

Study of Local Disaster Relief Procedures during the Qing Dynasty

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Abstract: Through an in-depth study and analysis of the local disaster relief procedures in Qing Dynasty, this paper reveals a series of unique and effective disaster relief procedures adopted by the local government in the face of natural disasters in Qing Dynasty. The disaster relief work in during the Qing Dynasty demonstrated close collaboration between the central government and local authorities, religious institutions, and civil society forces, forming a disaster relief system in which multiple actors participated. It is found that the core values of disaster relief procedures in Qing Dynasty are reflected in its institutionalized management, locally adapted strategy formulation, flexible and efficient resource deployment, and the deep tradition of community mutual aid. The purpose of this paper is to systematically sort out the basic processes and characteristics of local disaster relief in during the Qing Dynasty using document research, to improve the research of previous scholars, and to explore its practical significance and application value in contemporary social governance.

Keywords: Qing Dynasty; Local Government; Natural Disasters; Disaster Relief Procedures; Social Governance

1. Introduction

The study of local disaster relief procedures in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty is of great academic and practical significance, and it provides valuable historical references for understanding historical social governance mechanisms, ethnic relations, and modern emergency management.

From the perspective of historical research, the disaster relief procedures in Qing-era Xizang are a concrete manifestation of the wisdom of ancient Chinese frontier governance. In its management of Xizang, the central government of the Qing Dynasty took full account of the

special characteristics of its geographic environment and socio-economic structure and established a disaster response system that was consistent with the requirements of centralization and adapted to local realities [1]. This system covers the reporting, verification, decision-making, material deployment, personnel organization, and reconstruction, reflecting the high administrative efficiency and flexibility of the imperial court in dealing with emergencies at that time [2]. By studying this series of complex processes, we can gain insights into the interaction between the central government and the local Xizang government during the Qing Dynasty, as well as the practical concerns and effective interventions on the social and livelihood of the Xizang region.

At the level of culture and ethnic relations, the study of local disaster relief procedures in Xizang during the Qing dynasty helps to shed light on Sino-Xizang relations during the Qing dynasty [3]. The central government of the Qing dynasty played a pioneering role in the formation and promotion of local disaster relief policies in Xizang. The Qing central government clearly defined the disaster relief policy through a series of rules and regulations, while the local Xizang government could act according to the statutes and change the disaster relief policy by the actual situation in Xizang so that the disaster relief policy could be carried out in practice. In times of natural disasters, the Minister in Xizang actively cooperates with the local Xizang government in taking a series of measures for the central government to strengthen the cohesion and centripetal force of the Xizang monks and people, and to help improve the production and life of the grassroots.

In implementing disaster relief measures, the central government of the Qing dynasty not only respected local religious beliefs and customs but also focused on incorporating the Confucian concept of "benevolent government" and the advanced disaster management experience of the Central Plains into the traditional Xizang social

assistance system, a locally adapted approach to disaster relief that was groundbreaking in its significance. The advanced culture of the Central Plains spread into Xizang and interacted with the local culture. This not only deepened the ties between the various ethnic groups, but also gave a certain impetus to the development of Xizang's agriculture, economy, and culture. It also promoted the exchange and mutual appreciation of different ethnic cultures. At the same time, the unity and cooperation of people of all nationalities in the process of disaster relief have undoubtedly enhanced inter-ethnic emotional ties and social cohesion.

This paper aims to study the disaster relief procedures of the central government and the local Xizang's government in the Qing Dynasty separately by studying the original Xizang's documents and translating them word by word and sentence by sentence, and then to analyze the implementation of the disaster relief procedures from the perspectives of subject participation and ethnic relations. On this basis, the impact of the Qing central government's involvement in ethnic relations is summarised. Finally, it is hoped that based on summarising past disaster relief experiences, history can be used as a reference to enrich the experience of disaster relief in today's society.

