

# ***Palden Gyatso, Monk Who Suffered for a Free Tibet, Dies at 85***

By Daniel E. Slotnik

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Palden Gyatso, a Tibetan Buddhist monk who defied Chinese control of his homeland, and who then fled to tell the world his story of more than three decades of hardship in Chinese prisons and labor camps, died on Nov. 30 in Dharamsala, India. He was 85.

The cause was liver cancer, said a spokesman for Free Tibet, a nonprofit organization dedicated to Tibetan liberation.

Mr. Gyatso's soft voice became one of the strongest against Beijing's continuing hold on his homeland after China occupied it in 1950, vanquished Tibet's army in a matter of days and signed an agreement with Tibetan officials granting it control, beginning what many Tibetans consider a long and brutal occupation.

The Chinese Communist Party has argued that Tibet has long been a culturally distinct part of China. But in the nearly seven decades since the occupation, China has kept a grip on Tibetan monasteries, even destroying some, and restricted aspects of Tibetan culture, like the Tibetan language and Buddhist religious practices.

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