TIBETAN RESPONSES TO CHINA'S PROJECT OF MODERNISATION – 2001-2011

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled **Tibetan Responses to China's Project of Modernisation – 2001-2011** submitted by me for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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"THIS IS DEDICATED TO AND WILL ALWAYS BE FOR MY AMA AND ABA"

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

19.07.2012   JIGME YESHE LAMA

ABBREVIATIONS

C.P.P.C.C – Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference

C.C.P – Chinese Communist Party

C.T.A – Central Tibetan Administration

G.D.P – Gross Domestic Product

K.T.A.P – Kardze Tibet Autonomous Prefecture

K.M.T – Kuomintang Nationalist Party

N.P.C – National People's Congress

P.R.C – People's Republic of China

P.L.A – People's Liberation Army

R.F.A – Radio Free Asia

T.A.R – Tibet Autonomous Region

T.C.H.R.D – Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy

T.I.N – Tibet Information Network

U.F.W.D – United Front Work Department

U.S.A – United States of America

V.O.A – Voice of America

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Looking back on the course of modernization since its peaceful liberation, publicizing the achievements in modernization made by the people of all ethnic groups in Tibet through their hard work and with the support of the Central Government and the whole nation, and revealing the law of development of Tibet's modernization-these will contribute not only to accelerating the healthy development of Tibet's modernization but also to clearing up various misunderstandings on the "Tibet issue" in the international community and promoting overall understanding of the past and present situations in Tibet. (Foreword, "Tibet's March Toward Modernisation", 2001)

In November 2001, commemorating 50 years of the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the PRC had issued a White Paper on "Tibet's March Towards Modernisation", which is seen as the correct historical development, carried forward by the PRC through their liberation of Tibet. It is modernisation which provides the justification for the coming of the PLA in Tibetan areas in 1949 and also the subsequent policies that Beijing followed in Tibet. Therefore, the Chinese are seen as the harbingers of modernity to Tibet, which from the foundation of the PRC is a goal to be achieved. The Tibetans are one among the 55 national minorities incorporated into the PRC, whose drive to modernisation is termed as a historical inevitability under the leadership of Beijing. Development is seen as a key indicator of modernisation which was absent in the feudal serfdom under theocracy, abolished with the coming of the Communists. Every step undertaken by the Chinese state in Tibet is seen strongly in terms of bringing modernisation to the Tibetans.

Modernisation is seen as the tool which liberated the erstwhile serfs from their bondage and released the forces of production in the Tibetan areas, enabling the region to attain amazing growth and prosperity in the fifty years since their liberation. The modernisation process in China gained much ground in the aftermath of the reforms and opening up launched from 1978, which was also extended to Tibet. Under this numerous favourable policies were implemented in Tibet, such as "long term right to use and independently operate land by individual households" and "long term policy of individual households' ownership, raising and management of livestock." These policies further promoted the reforms in Tibet (Tibet's March Towards Modernisation, 2002).

There was a further acceleration of growth through investments from Beijing as well as from numerous provinces. By 2000, the GDP of Tibet was 11.746 billion yuan, deemed as being thirty times more than the pre - liberation period. What is significant to the project of modernisation is the growing importance of the secondary and tertiary industries in the local economy as well as the increasing mechanisation of agriculture. The other aspects of modernisation; urbanisation as well as infrastructure development have made major progress in the Tibetan areas. Under the Western Development Campaign launched in 2000, there has been the further opening up of the Tibetan areas and modernisation has been increased by manifolds with major large scale projects being implemented such as the completion of the Qinghai Lhasa railway in 2006 as well as the "Nomadic Resettlement" projects which increased the rate of urbanisation in Tibet. However, the campaign to open up the West is also seen in terms of bridging the increasing economic disparity between the richer coastal regions in the East and the poorer interior regions, which had led to much social and regional tension in China. Under this, foreign investments to Tibet have also risen.

Nonetheless, the project of modernisation launched by China is termed as the panacea to the ills plaguing the Tibetan society and has become the only way out and the most urgent question for social progress in Tibet (The Historical Inevitability of Tibet's Modernisation, 2002). This, according to the Chinese has led to getting rid of imperialism in Tibet and bringing freedom to its people from the clutches of a theocratic feudal serfdom under the Dalai Lama. Therefore, modernisation is seen in opposition to the traditional structure which was present earlier, which was static and lagged far behind the times. On the other hand the project of modernisation is seen to be dynamic and rational. Significantly, the achievements under modernisation in Tibet are compared to the pre Liberation period, which to a greater extent widens the gap between the 'old and new', 'tradition and modern' in the present situation.

Modernisation thus becomes the dominant historical discourse, from Beijing's vantage point regarding Tibet and the Tibetans. Furthermore, it provides the legitimacy as well as the sovereign rights over Tibet to the Chinese who have brought in modern civilisation to this backward isolated place. Economic development and modernity are seen as the reasons offered to the foreign nations for the policies that Beijing has pursued in Tibet. It is cited mainly to ward away its foreign critics and also defend against the issue of human rights violations in Tibet. It is seen

as a tool of national integration and stability in Tibet for China, as Tibet remains a major zone of conflict over sovereignty and China's rule as contested by the Tibetans and the exiles led by the Dalai Lama, who is perceived to have the support of the West. Thus, the project of modernisation remains highly important as Tibet is seen as a core subject in China's strategy. The process of modernisation has been institutionalised in Tibet through the Tibet Work Forums which have been held only five times after the liberation of Tibet. The Tibet Work Forums are the highest body in China which makes economic political policies for Tibet.

In earlier cases the decisions of the Tibet Work Forum were implemented in the TAR, but after the Fifth Work Forum in 2010, the policies have been extended to the other Tibetan regions in China. Held in Beijing, these Work Forums are attended by the nine members Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CCP. The Party General Secretary and President of China Hu Jintao, Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee Wu Bangguo, Premier of the State Council Wen Jiabao, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Vice President of China Xi Jinping, Vice Premier of the State Council Li Keqiang, He Guoqiang, and Secretary of the Party Central Committee's Politics and Law Commission Zhou Yongkang. A total of 332 officials representing the Party and central government, the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), other provincial-level areas, the People's Liberation Army, and the People's Armed Police attended the meeting in 2011 (Xinhua 2010). The First Work Forum on Tibet was held only in 1980, in the aftermath of the nation implementing the policy of reform and opening up as prior to that from 1966-76 even three years longer in Tibet (Barnett, 2010:326) China was caught in the political upheavals of the Cultural Revolution. It was a period when politics was in command and economic activity was much sidelined. This period was marked with intense Maoist campaigns when people were targeted as capitalist roaders or reactionaries. There was a targeting of the "Four Olds" which included the destruction of culture and the stalling of religion. This was of major concern for China's minority nationalities when their way of life was targeted as being a remnant of the old world. In the earlier periods of the 1950's the CCP were trying to built their base in Tibet, consolidate their grip through a united front with the local ruling groups, which crumbled with the uprising in 1959 and the flight of the Dalai Lama into exile. In the aftermath of this 80,000 Tibetans followed the Dalai Lama as well as numerous purges were

executed by the PLA, which may have adversely affected economic production (Dreyer, 2008:131).

In the 1960's the institution of the communes were introduced in Tibet, where all private property were confiscated and society was divided into a three tier structure of the commune, brigade and production team. In Tibet in 1970 a commune had a two level structure of the commune and the production team (ibid, 131-32). In 1975, almost 93 percent of the township had communes (ibid). Hence, these earlier steps undertaken by the Chinese in Tibet were top heavy and with less flexibility for the Tibetans as was throughout China. However these policies were replaced by the ones implemented by Hu Yaobang which materialised in the Tibet Work Forum. The forum provides an outline of the project of modernisation in Tibet and can be seen as a formulation of modernity. What is also important is the emphasis on "work" and development in the context of the Forum. The First and Second Work Forums were held in 1980 and 1984 under the guidance of Hu Yaobang who had ushered in liberal policies in Tibet, admitting to the fact that after thirty years of liberation much of the Tibetans still remained in poverty (Wang Yao, 1996:288). Therefore, the first two Work Forums were geared towards development by taking into strong consideration the uniqueness of Tibetan circumstances and also emphasising on the recruitment of more Tibetan cadres for development. It was only in 1994 that the Third Forum on Work in Tibet was held in Beijing from 20th till 23rd July and was termed as a golden bridge for achieving development and modernisation in Tibet (TIN 1994:242). What is equally significant is the fact that the Third Work Forum was held five years after the 1989 uprisings in Lhasa, thus stabilisation and development were considered to be of high vantage point.

The Work Forums can be seen as the discourse of modernisation launched by China with regard to Tibet. It lays the essential policies to be implemented in Tibet and to bring greater development to the region which is considered to be of utmost importance to the unity of the Chinese nation. From the Third Forum on Work in Tibet, economic development in the region was geared towards stifling the separatist activities of the Dalai clique. The earlier work forums were criticised for conceding too much to the Tibetan nationalists and also in effect ruled out the possibility of any "Tibetanised" form of development (TIN News Update, 2001). According to a statement made by the then Premier of the PRC, Li Peng was "*To speed up the development of Tibet is not only to balance the development of different areas, is not only an economic issue but*

also is a political issue in completion to our whole strategy" (TIN, 1994:242). Therefore, the activities of the Dalai Lama was seen as being in contradiction to development and the separatists were then seen as opponents to the modernisation project in Tibet and hard work was deemed as the strength to oppose such activities. However there is an affirmation to the low standards of living of the people and a need to correct this aspect. Thus, there is much emphasis on the overall rebuilding of the economy in Tibet, emphasising on meeting certain growth rates in agriculture and animal husbandry as well as in infrastructure, industries and the tertiary sector. Under this, Tibet is seen to be part of the socialist market economy framework, where Tibetans and the other nationalities are to cooperate with each other to achieve modernisation. Another important aspect that is stressed upon in the Third Work Forum is the issue of religion, the resurgence of Tibetan Buddhism in the post reform periods is seen as blocking the process of development in the region. Tibetan Buddhism is cited as a problem (Tibet Information Network, TIN 1994:242) and monasteries are seen as sites of growing dissent, which have violated numerous regulations as well as interfered in administration. Therefore the monasteries were portrayed as being antithetical to the modernisation process in Tibet and much of this had been accentuated due to the involvement of monks and nuns in the Lhasa uprisings of 1989. There is a strong call for the control over religious activities and institutions, hence to an extent curbing Tibetan culture and identity which are to be defined in Marxist terms (Canada Tibet Committee, 2001).

The Third Work Forum also called for the investment of 2.38 billion yuan on 62 items which were aid Tibet projects (National Conferences on Tibet Work, 2010:3) which would be borne by the Central government as well as provinces and larger cities. The investment was divided in the following manner 24.8 percent invested in agriculture and irrigation, 15 - 27.3 percent invested on productive items, transport and communication received 7 – 9.1 percent, industry had an investment of 6 – 7.3 percent and the social and city infrastructure received 21 – 31.4 percent. Hence from the period of the Third Work Forum, aid and central government investment to the region has become the dominant theme in Tibet's economic growth (TIN, 1994). This enabled the movement of Han migrant workers and entrepreneurs to help modernise Tibet. The Fourth Forum on Work in Tibet was held from 25-27 June 2001, which focussed on the strengthening of the "Party building" in line with the China wide drive to maintain and strengthen Communist

Party support and legitimacy. It also emphasised on the need to propel the economy from "accelerated development" to "leap over" model of development and bringing forward the social situation from basic to long term stability (TIN News update 2001). Premier Zhu Rongji stated at the forum that 117 state-funded construction projects valued at 31.2 billion yuan were underway—a sum that probably reflected the initial 26 billion yuan estimated construction cost of the Qinghai Tibet railway (US Congressional Executive Commission on China, 2006). This forum was held after the implementation of the Western Development Campaign from 2000 onwards. This large scale development project initiated at the behest of Beijing included 12 provinces and 5 ethnic autonomous regions of China. Most of the initiatives were large scale infrastructure projects, promotion of education and the encouragement of foreign investments in these regions. It also called for the westward flow of human talent and the integration of the regions through a process of socialisation and marketisation (ibid). The Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law had also been amended on February 28 2001 for directing the natural resources and infrastructural projects in the ethnic areas towards unified plans and market forces (Xinhua, 2001).

Thus much of the Fourth Work Forum was geared towards the implementation of the policies followed in the Western Development Campaign. However it can also be seen as an extension of the policies laid out in the 1994 Third Work Forum. Therefore, modernisation and development remains a high priority but so is an emphasis on stability. There is also a strong element of control over Tibetan culture and religion which was adopted from the earlier work forum, as a matter of fact this has been strongly emphasised, where Buddhism is stipulated to adapt to Socialism. The monasteries were further curbed and the attack on the Dalai Lama was intensified. Modernisation leading to the assimilation of Tibet into China was acknowledged but now an idea of cultural assimilation is mooted in the Fourth Work forum where Tibetan culture is seen as the major cause for separatist tendencies (Li Dezhu 2001). Earlier the emphasis was on religion which now incorporated the Tibetan culture in general. There was a major opposition to the idea of cultural separatism and that the Great Western Development Campaign would eradicate the nationality problem in China, through the assimilation of nationality cultures. More importantly, Tibetan identity was linked to separatist ideas which were an obstacle to fulfilling the project of modernisation in Tibet. This was to be rectified through economic development as

well as the migration of the Han entrepreneurs and workers into Tibet. There is also an attempt to win the hearts of the Tibetans through economic modernisation. In the Fourth Work Forum, the Chinese model of modernisation ("Socialism with Chinese characteristics") was seen as the correct mode to be imposed in Tibet which is seen on a discursive level to be in opposition to the Dalai Lama and the Western supporters. "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" is an innovation which gained momentum under Deng's reforms and it highlights the unique and separate path taken by China to modernise. It believes in not copying the models of other countries but charting a course in accordance to the distinctness of China (crienglish.com, 2007). It includes the reform and opening up program in China where the nation is seen to be in the primary stage of socialism. It is also seen as the crystallisation of Deng's notion of "seeking truth from facts" and not taking Marxism as a dogma but putting it into practice in accordance to a nation's background. Under this, class economic development takes precedence over class struggle in China. However this is to be achieved under the leadership of the CCP and a firm adherence to the 'Four Cardinal Principles' of upholding the socialist path, the people's democratic dictatorship, the leadership of the CCP and also upholding Marxist-Leninist, Mao Zedong thought and Deng Xiaoping theory. Hence under the "socialism with Chinese characteristics, China does not completely adhere to Western norms regarding development as well as other political – ideological forms and emphasises on a distinctness which is Chinese. This is also implemented to the national minorities such as among the Tibetans which in most cases leads to a clash with the differing characteristics of the Tibetan way of life. The socialism with Chinese characteristics can be seen as preventing the seeping in of distinct values which may not correspond with China.

Stability remained an overriding objective in the Fourth Work Forum which was also directed towards strengthening the role of the Party in Tibet as a countervailing option to religion. The cadres had to override their personal religious convictions towards the Party. The economic growth which was to follow the "leap over" model was geared towards stability and was to occur through aid from the Central government which from the Third Work Forum was in the form of subsidies and investments, thus seen as being highly benevolent. Under the Fourth Tibet Work Forum, an emphasis is seen towards infrastructural development in Tibet and also emphasising the development of Tibetan industries especially Tibetan medicine and mining. The primary

agricultural sector is also emphasised with a stronger push towards improving Tibet's human resources and the tourist industry in Tibet, with special push for domestic tourists to come to Tibet (TIN News Update, 2001). More importantly, under the Fourth Work Forum, Beijing has invested 31.2 billion yuan on 117 construction projects while the provinces and municipalities have financed around 70 projects with a total investment of 1.06 billion yuan (People's Daily 2001). From the Third Work Forum onwards a major change was initiated in China's policies with regard to Tibet due to the uprisings in the late 80's. This has been strengthened further in the Fourth Work Forum where Beijing is seen as a benevolent state providing the Tibetans with immense economic sops. However, much of development was seen as tools to bring stability and to assimilate Tibet further into the Chinese economic and cultural system. These top down and mostly huge infrastructural projects are unable to meet the local economic needs and can also be seen as a major source of discontent by the Tibetans which have sidelined them. This can be seen as a catalyst for the Lhasa uprisings in 2008 which soon spread to the neighbouring Tibetan regions and took the form of a pan Tibetan uprising. The uprisings in 2008, termed by Beijing as the March 14, 2008 incident was seen as unruly riots orchestrated by Tibetan separatists under the leadership of the Dalai Lama. However, much of the conflict can also be understood as a crisis in the mechanisms of the work forums on Tibet.

There is a further elaboration of the March 14, 2008 incident in a later chapter; the emphasis on a top down economic modernisation as a tool of stability and assimilation has led to an erosion of Tibetan culture and identity which are incidentally seen as threats by Beijing. There was a change of gears from the Third Work Forum, which started to emphasise more on Beijing's role in the modernisation of Tibet and interlinking Tibetan identity especially religion to instability. The riots in 2008 can be seen as a rejection of these very economic and socio cultural policies implemented in Tibet. Therefore, the Tibet Work Forum meetings can be seen as laying a blueprint for the modernisation of Tibet, which from the Third Forum onwards became more in lines with "Chinese characteristics" or the stronger adoption of a top down approach. The emphasis is not only on economic modernisation but also the modernisation of the Tibetan society, which will be ensured through economic and cultural assimilation. From the Fourth Work Forum onwards the migration of the Han into Tibet have increased, who are imbibed with a salvationist mission. Under the First and Second Work Forums carried under the leadership of

the moderate Hu Yaobang, the proposal to reduce the number of Han cadres in Tibet was initiated. The total Han population of the TAR during that period was 122400 out of which 75 percent were to depart within two or three years (Wang Lixiong 2009:71). By 1989, Tibetans accounted for 66.6 percent of the total cadres in the TAR (ibid, 2009:72). However, with the Third Work Forum, the earlier policies were reversed and a gradual increase was seen in the number of Han migrants to Tibet, which by the Fourth Work Forum had substantially increased. The following table shows the population of registered Han and Hui Chinese in the TAR after 2001 –

YEAR	HAN	HUI
2001	77003	2147
2002	85166	2140
2003	105379	2513
2004	93306	1106
2005	104647	1453
2007	110429	2228
2008	123558	2158

(Tibet Autonomous Region Year Book, 2009/33)

The growth in the migration of Han Chinese into Tibet has been justified on lines of them aiding in the development of Tibet. What is significant is the notion of cultural superiority that the migrants are imbued with. The Tibetans are portrayed as being materialistically backward seen as a result of the historical process they have undergone, reflected through their culture and religious traditions, deemed as superstitions. Beijing views the "westward flow of human talent" as being important for growth and development as well as for bringing stability to the region. This approach reeks strongly of a Manichean set of oppositions (Tsering Shakya, 2009:95) with the Tibetans requiring the civilising benevolence of the Chinese. Along with the registered Han and Hui population in Tibet, there is also a significant "floating population" who are drawn by the lure of the economic opportunity present in Tibet. After 2001, the migration of Chinese was made much easier, through a reformation in the local hukou system which led to the increase especially in the growth of temporary migrants who provide a stiff competition to the Tibetans.

The traditional versus progressive model describing the Tibetans and the Chinese migrants along with the state is important from the perspective of modernisation where the importation of progress or modernity is brought by outsiders. Thus, the Tibet Work Forums intensified the project of modernisation, by emphasising on Tibetan religion and culture being static and stalling progress, hence calling for the curbing of the Tibetan identity.

The Fifth Tibet Work Forum was held from January 18-20 of 2010 in Beijing after two years of the pan-Tibetan revolts, which was followed by a severe clampdown. A significant change seen in the Fifth Work Forum has been the inclusion of the Tibetan autonomous prefectures and counties in the neighbouring provinces of Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan and Yunnan, historical and cultural parts of Tibet. These areas were now placed under the ambit of the policies that the state adopted, which can be seen due to the mass participation from these regions in the aftermath of the March 14 incident in 2008. The Fifth Work Forum's objectives remained consistent with previous such meetings (US Congressional Executive Commission on China, 2010) which would focus on economic development and bring stability. Therefore, the attack on the Dalai Lama was raised, and control was sought through a regulation of religion and culture.