2. The Historical Construction of the Local Disaster Relief System in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty

2.1 Basic Framework and System of the Initial Disaster Relief Regime

The construction of a local disaster relief system in Xizang during the Qing dynasty was an important part of the Qing central government's strategy for the social governance of border areas. As the Qing court strengthened its management of the Xizang region, especially during the Kangxi and Qianlong periods, a relatively complete disaster relief mechanism gradually took shape. This mechanism, led by the central court and implemented by the local Xizang government, covered the entire process from pre-disaster prevention to post-disaster recovery and reconstruction. At the institutional level, a series of laws and regulations were enacted and promulgated, such as the "Regulations for the Aftermath of the Qin Ding Xizang", which clarified the responsibilities and powers of the various levels of government in

disaster response, and established a systematic process that included the early warning, disaster reporting, rescue, and post-disaster reconstruction. At the same time, the auxiliary role of individual forces in disaster relief activities has been strengthened, forming a disaster relief network with pluralistic participation [4].

2.2 Disaster Reporting and Verification Mechanisms

The mechanism for reporting and verifying disasters in Xizang during the Qing dynasty was rigorous and orderly, ensuring that information was transmitted accurately and quickly. In the event of a natural disaster, grass-roots officials were required to carry out on-site investigations and report preliminary information on the disaster to the local Xizang government, which would then summarise the information and report it to the court [5]. During this process, the disaster information must be recorded in detail, including the extent of the damage, the number of casualties, the damage to farmland, and the destruction of infrastructure. To prevent misreporting or underreporting, the central government set up a set of strict verification procedures, sending commissioners to the scene to review and ensure the authenticity and accuracy of the disaster data. In addition, the Qing dynasty also focused on using the post system to transmit information quickly and shorten the response time for decision-making, so that relief actions could be initiated promptly.

2.3 Decision-Making and Resource Allocation

The central government of the Qing Dynasty had a rigorous decision-making process and resource allocation mechanism for disasters that occurred in Xizang. Once the disaster is verified, the emperor will convene a pre-council meeting or consult with cabinet ministers to discuss relief measures according to the actual situation. Decision-making content, including whether or not to remit or exempt taxes, the allocation of food and supplies, the distribution of relief silver, the organization of labor restoration works, and other measures [6]. The decision-making process included whether or not to remit taxes, allocate grain and grass supplies, distribute relief silver, and organize labor and repair works. Resource allocation, on the one hand, the Qing central government received the minister in Xizang submitted to report the disaster and set

an example by actively distributing relief, to compassionate victims. According to the disaster file records, when the minister in Xizang Hui Xian "thought of Damu officials and people to maintain their livelihood, had rewarded the silver 500 taels", "Damu eight tribes, thirty-nine tribes have been snowstorms" when the Nagchu region in 1830 (the Xizang calendar fourteen years around the Tihu year) suffered a major snowstorms. The outlaws of the Thirty-nine Clans were also rewarded with an imperial edict on the same day, rewarding them with 3,000 taels of silver. On the other hand, the Qing government combined Xizang's special administrative system of unity of church and state to establish a more complex storage system in Xizang to deal with disasters: including the garrison storage; the Dalai Lama and the Panchen's dependency on the business on the storage; the living Buddha, Zongzhi system of the manor storage, and so on [7]. The establishment of warehouses provided a basic guarantee for disaster response. It is worth noting that the central government, through the establishment of the garrison and storage system, not only played a relief function in the event of a disaster, providing a manpower base for disaster relief, but also assumed the function of guaranteeing the transmission of governmental orders between the central government and the local government, the stability of Xizang, and the defense against foreign invaders. This garrison system on the one hand guarantees the rapid distribution of relief supplies and stabilizes the displaced persons; on the other hand, it also ensures that the border areas resist foreign invasion and maintain the stability of the borders.

2.4 Implementation and Monitoring

After the disaster relief policy was introduced, the implementation phase was particularly critical. The local Xizang government strictly followed the instructions of the imperial court and was responsible for the concrete implementation of the relief work, including the resettlement of the victims, the distribution of relief, the repair of facilities, the prevention and treatment of epidemics, and many other tasks. The Qing court was also responsible for the entire relief process [8]. At the same time, the Qing court implemented strict supervision of the whole process of disaster relief, and sent the minister in Xizang on behalf of the Qing court to

exercise the power of the central government in Xizang, the implementation of the disaster relief policy to play a supervisory role, which played a very important role in the whole process of disaster relief. 1830 (Daoguang 10 years), the Nagchu region suffered from snowstorms, then the minister of the Xizang Huixian on the one hand, on one hand, the emperor, rate of the Kasha prefectural government formulated a plan to buy food to help the victims, and to buy food to help the victims. Purchase food relief for the victims, but the plan cannot be implemented, Hui Xian in the "by the Kasha Zhaji" in this way: "when more than a few days, should not have been submitted to receive money and other situations, it is not a matter of urgency", "then the special re-additions, such as the Karen that is, order to fill the Hsu Ba in the Department of yi situation in yamen to receive the money loaned in advance! The government of the United States, and the purchase of food, quickly sent to the disaster area, to prepare for the relief of the use, there shall be no loss". Once the task of disaster relief was completed, it was quickly "handed back" the procurement and distribution of food and other matters.

