The current political context of Tibetan grasslands in Amdo (Qinghai Province, China) is formed by a patchwork of many power holders with a various degree of influence and charisma, official and unofficial positions, different aspirations and interests. They work together to build up legitimacy of the PRC government in the region, but also challenge it pursuing their own interests.

In this talk, Elisa Cencetti will explore complex relationships animating the local political scene, and reconsider the place of the PRC government and Tibetan lay and religious power holders. Focusing on phenomena such as grassland conflicts, marketization and relocation of Tibetan herders, she will demonstrate how this precarious balance between the government and Tibetan elites is kept.