The Fifth Tibet Work Forum also called for the creation of a development path with "Chinese characteristics and Tibetan traits", which is a call for modernisation whose principle features are Chinese, but where Tibetan traits will remain. The need for growth in the rural areas are also greatly emphasised, with a need to reduce the gap between the income levels of the urban and the rural, providing the rural with basic public services which are to reach the national level by 2020 (ibid, 2010). Thus, 2020 is termed as the year for achieving sweeping economic, social and cultural changes for Tibet. Infrastructural building which received a boost from the Western Development Campaign is a major focus area as by 2020, the intention is to have a network of railways connecting the plateau with neighbouring provinces. For the continuation of the "leap and bounds" development and stability the Central government aid as well as investment by the provinces and municipalities have been much increased. The importance of Tibet in ethnic unity, social stability and national security, as well as a favourable international environment was stressed much upon by the leaders (Xinhua, 2010).

President Hu Jintao also termed the looming principal contradiction for Tibet, as for the country as a whole, remained to be between the ever-growing material and cultural needs of the people and the backwardness of social production (ibid). Thus, a need to strengthen a scientific outlook on Development, so as to create a well-off society which relies on sustainable development was emphasised upon by him. The hindrance to this is seen in the form of the "special contradiction" in the activities of the Dalai Lama and the "separatist" forces, who are involved in the breaking up of the motherland, which can be prevented through economic development. There is also a further desire to control Tibetan Buddhism, seen as the site of dissent by China. It is termed as measures to maintain the "normal order of Tibetan Buddhism", which can be read as a further monitoring of Tibetan culture and the curbing of Tibetan identity (U.S Congressional Executive Commission on China, 2010).

The Fifth Forum on Work in Tibet points out to the importance of Tibet in China's global strategy and in the international rise of China, which had been tarnished by the protests in Lhasa and other parts of Tibet in 2008 and also the subsequent protests along the Olympic torch rally which China hosted that year. More importantly on a discursive level, the West is seen to be rallying the Dalai Lama and other hostile forces against China. In most cases human rights emerges as a strong issue with which the modernisation project adopted by China is questioned in Tibet. There is a lack of moral legitimacy in China's rights over Tibet, which Beijing tries to buttress through development and criticising the Western form of modernisation. Under the Fifth Work Forum, the importance of Tibet as a natural resource base for China has been noted (Xinhua, 2010). There is the promise of development in agriculture, animal husbandry, tourism industry, handicrafts and in the natural resources industry. Public services such as education, health care, telecommunications, and social security network in the urban as well as the rural sector are to receive much investment (ibid, 2010).

There is also a proposal of granting free education to children in the rural areas. However, the transfer of financial support, cadres and talents were also highlighted in the Work Forum. Therefore, from the Fifth Work Forum, a stronger focus is driven towards the upliftment of the livelihoods and standard of living of the rural populace. This can also be understood from the urban and rural divide which is much pronounced in Tibet and China's policies of "returning grazing land to grassland" and the settlement of the nomads which were further acerbating the

situation. These had also led to an increase in the discontent against China's rule over Tibet. In most of the urban centres in Tibet, the Han and the Hui Chinese dominate and the Tibetans are in a minority. The following table shows the distribution of population in the TAR –

YEAR	2003	2007	2008
URBAN	19.8	21.3	22.6
RURAL	80.2	78.7	77.4

All figures are in percentage and it is quite clear from the above official statistics from the TAR year book 2009 that the majority of the population are still rural. The figures below reveal the contributions of the three sectors of the economy towards the GDP which is the market value of goods and services formally recognised produced within a country in a given period, which also indicates the standards of living. The following table is the increase in GDP of the TAR.

YEAR	2003	2007	2008
PRIMARY	22.0	16.0	15.3
SECONDARY	26.0	28.8	29.2
TERTIARY	52.0	55.2	55.5

Hence the largest portion of the GDP in the years mentioned above has arrived from the tertiary sector, which is mostly urban based and much dominated by the migrant Chinese who have structural advantages over the Tibetans in respect to levels of education, skills as well as language. The primary sector's contribution to the GDP of the region has decreased over the years, which is moreover a rural based sector, where majority of the Tibetans are based. The industrial structure of employment shows the dependence of the majority of the population for their livelihood. The following table reveals the industrial structure of employment in the TAR –

YEAR	2003	2007	2008
PRIMARY	64.1	56.0	54.6
SECONDARY	9.3	10.8	34.9
TERTIARY	26.6	33.2	10.5

It is the primary sector; agriculture and its allied activities which provides with the highest percentage of employment in Tibet, or larger sections of the population are still dependent on agriculture as a source of living. From the Fourth Forum on Work in Tibet, there has been an increase in the investment and aid provided by the central government as well as by the provinces and numerous municipalities from China. There is also an impetus for foreign firms and corporations to invest in Tibet such as the building of good infrastructure; the completion of the Qinghai Tibet Railway brought in large investment as transportation became easier. Apart from this, the local TAR government provides for numerous preferential policies to foreign firms for investment in Tibet (Abraham Lustgarten, 2008:241-46) Some of these are "free funds" to purchase land at 50 percent of its value with associated fees waived for high tech and infrastructural investors, multi year tax free start up period and subsidized power (ibid, 2008:241). All of these attracted numerous investors to Tibet, who were mostly eager to tap in the potential of its rich mineral and other natural resources. In most cases, the local Tibetan population did not benefit from the fruit of this development.

The following table portrays the total investment in fixed assets in the TAR-

YEAR	2003	2007	2008
PRIMARY	4.6	5.8	5.2
SECONDARY	19.0	14.5	21.0
TERTIARY	76.4	79.7	73.8

This clearly shows that the tertiary sector has received more investment than the primary sector on which majority of the Tibetans are dependent upon (Tibet Statistical Yearbook 2009:18). This is seen as a result of the decades of emphasis laid on the secondary and tertiary sector in the Tibet Work Forum meetings, which smacks strongly of the centre not trying to comprehend the peripheral areas.

The idea of a forum on laying down the basic proposition of work in Tibet by Beijing is problematic as it does not take into consideration the local characteristics of Tibet. The notion of "work" and directing it in Tibet is problematic as it denotes the absence of a culture of development or of "work" amongst the Tibetans and the need for Beijing and the Han to bring

this culture to them. This has strong cultural imperialist undertones, emphasising on the benevolence shown by Beijing towards the Tibetans. However it remains quite aloof from the ground realities in Tibet and the major decisions are made by the leaders based in Beijing, for whom stability and security remains an overriding objective. Thus, through the Work Forums on Tibet, modernisation is delivered to a still backward region which is populated by an ethnic nationality portrayed as being resisting this process of modernisation. The term "special contradiction" was used to describe the "Dalai clique" seen as separatists, which was imposed in the Fifth Work Forum. The notion of "special contradiction" is Marxist and it exists when an entity experiences alienation and makes the mistake of equating it with "differentiation" and putting alienation into historical categories (US Congressional Executive Commission on China, 2010). Thus, development and modernisation is seen as the way to rectify this contradiction. This can be termed as a tacit acceptance of the fact that the Tibetans still remain backwards and the gulf between the rural and the urban is seen to have increased, which are revealed through the statistics.

The economy of Tibet had been growing at 12 – 14 percent annually, which however rose to almost 15 percent by 2006 (Lustgarten, 2008:234), seen as a region of China with a high growth rate, which however was propped through central government aid and investments. Still Tibet remained one of China's backward regions which in 2008 had risen up and questioned China's policies over the region. The project of modernisation as envisaged by China in Tibet is seen as an integrationist policy; a dominant narrative which views the question of Tibet through economic terms and the present situation of the Tibetans being that of alienation from the greater economic system which will be solved through bringing economic prosperity. However what is also important is the ideological baggage present in modernisation, which undermines the traditional way of life in Tibet. The Tibetan identity is portrayed as being incompatible to the modern system which the Chinese have brought, which is obstructed by the local culture and tradition especially religion, which constitutes a part of the special contradiction. It is seen to be personified by the Dalai Lama who is termed as a "splittist" and who opposes the trend of modernisation in Tibet.

MODERNISATION – BRIEF OUTLINE

Thus, the above section lays a background of the project of modernisation in Tibet which is a strong source of legitimacy for the Chinese state and a justification for many of its policies which may be deemed unpopular and diluting the Tibetan identity. The section below analyses the central concept in the European or Western context of modernisation and its import into Asia. Modernisation is seen as a specific project which originated in Europe and was brought to the rest through contacts that the Westerners had, mostly in the guise of trade, colonialism and cultural imperialism. It has been termed as a hegemonic project, an ideological weapon that the West used in its expansionist project and was heavily implemented by the US in the post World War phase to combat Communism. It is a model of development with immense ideological and cultural forbearing. Hence the global projects of modernisation are as follows.

Modernisation is a historical process, which has been seen in different ways. It can be seen as providing the theoretical framework to the sociology of development or as a paradigm to understand development (Bernstein 2002:141). Its proponents have termed it as having universal characteristics and bringing about a change from the traditional to the modern, thus strongly transforming culture and society. According to David Lerner, modernisation is the social process while development is the economic component (Bernstein 2002). Modernisation as a process emanated from the West and is a product of the historical and cultural forces which shaped the Enlightenment or the Age of Reason. The values which emerged from this specifically European historical period were later touted as being universal and thus laying the foundation of the need to export them to other regions of the world (Valentine, 2006:8). The historical specificity of the process of modernisation makes it localised. Although, history is change, the changes introduced by modernisation are phenomenal. The process of modernisation is also seen as an approach to understanding history, thus leading to the emergence of the ideas of developed and underdeveloped. This mode of looking at history as a modernisation programme leads to strong ideas of civilisational change where the modern is imbued with the duty of bringing modernity to the uncivilised cultures.

Therefore, modernisation has strongly been linked with projects of colonialism and neo colonialism in the present context. The Enlightenment period occurred in Europe specially

France and Scotland in the 18th century, which spread to the Americas. It was a movement of ideas and knowledge which had been facilitated further by the period of the Renaissance and the Reformation. While the latter led to the growth of secular education and the breaking up of the authority of the Catholic Church, the former was a cultural movement that occurred from the 14 – 17th centuries in Europe and led to growth of scientific reasoning and knowledge (Carl Slevin, 2003:170). The Renaissance can also be seen as a revival of Classical knowledge which flourished in art and architecture but also spilled into numerous socio political spheres. It led to the Age of Reason and provided the base for scientific growth and inquiry. These were further accelerated due to the Age of Discovery, when perilous voyages were taken across the seas, leading to the discovery of newer land and cultures on it.

What is significant is that these movements led to a growth in rationality and secularisation and the affirmation of the importance of the individual. The Reformation had broken the Catholic church's hold over knowledge and a strong liberal attitude emerged out of the Renaissance, which was seen in the works of the 17th century scholars such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Rene Descartes' and Isaac Newton, who laid the framework for a modern scientific rational mode of understanding. Their work started to penetrate deeply into the fabric of the European society then and in many cases it was supported by the monarchies of that period, termed as the Enlightened Despots (ibid). The Age of Enlightenment carried forward these principles and most of the scholars of that period, such as Rousseau, Voltaire and Montesquieu were strong proponents of individual liberty, reasoning and secularism. Their ideas led to the formation of the modern concept of nation states and also facilitated the increase in the rate of industrialisation, in science as well as mechanisation in agriculture. Progress and rationality went hand in hand and society with all its socio cultural and economic appendages was to embrace this process which led to the growth of modernisation (ibid, 171). The project of modernisation is seen in terms of rationality and secularism, where the worth of the individual is extremely high. It calls for the unshackling of the person from tradition and the march towards differentiation in private life. The development of a capitalist industrial system and a liberal democracy is seen as the high points of modernisation.

However, socialism was also offered as an alternative model of modernisation that can be adopted. It was championed further through the growth and development of Marxism by Karl

Marx as a modernising project, who along with Freidrich Engles emphasised on scientific socialism, providing a vision of modernity where the factors of production are owned by the working class and there is an equitable distribution of income according to capacities. Marxism is a world view which however still embraces modernity as the correct path for development of the human society. These ideas can be clubbed as meta narratives, which provides for a linear view of human history and are seen as emancipating ideologies. Marxism views history as being one of class struggle; of historical materialism which leads to the development of a higher stage in a society. Thus, each society or nation is viewed to be in a particular stage, always advancing. This was precisely what the project of modernisation is especially in the current period. Modernisation as an aspiration, an ideology was offered in the post War period by the United States and other Western European nations as an alternative to Communism, it was seen as an ideological rival to Communist modernisation and also provided the developing and third world countries with a structure of development, that is rooted in western liberal democracy and in free market policies (Y.H. Lin, 2009)

Modernisation is a process whose end result is modernity; the complete transformation of society. It is also understood in terms of the opposition between the traditional and the modern. The former is seen as static and backward whereas the modern is seen as being dynamic and ever changing and the roots of this dynamism is seen in the West especially in Europe (ibid, 2009:3). This understanding of modernisation has led to the growth of the "white man's burden" where modernity is equated with civilisation and is brought by the West to the rest of the world. This transmission of values which emerged in a specific Western context and imposed on other parts of the world has led to the growth of colonialism and imperialism, where the values and cultures of the colonies are seen as traditional and backward. It calls for the creation of a homogenous world where the values of the Enlightenment is practiced by all. It is also spread through institutionalised agencies of the West which offers aid for development. More importantly, the spread of modernisation has also been championed by numerous academics. Numerous theories especially rooted in economics were used in understanding modernisation which were however specific to a particular Western context, thus was problematic when it was applied to the other parts of the world (Bernstein 2002:143). For gauging the spread of modernisation in a country there are numerous specifications such as mechanisation of agriculture, industries as well as

other factors of production, the growth of urbanisation, the influx of democratic ideals in society, the increase in individualism, secular education, improvement of infrastructure and communications, the growth of specialised bureaucratisation and also globalisation.

The race to modernity has been the dominating issue in global affairs in the present era, with the race present between a free market laissez faire liberal democratic set up and an alternative attempted by the Soviet Union with an emphasis on central planning. However, in both rationality and reasoning is of utmost importance which places the "others" to a form of domination through cultural imperialism (Valentine, 2006:9). The process of modernisation has also led to the creation of a nation state, which is based on ideas of rationality and progress. It is seen mostly as a rejection of the traditional, but it has also been seen that tradition can also be used to create conditions of modernity, as in the case of numerous East Asian nations, whose high economic growth can be related to the Confucian traditions practiced by these cultures. In numerous cases it is the traditional elites who carry forward the process of modernisation. Tradition may not stand antithetical to the modern but aids in the transition to high economic growth rates, increase in wealth and rising prosperity. Apart from the Confucian value system, the Indian caste system; highly regressive and humiliating to the individual has also been denoted as a system which can bring forth economic progress, although its practices and doctrines can be termed as backward and steeped in deep religious tradition. It has also been discovered that the numerous modern practices in the West may have roots in the practices which were prevalent in the Orient. This is seen in the form of bureaucracy, the idea of an enlightened despot as well as a free market system, values which are central to modernisation (ibid, 10).

This is the case with positive cultural transmission which was present earlier between China and Europe, especially through the Jesuits and their mission in Beijing (Valentine, 2006:11-12). They were heavily impressed with the imperial mandarin system present during the period of the Ming dynasty when they were the cultural bridges between China and the West. The Jesuits were in correspondence with numerous thinkers in Europe such as Quesnay, Voltaire and Montesquieu who carried forward the ideas brought to them by the priests. The modern day Weberian bureaucracy has certain roots in the Chinese imperial mandarin system and the works of Confucius were also translated. More importantly, the Chinese emperor Kangxi who indulged in

debates with the Jesuits can be seen as a model of the later idea of the enlightened despot (Valentine, 2006:12). Francois Quesnay was also known as the European Confucius who thought of the idea of transforming the French economy on lines of an agricultural basis as China and also derived the idea of a free market from the Chinese (ibid, 2006:12). During this period, China had a positive image in the West, which was soon transformed into the image of "the sick man of Asia" when cultural interest was transformed into economic and commercial ones and the reins were held by the East India Company. China was seen as being backward, which needed immense help from the West. The later scholars such as Kant, Hegel and Marx portrayed China as being antiquated and without reason. Modernisation was to be brought to China through an act of force, which transformed the Middle Kingdom into an informal colony which suffered a series of humiliations, a loss of sovereignty and was completely stifled through a series of unequal treaties. Therefore, the Western model of modernisation is seen as a tool of imperialism, which was imposed on China and which is also extended to Tibet, which was invaded by the imperialists in 1904-05, known as the Younghusband expedition, when British India had invaded Tibet and had imposed upon her unequal treaties. This is cited by the Chinese as a reason for them liberating Tibet in 1949. Therefore, modernisation was introduced to China in a painful manner, termed by them as the century of humiliation. The liberation of Tibet by the PLA was also justified on lines of bringing modernisation to the Tibetan areas, which in the later periods took the shape of a form of modernisation which did not take into consideration the local characteristics of Tibet. Thus, modernisation in Tibet purportedly brought by China is also seen to be present with the same features that were present in the European model which had been imposed on China after the Opium wars.

MAX WEBER AND MODERNISATION

Max Weber (1864-1920), a German sociologist is considered to be one of the founding theorists of modernisation. He perceived it as a universal process which was the result of rationality emerging with the strong disenchantment towards religion. Rationality is held as a high parameter by Weber, which is deeply embedded in Western society, whose emergence is due to the various processes which occurred with the phenomena of the Renaissance, Reformation and the Enlightenment in the West (Ivan Oliver, 2003:566-67). In his work, Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Max Weber traces the growth of bourgeois capitalism to a process of

rationalism. For him, rationality was synonymous with calculation which is a major feature in a capitalistic society, which is considered as to be most rational and also imbibing modern methods of production. He elaborated on an idea of a creation of a capitalistic society from a non Marxist perspective. This society was embedded in a form of institutional rationality, based on specialisation and the importance of an individual. There is a link that has developed among increasing knowledge, growing impersonality and enhanced control. The form of knowledge which has grown is the one based on science and technology and the earlier sources of knowledge, religion and metaphysics has been dubbed as superstition, which has occurred to its greatest in the West. An important feature of rationalisation is the formation of the impersonal or the objectification which is a prime feature of capitalism. This impersonalisation is ironically seen as a result of the Protestant ethic which reduced humans to tools of God's providence. There is also a strong aspect of control in the process of rationality which is also linked to the Protestant ethic of self discipline and self control (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2007).

Weber's idea of rationality became significant as it became the foundation of a modern society which stood in opposition against a traditional one which was seen as being irrational (Alan Sica, 2004:144). The differentiated bureaucracy is seen as an important consequence of the process of rationalisation which emerged out of a specialised rational legal structure and was seen as the model for governance in modern societies. However, Weber has also stressed much upon viewing modernisation in a comparative manner rather than a universal law of history, thus contradicting his earlier stand. He further wrote that rationality in later stages became an overbearing and overarching force in human history which penetrated into the overall aspect of human life thus curtailing the individual. The virtue of rationality was individualism, but it was precisely the rational which turned individuals into prisoners in "iron cages". Thus, in his own words, Weber believed that rationality would lead individuals to become "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of humanity never before achieved. The individual who is created stresses on self affirmation viewing the world through rationality which leads to the creation of a modern civil society but also leads to the mechanisation of man. The rational modern society is able to control nature and society itself for a variety of ends and it leads to a strong division of labour, which is a high point in capitalist modernisation where there is "functional specificity" within individuals who are classified

according to their competence (Schwartz 1965:6-7). Thus, rationality and modernisation has led to the further alienation of man from his/her being; a central argument against the capitalistic model of modernisation.