Ministers in Xizang can also listen to the people's complaints through the border system, and improve disaster relief measures. Qianlong sixty years (1795), Songkun with a reward of silver border patrol, along the way to pass the decree discretionary reduction of servitude, to sympathize with the poor and needy people, to listen to the people complain about their suffering, according to the "Songkun Zaobao", Songkun in the "Songkun Zaobao" recorded this point. "The way times have Fanmin report, whenever the Dalai merchants and the big temple sent to Nyalamu and other places to trade, the border people and Ula circled, really bitter, tired, bitter, joyful slaves through the Oracle, this one is not good, permanently banned, and strict rectification of the camp officials Kabulun, such as the private party violators, set the 'strict reference to the punishment of its crimes ', as a sign of rigor. The minister in Xizang supervised the implementation and examined the situation of the people to ensure that the relief funds and materials really benefited the victims and effectively restored the social order and economic life in the disaster area. Through this top-down, layer-by-layer implementation of the responsibility mechanism, the disaster relief work in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty was

able to advance in an efficient and orderly manner.

3. Characteristics and Effectiveness of Local Disaster Relief Procedures in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty

3.1 Tailored Policy Development

When a disaster occurs, the local government takes into account the severity of the disaster, the economic situation of the affected area, the customs of the Xizang people, etc., and scientifically and reasonably formulates specific relief measures such as remission of taxes, allocation of materials, and issuance of relief silver. These can be roughly divided into the following four categories: First, in-kind relief in the form of grain in agricultural areas, livestock in pastoral areas, and money in the form of silver. The process of in-kind relief will also be based on the scope of distribution, the number of objects, and other flexible changes in distribution; in emergency relief situations, a large number of food distribution may need to be quickly converted into barley and tsampa and other forms. For example, in the year of the Earth mouse (1828), when the Nagchu region was hit by severe snowstorms, the distribution of relief food was like this. "As the quantity collected was not small, it was ordered that those that could be ground should be ground into tsampa, and those that could not be ground should be fried with barley so that they could be transported to Nagchu at any time". When a disaster is severe, relief in kind is the most direct and effective way to make a difference [9].

Secondly, interest-free or interest-bearing relief loans are given to the victims in the form of rations, seeds, livestock, and money. To restore production and rebuild their homes after a disaster, local governments often adopted relief measures to help the victims. The successful implementation of the relief measures was attributed to the complete warehousing system, where the local governments lent interest-free or interest-bearing loans to the slightly poorer victims to maintain their livelihoods with the stored food. Most of the loans for seeds and rations were interest-free, but some less affected areas required interest payments for rations and seeds.

Thirdly, local taxes were suspended or remitted. During the Qing Dynasty, the tax system in Xizang was complex, covering a wide range of

aspects such as labor, taxes, and land leases. In the event of a natural disaster, the ability of residents to pay taxes would be affected and weakened. The acting dzongdu requested the government of Kashgar to remit the difference in taxes, and the government of Kashgar approved the request after verification. The amount of relief depends mainly on the disaster, and there are different ratios, different periods, and even different types of fields that can or cannot be reduced.

Fourthly, food and silver were provided free of charge. After the disaster, the residents had a huge impact on their lives and had to beg for survival far away from their hometowns, which seriously affected the stability of the society. To avoid or reduce the occurrence of such misfortunes, the local government in Kashgar often through the gratuitous relief of food or silver measures to alleviate the disaster, to maintain the people's minimum living needs after the disaster. Such as Tiema year (1870) "monastery manor of land, houses, etc., one by one by the water washed away, the submitted is true. For this reason, for the past and future repair of the dyke of the people, to enable them to have to maintain the conditions of life, the special reward for food of 1,000 grams, - 1,200 as grams, 1,500 as grams, from the fine Kang Qing grain to receive". Another example is that in the year of the Iron Ox (1901), the Nagchu area was hit by snowstorms, and livestock died in large numbers, to provide relief to the herdsmen, the Kasha gave instructions: "To make up for the increase in the rent of female yaks and to fulfill the ghee tax owed to the rent of livestock, according to the number of deaths of livestock, the subsidies are 300 taels, 200 taels, 150 taels of Xizang silver in materials". These reliefs were unpaid, but the conditions were such that they threatened the survival of the victims in a serious disaster situation.

