet*; Routledge, 2015; ISBN 1-315-69943-5.
11. Fan, J.; Xu, Y.; Wang, C.; Niu, Y.; Chen, D.; Sun, W. The Effects of Human Activities on the Ecological Environment of Tibet over the Past Half Century. *Chinese Science Bulletin* **2015**, *60*, 3057–3066.
12. Zhang, X.; He, Y.; Shen, Z.; Wang, J.; Yu, C.; Zhang, Y.; Shi, P.; Fu, G.; Zhu, J. Frontier of the Ecological Construction Support the Sustainable Development in Tibet Autonomous Region. *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences* **2015**, *30*, 306–312.
13. Zhong, G.Z.; Geng, J.Y.; Ma, X.F. The Correlative Study of Tourism Industry Development and Economic Growth of Tibet. *Economic Geography* **2012**, *32*, 166–170.
14. Li, X.R. An analysis of the impact of the tourism industry on the income gap between urban and rural residents in Tibet. *Regional Governance* **2019**.
15. Fu, X.F.; Zheng, D. On the Population Growth and Socioeconomic Development of the Tibet Autonomous Region. *Chinese Tibetology* **1999**, 19–29.
16. Liu, A.J.; Li, X.M.; Zhou, L.C. Research on the Development Issues of Minority Nationalities in Tibet Autonomous Region. *Northwest Population Journal* **2011**, *32*, 23–27.
17. Shi, Y.F.; New Urbanization in Tibet: Current Situation, Characteristics, and Paths. *Journal of Tibet Nationalities Institute: Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition* **2016**, 51–56.
18. Gao X.; Yao Y.Y.; Cheng, Q. The Features, Types, Causes of Poverty and the Targeted-Poverty Alleviation Measures for Tibet Farmers. *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences* **2016**, *31*, 328-336.
19. Zou, Z.W. Analysis of the Impact of Snow Disaster on Highland Pastoral Economy in Tibet (1824–1957). *Journal of Northwest University (Natural Science Edition)* **2011**, *41*, 1059–1063.
20. Sun, D.H.; Major Snow Disasters in Tibet in the Past Two Centuries. *Chinese Tibetology* **1999**, 49–55.
21. Sun, W.G.; Xie, J.Z. Survey on the Factors Influencing Tibetan Pastoralists' Participation in Livestock Insurance. *Tibet Studies* **2013**, 74–81.
22. YAN, J.Z.; WU Y.Y.; Zhang, Y.L.; Zhou, S.B.; Shi, Y.L. Livelihood Diversification of Peasants and Nomads of Eastern Transect in Tibetan Plateau. *Acta Geographica Sinica* **2009**, *2*.
23. Yang, M.H. Theoretical Understanding and Implementation Path Research on the Effectiveness of Paired Assistance to Tibet. *China Tibetology* **2014**, 126–132.
24. Yang, M.G.; Ma, J.L. Examining the Twinning Assistance System with 'Democratic Reform' as the Starting Point. *Journal of Minzu University of China (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)* **2019**.
25. Dong, R.R. Empirical Study on Fiscal Transfer Payment System from Tibet Autonomous Region to Lower Levels. *Economic Law Review* **2012**, 1–35.
26. Chen, P.; Ni, B.G. Empirical Analysis of Problems in Fiscal Transfer Payments in Tibet since the Fourth Tibet Work Symposium. *Tibet Development Forum* **2011**, 23–28.
27. Ge Q.S.; Fang C.L.; Zhang X.Z.; Yu C.Q. Strategic Direction and Innovative Routes of Tibet's Coordinative Development of Economy & Society and Science & Technology. *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences* **2015**, *30*, 285-293.
28. Li, S.C.; Li, S.W.; Ji, X.; CIRENLUOBU; Zhen, Y. Analysis of current situation and assessment of spatial layout of nature reserves in the Tibet Autonomous Region. *Acta Ecologica Sinica* **2018**, *38*, 2557-2565.