MODERNISATION IN CHINA

Traditional Chinese society is based upon Confucian principles of the five relationships which in turn is based on filial piety and stresses deeply on morality. As mentioned earlier, few of the Confucian ideas were responsible for the birth of numerous modern ideas in the West, but in China, with the encounter of a modern West, the Confucian traditional system was seen to be quite backward and was unable to provide a strong alternative to the modernity of the West. The ideas of modernity were imposed through an act of force by the Westerners and later Japan, which resulted in China being humiliated in signing numerous unequal treaties as well as losing sovereignty. The middle Kingdom was carved like a melon among numerous foreign powers which imposed unfair trade on the Chinese as well as intruded on Chinese culture and religion through missionary activities. The ruling Qing dynasty was seen by many as foreign rule and unfit to govern, thus faced numerous domestic revolts in the form of the Taipings and the later activities of the Nationalists. There was also immense pressure from the modern Western world for China to open up and change its traditional ways. The Imperial system was seen as being antiquated and quick reforms were required to protect the Chinese traditional system. There was a need to adapt to the West, which came in the form of numerous reform movements in the late 19th century brought by the decaying Qing dynasty as well as by revolutionaries opposed to the Qing (Valentine, 2006:13).

Some of the important movements were – The Self Strengthening Movement (1861-1895), which were reforms launched by the imperial government, initially for military modernisation. It came after the defeat of China in the Opium Wars and emphasised on Chinese learning for substance, while Western learning was for application. The idea was to increase the military strength of the Chinese and overtake the Westerners. The Chinese culture and practices were considered to be superior to the West and thus would soon overtake them. The self strengthening movement were reforms from above imposed under duress which slowly permeated into civilian spheres. However, these were superficial institutional reforms which did not bring modernisation

to the socio-cultural spheres of China. The Hundred Days reform (1898) led by Kang Youwei was a mix of reforms as well as revolution as it had numerous objectives which were seen as radical and was directed towards major changes in the traditional society (Lin, 2009:4-9). These reforms were initiated after China lost the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 which came as a major shock as Japan was viewed by many as a tributary under the Confucian world order. This defeat raised the need for China to modernise rapidly, thus called for the modernisation of institutions, the imposition of a constitutional monarchy, the need for modern education and the intensification in capitalism as well as modernisation in military affairs.

However, still much of the reforms were opposed then which were brought back during the late Qing Reforms, when the imperial examination system was done away with in 1905 as well as an experiment in constitutional and parliamentary government was initiated. These were however seen as the last attempts by the Qing dynasty which was rapidly seen as being incompatible to the age of modernity which had dawned on China with the coming of the Westerners. Therefore, in 1911, the Xinhai Revolution led to the downfall of the Manchus from power, leading to the end of imperial rule in China and the establishment of a Republican form of government which was led by Dr. Sun Yat Sen of the KMT or the Nationalist Party in China, heralding the age of the modern nation state and modernity in China. However, the Xinhai revolution was unable to sustain the momentum and slowly it degenerated into warlordism as well as numerous attempts to bring back the imperial system especially by Yuan Shi Kai. An important movement which focussed strongly on reforms and the coming in of modernisation was the May Fourth Movement of 1919 which started through student demonstrations which strongly opposed the treaty of Versailles which had conceded a large amount of rights over China to the Japanese after the First World War (ibid, 12-13).

It also emphasised on the reform of thoughts, values and behaviour, with a call for the eradication of the dominant Confucian philosophy in Chinese society. It was strongly anti imperialist and nationalistic but also sowed the seeds of Communism among a large number of intellectuals and thinkers in China. The ideas of Science and Democracy were expounded in China during this period. Therefore modernisation in China can be seen as being anti West or as a result of the aggression by Japan (Valentine, 2006:14). Significantly, the process of modernisation was stalled due to the numerous political upheavals that China underwent and it

was only in 1949 that the Communists under Mao was able to proclaim the foundation of the People's Republic of China and the end of the humiliation they had suffered for countless years. There were two models of modernisation present in China during the early 20th century, a top down modernisation based on liberal capitalism as propounded by the Nationalists, which was implemented till 1949 and in opposition to it was a mass based movement to modernise on lines of Marxism- Leninism, which in 1949 was consolidated as the PRC (Lin, 2009:13).

In the period of 1949-56, China adopted a pattern of modernisation which was similar to the Soviet model (Schwartz, 1965:8) where a modern bureaucratic apparatus and the rationalisation in the PLA were followed. However from 1956 onwards a key change occurred and China followed a pattern of modernisation which can be considered to be based on agricultural development. However, on an ideological basis from 1949 – 1978, China carried out a socialist modernisation where class struggle was the key link to modernise which was based on revolution, socialist principles and historical materialism. Many have viewed the goal of the Communist Chinese as to achieve modernisation (ibid, 1965:4). It was marked by a series of mass based Maoist movements such as the Democratic Reforms of 1958, the Anti Rightist Campaigns of 1957, the Great Leap Forward and the later Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution. Under socialism propounded by Marx, Engels and Lenin with a victory gained by the Communist Party three stages were created – The Post Revolutionary, the Socialist and the final a Communist society.

However Marx had never mentioned about the post revolutionary condition, it was elaborated further by Lenin in his pamphlet "The State and Revolution" where the undertakings by the Communist Party in power is explained and laid forward. Society undergoing the three stages was initiated but in 1961 in the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a fourth stage between the   second and the third stages was mooted; a state of the whole people (Wallerstein, 1974:395) where class struggle had come to an end. Around the same period a debate had ensued between Mao and Liu Shaoqi on the idea of a continuation of class struggle after the victory in the revolution. Mao however asserted on the continuation of class struggle in the post revolutionary set up. He saw class struggle as a process, albeit a long one which would eventually lead to the elimination of the system of ownership through socialist transformation (ibid, 1974:396). This was the apparent idea behind the Cultural Revolution in China.

Thus, Mao's insistence on class struggle as a process and not a structure is according to Wallerstein bringing forth the category of the world system rather than the nation state as the unit of analysis in modernisation (ibid, 1974:397). Mao stressed on the importance of the collective, the complete abnegation of the individual and the need for spiritual transformation for getting rid of class distinctions among people, which brings in a unique idea to modernisation where it is also through thought transformation that modernity could be brought about (Schwartz, 1965:11). The reform and opening up policy initiated by Deng can be understood as another phase of modernisation in China, which has also been termed as "building socialism with Chinese characteristics". To a greater extent it abandoned the wrong "left" principle of "taking class struggle as the key link" which was not right in a socialist society and shifted the focus to economic development (Beijing Review, 2011). The idea of building socialism with Chinese characteristics is seen as the key in understanding the essence to China's development whereby socialism is taken as a guide to action and practice as the test for truth. Thus, it is seen as seeking truth from facts and following a form of socialism which is distinct to China and not copying the models from other nations (ibid, 2011:2). The only method of achieving modernisation in China is through reforms which will unleash the productive forces.

This has been seen as an answer to Western modernity which is a value imbedded in the West and also as a mode of achieving modernisation through an alternative manner. The strong focus on economic modernisation and the delaying of political reforms and modernisation has led to the strong growth rates that China has, turning it into the second largest economy in the world. Deng's Four Modernisation in agriculture, industry, science and technology and in military are the fundamentals of the modernisation project in China. It emphasises on China's economic growth through an opening up of its market and increasing the volume of foreign trade. There have been demands for the incorporation of a Fifth Modernisation, which entails Democracy and political reforms, which would be China treading the path of a liberal democratic model. However, the China model stresses on the improvement in economy first and then a gradual step towards political reforms. The functional aspect of modernisation (Schwartz, 1965:8-9) can also aid us in understanding the growth of nationalism in China. Thus, the emergence of modernity with Chinese characteristics also questions the universality of the modernisation project which

came from the West and has led to the indigenisation of modernity or the growth of alternative modernisations.

Jiang Zemin was the General Secretary of the CCP from 1989-2002 and President of the PRC from 1993-2003 as well as the chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission in China from 1989-2005 and a third generation of Chinese leaders to take over the helm of affairs of the CCP. He carried forward Deng Xiaoping's legacy of reform and opening up as well as emphasised on China's drive towards modernisation which was to be directed towards building socialism with Chinese characteristics (Beijing Review, 2011:1). He emphasised on the liberation and development of the productive forces for the creation of a new and vigorous socialist economic structure. In a speech given by him as the General Secretary of the CCP in 1993, he does mention about the old economic structure during the Maoist period to correspond less and less to the requirements of modernisation and the present Deng reforms as a foundation for China to achieve modernisation. He outlined the basic proponents of the idea of socialism with Chinese characteristics, where modernisation is a goal to be achieved through reforms and the creation of a socialist market economy. Modernisation is to be achieved further through three stages (ibid, 2011:2). In a speech at the graduation of the Party School of the CCP Central Committee in 2001, Jiang Zemin linked socialist democracy to the growth of China's socialist modernisation drive. There was a call for reforms in the political system however through the adoption of the uniqueness of China or the consideration of Chinese characteristics. This is seen as the affirmation of socialist democratic politics with Chinese features and not copying Western political systems (Xinhua, 2002). The modernisation drive in China is to be under the Four Cardinal Principles which are adherence to the socialist road, the people's democratic dictatorship, Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, and the leading role of the Communist Party of China (ibid). Under this, an emphasis on sustainable development is stressed along with balancing regional disparity and regional inequality in China along with a need to uphold the scientific nature of Marxism, developing it and applying it to practice.

Jiang also brought out the idea of the Three Represents in February 2000 which was further propounded in the Fifth Plenary session of the Fifteenth Central Committee of the CCP in October 2000 which can be termed as a new direction to the modernisation program in China, where the CCP is at the helm of furthering the advanced productive forces, the advanced culture

and also representing the fundamental interests of the majority of the Chinese people. This was further elaborated in the graduation ceremony for provincial and ministerial officials who had taken a class in the Party School of the Central Committee of the CCP and in the 16th National Congress of the CCP in 2002. Basically the Three Represents are seen as a part of the lineage of Marxist-Leninist, Mao Zedong thought, Deng Xiaoping theory which directs China and places the CCP as the force at the forefront of modernising China through representing as well as adapting to the advanced productive forces, advanced culture and also the majority of the Chinese people. It is thus seen as the correct guideline towards modernisation in China (News of the Communist Party of China, 2006). Under the Three Represents, the CCP is seen to be embracing and representing the interests of the broad masses and not only of its earlier constituents, the peasants, workers and soldiers. More significantly, there is much emphasis on the advanced productive forces that also constitute the entrepreneurial business classes and the professionals in the society, who are seen as dubious in a Communist setup, but with reforms and opening up these classes become the key in modernising China.

The assertion on advanced culture is towards the development of a national, scientific, and popular socialist culture geared to the needs of modernization, the world and the future in order to improve the ideological and ethical standards and scientific and cultural levels of the whole nation (english.people.com, 2007). According to Zhang Shiyi, advanced culture must be rooted in and be developing from the practices of China's socialist construction. It also stresses on retaining the advantage from its traditional culture, which will be under the direction of the CCP (crienglish.com). The traditional culture in China can also be seen in lines of neo Confucianism which is an indigenous religio political thought that had deeply permeated into every aspect of China's culture and society which lost its pre-eminence under Communism. There has been a resurgence of these values and principles lately in China with the philosopher saint's 2561 birthday being celebrated quite grandly (Xinhua, 2010). Confucian values are used to legitimise the CCP as well as to soothe the souls of stressed workers in China (the Guardian, 2010). On the other hand, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity are considered foreign religions which are to a certain extent associated with China's imperialist past. Hence with resurgence in neo Confucianism which is seen as a new guiding principle for China especially in the age of reform and opening up, ideas of filial piety as well as obedience to rulers and a benevolence becomes

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important. Under this, Tibetan Buddhism can be seen as a foreign religion which needs to be controlled whereas the Tibetans are to adhere to China's benevolent rule through an expression of filial piety. Hence, Tibet and the Tibetans can be seen as a part of the Confucian world order, based at the periphery but a need for them to affirm to the new values of the state.

It is under this that Hu Jintao's "Harmonious World" and "Harmonious Society" concept emerges as a dominant discourse of the CCP which was the central theme in the 17th Party Congress of the CCP in 2007. It was to provide a new direction to China's socio economic development program (Zheng and Tok, 2007:4). Hu Jintao is a fifth generation Chinese leader who is currently the President of the PRC and the General Secretary of the CCP as well as heads the CMC. He had taken up the leadership of China during a period when numerous challenges had risen as a consequence of the earlier reform periods, especially a growing wealth gap and regional disparity in China. It is under such a situation that Hu laid out the concept of a harmonious society and harmonious world for China (ibid). In an earlier statement issued at a high level seminar offered by the Party School of the CCP in 2005, he had stressed on a need to balance the interests between different social groups, to avoid conflicts and to make sure people live a safe and happy life in a politically stable country and that a harmonious society will feature democracy, the rule of law, equity, justice, sincerity, amity and vitality (Xinhua, 2005). This is seen to be leading to stability and unity in China. The idea of a need to build a harmonious society in a tacit manner takes into consideration the numerous social contradictions which have emerged and a need to deal with them in a correct manner as a harmonious society will streamline the relationship between sectors and lead to the economy develop in a positive way (China Daily, 2007).

The idea of a harmonious society puts "people first" and reduces social and ecological tensions, which can be seen as an acceptance of the presence of such in the present Chinese setup. Thus under the idea of building a "harmonious society" the CCP is placed at an elevated position as it is seen to be responsible for bringing about modernisation in lines of a harmonious society. With respect to Tibet, the economic development is geared towards strategy and stability which is seen as being important for achieving a "harmonious society" as Tibet remains central in maintaining China's sovereignty as seen through the eyes of the leadership in Beijing. It is in this context that

the protests and demands made by the Tibetans are seen as elements against the build up of a harmonious society in China.

CRITICISMS AGAINST MODERNISATION

The theory of modernisation has been strongly criticised as a tool of imperialism, a justification of colonialism by its opponents. It was the dominant narrative which was superimposed by Western European nations which had set out to different parts of the world which subsequently led to a process of colonisation. In the earlier periods, after the Age of Discovery and the subsequent industrial revolution in the West, the ethos of civilisation was brought to the rest. The idea of backwardness and underdevelopment emerged with the coming in of the Western socio economic models. The mercantile activities of the numerous European powers were also accompanied later by their socio cultural system which was immersed in a deep salvationist civilisational agenda (Valentine, 2006:16). It was the "white man's burden" to spread the Enlightenment values of the West, which encountered a multitude of cultures and societies classified by the foreigners further as being inferior. In most cases, it was introduced through an act of force, as in the case of the unequal treaties in China after the Opium war, which transformed the Middle Kingdom into an informal colony (Lin, 2009:11). This ethnocentric idea of the modern emerging from the West has oversimplified the whole process of modernisation and it acts as a curtain which hides the process of colonial domination by the Western powers (Bernstein, 2002). The dichotomy between the traditional and the modern becomes more pronounced with the coming in of Western values and systems which are seen as the embodiment of the latter. It has also led to cultural chauvinism as Western science, education and knowledge system is seen as being superior to the indigenous cultures.

In the 18th and the 19th centuries, it was missionary activities which also aided in the dissemination of Western value, especially through conversion and the spread of education undermining the traditional knowledge systems and religion present. It is the pre suppositions of universality of the modern West which has led to the emergence of notions of a homogenous world where the dominating culture will be the one of the modern West. Furthermore, modernisation as an ideology of progress was championed by the liberal democratic nations in the 20th century especially by the United States of America, which was seen as the ultimate

source of modern liberal capitalist democracy, as an alternative to the Communism offered by the USSR during the Cold War. Hence, modernisation can also be understood as a struggle between two discourses where however the priority is for the West and its values. In the post Cold War period, with the decline in Communism, it is seen as the consolidation of the capitalist market economy and a liberal parliamentary democracy (Valentine, 2006:9-10). It is also seen as a set of knowledge discourses, sources of power and domination which are termed universal, but are construed as projects of hegemony by its critics. The critics of modernisation can be divided into two groups – The New Left and the Postmodernists and Cultural Relativists. Another emerging criticism against modernisation is from the Post Colonial and Subaltern groups, who emphasis on a criticism of modernisation not through the adoption of Western critical theories but through the perspective of the other of the other. It is not an affirmation of the conservative traditional systems of knowledge which is seen as regressive but is the acceptance of values which have emerged out of a post colonial context which puts forward the opinions and values of the former colonies (Lin 2009:4-5).

The New Left and its criticism against modernisation has been one of the oldest oppositions against the Western neo liberal model of modernity, which is seen as a mode of capitalist exploitation breeding a neo colonial structure (Wallerstein, 1974:391-92). Andre Gunther Frank's "Development of the Underdevelopment" proposes the idea of a centre – periphery and also a semi periphery structure brought forward by the modern capitalistic structure, where the underdevelopment occurs due to the area being transformed into a peripheral raw material producing area for the developed capitalist markets. Thus, there is a direct connection to the growth of underdevelopment through capitalist expansion. The criticisms by the New Left levied against modernisation is that it automatically leads to the creation of a highly unequal system of capitalism which is the result of historical developments in a specific period and space, which however is termed universal (Lin, 2009:4). They also criticise the construction of social structure in stages which Marxists are also guilty of, especially of the imposition of stages in development brought by developed nations on developing and underdeveloped countries. The proponents of the New Left such as Wallerstein and Gunther Frank are however criticised for the totality of their theories as they are also guilty of viewing the world in terms of systems and structures.

The Postmodernists and the Cultural Relativists emerged in the 1970's and attacked modernisation for its claims to universality. Post modernism emerged first as a movement in art, architecture and in literature but soon transcended into the fields of politics, sociology and history. The Post Modernists strongly denounced the idea of rationality and science; both high points of modernisation for its failure to deliver progress (Apperley, 2003:429). There was a further attack on the meta- narratives which were products of the grand theories of modernisation and which sought to reduce every aspect of activity on the basis of rationality. They called for the presence of numerous narratives, unlike modernisation which stressed on a single narrative. Therefore there was a rejection of the totality of knowledge by the post modern scholars like Foucault who further emphasised on the importance of power in the discourse of modernisation. There was a further decentring of power by the post modernists which presented a relativist notion of things, which has been criticised of being vague and problematic (ibid, 2003). However, the postmodernists have provided with a strong defence of difference. The Cultural Relativists have taken much of their discourses from the post modernists as well as the New Left, where the localised sources of knowledge are taken into consideration but with an emphasis that all knowledge are partial being extremely strong. It questioned the absoluteness of the idea of civilisation which modernisation strongly adheres to. Cultural Relativists also strongly attack ethnocentrism and a reductionist idea that is associated with the modern. Under this, certain traits of personality mechanism is universalised, especially for trying to understand the growth of development in capitalist as well as communist states. This has been criticised by the cultural relativists who emphasise on the idea that numerous social institutions as well as social processes cannot be understood through individual actions (Bernstein, 2002:149). More importantly the emergence of numerous localised as well as indigenous versions of modernity has led to a drubbing of the idea that modernisation is westernisation.

The Post colonial voices have risen strongly against Western modernisation, which in the initial stages were mirroring the criticisms made in the west against modernisation but in the current context have taken the idea of criticising the West without an appropriation of their theories. In the context of China, there has been a strong emergence of the "post" scholars who were earlier adherents of Western modernisation who saw in it a process apt for China to progress but soon realised that the modernist theory was a product of specific historical and cultural factors in the

West especially in Europe whose universality was an excuse for imperialism. Thus, these scholars such as Xu Jilin, Zhang Yiwu and Zhu Majie (Valentine, 2006:15-18) have laid down the structure for criticising Western modernity through the creation of the other of the other. Numerous Indian scholars such as Ashis Nandy (1983) and Partha Chaterjee have also offered a similar criticism of modernisation. In the context of China, the emergence of the country as an economic powerhouse also facilitated strong calls for anti Westernisation which was further exacerbated through numerous international events such as the bombings on the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by the NATO, which led to an outrage. The obstacles presented to China in its membership of the World Trade Organisation as well as in hosting the Olympics, which led to a huge furore in China. Thus, the Chinese scholars started to view modernisation in a different perspective, which led to a stronger wave of the indigenisation of modernity in China (ibid, 2006:15). More importantly, there was a strong emphasis made by these post colonial scholars where their criticisms were not an appropriation of the ideas which arose in the West but were imbued with Asian values as seen in the form of the teachings of Gandhi taken up by scholars like Nandy to criticise modernity. It is also seen that these anti modern stance towards the West has led to the growth of strong nationalisms, which provide numerous ways for achieving modernity and can be termed as arising from the modernising process.