It is worth noting that, in the practice of disaster relief, these types of relief are not by the degree of the disaster is strictly divided into clear implementation, but according to the characteristics of the post-disaster shortage of the long-term continuity of a variety of combinations of relief measures superimposed on the implementation of the measures. In addition, before the implementation of the policy, the local government of Kasha had to carry out a detailed verification to confirm that the situation was true before making the corresponding

measures. The implementation of these locally adapted, situation-specific relief measures reflects the maturity and meticulousness of the disaster relief procedures of the local Xizang government under the centralized system of the Qing Dynasty. The local government has formed a set of disaster relief systems with Xizang characteristics in its long-term practice of disaster relief. The continuous enrichment of this disaster relief system helped to reduce the losses caused by disasters, stabilize Xizang society, and restore interrupted production, effectively reducing the impact of disasters on local social production and people's lives, and laying the foundation for the socio-economic stability and slow development of the Xizang region during the Qing Dynasty.

3.2 Participation and Collaboration of Multiple Subjects

In addition to the leading role of the central court and the local Xizang government, government offices at all levels, monasteries, and even private forces were actively involved in the entire relief process.

Local Xizang officials carry out specific disaster relief tasks by imperial directives, forming an efficient administrative chain from the reporting and verification of disasters to the allocation of resources and the implementation of relief. Second, the monasteries spread throughout Xizang often became an important auxiliary force because they possessed a certain economic base and social influence. Through almsgiving, the monasteries not only satisfied the religious needs of the givers but also objectively relieved the lower strata of society, such as the stranded, homeless vagabonds and beggars. During the Qing Dynasty, there were many ways of giving alms in Xizang, including donations of property and land to senior monks, such as the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Erdeni, the monastic dharma table, and the Khenpo. Such as the Turks and Caicos Department moved far away to the Volga River Valley, still not far away from thousands of miles, "sent to Xizang to boil tea" There were also poor people and vagabonds to provide food [10]. Through these many kinds of almsgiving behaviors, with varying numbers of recipients, the inadequacy of official disaster relief has been compensated for to a certain extent.

Civilian forces were also an important part of the disaster relief system in Xizang during the Qing dynasty. In the procedure of reporting

disasters, from the point of view of those who report disasters, there are many levels, including local officials, nobles, monks, and local chiefs, as well as ordinary people and poor people [7]. For example, according to the archive records, Lin Zhou Zong area people crops suffered insect disaster Lang and Jiegang Xi people crops suffered insect disaster respectively to the Xizang government submitted a petition to report the disaster. Sometimes there are government, nobles, temples, and people report the disaster together, for example, in the 14th year of the Xizang calendar around the Jongmu Monkey (1824), snowstorms occurred in the Nyalamu area, "Nyalamu local government, nobles, temples and the people of the three sides of the Genbao briefly told the main purpose of the same voice". This shows that the Xizang people, the poor people, the nobles, and the government officials were actively involved in reporting the disaster and requesting a reduction or exemption of the tax. This active participation of multiple subjects in reporting disasters and their concern for people's suffering provided a guarantee for timely control of the spread of the disaster and relief for the victims, and to some extent helped to reduce the losses caused by the disaster.

In the process of disaster relief, the civil power is also subject to the unified management of the government, as in the year of Tu Niu (1949), Kasha's reply on the need to repair the embankment of Dui Creek flooding required Shannan district and all the dzong sai to recruit helpers, and it was stipulated that the government, temples, the nobles, and the smoky households should all send helpers. The participation of civil society alleviated the shortcomings of the government in terms of manpower and resources for disaster relief. The local disaster relief procedures in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty were flexible and responsive to the situation, benefiting from the effective synergy between the central and local authorities and the participation of multiple actors from all walks of life. This kind of institutional arrangement and practical operation not only ensured that disasters could be responded to quickly and handled properly when they came, but not only did the victims make concerted efforts to resume production, but also achieved three things in one, and achieved positive results in the disaster relief procedures, and also to a certain extent promoted the enhancement of

local cohesion and the development of the spirit of national unity.