29. Zhao, H.; Wei, D.; Wang, X.; Hong, J.; Wu, J.; Xiong, D.; Liang, Y.; Yuan, Z.; Qi, Y.; Huang, L. Three Decadal Large-Scale Ecological Restoration Projects across the Tibetan Plateau. *Land Degradation & Development* **2024**, *35*, 22–32, doi:10.1002/ldr.4928.
30. Xu, K.; Wang, X.; Wang, J.; Wang, J.; Ge, R.; Tian, R.; Chai, H.; Zhang, X.; Fu, L. Effectiveness of Protection Areas in Safeguarding Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Tibet Autonomous Region. *Sci Rep* **2022**, *12*, 1161, doi:10.1038/s41598-021-03653-6.
31. Sharma, P.; Chettri, N.; Uddin, K.; Wangchuk, K.; Joshi, R.; Tandini, T.; Pandey, A.; Gaira, K.S.; Basnet, K.; Wangdi, S. Mapping Human–wildlife Conflict Hotspots in a Transboundary Landscape, Eastern Himalaya. *Global Ecology and Conservation* **2020**, *24*, e01284.
32. Dai, Y.; Hacker, C.E.; Zhang, Y.; Li, Y.; Li, J.; Xue, Y.; Li, D. Conflicts of Human with the Tibetan Brown Bear (*Ursus Arctos Pruinus*) in the Sanjiangyuan Region, China. *Global Ecology and Conservation* **2020**, *22*, e01039.
33. Lu, T.; Huntsinger, L. Managing Human–Wildlife Conflict on the Tibetan Plateau. *Ecosystem Health and Sustainability* **2023**, *9*, 0023.
34. Xu, Z.; Wei, Z.; Jin, M. Causes of Domestic Livestock–Wild Herbivore Conflicts in the Alpine Ecosystem of the Chang Tang Plateau. *Environmental Development* **2020**, *34*, 100495.
35. Luo, J.; Liu, Q.; Gama, Z.; Gesang, D.; Zhu, Y.; Yang, L.; Bai, D.; Zhao, Q.; Xiao, M. Factors Influencing Utilization of Assistive Devices by Tibetan Seniors on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau: Based on Research Strategy of Triangulation. *Patient preference and adherence* **2023**, 401–411.
36. Ma, J. Mainland Education Cultivates Talent for Ethnic Minority Areas’ Development. *China Ethnic Education* **2021**.
37. Peaceful Liberation and Prosperous Development of Tibet. *Xinhua Net*. Available online: http://www.xinhuanet.com/2021-05/21/c_1127472252.htm (accessed on 15 April 2024).
38. Xie, Y.; Zhou, X. Income Inequality in Today’s China. *Proceedings of the national academy of Sciences* **2014**, *111*, 6928–6933.
39. Lu, Y.; Zhang, Y.; Cao, X.; Wang, C.; Wang, Y.; Zhang, M.; Ferrier, R.C.; Jenkins, A.; Yuan, J.; Bailey, M.J. Forty Years of Reform and Opening up: China’s Progress toward a Sustainable Path. *Science Advances* **2019**, *5*, eaau9413.
40. Shih, V. Development, the Second Time Around: The Political Logic of Developing Western China. *Journal of East Asian Studies* **2004**, *4*, 427–451.
41. Fischer, A.M. State Growth and Social Exclusion in Tibet: Challenges of Recent Economic Growth; NIAS press, 2005; ISBN 87-91114-63-2.
42. Jeong, J. Ethnic Minorities in China’s Western Development Plan. *Journal of International and Area Studies* **2015**, 1–18.
43. Liu, S.; Xie, X.; Zhang, X.; Zhou, C.; Cai, Y. Coordinated Development between Assistance to Tibet and Tourism Development: Spatial Patterns and Influencing Factors. *Discrete Dynamics in Nature and Society* **2020**, *2020*, 1–13.
44. Yeh, E.T. Tropes of Indolence and the Cultural Politics of Development in Lhasa, Tibet. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* **2007**, *97*, 593–612.
45. Fischer, A.M. The Disempowered Development of Tibet in China: A Study in the Economics of Marginalization; Lexington Books, 2013; ISBN 0-7391-3439-6.

Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.