From the Tibetan side, the Chinese policies of modernising Tibet for the Tibetans can be understood as modern China's nation building process. There are numerous accounts of Tibet being an isolated backward place, which stood still in time (Schaik, 2012:308) and that with the coming of the Chinese, modernisation dawned on the Tibetans. Keeping aside the polemics as well as the contentious historical relationship of Sino Tibetan ties, the newly arrived Chinese Communists pledged to liberate Tibet to bring in a process of modernisation and progress. If it is seen in an objective manner it can be seen as a civilising mission, a salvationist duty that the Chinese undertook in Tibet which thus places the above mentioned criticisms as well as assumptions towards the Chinese policies implemented in Tibet. Hence, China's project of modernisation has been deemed as a tool of imperialism in Tibet and it is seen to be facilitating the same processes as the West had imposed on it earlier.

This is seen in the discursive idea of China's act of liberation of Tibet; it's portrayal of the land as backward and the people as culturally barbaric who are in the need for modernisation. The

interjection of the Han into Tibet is also seen in similar context where the Han population with its advanced culture is stipulated to enlighten the Tibetans. Thus, China is also seen to be exercising similar ideas on the Tibetans in Tibet, of civilisation and modernisation. There is a general perception that the elements of modernisation came with the Chinese, which however is challenged by the historical fact that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had started a process of introducing timely progressive reforms after his return from exile in India (Narkyid, 2010:32). The Manchu forces had attacked Lhasa under Zhao Erfeng in 1910 and thus leading to the flight of the Dalai Lama towards India. The invasion was then translated on lines with liberation of Tibet from foreign forces. For two years, the Dalai Lama lived in India and was exposed to numerous modern ways and methods which he tried implementing in Tibet after his return in 1912, as the Manchus had a downfall in 1911 (van Schaik, 2012:226-229).

 The Dalai Lama tried bringing in modernisation in national defence through the incorporation of a modern army and a police to maintain law and order as well as championed modern Western education. He wanted the gradual establishment of modern industries for which a small hydroelectric project was commissioned. The thirteenth Dalai Lama also banned capital punishment and facilitated the sending of able young Tibetans to foreign nations for gaining Western education. However, a conservative faction of the Tibetan aristocracy as well as the monastic clergy stood as strong opponents against the process of reforms and gradual modernisation promised by the Dalai Lama. There were also numerous individuals such as Gendun Chomphell, an iconoclastic monk who wanted the modernisation of Tibet through a rejuvenation of the Tibetan nation, which is evident from his works on Tibetan history, as seen in the White Annals as well as his searing criticisms against the orthodoxy of the monastic order and writing articles in the Tibet Mirror, from Kalimpong, then British India, owned by Tharchin Babu another Tibetan who was exposed to Western ideas and knowledge. He wrote detailed articles on the idea that the world was not flat (Lopez Jr, 2006:16) which for a Tibetan was equivalent to committing blasphemy.

Therefore, indigenous ideas of modernisation and progress were taking root in Tibet which in similar lines to the late Manchu periods was obstructed by the conservative faction of the ruling classes. This view strongly challenges the cultural and civilisational superiority displayed and emphasised by the Chinese in Tibet, especially of the Tibetan society and psyche being

backward and static. This is a major reason for the process of negotiations present in the cultural fabric of Tibet towards modernisation introduced by China. Thus, terming the Tibetan society as static and unable to receive progressive values of modernity is a problematic concept as the seeds of the idea of change is located in every society. The encounter of Tibet and Tibetans with the Westerners during the early periods led to the creation of an exotic Tibet and the formulation of a Shangri-La by the West regarding the land which led to a further lack of agency for Tibet and the Tibetans. Thus, the land and its people were seen as aloof from the modern, being deeply steeped in a pacifist Buddhist culture where activity was directed towards the spiritual, which in itself is a construct of the West. This singular representation of Tibet, which has emerged as the dominating perspective regarding Tibet and the Tibetans has led to the need for them to be civilised, to be mentored in the ways of the modern, which the PRC took it up on itself in 1949 to accomplish. However, it is seen that elements of the modern is much present in the context of Tibet and among the Tibetans. This has brought about a localised hybrid of modernity, which at present is steeped in Tibetan Buddhism and seen by the authorities as harbouring strong tendencies of the growth of sub nationalism.

LITERATURE ON MODERNISATION IN TIBET

There is a whole corpus of literature on modernisation in Tibet as the issue of Tibet has assumed great significance in the present age, where modernisation is an implement used by the Chinese to legitimise their presence in Tibet as well as a goal aspired by the Chinese and the Tibetans including the ones in exile. It is the degree and the question of who receives modernisation over which a conflict is present. The voices from exile as well as the scattered ones emerging from Tibet are mostly of the view that it is a desired aspiration, but not at the cost of culture and tradition. There is a strong sentiment that modernisation in Tibet aids the Chinese migrants more than the local Tibetans. Therefore, a classification of the literature as "pro" or "anti" modernisation remains problematic. This has emerged due to the growth of numerous dynamic factors such as Buddhist modernity, modern nationalism as well as sustainable development and inclusive growth which makes the issue of modernisation more complicated. The zone of conflict in the present situation can be traced to the ownership over the process of modernisation and the direction it takes.

However, the project of modernisation can be subjected to a narration of formal and informal directions regarding modernity. A major proponent of the formal views regarding modernity is the official documents brought out by China, majority of which harp on the idea of modernisation in Tibet brought by the PRC. The official discourse on Tibet can be termed as modernisation. These are in the form of the White Papers on "Tibet's March Towards Modernisation" (2001) the White Paper on "Tibet – Its Ownership and Human Rights Situation" (1992), "Regional Ethnic Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China" (2008), Fifty Years on the Democratic Reform in Tibet and also the one on "The Development of Tibetan Culture" (2000). There are other Special Reports, budgetary statements and the Government Work Reports which offers a peek at the policies implemented by China towards the Tibetans. The reports from the Work Forums on Tibet can be seen as a briefing on the discursive formulation of modernisation in Tibet. The Chinese authorities have been bringing out a series of statistical yearbooks which do provide the figures and data of development occurring in Tibet.

Although, the figures and statistics presented in the reports and mentioned earlier reveals the presence of unevenness in the economic growth, the Chinese project of modernisation is presented as the answer to all of the problems faced by Tibet. A major recurring feature of the narrative in these are that it emphasises on the backwardness of Tibet prior to the liberation and the dawning of an age of prosperity with the coming of the Chinese, who brought with them science and technology and modern education. These present a picture of benevolence shown by the Chinese towards Tibetans. Apart from the official discourse, most of the formal literature emphasise on the destruction of Tibetan culture and religion only during the period of the Cultural Revolution. These are rife with the process of integration that the project of modernisation brings about for the PRC. Much of the literature can be seen to be rife with Marxist notions and cultural understandings, which does not however provide the complete picture in Tibet. A large number of scholars, Chinese as well as Western have lauded China's role in the modernising of Tibet, however they have also seen the presence of dependence of the Tibetan region to Beijing as being negative towards the agency and greater freedom of the Tibetans.

Scholars like Tom Grunfield, Barry Sautman and also Melvyn Goldstein (1996:76-109) are mostly of the view that the Communists liberated the Tibetans from feudal serfdom and from a

form of statehood termed as Lamaism, which was parasitic and which stalled reforms. However, their mode of analysis is based on the Western rational methods of the creation of nation states and ideas of sovereignty, which is one of the dominating narratives regarding the Question of Tibet and a central theme in modernisation. There is an undue emphasis on positivism as a methodology by them. The idea of emancipation is strong in the modernisation of Tibet by the Chinese especially in the post reform period when Tibet along with the rest of China benefited much under the new policies. Such a view is also carried forward by N. Ram, the editor in chief of Frontline (2008: 4-21) who strongly believes as well as champions the idea of development of Tibet by China and highlights the role of the Dalai Lama and the Western powers in trying to destabilise Tibet and China.

Ma Rong, in his works on the Tibetan ethnic population in the TAR (2007) does emphasise on growth and development brought about by the new policies, such as mechanised farming and on agro modernisation which has led to an increase in the income of the rural Tibetans. However, he does admit the fact that the urban incomes are much higher than the rural ones and this ever increasing income divide is termed as a result of the "diffusion model", which is heavily dependent on the Central Government which is to a certain extent justified on Marxist lines and for a need to integrate Tibet into China. On a similar vein with other supporters of modernisation in Tibet, he stresses on the earlier imperialist influences narrative to justify the Chinese occupation of Tibet. The economic backwardness of Tibet is seen being due to its geographic isolation which needs to be rectified. The Western Development Campaign is much championed by him to undo the economic backwardness of Tibet. He also brings forth the idea of a circular – worker cadres by Beijing for bringing in the Han migrants into Tibet for its development, who are mostly temporary and of the floating category of populations, which is seen as a major cause for a rise in tensions with the indigenous populations. He states that the diffusion model is not apt for Tibet and there is a need to take in the "local characteristics" into consideration for any developmental project, which favours modernisation with a local flavour.

The informal narratives on the issues of modernisation of Tibet are ample, in the form of writings and voices from both inside Tibet, mainland China and also from exile. The bulk of which are the counter reports and examinations made by the Tibetan Government in exile or any other agencies outside Tibet. There are numerous Western authors who are overtly critical of

China's modernisation project in Tibet, terming it as the end of Tibetan culture and identity, the Sinification of Tibet and so on. Many of them have seen China's policies as being violations of human rights towards the Tibetans as well as undermining Tibetan Buddhism. The projects introduced by the Chinese in Tibet under the aegis of economic modernity have truly pushed Tibet to the modern period but is seen to be self serving and a process of consolidating their control over Tibet. The emphasis on modernisation in infrastructure and communications are seen as having a more strategic value to China rather than for the benefit of the Tibetans. This is a strong sentiment expressed by the Indian strategic community as Tibet was earlier regarded as the buffer between India and China, which dissipated by 1950. There is also the presence of the idea that the indigenous population that is the Tibetans should have a greater say over the modernisation project launched by China. Western scholars such as Amy Heller and Anne Marie Blondeau who primarily deal with Tibetan culture are of an opinion that the Chinese policies have been detrimental to the Tibetan way of life, diluting the Tibetan identity. This was seen to its optimum during the Cultural Revolution, which was however revived during the reform era (2008).

These scholars stress on the aim of the Chinese authorities to secularise the culture and religious traditions of Tibet; to induce a process of folklorisation, where culture does not remain a tool of distinctness but is seen as a part of the national project in China. This prevents the reinforcement of local identity of these cultures and enables them to be incorporated into the Han culture and traditions. The modernisation process especially after the reforms and opening up has also led to a commercialisation of Tibetan culture and religious institutions, which is further eroded through a process of exoticisation by the Chinese. Robert Barnett (2008) and Wang Lixiong (2009) believes in the idea that modernisation has led to the injection of selective amnesia among the Tibetans with regard to their past as it is seen in the restoration of only one section of their heritage, which is mostly secular. Wang Lixiong and Tsering Shakya (2009) are of the strong opinion that the project of modernisation has completely destroyed Tibetan Buddhism and a unique way of life. Wang Lixiong stresses on the idea that the project of modernisation is nothing but the expression of Han chauvinism, which will result to the alienation of the Tibetans more.

Ashild Kolas and Monika Thowsen (2005) in their immense ethnographic research in the Tibetan areas outside the TAR present a balanced picture of the impact of modernisation on Tibetan culture at the periphery. They emphasise on the growth in religious conviction among the population in the post reform period, seen in the contributions made by the public in rebuilding of monasteries and temples. Furthermore, their researches in these areas also deconstruct the idea of an all out opposition to modernisation by the Tibetans, as many monks and religious leaders have been financing the building of secular schools as well as have been incorporated into the local power structures. The articles of Mitra Harkonen looks at the issue of secularism which is a major result of modernisation and the growth of religion in Tibet and sees it from the aspect of religion being a tool to negotiate the changes occurring with modernisation or to defend the Tibetan way of life. The transitions to modernisation are negotiated to fit the old belief systems (2008). Ronald Schwartz as well as Robert Barnett (1996) also emphasises on the role of Tibetan Buddhism and culture as a mode of creating an alternative form of modernity in Tibet and in exile against the Chinese modernisation.

Abraham Lustgarten (2008) and Monika Chansoria (2011) provide a good analysis of the infrastructural projects in Tibet especially the Qinghai Tibet train which is seen as a model of modernity in Tibet. Lustgarten's accounts provide the human angle in the project of development, both from the side of the Tibetans and the Chinese. He emphasises on the strategic importance of infrastructural build up in Tibet and also the increasing socio economic gap present between the Chinese and the Tibetans, which is often expressed in terms of frustration or escape to exile by the ones' who have been displaced by modernisation. The writings, essays and poetry which have emerged more rapidly due to the spread of telecommunications in Tibet are also seen as being a strong voice against the policies implemented by the authorities in Tibet. It is seen as symptomatic of the Han chauvinism which is seen as a strong ideology in Tibet, leading to the growth of a pan Tibet nationalistic sentiment.

On economic modernisation, Andrew Martin Fischer emerges as a strong voice on the economic situation of Tibet under the Chinese in the current period. His work 'State Growth and Social Exclusion in Tibet: Challenges of recent Economic Growth' (2005) presents a balanced picture of the economic policies that the Chinese have implemented in Tibet. This has brought massive development prospects in the region but has been termed by him as an exclusionary dynamic of

growth. It is completely controlled by Beijing and is totally subsidy driven. The economy is further polarised as there is a strong urban rural divide. The injection of Han migrants who have structural advantages over the Tibetans has further led to the formation of an ethnic exclusionary dynamic. Fischer terms the Tibetan economy being wholly dependent on subsidies which are driven mostly to the tertiary sector which is urban based and dominated by the Han. There is also the funding provided by numerous state firms, provinces as well as municipalities in Tibet, seen in the form of infrastructure and construction work. However, the revenue earned is seen to be going back to the sources along with the workers employed and the management who are mostly non Tibetans.

This is termed as "Boomerang Funding". Fischer also debunks certain misrepresentations that the exiles have created regarding Tibet as a major zone for resource extraction for China, which has only emerged in the recent period and is still in its infant stages. The idea of massive migration of Han and Hui Chinese into Tibet is also seen by him as a wrong concept as most migrations are seasonal as well as present more in the peripheral Tibetan areas. He is also critical of the fact that China stresses on modernisation bringing about a much higher life expectancy as well as better health conditions to Tibet, which he believes is more due to the demographic transition affecting the developing nations of the world.

The literature covering the issue of modernisation in the context of Tibet from numerous vantage points is huge and highly comprehensive, covering almost all aspects of the debate in modernisation. Almost all aspects of modernity has been covered, therefore a further deciphering of the issues and themes related to the project becomes difficult. However, still one can try understanding the process of modernisation from the perspective of emergence of strong sub nationalism, especially from the aspect of the creation of a psyche of common identity and nationhood. The spread of the ongoing Lhakar movement, which has been extensively dealt with in the first chapter and the third chapter should be understood from such a perspective, where there is a combination of cultural, religious and economic factors creating a surge of resistance against Chinese modernity. It can be seen as a non violent non cooperation movement which is currently underway in Tibet, starting from the post 2008 protests which swept the plateau. There is also a further need to reflect upon the impact of modernisation especially globalisation and the idea of an "image" with the increase in the spate of self immolations occurring in Tibet and the

Tibetan regions of Kham and Amdo. The idea of humiliation in the process of development imposed by the Chinese in Tibet becomes strong and the role played by culture in the negotiation of modernity becomes important. The process of reforms and opening up has also led to the emergence of the state's withdrawal from its welfare policies, not in toto in Tibet. This is visible in the lower rates of investment in sectors like health and education. Thus, there has been the emergence of numerous associations and institutions mostly led by the "Living Buddhas" which provides with such facilities. These can be seen in light of the growth of local hegemonic powers, which rests in traditions but are negotiating modernity.

Emily Yeh, from the University of Colorado (2007) has ventured on such aspects where the cultural impact of modernisation is much elaborated upon. She strongly confers on the idea that the Tibetan culture and religion are strong variables in the understanding of modernisation and how the latter has also shaped the former in Tibet. Modernisation should also be understood in terms of the diplomacy as practiced by China to strengthen its rule over Tibet. The numerous foreign companies participating in the project of modernisation such as the Continental minerals from Canada and the French Bombardier who manufactured the coaches for the Qinghai Tibet railway have faced immense flak from numerous pro Tibet groups in their own home countries. The Project of Modernisation in Tibet becomes important for China as it is one of the most restive regions, where demands for independence have not disappeared with more than five decades of China's rule. The 2008 protests in Lhasa as well as in other parts of the Tibetan regions which had spread out in the neighbouring provinces of China are indicators of the fact that the process of development has led to a further alienation of the Tibetans. The self immolations which started from 2009 onwards and which has reached a toll of 41 is seen as questioning the very idea of progress that modernisation is supposed to bring about. With an increase in the stature of the Dalai Lama in the world and among Tibetans inside Tibet, the policies implemented by China become more important as a tool to curb his influence as well as prevent separatist tendencies.

This research is based on a deductive approach as to whether Gramscian analysis on hegemony and contradictory consciousness can be taken as tools to understand the responses of the Tibetans, the subaltern to the policies of the Chinese state, the ruling group. There are numerous possible areas of negotiations between modernisation and the Tibetans and whether it can be

understood from such aspects. The issue of culture becomes important and it is here that Gramsci's formulation comes handy. He takes into account the historical background, the differing cultural perceptions that communities have, thus, aiding in understanding the project of modernisation as one of hegemony (Gramsci, 2010:324). The independent variable for the study is progress, development and stability while the dependent variable is modernisation and the intervening variable is Tibetan culture and religion. For the research, as stability is of utmost importance, the hypothesis drawn are as follows firstly, the project of modernisation in Tibet are aimed at integration and assimilation and secondly China's policies in Tibet are geared in securing its rule in the region.

In the following chapters, the nature and scope of the modernisation project employed by China in Tibet is further elaborated. The responses of the Tibetans which can be seen as negotiations to modernisation through religion and the Tibetan culture have also been brought forward. The first chapter deals with the impact of modernisation directly on Tibetan culture especially on Tibetan Buddhism, which stands as being antithetical to modernity. The Tibetan identity is a unique consciousness which encountered the Chinese project of modernity, which became the hegemonic narrative. In this chapter, the hegemony and domination is seen mostly in the institutional level, which however has not completely seeped into the individual lives of the Tibetans where culture and traditions still dominate and values of modern(China) is rejected or negotiated around leading to the synthesis of a localised form of modernity. The Second Chapter is on Infrastructural developments in Tibet, especially the Qinghai Tibet Railway and urbanisation which are the essence of modernity. The progress in infrastructure is seen as a tool to maintain stability in Tibet as it is of immense strategic value to the Chinese. It has been criticised as enhancing the economic exploitation of Tibet, bringing in droves of Han migrants, which has led to claims of cultural genocide in Tibet. However it has also led to the germination of the idea of a pan Tibet sub - nationalism in China, which has bridged the earlier gaps more.