4. The Value and Significance of Local Disaster Relief Procedures in Qing Dynasty Xizang

4.1 The Significance of the Construction of an Emergency Management System

The local disaster relief procedures of Xizang in the Qing Dynasty provide rich historical references and practical wisdom for the construction of modern emergency management systems. Firstly, the high degree of adaptability to local conditions embodied in the Qing Dynasty in dealing with natural disasters in the Xizang region is an important reference value for the construction of a hierarchical, categorized, and precise disaster emergency management system today. This means that the natural conditions, economic levels, and community characteristics of each geographical area should be fully taken into account in the formulation of emergency response plans, to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of relief measures.

Secondly, the close collaboration and information-sharing mechanism between the central government and the local government of Xizang as well as multiple social forces during the Qing Dynasty hints at the importance of cross-sectoral and cross-level synergistic operations in modern emergency management systems. The establishment of a command and dispatch system with rapid response and efficient linkage can significantly improve the efficiency of decision-making and the ability to allocate resources when responding to major disasters. At the same time, encouraging and regulating the participation of civil society organizations and social forces in disaster relief work will help to form a multi-dimensional pattern of government-led and social participation.

4.2 The Significance of the Study of Local Disaster Relief Procedures in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty

The research significance of the disaster relief procedures of Xizang localities in the Qing Dynasty By sorting out the disaster relief procedures of Xizang localities in the Qing Dynasty, it can be seen that the central government of the Qing Dynasty had a close

relationship with the ethnic groups in formulating the policies and management system of disaster relief in Xizang. Therefore, the decision-making and attitude of the central government in the Qing Dynasty in formulating the central government of Xizang played an important role in promoting the development of Sino-Xizang a relations and in stabilizing the Xizang society, which was an important decision-making attitude of the central government in the development of Sino-Xizang relations. This is of great significance for the study of Sino-Xizang ethnic relations in the Qing Dynasty, and can also be used as a reference material for the governance of Xizang society today.

On the other hand, by collating the letters from local Xizang chiefs requesting post-disaster relief from the central government, it can be proved that when the local Xizang government responded to and dealt with natural disasters, the formulation of specific relief policies was based on the system of the central government of the Qing dynasty, rather than arbitrary disposal and that the system of relief and management of Xizang as stipulated by the central government in the way of disposal was conducive to the incorporation of the relief of the Central Plains into the local grass-roots level, thus enable the central government to deal with natural disasters, which is also a pluralistic culture formed by the central government of the Qing dynasty by drawing on the wisdom of the people of the Central Plains and promoting the intermingling of the cultures of the various ethnic groups through common production, common development, and common construction. At the same time, studying the implementation measures of the local Xizang government helps to understand the characteristics of the political system, administration, financial and taxation system, and social order of local Xizang in the Qing Dynasty, which is of great significance for the modern state to govern Xizang.

5. Conclusions

The study of local disaster relief procedures in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty is not only an excavation and restoration of historical facts but also, in the context of the era of globalization, an important value that cannot be ignored in terms of enhancing the level of disaster risk management in border areas in China and even in the international arena, promoting harmonious

coexistence of ethnic groups and constructing an efficient governance system. Through in-depth exploration of this field, it provides a constant source of wisdom for contemporary social development and public policy innovation. The core value and contribution of the study of the local disaster relief procedure in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty lies in its unique geographical adaptability, the participation of multiple subjects, and the profound culture of mutual assistance. This procedure has demonstrated in historical practice an effective response to and management of natural disasters, including but not limited to the precise application of policies, flexible dispatch of resources, strengthening of local autonomy, and the integration of religious and humanistic forces for social mobilization, etc., which have been gradually perfected through practice and the test of time and have resulted in valuable experience.

These valuable experiences provide a model for social governance in ancient China and a substantial reference for the construction of modern disaster management strategies. The historical experience accumulated in local disaster relief procedures in Xizang during the Qing Dynasty has far-reaching implications and lessons for future national and regional disaster management strategies.

Acknowledgments

This paper is supported by the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program for College Students at Southwest Minzu University (No. S202410656137).

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