This chapter also elaborates further on the idea of modernisation as a hegemonic project as seen with rapid urbanisation and the reaction of the Tibetans to it which can be understood in terms of contradictory consciousness. The final chapter deals with another important response by the Tibetans towards Modernisation and China's policies, through Resistance and Revolts. The 2008 pan Tibetan uprising as well as the self immolations is a strong form of response towards the

policies implemented by China in Tibet. There has also been the growth of other forms of cultural resistance which are expressed through literature, art and music and which invent a strong form of Tibetan consciousness that contradicts the dominating hegemonic institutions but has risen in the same discursive space shared by them.

CHAPTER ONE – TIBETAN BUDDHISM - THE ESSENCE OF TIBETAN CULTURE AND CHINA'S PROJECT OF MODERNISATION

"Historically, the western region was a sensitive region for ethnic relations. The negative impacts of some ethnic relations problem left over by history cannot be eliminated in the short term, but still require long term effort. The religious influence of the Western regions is far reaching, and the complexity of managing ethnic relations has been increased by the intermingling of nationality and religious issues" (Li Dezhu, Minister of State Ethnic Affairs Commission 2000)

"Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief".

 (Article 36 – Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Chapter Two, The Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens)

"Eradicate Tibetan Buddhism and culture from the face of the earth so that no memory of them will be left in the minds of coming generations of Tibetans, except as museum pieces"

—Chen Kuiyan (TAR Communist Party Secretary 1992-2000), closed-door meeting on Tibet, Chengdu, December 1999

INTRODUCTION

China is one of the 4 major river valley civilisations of the ancient world, with a rich historical legacy and a presence of strong religious traditions. It is also the birthplace of two important religious thoughts, Confucianism and Taoism, indigenous religio-philosophical movements which had its roots in the Middle Kingdom. The former deeply influenced Chinese thought and the Chinese way of life. The Middle Kingdom also saw the flourishing of Buddhism which was imported from India in the 3rd century BC and became strong in the 1st century A.D. Much of Buddhism was assimilated which led to the emergence of numerous strands, such as Zen Buddhism, The Pure land form and after 1951, the incorporation of Tibetan Buddhism (Mirsky, 2008:159). Prior to the coming of the Chinese, Tibetan Buddhism had a major role in historical Tibet. Much of it was disseminated through the Tibetan monastic institution and the institution of the spiritual teachers, who played central roles in the Tibetan public spheres of life. They provided the population with spiritual, ritual

and educational activities and also had important socio political and economic roles differing from region to region. In those areas of historic Tibet with political centralization (Dawa Norbu, pg 137- 148, 2001), monasteries were part of the administration. Many were also wealthy landowners and had numerous tenants mostly farmers and nomads staying on their land (Melvyn Goldstein, 1996). This also led to a formation of a theocracy from the 17th century onwards with the Dalai Lama as the head, which had lasted till the Chinese invasion in the 1950's (Sam Van Schaik, 2011). Therefore, Buddhism had a major impact in the daily life of the Tibetans and for the majority it was the *raison d etre*. When the Chinese arrived, as much as 20 percent of the Tibetan male population were monks belonging to the over 6000 monasteries which existed in the 1950's. Tibetan Buddhism had permeated into every aspect of life on the plateau.

The Communist Revolution in 1949 was a major milestone in Chinese history because for the first time there was a break in the historical legacy of Imperial China, leading to the rise of socialism and the relegating of other beliefs like religion. The Tibetan plateau was always viewed by the Chinese leadership as a part of China, an area of influence for the Middle Kingdom. The invasion of Tibet in 1949 was justified on lines of liberation and bringing modernity to the Tibetans. On the 23 May 1951, the Agreement of the Central People's Government and the local Government of Tibet on measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet more commonly known as the 17 Point Agreement was signed and under this Tibetans were clubbed under the national minorities of China who were given the freedom to develop their spoken and written languages and to preserve or reform their customs, habits, and religious beliefs, and the Central People's Government would assist all national minorities to develop their political, economic, cultural, and educational construction work (Xinhua, 2001).

However from 1959 onwards radical socio economic reforms were introduced to help backward Tibet progress, while the democratic reforms begun in Eastern Tibet in the 1950's and throughout Tibet after the failed 1959 uprising and the subsequent escape of the Dalai Lama into exile, thus reverting back on the Agreement between China and Tibet (Mitra Harkonen, 2009:47). Communists as such view religion as an erroneous worldview, a tool used by the ruling classes to exploit the others. Hence, Tibetan Buddhism was a world view which needed to be corrected. Furthermore as Buddhism was the ruling ideology earlier, it became more important to subdue it. This was the interpretation of Marxism on religion which was imposed on Tibet by the CCP, which is seen to be a simplistic reiteration of the

statement issued by Marx that religion is the opium of the masses. Marx saw religion as providing the illusory fantasies for the poor. In his Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right' he states -

> "The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness. The demand to give up the illusion about its condition is the demand to give up a condition, which needs illusions" (Marx and Engles on Religion, 1957).

Marx sees religion as providing a solace, as a medicine to a life threatening disease which will only postpone the pain for a temporary period. Therefore, religion is seen as a symptom but not the root cause. It is seen as an escapism which will ease an uneasy life (Himel Shagor, 2006). Marx stresses on the idea that religion as such is manmade which has led to the estrangement of humans. It is an ideology which inverts reality for man, which therefore needs to be understood in lines of a social purpose that religion serves and not as a metaphysical belief. This can be deducted as a functionalist approach towards understanding religion (ibid). Marx saw this aspect of religion as being problematic and not in its entirety. In most aspects, it was a conclusion drawn from his understanding of the Christian religion. For the Communists in China especially after the initiation of reforms in 1978 it is Document No. 19 released in 1982 by the Central Committee of the CCP that the official stand on religion is clarified as –

> The basic policy the Party has adopted toward the religious question is that of respect for and protection of the freedom of religious belief. This is a long-term policy, one which must be continually carried out until that future time when religion will itself disappear.

There is a further understanding that as Communists are atheists and propagate atheism, there is a need to understand that through a simple coercion the religious belief of an individual cannot be changed (Document No. 19, 1982:5). There is a need to redress the economic situation of the people first irrespective of ideology which in the long run will lead to a decline and a disappearance of religious belief among the people. Under this, there is a right to a freedom of religious belief which is however kept under the ambit of national unity and stability. Hence, among the religious adherents a patriotic ethos is required, making religion subservient to nationalism. The Communist Party in China firmly believes in the idea that religion will of itself disappear when the material structure of society reaches an extremely high level. The Communist cadres are atheists and it is strictly proscribed on them. This is

more complex in terms of the cadres in the ethnic minority areas who do good work for the Party but are swayed by religious influence, which however needs to be understood through concrete circumstances, as seeing truth from facts. However, through ideological work, this consciousness should be slowly dissipated (ibid, 1982:11). There is also the idea of harm being caused through the lumping of ethnic customs and traditions with religion which is seen as an error and harmful to ethnic unity and is seen as a problem for Tibet. This is because almost all practices and customs in Tibet have a religious significance to it.

However, prior to 1959, the CCP had a United Front with the Tibetan Buddhist clergy, the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama working under the principles of the 17 Point Agreement. The chief task was to expand the struggle against anti imperialism and for patriotism which did not last (Goldstein, 1996:21). Under the United Front, social reforms were stalled in Tibet and the emphasis was on sovereignty and integration of the region into China. Under this, the local affairs were administered by the indigenous elites and a "one country, two systems" mechanism was under place (Wang Lixiong, 2009: 43). There was a promise of autonomy by Beijing to Tibet, where the social and religious system and the role of the Dalai Lama as well as other leaders would remain intact. In most of the Preparatory Committees in the Tibetan regions, the local elites; political as well as religious were included. For instance, in Chamdo, the Chamdo People's Liberation Committee was set with seven Tibetans among its nine vice chairmen. The 12 subordinate county level liberation committees had 14 Han officials and 154 Tibetans, all from the elite. Under the tactics of the United Front, the Dalai Lama was made a vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and the Panchen was made a Standing Committee Member. There was the deliberate usage of religious leaders in an effort to influence Tibetans to accept the PLA intrusion. The PLA units under the leadership of the South West Military Command were instructed to respect religious practices as well as cooperate with the religious leaders (Ashild Kolas and Monika P. Thowsen 2005: 46).

Through the Document no. 19 issued in 1982, the CCP also stresses on the presence of certain religious professionals who are patriotic and supporters of the socialist system. These individuals are seen as doing good work in their areas along with the spiritual activities as demanded by the masses. This is seen as being an important factor for the CCP as these professionals can influence the masses, which are mostly seen in the ethnic areas. The Party is to direct them to the path of patriotism and faithfulness towards the goal of Socialist modernisation. As the document is issue in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, deemed

as a result of "leftist error", there is a strong tendency to revert back to the earlier position of the CCP on religion. There is a call for a United Front with religious groups who are compatible to the viewpoint of the Chinese state. During that period, the number of religious professionals in China was as follows – 27000 Buddhist monks and nuns, including Lamas, 2600 Daoist priests and nuns, 20000 Muslims, 3400 Catholics, 5900 Protestants (Document no.19, 1982:6). Majority of them were seen then to be closely working with the CCP under a United Front for socialist modernisation and development.

There was a further delaying of reforms in Central Tibet by Beijing, which was however not extended to the other Tibetan populations in the East; the traditional regions of Kham and Amdo. Traditionally, these areas were not under direct control of the Lhasa government, but maintained distinct authorities. However under the 1914 Shimla Accord, the treaty between British India and Tibet (Chinese representative withdrew), Tibet was divided into Inner and Outer Tibet, whereby the Lhasa government had the authority only over the latter; present day Central Tibet (Schaik, 2012:237). This led to the Communists exerting control over the Tibetan regions in the east and integrating them with the neighbouring provinces of Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai and Yunnan. Hence, with the launch of nationwide collectivisation in 1955 and the democratic reforms in 1956, areas having a majority Tibetan ethnic population also came under the socialist reforms which completely undermined the existing religious, social and cultural structures in these areas.

Till 1955, the CCP wanted to carry out a policy of gradualness regarding collectivisation, as they were well aware of the consequences of collectivisation which had taken place in the Soviet Union in 1933-34 (Communist China 1955-59, Policy Documents with analysis, 1971:3). This was however criticised by Mao Zedong who said that the pace of collectivisation needed to be increased. It was the low agricultural productivity as well as the low levels of industrialisation which partly incited the need for collectivisation. Agriculture was still the sector on which the economy depended. Through the imposing of collectivisation, the new "Three Fix" systems was implemented on the collectives which determined the amount of grain to be collected as well as fixing the rationing of the countryside (ibid, 1971:4). What is also significant is the growth of a new richer peasantry which the process of collectivisation would indefinitely curb. This was implemented in the eastern Tibetan regions of Kham and Amdo, which had been incorporated in the neighbouring provinces of China.

Under this the monastic leaders were termed as feudal lords and punished. Massive revolts broke out against China's rule which had a huge participation from the monastic communities and the PLA stepped in to crush the rebellion. In a number of cases, the monasteries were bombed (McGranahan, 2010:71). Furthermore, streams of refugees from the Eastern regions poured into Central Tibet, pressuring the resources further and raising tensions between the local government and the Chinese authorities, which eventually led to the uprising of 1959 and the fleeing of the Dalai Lama into exile (van Schaik, 2012:252-289). This led to the heralding of the democratic reforms to Central Tibet, commemorated by the Chinese on the 10th of March, which is also seen as the day of the national uprising by the Tibetans, when thousands of Tibetans had protested against the Chinese in the city of Lhasa (Robert Barnett, 1994:243). There is an interregnum between the democratic reforms and the Cultural Revolution when liberal policies towards religion is seen in the Tibetan areas, especially after 1962, when in the aftermath of the North West Nationality Work Meeting, the policy shifted to a reconstruction of monasteries in the region which led to the opening of 137 monasteries in Qinghai and 107 monasteries in Gansu, with the number of monks rising to about 4000 by 1966 (Kolas and Thowsen 2005: 47).

With the heralding of the Cultural Revolution in China (1966-76), religion was completely denounced and placed under the "Four Olds" and was to be eradicated. Thus, during this period almost all religious institutions had been destroyed and private religious practices were strictly prohibited. This was in tandem with the Marxist belief in controlling the superstructure, religion being a part of culture was important and needed to be curbed. This was the period when politics was in command. On 1 July 1966, a People's Daily editorial urged the masses to "sweep away all ox devils and snake spirits" (Elizabeth J.Perry, 2003:269). Religion was kept under the ambit of the 'oxen ghosts snakes and demons' and thus needed to be eradicated. The rest of China saw an ensuing chaos and the immobilism of the state which led to a growth of localism (ibid, 2003:268). Much of the attacks on the places of worship in China also led to a reversal effect of these places being deemed as places of nostalgia but with a strong tilt towards Maoism, where Mao replaced the tutelary deity. This was seen in the form of religious observances in front of portraits of Mao and reciting prayers to Mao (ibid).

It was also seen to be present among the ethnic groups, such as the Tibetans who started worshipping Mao, instead of the Buddha (Wang Lixiong, 2010:60). However they started worshipping their own gods as soon as the CCP started showing a liberal attitude towards

religion. The attack on religion was to eradicate the primary features of the old society but also to remove ideas which had a foreign tinge to it, and was present in many of the religions in China (C.P. Fitzgerald, 1967:124-29). In the Tibetan areas, the Cultural Revolution led to an official persecution of religious practices, which were central to the Tibetan way of life. Thus, people were forced to denounce the Dalai Lama during public struggle sessions and religious scriptures were burned. Prayer wheels, beads and amulets were confiscated and the Red Guards destroyed the private altars of families. The period saw the complete destruction of the religious shrines in Tibet (DIIR, 2006). The order that had been passed was 'smash the feudalistic nests of the monks' (Jeffrey Hays, 2008) whereby much of the monasteries were torn down or simply abandoned or put to utilitarian purposes. They were turned into schools, storerooms, cowsheds or houses. The monasteries were also abandoned in many cases and the monks and nuns forced to renounce their celibacy. What is also of much significance here is the fact that the revolutionary zeal of the Han were seen as the way and imposed on the national minorities. Modernisation would be brought by the Han at the cost of the "Four Olds".

RELIGIOUS BELIEF IN THE ERA OF ECONOMIC REFORM

The Cultural Revolution ended with the death of Mao Zedong and the arrest of the "Gang of Four" who had spearheaded the ultra leftist policies in China. Under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, economics took centre stage and the period of reforms was initiated by the leadership. Under this, market oriented reforms were implemented which led to a rise in the standard of living and an improvement in the economic conditions. In the course of correcting the errors of the "cultural revolution" governments at all levels made great efforts to revive and implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, redressed the unjust, false or wrong cases imposed on religious personages, and reopened sites for religious activities (White paper on Religion, 1997). The relaxation towards religion and religious practice came in 1972, and with the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Party Congress in 1978 the Right to Religious Freedom was adopted. These policies were also implemented to the minority areas of China, which to a certain extent had suffered the most. In 1974, a group of 40 Tibetans were allowed to attend a sermon given by the Dalai Lama in India (Kolas and Thowsen 2005: 49).

In Tibet, affirmative action measures were adopted under the leadership of Hu Yaobang, who brought about strong measures of rehabilitation as Tibet was crippled by abject poverty. He

implemented a series of conciliatory policies and under his purview the tenth Panchen Lama, Tibet's second most holy figure, who had been denounced publicly tortured and then jailed for fourteen years, was released from prison (Lustgarten,2008). During this period, Tibet was ushered towards considerable levels of autonomy which allowed a religious renaissance not imagined since the Dalai Lama's exile in 1959. For a certain period, taxes on Tibetans were suspended and land was returned to private ownership. Hu Yaobang promoted policies which were critical of the earlier Chinese handling of the region and called for development which were complementary of Tibetan culture and identity. He laid down six major proposals –

- Tibet should enjoy autonomous rule, and Tibetan cadres should have the courage to protect their own national interests;
- Tibetan farmers and herdsmen should be exempt from taxation and purchase quotas;
- Ideologically oriented policies should be changed to practical ones, geared to local circumstances;
- Central government's financial allocations to Tibet should be greatly increased;
- Tibetan culture should be strengthened;
- Han cadres should step aside in favour of Tibetan ones.[1]

These liberal policies also had a positive effect on culture and the revival of Tibetan Buddhism, especially its institutions and practices and it was during this period that the reconstruction of monasteries and temples took place. However, religious teachings were still largely forbidden in Tibet (Getzelman 2008:46). Data collected by the researchers Ashild Kolas and Monika P. Thowsen indicate that the monastic reconstructions in the four provinces outside the TAR vary from 60 percent to 92 percent. In the TAR, it was much higher. The revival of religion had taken place throughout China, but still the impact of Communist China has been there on religion with 41.5 percent of total population terming themselves as non believers, 8.2 percent as atheists. (National Geographic, May 2008). The official viewpoint on religion is that there is respect for religious belief and of independent running of religious affairs which however needs to be curbed under the ambit of nationalism and the religious propounding their patriotism.

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[1] More than the economic proposals, the proposals to strengthen autonomous rule, indigenous culture and Tibetanisation were strongly welcomed by the Tibetans – Shakya Tsering, 2009, *The Struggle For Tibet*, USA, Verso.

The Chinese Constitution Article 36 of 1982 provides for the principle of freedom of religious belief. In the Common Programme of September 1949, Article 5 provides the freedom of religious belief which was taken up in the first constitution of 1954 but was later rejected in the 1975 and 1978 Constitutions which took a leftist turn. In many cases, religious practices were deemed superstitious and thus opposed as feudal practices. Mao always wanted a 'patriotic political alliance between the Party and religious circle of every ethnic nationality'. Thus, respecting and protecting freedom of religious belief became a long term fundamental policy of the Party (Aalderink, 2001). The state's long held belief or discourse is that Chinese civilization has never been interrupted by any alien culture and that the numerous religions were accustomed to putting the country's interest first (Xiaowen, 2005) which can be understood as the CCP's understanding of religion as being subservient to the ideology of the Party.

With regard to Tibet, religion was more closely monitored as it was closely interlinked with ethnic identity, culture and specifically with separatism. What is also important is the discourse related to the preservation of religious institutions in Tibet, where the authorities stress on the period of the Cultural Revolution as an error which led to the destruction of the monasteries. However, historical records and memory has shown that the first assault on the monasteries came in the 1930's from the Red Army during the Long March through Ngaba and Kandze prefectures. With the democratic reforms in the 1950's there was a further destruction of monasteries and temples in Tibet. In a White Paper on the development of Tibetan Culture brought out in 2000, Beijing does emphasise on the positive development that has taken place for Tibetan culture under China's rule, which took place through the elimination of feudal serfdom under theocracy. More importantly, there is a strong belief that the cultural autocracy was a result of domination by religion in every spectrum of socio political life which was an inevitable outcome of both the historical and cultural development in Tibet. Therefore, the influence of Tibetan Buddhism is sought to be curbed by the Communist Party in Tibet. More importantly, religion and specifically Tibetan Buddhism is seen to be inimical to China's development project and to modernisation.

Beijing frequently emphasises on the state's role in the reconstruction and the funding of the monasteries and temples in Tibet, especially in the post reform period funds were set aside for the reconstruction of the Jokhang, the Potala palace and the Drepung monastery in Lhasa (Kolas and Thowsen 2005). Since the 1980s the central government has allocated more than 200 million yuan in special funds for the maintenance and reconstruction of the famous

Potala Palace and the Jokhang, Tashilhunpo and Samye monasteries. The State has also established special funds to support the work of compiling and publishing the Tripitaka in the Tibetan language and other major Tibetan Buddhist classics as well as the work of establishing the Advanced Buddhism College of Tibetan Language Family of China in Beijing and the Tibet College of Buddhism in Lhasa (White Paper on Freedom of Religious Belief in China, 1996). The initiation of the reforms also led to the authorities deciding to return the properties to the monasteries which were confiscated during the Democratic Reforms. In unpublished documents (Kolas and Thowsen, 2005:51) the authorities returned 1630 mu of land to the monasteries although it had totalled 1856 mu during the democratic reforms. Monetary compensation was also given which were mostly nominal and symbolic.

The redistribution of land to the monasteries was a thorny issue as there was much reluctance in returning the land which would increase the power of the monasteries. However, for the growth of self dependence of the monasteries, land was given back to them. The modern concept of a nation state and the redrawing of boundaries between provinces had also created much confusion among the monasteries as their earlier lands stretched across different provinces making ownership difficult. The claim to funding for the reconstruction and restoration of monasteries by the state is also challenged as much of the reconstruction has been done through donations from village populations as well as from the pilgrims. Furthermore, volunteers had participated in the reconstruction and restoration of monasteries for religious merit and also much of the contribution was through unpaid labour and in kind through building materials. (Kolas and Thowsen, 2005:54).

Hence majority of the funding arrived from the local communities and in many cases the state just supplied timber (ibid). What is equally important is that even though the standards of living of the Tibetans were not high still a huge amount was directed towards the monasteries and the growth of religion. This reveals the growth and influence of Tibetan Buddhism in the aftermath of the reforms. However, for a few monasteries which were singled out as tourist destinations or cultural relic sites, there were some funding from the state as is the case with the Kumbum monastery in Qinghai which the State Council in 1962 had listed as one of China's foremost national, cultural and historical sites. Even funds from outside the Tibetan community has gone in the rebuilding of the monasteries, the best example can be of funding from the Hong Kong based businessman, RunRun Shaw (ibid, 2005:55). Therefore a certain degree of discrimination is seen in state funding where monasteries having a commercial value or are of strategic importance, which displays a history of China Tibet relations are

financially promoted. Thus, commercial value becomes more important than religious sentiments. This can also be linked to the growth of consumerism in China which in turn is a result of the process of modernisation. With tourism as one of the pillar industries in Tibet and Buddhism being attractive to the West, the state is seen to be funding and popularising certain temples and monasteries, which can provide them with stable revenue.

It is mostly the large monastic complexes in Lhasa or Tashikyil in Labrang Gansu and Kumbum in Qinghai which have been receiving much of the financial support from Beijing. The rise in economic well being of a common Chinese has led to a spurt in domestic as well as foreign tourism, of which Tibet remains a preferred destination for the Chinese. Thus, monasteries and temples which are mostly grand complexes and have historical significance are revived, much for tourist consumption. Hence, through an increased level of consumerism, the monasteries are turned into exotic hotspots for tourists, which are seen as receiving state finances. The ones having connections to the Panchen Lama have also been funded generously by the government, as the earlier (ibid, 2005:56). The Panchen had used his influence to garner the support for religious freedom in Tibet and specifically for funding for monasteries affiliated to his seat in TashiLhunpo Shigatse in the TAR. The Panchen Lama was seen as a figure through which the Chinese state could garner support for its policies in Tibet as well as create strong patriotism among the clergy. The role played by the Panchen in Tibet thus becomes extremely important as he was able to negotiate the growth and development of Tibetan culture, religion in the larger Chinese project of modernity in Tibet.

With protests occurring in the late 1980's in Lhasa, initiated by monks, the monasteries slowly became hotbeds of separatism. Thus, from this period onwards the state stopped funding the monasteries and policies were framed which called for them to be self sufficient. Government funding was given only to those which were damaged by natural disasters. This increased the dependence on the funding from the local populace; although it was the same as earlier where state funding was nominal. The sustenance of the monks' was provided by their families or through common funds of the monasteries (ibid). What is also important is that a large number of monasteries and the monks embarked on a commercial road. In the pre 1958 period, monasteries were economic centres, owning land, collecting taxes from the peasants or nomads as well as a "nyerba"[2] of the monastery used to conduct trade and grant loans to the locals (Fischer, 2008). In the post reform period, although it was not on the same scale,

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[2] Financial officer assigned by the monastery who used to handle commercial transactions for the monastery.

some entrepreneurial spirit developed in the monasteries. These included opening shops which sold general goods, keeping herds of yaks and selling the butter. Many had land redistributed by the state which was tilled and made productive. A monastery had also bought a car and had rented it out. (Kolas and Thowsen, 2005:55).

A large number of them sold butter candles to pilgrims and devotees. The state funded monasteries and temples also charged tickets for entry specifically for tourists and some also had medical centres for the locals as well as the monks. Monasteries and the monks also performed their religious duties in the lives of the community staying in the villages for which they received token money. In a number of cases the monasteries and temples which served as a spot in the pilgrimage circuit undertaken by Tibetans were also used as stopover points, providing lodging and food, thus sustaining themselves. There have been strong cases of monasteries especially nunneries being raised completely through donations (ibid, 2005:56). With a rise in tourism on the Tibetan plateau, an increase in the income of the monasteries have also been seen due to donations from Tibetans whose rise in income can be credited to the growth of tourism. However, according to numerous accounts (Harkonen 2009:54), it has had disastrous effect as tourism has led to a "crass commercialisation" of Tibetan Buddhism and the monasteries are merely tourist sites, where Tibetan Buddhism is exoticised which further places the image of the Tibetans in a negative manner. The economic growth has led to a rise in the number of monasteries but also the quality of religious education is hampered due to tourists flocking into the monasteries. It is also seen as in the case of the monastery of Labrang in Gansu province where "tourism brought Han Chinese and foreign visitors as well as Muslim merchants, including women, onto monastic grounds in movements and at times that disrupted the cycles of [the monastery's] ritual life" (Makley 2007). However, one needs to understand that it is through the negotiations with the Chinese project of modernity that much of the survival of the religious institutions has been possible.

BUDDHISM AND SECULARISATION IN TIBET

Much of the monasteries were seen as seats of dissent, a potential for instability and thus as roadblocks to China's development projects. They were also seen as directly opposing numerous modernising tendencies implemented by the nation state. The Chinese invasion was largely justified on lines of bringing modernity to the Tibetans and there was a strong idea of Chinese cultural and social superiority and the belief that the minority nationalities

could not develop culturally or economically without the support of the 'advanced Han nationality' (Harkonen 2009:47). Therefore, the Tibetan culture which is strongly based on Buddhism was seen as backward, feudal and retrogressive opposing modernisation. More importantly, the project of modernisation itself is quite seen as being in opposition to religion. However in the White Paper on Freedom of Religious Belief published in 1997, it also stresses on the idea that 'religion should be adapted to the society in which it is prevalent. This is a universal law for the existence and development of religion. Now the Chinese people are building China into a modern socialist country with Chinese characteristics. The Chinese government advocates that religion should adapt to this reality. However, such adaptation does not require citizens to give up religious belief, nor does it require any religion to change its basic doctrines. Instead, it requires religions to conduct their activities within the sphere prescribed by law and adapt to social and cultural progresses'. Therefore a strong confirmation to modernity is proposed by the CCP towards religion. Modernisation is the transition of a society, community or a group of people from the traditional to the modern. It is a Western experience, which emerged from the European Enlightenment movement stressing on the idea of progress, rationalism, individualism and secularism. There was no outright rejection of religion but a rejection of the church/religion as the sole source of knowledge thus leading to the growth of secular education and the idea of civilisational advancement. However, the move from the traditional to the modern should not be taken as being exclusive to the West, but due to globalization and the foray of modern communications, has led to the dissemination of numerous variants of social transformation everywhere.

Secularisation, seen as a by product of modernisation has been defined in varied terms, one being a process, which has led to religion losing its presumed central place in society or seen as a decline in the religious practices of the people. It can also be construed as a policy adopted by the state to exclude religion from public life (ibid). These policies emerge from the ideological position that society benefits from being less religious and being less influenced by religious institutions as they are contradictory to progress. This is a key belief that the PRC has with regard to Tibetan Buddhism. The deep seated disapproval of the Chinese leaders towards Tibetan Buddhism was made more evident by the statement of Jiang Zemin when in a dialogue between him and the US President Bill Clinton televised from Beijing in 1998, he mentioned about the well educated people in the West and their strong belief in Tibetan Buddhism which was seen as a problem by him (Lixiong,Shakya 2009:175).

This reflects the perception that Beijing has with regard to Tibetan Buddhism, as propagating superstition, tradition and backwardness and with a strong urge to control it. In general, the Marxist idea of religion being a false consciousness which will wither away is still prevalent among the leaders in Beijing, which can be corrected through economic development. Modernisation and secularisation is seen as the tool to resolve the problem brought about by religion.

Secularisation has strongly permeated in Tibet especially at the macro level, as it has led to major changes in the social structure of the Tibetans which were founded on religious institutions. From governance, welfare, community organisations and education, the secular Chinese state has gained a strong foothold. Secular officials in the form of the local state and the Party have removed religious rulers from power and monasteries which were the locus of Tibetan economic and political life are no more. Many see that due to institutional secularisation religion is on the decline especially in the lives of the young Tibetans. According to Vincanne Adams, the Tibetan youth mostly in urban areas are less interested in religion and more attracted to social mobility and economic security. A major reason cited has been the influence of secular Mandarin education on the Tibetans. Furthermore, improved communications, urbanisation and Chinese migration have also destabilised local Tibetan communities where religion has been present traditionally. The modern nation state of China has increasingly dominated the lives of the Tibetans. (Harkonen, 2009:49). On similar lines, the city of Lhasa has also changed from a purely religious centre to a site of tourism abuzz with the related attractions and deep commercialisations. The Chinese state has thus reduced the role of religion in the lives of the Tibetans which is also accounted to the process of modernisation initiated by the state. However, in the past places like Lhasa or Shigatse did serve a dual purpose of religion as well as commerce as these urban centres during the pre 1959 period were places of mass religious activities which attracted thousands of pilgrims but also attracted the same amount of businessmen, traders and merchants. Lhasa was a major cosmopolitan centre for trade during the early periods which was thronged by merchants from South Asia, Eastern Tibet as well as from present day Xinjiang, Central Asia and China. As mentioned earlier the monasteries were also involved in numerous economic activities with the larger ones being involved in trade between countries. The monastic administration appointed a nyerba who would look after the commercial transactions. More significantly, they would also grant loans to the locals, which enabled the circulation of money within the region (Fischer, 2008).

In the present period the monastic population as well as sites of worship and monasteries have become considerably less than in comparison to the 1950's. Under the Democratic Reforms which ensued after the crushing of the 1959 rebellion, 97 percent of monasteries were closed down, monks and nuns were forced to marry as well as 93 percent of the inmates that is 104000 out of 110000 were dispersed (Wang Lixiong,2009:53). However in 1996 official TAR government statistics estimated that there were 46,000 monks and nuns and 1,700 religious sites in the TAR, but this figure has likely varied over time due to government policy, politically motivated detentions, monastic secularization, and commercialization due to tourism. Furthermore, the government figure of 46,000 monks and nuns represented only the TAR, where the number of monks and nuns is strictly controlled. There are reportedly large numbers of unregistered monks both inside and outside the TAR, a factor that makes it difficult to produce reliable estimates. According to statistics collected by the China Center for Tibetan Studies, a government research institution, there are 1,535 monasteries in Tibetan areas outside the TAR. Informed observers estimate that 60,000 Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns live in Tibetan areas outside the TAR (Association of Religion Data Archives). In 1997, a White Paper on Religion stated that there are 120,000 lamas and nuns, more than 1,700 Living Buddhas, and 3,000-some temples of Tibetan Buddhism. (White Paper – Freedom of Religious Belief in China, 1997).

GROWTH OF BUDDHISM IN TIBETAN AREAS

Extensive data has been accumulated by Ashild Kolas and Monika P. Thowsen on the state of religion in the Tibetan regions outside the TAR, which reveals the growth of religion in the lives of the Tibetans. These areas as mentioned earlier are parts of historical Tibet, culturally Tibetan but having a long history of self governance. They are the margins of the Tibetan plateau which experienced cultural and economic interactions with numerous communities, Han included. Thus, there has been the emergence of strong practices of assimilation and interaction but also the strong maintenance of a unique Tibetan identity in these areas. As they were incorporated in the neighbouring provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan in the aftermath of 1951, these Tibetan areas faced the brunt of the democratic reforms before it was implemented to Central Tibet. What also becomes important is the need to understand the survival of Tibetan culture and religion here which in many instances have contributed more to the Tibetan heritage than Central Tibet. In the province of Sichuan, there are two Tibetan prefectures; the Ngaba (Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture and the Kandze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. There is also one Tibetan designated

county; The Muli (Mili) Tibetan Autonomous County in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture. The authors have looked at numerous sources along with field surveys carried out from 1998 to 2000 to determine the number of monks and monasteries in the region. Data obtained from the local religious affairs department and the county histories have been tallied with their field research.

What has also mattered is the coming in of a proper definition of a monastery with the imposition of a categorisation by the modern Chinese state in these regions. In the TAR, there are 1142 active monasteries and religious centres (Blondeau, 2008:160). In the Kandze TAP the number of monasteries prior to the democratic reforms was 564, with around 80,000 monks. By 1999 there were 516 monasteries, with 43,000 monks which included 3000 nuns and 500 Living Buddhas (tulkus). According to the Kandze Prefecture Religious Affairs Department, only 87 of the tulkus have been officially recognised by the authorities since 1980. The Ngaba TAP had 343 monasteries prior to 1958 with 26,226 monks. In 1999, the number of monasteries was 201 with 19,982 monks. There was also the presence of 10 nunneries in the Ngaba TAP. (Kolas and Thowsen, 2004: 192-193). The Muli (Mili) Tibetan Autonomous County had 15 monasteries prior to 1958 which have all been rebuilt. Furthermore, there are two monasteries reported from Yuanyuan and Baoxing counties. Gansu province has two Tibetan Autonomous areas; the Kanlho (Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) and the Pari (Tianzhu) Tibetan Autonomous County in Wuwei Prefecture. The information on the state of Tibetan Buddhist institutions has been accumulated from a number of sources, government as well as from the work of Pu Wencheng. In the Kanlho TAP, the number of monks add upto a total of more than 7006 by the late 1990's who are based in the 121 monasteries which are present. In the pre 1958 scenario, there were 196 monasteries with 9562 monks. In the Pari (Tianzhu) Tibetan Autonomous County, there were 196 monasteries with 1203 monks whereas by 1999 the number of monasteries has reached 12 with 70 monks. However, what needs to be noted is that much of the earlier territory which encompassed these areas has been incorporated into the TAR, where reconstruction of monasteries has taken place more.

In Yunnan, there is the Dechen Autonomous Prefecture which according to a news report in the Xinhua dated 4 April 1998 has 25 monasteries with a total of 1508 monks. Prior to the democratic reforms of 1958, there were 24 monasteries with 2945 monks. In the province of Qinghai, prior to the democratic reforms there were 722 monasteries with 57647 monks. In 1999 there were 666 monasteries with 24478 monks, which also include 700 nuns in 18

nunneries and also 497 tulkus with 73 officially recognised since 1978. The province has seven prefectures out of which five are designated as Tibetan Autonomous and one; Tsonub is designated as Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Haidong is not designated as an autonomous prefecture but it encompasses several counties with village districts that have Tibetan Autonomous status. (Kolas and Thowsen 2004:204) It is also seen that with a rise in the standards of living, majority of the Tibetans have contributed more to the construction as well as building of new monasteries and temples in Tibet. More importantly, much of the protests in Tibet and the current spate of immolations in the region are for religious freedom and a longing for the spiritual leader The Dalai Lama as well as much concentrated in this region majority by monks or former monastics. This does contradict the idea of the secularisation of Tibetan society. The authorities believed in the idea of economic growth and development replacing religious practices.

NEGOTIATIONS IN MODERNITY BY BUDDHISM

It is true that modernisation has seeped into the fabric of Tibetan society, leading to the growth of secular institutions at the macro level, but it has also led to a resurgence of Tibetan culture especially through Tibetan Buddhism. Religion is used as a "cultural defence" and thus it remains a powerful social force as it provides the resource for the defence of a national, local or status group culture (Harkonen, 2009:52). This has precisely occurred in Tibet, accentuated more due to the repressive policies targeted towards the practice of Tibetan Buddhism, specifically on monasteries. They were always seen as seats of latent Tibetan nationalism, of a separate identity, thus were strongly targeted. As mentioned earlier, monasteries were the cradle of Tibetan life where culture and traditional education flourished, which stood for the unique Tibetan identity that the Chinese encountered when they first came to Tibet. In the post reform period, even though certain degree of religious freedom was given, the monasteries were monitored and controlled, with an imposition of government quotas on the number of monks as well as creating Democratic Management Committees with Communist cadres to regulate the monasteries. It is also seen that through the Patriotic Education Campaigns and also the Strike Hard Policy, monks and nuns in the monasteries have been kept under strict purview. Through this, Beijing calls for religion and patriotism to be intertwined (Cooke, pg 7, 2003). The Communist leaders have called for Tibetan culture which flows out of religion to be supportive of Chinese ideological, political and developmental objectives (Fourth Tibet Work Forum, 2001). It is a strong contradiction present between Tibetan and the Chinese conception of religious freedom and religion in

general. Tibetan Buddhism is deeply engraved in the Tibetan psyche and forms the Tibetan identity. For the Tibetans the most visible forms of religious expressions includes activities such as burning incense, turning of the prayer wheels, prostrations and circumambulations which are also incorporated into the Party's policies for allowing the "expression of voluntary religious faith". More importantly it is also seen as harmless superstition, just a decorative feature of minority nationalities. There is a strong tendency to formulate religion as such so as to neuter it and prevent the assigning of nationalism to it.

The monasteries as well as the monks have been the principle sources of dissent against the Chinese state in Tibet. The imposition of martial law on Tibet in March 1989 was a result of the demonstrations led by monks in Lhasa, which was followed by more protests in the region for the following eighteen months, which led to the martial law[3] (Tsering Shakya, 1996:1). Almost all the protests since 1989 have been mostly led by the monastic community, including the protests in the spring of 2008 in Lhasa which had spread to the neighbouring provinces with strong Tibetan populations. Religion has been the natural recourse for the Tibetans in the aftermath of the reforms of the 1980's which also led to de-collectivisation and the decline of a social order which had bound the Tibetans into their communes, easily controlled by the State. However, in the absence of an all pervasive collective organisation, Tibetans looked for relationships beyond the reach of the state, frequently in opposition to it. It is here that the natural institutions present on the plateau; the monasteries became important and acted as a basis for solidarity among the Tibetans with a common experience of Chinese rule (Schwartz, 1996:210). The campaigns led by the state against the protestors further sharpened Tibetan consciousness and opposition to the Chinese state. Tibetan Buddhism and its institutions and practices were further used as symbols of defiance against Chinese policies in Tibet. In Lhasa as well as in other areas, the demonstrations have occurred mostly at the Jokhang, around the Barkhor; Tibet's holiest site or around monasteries or areas of worship (Barnett, 1996:244). The religious sites are turned into the centres of political focus in Tibet, spaces which are claimed by the Tibetans. What is significant is that it is in these areas such as the Jokhang, that majority of the Tibetans live and earn a livelihood.

 The Jokhang has become a symbol of Tibetan nationalist aspirations. It always had a symbolic role in the Tibetan culture, as it is one of the first Buddhist temples in Tibet,

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[3] This was the first time that the government of the People's Republic of China had formally imposed martial law on any part of its territory.

constructed by King Songtsen Gampo who had married a Chinese princess and a Nepalese princess. It is this matrimonial union that the Chinese have cited as a historical evidence of Tibet being a part of China. However, since the demonstrations of 1980, the Tibetans have turned it into a focus of cultural nationalism with religion being the driving force. It stands as an alternative to the Norbulinka, the summer palace of the Dalai Lama where after 1959, the Chinese have organised all secular activities, which have faced severe protests in the past. The importance of the Jokhang has been further accentuated by the reactions of the Chinese authorities towards the Tibetan protests, seen in the form of positioning tanks outside the temple complex, which had a negative effect, leading the Jokhang to become the centre of Tibetan dissent. (Barnett, 1996:244). The concentration of protests at the Jokhang by the majority of the Tibetans and not at the sites of Chinese administration further strengthened the notion of a space created by the Tibetans, which was drawn on lines of Tibetan nationalism. Demonstrating in front of administrative buildings would reflect an acknowledgement of Chinese authority. It would be the kind of demonstration that the Chinese understood and an acceptance of the Chinese understanding of the issues; in terms of policies implemented and imposed by them on Tibet (Schwartz, 1996:227). The Jokhang and the Barkhor are the old Tibetan quarters where the Chinese do not frequent much.

The Tibetans have turned the religious sites such as the Jokhang into spaces of political reclamation and hence religion became the focus of resurgence in Tibet. Moreover, the Chinese state was strongly committed to reforms, the success of which was displayed through a display of religious tolerance. This freedom granted to religion was negotiated by the Tibetans and much political mileage was derived from this. This has been seen in the case of the worship of the Dalai Lama in Tibet as China views him as a the leader of the separatists and a major threat to China's unity while banning his worship in the earlier periods of the reforms have been a difficult task as the Tibetans have termed him as a religious leader (ibid). However, the role of the Dalai Lama as the political head in Tibet also creates a dilemma for the Chinese state as much of the cries for independence are in the name of the Dalai Lama.

BUDDHISM AS A FORM OF PROTEST BY TIBETANS

The Dalai Lama has been a strong polarising figure in Tibet and has been used as an important resource by the Tibetans in the modern world. All the protests recorded till date from Tibet are invoked in his name, for his longevity as well as his return to Tibet. His role as a world leader, one who stands for human rights and democracy; values of modernity

becomes ideal for the Tibetan youth to accept as well as champion further. The Chinese authorities did have serious problems during the earlier anti splittist campaigns when the Tibetans refused to denounce the Dalai Lama as he was purely taken as a religious head. Anniversaries related with the Dalai Lama are celebrated by the Tibetans inside Tibet through religious activities such as the *lhagyal* or *sangsol*. While sangsol or incense burning; juniper burning in the case of the Tibetans is an integral activity of Buddhism, the practice of lhagyal which consists of throwing tsampa (roasted barley), a staple diet of the Tibetans in the air can be derived from the pre Buddhist, Bon period.

In the days following the news that the Dalai Lama had been awarded the Nobel in 1989, the Tibetans began to celebrate by burning incense and tossing handful of tsampa over each other as well and at Chinese troops. When the Chinese authorities became aware of the significance on the 13 October 1989, troops were ordered to arrest and shoot the participants. The ban on the practice of lhagyal came after a political campaign was launched and by December these acts were termed as political crimes, acts which would fetch imprisonment (Barnett 1996:251). Through the throwing of tsampa, the well being of the person of the Dalai Lama was sought by the Tibetans. The Tibet Information Network has also reported that annually the Tibetans in Tibet have prayed and performed sangsol as well as lhagyal on the birthday of the Dalai Lama after the lifting of martial law from Tibet. On 13 September 2007, the Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to the Dalai Lama, the highest civilian honour by the US government, which was received in person by the Dalai Lama on October 2007, Tibetans inside Tibet performed the sangsol in the Barkhor Lhasa and there were fireworks as well as prayers in Gansu and as a result the Drepung monastery was sealed off by Chinese security (Associated Press, 2007). The Dalai Lama has emerged as the symbol of Tibetan aspiration, of solidarity and someone who cuts across sectarian lines in Tibet. This has brought about a sense of unity among Tibetans, who were earlier divided along sectarian and regional lines. The Dalai Lama offers an alternative view of modernity to the Tibetans, one which is based on Buddhist ethics and which calls for democracy, freedom and human rights. These ideas are Western in orientation, however having a universal appeal and supported by Buddhist practices.

Religious practices both on an individual as well as the community level have been transformed into acts of protest against Chinese policies in Tibet. During the protests in the 1980's, with the Barkhor becoming the locus of opposition against China, a large number of Tibetans as an act of protest sat in the teaching area next to the temple and recited prayers for

several hours on behalf of the dead which was not broken up. The promise for reforms in Tibet had led to a more liberal attitude towards religious practice which soon became acts of resistance. On 3 December 1988, during the Butter Lamp festival, over a 1000 Tibetans gathered in front of the Jokhang and chanted "*bden tshig smonlam*" (Prayer of Truth) composed by the Dalai Lama, which calls for the protection of Tibet from foreign aggressors (Schwartz, 1996:228). Even in the recent protests against mining of sacred mountains by the Chinese, the protests were interceded with prayers from the Tibetans. The authorities realised the interlinking of the religious act to a form of resistance against China and the subsequent growth of national consciousness among the Tibetans which led to them imposing further restrictions on religious practice. An important enforcement came in the form of a ban on the image of the Dalai Lama in 1996, in the aftermath of a strike hard policy in Tibet (Getzelman, 2008:46). However, Tibetans have negotiated further with the impositions made by China and more novel methods of protests with a tilt towards religion have been seen. The act of performing circumambulation is central to Tibetan Buddhism which is also seen as a form of resistance against the Chinese. Much of the protests around the Jokhang took place in the form of a circumambulation by the ones' involved.

In opposition to the act of circumambulation, the People's Armed Police as well as other security agencies were performing it in an anti clockwise manner thus offending the Tibetans more (Schwartz, 1996:227). The commitment to liberal reforms in Tibet; the success of which is generally through the visible display of religious tolerance has led to the authorities granting permission as well as organising numerous religious festivals and events in Tibet. One of the most hyped religious events held by the Chinese authorities was the Monlam festival in 1986. The Monlam is considered to be the most important religious festival in Tibet and dates back to the 15th century when it was instituted by the founder of the Gelug sect or the Yellow hat sect which was in power when the PLA marched into Tibet. The authorities wanted to organise the Monlam as it would bring out the liberal angle towards religion in their reforms (Barnett, 1996:245-46). However, for the Monlam to be organised there was a need for the traditional blessings as well as a consensus from the monks, hence granting them importance as well as an informal degree of power. What is important is that through reinstituting the Monlam, the authorities nourished the union of religion and politics in Tibet as that is the traditional purpose of the Monlam Chenpo (ibid). According to Robert Barnett, the Monlam defines the spiritual or the ecclesiastical endorsement on the Tibetan establishment and during the period when the festival is held, the administration is under the

three great monasteries in Lhasa; Sera, Ganden and Drepung. During this period, majority of the monks were not willing to participate in the Monlam festival and it was only through an intervention by the Panchen Lama that many did participate but it was rocked with protests towards the end. Therefore, the Tibetans preferred to mark the Monlam by refusing to attend it which gave them more leverage as it was a rejection of the Chinese attempt to control Tibetan Buddhism. With liberalisation, numerous other religious festivals have been revived such as unscrolling the giant thanka[4] on the slope of a hillside; the most famous one being in Kumbum and also the cham or religious dances.

Most of these festivals bring about a strong sense of solidarity as well as unity among the Tibetans. There have been numerous instances where the Chinese authorities have banned the festivals such as the horse racing festival in Lithang county in 2008 when a Yonru nomad Rongye Adrak in 2007 in a previous festival was detained for whipping up the crowd to shout in support of the Dalai Lama (Radio Free Asia, 2008). There have been other forms of cultural resistance such as through abstract paintings that employ Tibetan motifs in unconventional ways; rap songs that celebrate distinct Tibetan cultural markers; new forms of religious organization and community; films and novels that explore the Tibetan experience from diverse vantage points; and rinpoches dispensing the Buddha dharma through 140 character micro blogs (ICT, 2012:115). There have also been more radical methods employed for protesting against China's policies in Tibet. The spate of immolations in Tibet from 2009 onwards have all being termed as an extreme way of voicing dissent against the Chinese state. All the immolators, majority of them from the monastic community had made strong demands for the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet and for greater religious freedom. Many of them have left their last testaments in the form of letters or audio visual recordings as with the case of Lama Sobha a reincarnated monk who self immolated on 8 January 2012 as a protest against China's policies towards religion (ibid, 2012). The protests in 2008 which had spread across the plateau can also be seen to have displayed a strong cultural significance to it as majority of it was led by monks and were centred around monasteries, whether the Jokhang in Lhasa (TAR) or Labrang Tashikyil (Kanlho TAP, Qinghai). Almost all the demands made were for the return of the Dalai Lama. Many of the songs such as "*Yi re Kyo*" performed by the famous singer Kunga have strong allusions to the Dalai Lama and yearn for his return or for them to be able to meet him (YouTube, 2012).

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[4] Embroidered or painted silk image of a deity, especially a Bodhisattva.

In the aftermath of the 2008 protests in Tibet and the widespread crackdown by the authorities, there have been numerous expressions of protests, many which reaffirm faith to the Dalai Lama. A prominent example can be of the mass religious celebrations which occurred on July 2011 in Lithang monastery where more than 5000 monks participated in a 10 day ceremony where a huge portrait of the exiled Dalai Lama was symbolically enthroned. Such actions were repeated across numerous monasteries and were attended by the local Tibetans as well as by the local officials (ICT, 2011:119). In the celebrations, various campaigns were launched by the monastic leaders to preserve Tibetan culture, especially Tibetan language as well as the preservation of Tibetan Buddhism and religious sites. The Buddhist act of sparing the lives of animals was called for; the merit of which would be transferred to the long life of the Dalai Lama. According to the International Campaign for Tibet, the 'Language Protection and Preservation Association of Lithang Monastery' set up regulations for the participants which included the wearing of Tibetan style clothing and speaking Tibetan, which even the CCTV crew who were covering the event had to comply with.

There is also a strong resurgence of a resistance against China's polices through literature and Tibetan popular music. Much of the dissemination of these ideas occur through the internet; published in blogs, unauthorised literary magazines, uploaded as YouTube videos and also cell phone ringtones. The modern digital technology is made good use by educated Tibetans, who have been brought up in a bicultural, bilingual generation who have a grasp over the informal narrative of Tibet as well as of Western ideas of Democracy and Rights. Through this, a sense of solidarity and unity is brought among the Tibetans. One of the most visible Tibetan intellectual based in Beijing is Woeser, who through her blogs has been able to provide an alternative picture of Tibet to the outside world, especially at a period when the authorities have circumscribed the internet and imposed a moratorium on informal information on Tibet. [5] The internet, a modern tool of globalisation has been aptly used by the Tibetans to create a space for Greater Tibet, where Tibetans are able to communicate to a larger audience as well as connect with each other across a great distance, creating solidarity and strongly asserting a Tibetan identity.

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[5] Woeser's blog is http://woeser.middle-way.net/ She writes in Chinese and much of her works are translated by www.highpeakspureearth.com She was awarded the Prince Claus award for her fearless reporting but was prevented from receiving it from the Dutch Embassy in Beijing.

One of the most important movements for cultural resistance which has emerged lately from Tibet has been the Lhakar Movement. The term Lhakar means "White Wednesday", encompassing religious as well as secular ideas which was raised in the post 2008 pan Tibetan uprisings. The day is closely related to the Dalai Lama as Wednesday is associated as his "soul day" when prayers are offered for his long life. On this day, a cultural revitalisation initiative is undertaken by the Tibetans whereby Tibetans are making conscious efforts and vows to speak Tibetan (rather than Chinese), support Tibetan businesses, and wear Tibetan dress. The actions have been seen by many as an emulation of a non violent strategy adopted by the Tibetans, based on Non Cooperation and on Satyagraha, which was launched by Mahatma Gandhi in India against British rule (Outlook India, 2012). In the numerous instances of observing Lhakar, the Tibetans take a pledge of being Tibetan, through words as well as deeds. There have been numerous instances of a boycott of purchasing products especially vegetables from Chinese markets and buying it from Tibetans which occurred in Qinghai's Nangchen county. This was an act which emerged due to the spiralling prices of vegetables but soon led to the locals boycotting the Chinese business establishment in the area and buying from Tibetans (Voice of America, 2011). In another instance, in Sershul monastery in Zachuka Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, the locals were fining those Tibetans who uttered a Chinese word in the premises of the monastery. This was an act of preserving the Tibetan language in an innovative manner. These actions have spread to the other neighbouring regions. In all of these attempts of resistance through culture, elements of Tibetan culture and identity going back centuries are used to strengthen a sense of identity, of distinctiveness from Chinese culture. In the process, much of the earlier divisions on lines of religion and region have been transcended by the present generation of Tibetans (Van. Schaik, 327:2012).

On a discursive level, the Dalai Lama's politics and philosophy have been taken up by the Tibetans inside Tibet, seen in complete opposition to the Chinese policies. There is a conflict of ideas and consciousness between Tibetans and the Chinese policymakers. In the initial phases of the anti Splittist campaigns which were launched in the late 1980's, political meetings and campaigns were held by the CCP work teams in neighbourhood committees, work units as well as in monasteries. The latter was targeted the most as they were the ones who had started the demonstrations. Political re education was the major goal of the meetings, which however failed and much of the activities were used by the Tibetans to voice their grievances against the Chinese state or clamour for Independence. Much of these acted

as platforms for Tibetan solidarity and to collectively challenge the Chinese leaders (Schwartz 1996:224-25). The platform was also used by the monks in the monasteries to debate and use their logical reasoning against the Chinese state, which frustrated the cadres. It further sharpened national consciousness among the Tibetans bringing about solidarity and unity. More importantly, unlike the earlier Cultural Revolution or the Democratic Reforms Campaign of the 1950's class was not a criterion for unifying the masses against a few reactionaries. The Chinese saw themselves as modernisers who had brought reforms and development to the Tibetans, which was not really accepted by the majority.

MODERNISATION IN TIBETAN BUDDHISM

The plethora of modern technology especially telecommunications has led to the seeping in of information of the outside world to Tibet, which was more during the prior stages of the reforms. Although the authorities have initiated a strict monitoring over the flow of ideas from the outside world, Tibetans have taken up modern political terminology, notions of human rights, democracy, liberalism and national struggles and have provided with an alternative vocabulary to the Chinese (Harkonen, 2009:53). In most cases, a Buddhist framework is used in the understanding of issues which provides a wider and coherent view of the Tibetan situation under Chinese rule. Through Buddhism, political ideas of democracy, human rights and self determination take on a much wider context whereby religion provides a more altruistic understanding of such issues, for instance truth or "*denpa*"[6] is seen as the force the Tibetans have which is lacking in China's rule in Tibet. The human rights angle is extremely important in the Tibetan Question and in most of the protests from Tibetans inside Tibet, it figures out as a primary demand, not only to China but also directed to the United Nations which is seen by them as the highest body for the redressal of grievances and justice. The Tibetan terminology for human rights is also replete with a strong Buddhist understanding of a meaningful life which is lacking in the current situation under China's rule. (Schwartz, 1996:232). Numerous letters addressed to the United Nations were smuggled out of Tibet by foreigners in the early 1990's which call for truth and justice for Tibetans (ibid).

Hence, the traditional ideologies behind the monastic institutions and in Buddhism are negotiated to fit the new secular ideologies or also to ease major cultural and social

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[6] Denpa means the truth but also has strong Buddhist undertones, where it also means the ultimate reality, the conquest of ignorance.

transitions that threaten the traditional world view (Mitra Harkonen, 2009:50), which has emerged from Chinese Communism. Although religion is antithetical to Communist ideology, numerous similarities have been drawn, primary being the upliftment of the community, which features as a strong postulate in Communism but is also a strong component of Buddhism (ibid, 2009:52). The White Paper on the Freedom of Religious Belief in China in 1997 also propounded that "The various religions all advocate serving the society and promoting people's well-being, such as the Buddhists' "honouring the country and benefiting the people", This is seen to a greater extent in the monastics which are found on ideals of compassion and of a Bodhisattva[7], thus practice of Dharma is seen foremost for the benefit of others, for the community which is seen as being compatible to the idea of communal good in Communism. This has been seen as a process in dealing with the new emerging values of modernity which brings about rapid social changes thus threatening the fabric of society. More importantly numerous aspects of modernisation such as individualism, rationality or pluralism are seen to be in sync with Buddhist ideas and are termed as existing features of Tibetan Buddhism. Through this Buddhism is used as a value system which is flexible and has enduring significance and provides values which are in a sense modern.

The Buddhist monasteries are also seen to be the sites where traditional Tibetan language is taught, with numerous monasteries having their own schools. They were the former sites of knowledge and a large number of them were known for the high quality of religious scholastics they produced. With the ensuing liberal attitude being shown towards Tibetans in the immediate post reform period, the monasteries became sites of traditional education where along with Tibetan Buddhism, the language would also be taught. There was an entire generation of Tibetans who had grown without learning the Tibetan language due to the Cultural Revolution. More importantly, with monastic education, numerous Living Buddhas or tulkus have also built schools where secular education is granted. According to Ashild Kolas and Monika P. Thowsen, there are at least eight private primary schools in the Kandze TAP sponsored by the local tulkus. There is an understanding between the state and such schools for the dissemination of education among the Tibetans and many of them are registered. Most of these schools taught traditional Buddhist texts as well as the Tibetan alphabet, reading and writing and Tibetan grammar. Many did not charge any money from

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[7] Enlightened being who has postponed nirvana for the betterment of all sentient beings. The Avalokiteshwara; Chenrizig in Tibetan is a Bodhisattva whose earthly manifestation are the Dalai Lamas.

the students but also did receive some funding from the Provincial Religious Department and the Educational Department. However, much of the expenses were borne by the monasteries and also the reconstruction work on the buildings was done through voluntary work (Kolas and Thowsen, 2005:113).

The resurgence in culture and an emphasis on the usage of Tibetan language also arose due to such endeavours from the monasteries. However, in the aftermath of the major protests which engulfed the plateau in 2008, many of these schools were shut and their founders along with the teachers have been arrested. The Chinese authorities of Ngaba TAP had indefinitely closed down a school run by Taktsang Lhamo Kirti monastery in Dzoege county, Sichuan province, on 8 April 2008. The major reason was that the students had participated in the protests on 15 March 2008 (TIN, 2008). In 2010, enormous protests broke out in the Tibetan regions outside the TAR against the imposition of Mandarin as the sole language, mostly led by students but also spearheaded by monks. The monks had been actively involved in the levying of fines on Tibetans who were using Chinese vocabulary while speaking Tibetan (TIN, 2010). Hence, the monks and the monasteries were at the forefront of cultural preservation.

RELIGION AND SOCIAL STABILITY IN THE ERA OF MODERNISATION

Modernisation and the liberalisation of the economy have led to an increase in the living standards of the local Tibetans, a rise in income. However, social evils which can be seen as a manifestation of the crass commercial policies implemented in Tibet have also risen. This is seen mostly in the form of an increase in the crime rates as well as other anti social activities such as drug addiction, gambling and prostitution. The last two social vices were present in the Tibetan society prior to the coming of the Chinese but it has risen by manifold in the present period. In most cases a blind eye is turned towards such activities by the state which has led to a steady increase in prostitution in Tibet's major cities of Lhasa and Shigatse. It is mostly the Han migrant women who end up in the sex industry but also due to financial difficulties the number of young Tibetans entering in the sex industry has increased. The presence of the Chinese military in Tibet is seen as a major reason for the thriving of the industry. The absence of any HIV testing sites has also led to a spurt in the rate of HIV AIDS in the region (Seidman, 2001). The growth in economic opportunities in Tibet after the starting of the Qinghai Tibet railway has also accelerated the rate of Han Chinese migration

into the Tibetan areas. This has also been seen by Tibetans as a reason for the increase in the crime rate in cities like Lhasa (Lustgarten, 2008:236).

However, the pursuit of wealth and crass commercialisation on the plateau along with a decline of the influence of Tibetan Buddhism has led to Tibetans being actively involved in criminal activities. In the Maoist period, the local organisation and the individuals were vigilant and took up responsibility for maintaining social order, which were no longer present in the current reform era (Lixiong, 2009:154). On the other hand, the state had invested a huge amount on revamping the public security in the Tibetan areas to tackle crime, which has not really helped. It is here that Tibetan Buddhism with its stress on ethics and compassion can be taken as an important tool to counter the rise in social evils among the Tibetans. More importantly, this has occurred with the rise of influential lamas, Living Buddhas such as Tulku Tenzin Delek from Kandze TAP, Sichuan, who through his philanthropic activities as well as offering advices against social disturbances was able to curb the criminal mindset of many in the area. Under Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, sixty to seventy widowed elderly were looked after as well as a school with around 130 students which consisted of orphans and disabled children were looked after by him (ibid, 2009:156). He also funded construction work in the villages. These acts made the Tibetan community listen to the lama and in many cases he would call out people who had been involved in drinking and fighting. These miscreants would not be allowed to join in the chanting which the rinpoche led which in Tibetan Buddhism is termed as the gravest punishment, which would recur in their future lives. Thus through religion the negative excesses of modernisation can be curbed whereby the Buddhist clergy can be seen as functioning as a civil society moral group in the Tibetan region (ibid).

Tibetan Buddhism was the moral compass for the community on the plateau which was much deteriorated due to the attack on the foundations of Buddhism in Tibet with the coming of the Communist Chinese. What further accentuated the decline of religion in the lives of the Tibetans was the pursuit of material wealth, the selfish desire which has led to degradation of the society as well as of the ecology. The rise in crime in Tibet as mentioned earlier is interlinked to rampant consumerism due to economic reforms, for which the Chinese authorities have invested much on maintaining social security. This is however a source of much resentment for Tibetans and have not been successful in uprooting crime. Hence through religious and moral restraint an effective method can be adopted which is cost effective and reduces social tensions in the larger community. The negative effect of

commercialisation especially tourism has deeply seeped into the monasteries, effecting monks and nuns who are seen as models of good morality which does get polluted due to economic liberalisation (Lixiong, 2009:180). This has increased with the disruption in the religious tradition which occurred due to the coming of the Chinese state. The organic structures of Tibetan Buddhism, especially the monasteries and the reincarnation system have been corrupted leading to a break in the linkages between the laypeople and Tibetan Buddhism. Many tulkus and Living Buddhas have been attracted by fame and fortune which is present in the Chinese cities where wealthy Han patrons support them. Thus, they are seen to be indulging in mundane pleasures instead of spreading religion in their community or looking after the monastery and the local community around it (ibid, 2009:181).

The estrangement caused by crass capitalism in China has increased the demand for religion especially mysticism and its other exotic ideals which is partly created by outsiders. The lamas have also played their roles in such a situation which has led to commercialisation of religion. Most of the big monasteries are transformed as tourist spots, leading to them being financed by the state. However, under this monks have to spend some amount of their time carrying out work related to tourism rather than focus on their religious work (ibid). The exoticisation of Tibetan Buddhism has been increased for tourist consumption. The monasteries and their upkeep have also been contracted out to businessmen; mostly Chinese whose obvious focus was on profit making, which has further led to further degradation of Tibetan Buddhism. Although this was banned in 2002 by the Religious Affairs Bureau, the monasteries which have been commercialised are much ostracised by the Tibetans as they are seen to have lost their sanctity (ICT, 2012:118). In the reform era, Tibetan Buddhism and its institutions have maximum commercial value for the disillusioned rich Chinese and Westerners who do not understand Tibetan culture and hang on to the mystical aspects of Buddhism, damaging it further. However, alternative voices have emerged from the CCP regarding religion and the need to reform Marxist ideas on religion. Pan Yue, the ex deputy director of Economic Restructuring Office of the State Council did call for a re evaluation of the role of religion especially the social function of religion and the need to emphasise on the utilitarian aspect of religion (Lixiong 2009:184).

Hence religion has a strong role to play in the modern society. It can especially be used as a tool to regulate and to upkeep morality in a society where commercialisation and profit making runs deep. However, with state regulations and reforms in religion being carried out by secular initiatives, the role of religion in society diminishes. As religion has evolved

through a long process of historical accumulation, any attempts at altering any part of the system or removing certain practices, terming it as superstition which baffles the modern is seen to be harmful. In the case of Tibetan Buddhism, it has evolved in a manner that it complements the Tibetan society as well as the environment in which they have lived for generations. The commercialisation of religion has further led to an erosion of the notion of karma and compassion which are the foundations of Tibetan Buddhism.

The belief that through donations punishment can be averted, has led to a further weakening of the Tibetan society. Much of this has risen from a lack of understanding of religion by the Tibetans themselves. Majority of the population in Tibet are herders and animal husbandry is seen as the principle form of livelihood. The economic reforms in China, which has also seeped in these regions, have also increased the pressure to promote development and generate income. This has further led to the growth of livestock economic zones, inviting outside investors, cultivating local entrepreneurs, promoting the sale of yak meat by branding it as "green," environmentally-friendly and healthy, and encouraging herders to increase their off-take rate (rate of selling or slaughtering). The formation of the Aba Tibetan Plateau Yak Economic Zone can be taken as an example of neo liberal policies being implemented on animal husbandry in Tibet. These efforts have prioritised the increased circulation of commodities and the cultivation of a "vision of commodity production" among Tibetans. This has led to the mass sale of livestock to Chinese merchants, increasing the income levels of the Tibetans (Gaerrang {Kabzung}, 31/2008).

However, from 2003 onwards an anti slaughter movement was started by the local Buddhist teachers, especially by Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche which had become extremely popular spreading across the region. The lama and his disciples through their teachings on Tibetan Buddhism stresses on the accumulation of negative karma through slaughtering of livestock; as a matter of fact prohibiting the taking of life of any being. Many herders have responded to these appeals by taking an oath to stop the selling of yaks for a period of three years, which many have continued even after the completion of the oath. This has led to a decline in their income, which however has not deterred many from stopping although there have been those who have continued selling their livestock for slaughter. However, through such acts, which employ Tibetan Buddhist values, many Tibetans and Buddhist masters have been able to create an alternative to the Chinese model of development. On the other hand, the neoliberals secular pull has also led to a large number of herders continue on with the practices after the completion of their oath (ibid). Thus the development processes in Tibetan

areas have been contested by Buddhism which offers alternative paths to growth and modernisation, one which is rooted to a sustainable form of development.

TIBETAN BUDDHISM AND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

Modernisation is seen to have an adverse effect on the ecology of regions where developmental projects are imposed. The environment of the Tibetan plateau is fragile and extremely important for bio systems of not only the plateau but also the neighbouring countries in South and South East Asia. Most of the major rivers flowing to China and these regions emerge from Tibet, thus earning the title 'The Third Pole' as outside the polar ice caps, Tibet has the largest amount of fresh water in the form of mountain glaciers, which feed numerous rivers in Asia. However, the increased economic activity in the region has led to numerous negative effects on the ecology thus endangering a unique way of life of the Tibetans on the plateau. Further damage to the environment can be prevented through religion as Tibetan Buddhism calls for harmony between human beings and nature. It is seen as a pragmatic function of Buddhism where compassion is the central tenet that is all sentient beings as being equal, which helps to protect the fragile ecosystem in Tibet. The lands next to a monastery are often well protected. Therefore, monasteries can be mobilised as a social force to create environmental responsibility. It is here that consciousness plays a significant role as for the Tibetans, the environment with all its associated features brimming with life are the same as human life and there is a need to preserve it (Lixiong, 2009:160-64).

The call by Mao to conquer nature stands in complete contradiction to this idea, which has been pursued by the modern Chinese state, although environment protection and sustainable development is on the rise. The state took cognisance of the issue and proclaimed a moratorium on lumbering upstream as well as the setting up of conservation projects which are mostly in the Tibetan areas. The authorities had also singled out the nomadic communities on the plateau for the ecological damage they caused through their herding practices which however have not been proved and have been dismissed by numerous analysts (Yeh, 2003:500). However for the Tibetans, environment protection comes with karmic logic. Numerous religious leaders such as Tulku Tenzin Delek were active in the preservation of the environment and had initiated numerous campaigns to protect nature. He had encouraged Tibetans in the Kardze TAP to prevent the Chinese from felling trees (Lixiong, 2009:164). To divert individuals from hunting, a unique method was adopted by him whereby he purchased sheep and yaks for them to start a pastoral life. In most of his

teachings he stressed the importance of the environment and for economic activities to be complementary to nature. These alternative values expressed by Tulku Tenzin Delek as well as numerous other religious teachers did not fit well with China's project of modernisation in the Tibetan areas (ibid).

One of the most important aspects of modernisation in Tibet has been the growth and development of the extractive industries. The presence as well as the discovery of huge amount of minerals and other natural resources in Tibet has turned it into one of the richer provinces of China. The mineral findings were the culmination of a secret seven year 44 million dollars survey project prior to the railway whereby a thousand geographers had been sent to the plateau to scour the region for mineral resources. The completion of which led to the discovery of minerals worth an estimated 128 billion dollars (Lustgarten 2008:240). Along with minerals, oil and natural gas fields were developed in northern Tibet and Qinghai and also they had purportedly discovered crude oil and gas reserves in far western Changthang. All of these would increase investment in Tibet and under the period of the reforms large amount of foreign companies were granted the right to invest in the mineral extraction industries. What is also equally important is that Beijing also offered generous development incentives, including a multiyear tax free start up period, subsidized power and heavily discounted transport on the railway (Lustgarten 2008:240). A large number of Australian and Canadian companies are involved in this extractive industry. However, this economic activity has also led to a massive degradation of the environment of Tibet, which as mentioned earlier is fragile. The mining projects have also led to pollution of rivers in Tibet which have led to poisoning of cattle as well as the public (Woeser, 2012). Furthermore, the locals have strongly protested against such an activity on grounds of religion, whereby the mountains and the land on which the mineral extraction occurs is held sacred by the Tibetans.

An important element which plays a significant role in Tibet's cultural identity is the mountain cult, which is also a rallying point for Tibetan nationalism. The geographic peculiarity of Tibet which is depicted in the Tibetan national flag in the form of a mountain defines what it is – a land surrounded by mountains; the roof of the world. This has a strong influence on the psyche of Tibetans, who used to consider much of the mountains and other natural landscapes like lakes and rivers as being sacred. Much of this is derived from the pre Buddhist Bon religion which was assimilated into the Buddhist practices when the latter made its foray in the seventh century into Tibet. The worship of the mountains can be divided further into two – Secular and Religious (Samten Karmay 1996:114). The secular worship of

the mountain cult does not involve the Bon or the Buddhist clergy but it represents a strong phenomenon of the Tibetan national identity whereby the mountain deities are worshipped by laymen with mundane affairs. The religious mountains are the ones deemed as holy or sacred mountains like Kailash which are the object of Buddhist veneration, having monasteries and hermitages at its periphery and also attracting pilgrims who perform circumambulations. This notion emerges from the Buddhist idea of devotion (Karmay 1996:115). The worship of the mountain cult had been banned in the 1960's and was reinstated in 1983. The major reason for the ban was that it created solidarity among its participants. The worship and the practice of the mountain cult implied a total integration into the community which also meant an inherited social and political obligation, moral and individual responsibility and an affirmation to communal and national solidarity in the face of external aggression. Thus, the mountain cult plays an important role in the building of a national identity of Tibet which is embraced by the individuals (ibid).

With the increase in mining in Tibet, many of the mountains held sacred by Tibetans have been exploited for mineral extraction and incidentally many of these mountains are rich in natural resources which the Tibetans since ages have seen them as hidden treasures or "*ter*" sacred and thus could not be violated. This has led to an increase in protests by Tibetans against such activities carried out by Chinese and foreign miners. Earlier in June 2009, a tense standoff over a planned Chinese gold mine in Markham County, in Chamdo Prefecture in "TAR", was forced to be resolved in favour of local Tibetans after vigorous anti-mining protests for weeks. The dispute occurred over operations of the mine set up by a Chinese firm at Ser Ngol Lo (Year of gold and silver), a mountain considered sacred by Tibetans (Phayul, 2011). In May 2010, five protesters, including two women, were injured as thousands of Tibetan villagers in Markham County renewed protests against mining operations on mountains they consider sacred (Radio Free Asia, 2010). Furthermore, the locals were able to stall mining on the sacred Khawa Karpo mountain in Eastern Tibet, which is considered to be one of the holiest mountains in Tibet (Phayul, 2012). According to the White Paper on Religion 1997, The Chinese government has promulgated the Regulations on the Administration of Sites for Religious Activities so as to protect the lawful rights and interests of such sites. However in Tibet much of the natural landscape is considered sacred and pure which is held with deep reverence by the Tibetans and are strong sites of worship for them. Therefore a clash of interests is seen between the modern Chinese state and the Tibetans for

the landscape revered by the latter while seen as a source of abundant natural resource to feed the growing modern economy of China.

CONCLUSION

The resurgence in religion in China has also been linked to a dilemma arising from regime legitimacy as well as the void created due to the economic reforms which led to ideological bankruptcy (Pittman Porter, 2003:322). However on paper, the PRC has always provided the freedom to religious belief to its citizens, which are seen through its Constitutional provisions over the years. The Constitution of 1982 incorporated the freedom of religious belief. Under it, Article 36 of the Constitution stipulates, "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief." This has been a primary policy which the Party has been following which during the period of the political upheavals of the Cultural Revolution was compromised. The CCP's ideology stresses on atheism but the right to freedom of religious belief was implemented in the Common Programme of the CPPCC in 1949, which was carried forward in the later constitutions. However Chapter 5 of the Common Programme having articles 41-49 deal with cultural and educational policies of the PRC in 1949, which is geared towards the dissemination of scientific knowledge and the eradication of feudal ideas. This was adopted further in the First Constitution of the PRC in 1954. There is a reaffirmation of the idea of the PRC being a socialist state under the dictatorship of the proletariat but also representing the rights of the peasants, workers and the soldiers (Marxist Internet Archive, 2005).

Article 88 of the 1954 Constitution gave citizens the right to freedom of religious belief. In 1975, it was amended by the 4th National People's Congress to impose the idea of the primacy of class struggle as the paramount ideology in China which would lead to a dictatorship of the proletariat. This can be seen in the context of the Cultural Revolution when numerous political campaigns were underway, which was to impose the idea of the supremacy of the proletariat through a union among the workers, peasants and army. The contradictions which arose in society could only be eradicated through a theory of continued revolution. The revised Constitution of 1975 called on the continuation of the revolutionary movements of class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment. Article 12 called for the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie in the superstructure, especially in all cultural realms. It does however provide the freedom to believe in religion as well as to propagate atheism. Thus, under the idea of a dictatorship of the proletariat in

cultural realms and also the insertion of a scientific mode of understanding in every aspect, there is the classification of numerous religious practices in Tibet as superstition. This did lead to many curbs on religious practices. It is through a democratic centralism that China was and is still governed. In 1978 the Constitution was again amended whereby the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat was announced with China becoming a socialist country. It affirmed the success of the Cultural Revolution and called for the consolidation of the three great revolutionary movements of class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment. It was replaced with the Constitution of the PRC adopted on 4 December 1982, which calls for the development of socialist modernisation in China where a socialist road with a people's democratic dictatorship is adhered to. Under this the state is seen as serving mostly the interests of the workers and peasants. However Article 24 calls for the building of socialist spiritual civilisation which is done through education in morality and high ideals to its citizens which is also linked to educating the people about patriotism and loving the motherland.

There is a further notion of combating the decadent ideas of feudalism and capitalism (People's Daily Online, 2004). It also upholds the right to religious belief of the Chinese. There were further four amendments to this constitution in 1988, 1993, 1999 and 2004. In the 1988 amendment, private property was allowed under the law as a complement to the socialist public economy (ibid) which was however under the strict control of the state. The amendment of 1994 included the mentioning of reforms and opening up to the outside world. There is also the emergence of the rural household based contract system in China then. The incorporation of the individual, private and other non public economies which are seen as a major component of the socialist market economy was also seen. In the amendment of the Constitution in 2004, there is the incorporation of the "Three Represents" by Jiang Zemin as one of the guiding principles of PRC and also the development of the material, political and spiritual civilisation. In this amendment, there is also the insertion of the idea of the state supervising, controlling and protecting the non public sectors of the economy (ibid).

In October 2000 the then General Secretary Jiang Zemin propounded the idea of the 'Three Represents' where the CCP was placed at the helm of representing China's advanced productive forces as well as advanced culture, and fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of Chinese people (News of the Communist Party of China, 2006). These Three Represents were considered to be the base for the CCP which would strengthen it further. The Party also has to follow the 'Four Musts' which emphasises on the idea that the Party needs

to gear up to the changing times, give top priority to development and also to the modernisation drive, mobilise all positive factors and constantly generate new strength for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and also improve on Party building (ibid). The CCP was seen as representing the broad masses, the majority of the people in China which can be deemed as a shift. The productive forces which the CCP needs to direct are the revolutionary and dynamic factors in social modes of production which changes the contours of the human society. Representation of China's advanced culture can be understood in lines of developing a national, scientific and popular culture which is geared to the needs of modernisation, the world and the future. Socialist culture is re-shaped as educating citizens to have lofty ideals, moral integrity, good education and a strong sense of discipline. There is a call for the improvement in material and spiritual civilisation which can be seen as harking back to a form of neo Confucianism.

Confucianism is an indigenous religio philosophical thought of China which was prevalent in every aspect of life. More than a religion, it is a set of ethics on which Chinese society was based, disrupted by the Communist Revolution of 1949. On the other hand, religions like Buddhism, Islam and Christianity are considered as foreign which are viewed with much suspicion in China and are made to undergo a process a sinicization as seen with the Catholic religion through the "Three self Patriotic" Christian movement. It is the same with the other religions which have arrived from outside and are made to undergo a process of "patriotic education" in China. With the emergence of neo Confucianism, it is likely that some stress will be seen in the other religions such as in Tibetan Buddhism or Islam in the case of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

In the imperial periods, Religion was also a form of expressing dissent; as in the case of the religious secret sects and the Taipings, which emerged to challenge the authority of the imperial order. In the post reform period, autonomy in Religion was granted along with other socio economic autonomy in exchange for loyalty to the Party State. Religion is seen as a fault line of sorts 'in the regimes' efforts to build legitimacy through social policy. With the re emergence of Religious belief, it faces a constant challenge in maintaining sufficient authority to ensure political control while still providing a broad image of tolerance. It is a matter of devotion, of faith which both religion as well as the CCP seeks from the common Chinese people, which becomes more complicated in the case of Tibet as the Tibetan way of life revolves around Tibetan Buddhism. It was however ironically a factor which had quelled the national consciousness of Tibet during the Buddhist Revolution of 842 – 1247 AD (Dawa

Norbu 2001: 39-54). However with the coming of the Chinese in 1949 patriotism was often expressed in terms of protecting the Buddhist doctrine and its institutions. The Khampa rebels during the 1950's initially were termed as the "tensung dhanglang magar" or the voluntary force for the protection of Buddhism (Jamyang Norbu 1996:193).

The struggle was not for a Tibetan nation per say in the initial stages but in the present period Buddhism especially under the Dalai Lama is seen to be the rallying point for Tibetan nationalism. It has been incorporated as a way of life by Tibetans and its tenets runs deep in the Tibetan society and state. The Tibetan outlook is shaped strongly by their faith towards Tibetan Buddhism, which in most cases comes in conflict with the Chinese modern state and its project of modernisation. With the intrusion of Chinese modernity in Tibet tensions have increased with the traditional Tibetan way of life. There is a further embracing of religion and culture due to the increasing repression by the Chinese authorities in Tibet. With Tibetan Buddhism linked to the Tibetan national identity, there has been a stronger attempt to monitor it. However, as mentioned earlier Tibetan Buddhism is seen as a tool for negotiating with the changes brought about by modernity as well as a tool to defend the Tibetan way of life. Buddhism and culture are deeply ingrained in the Tibetan consciousness which to a certain extent stands in contrast to the project of modernity launched by China, however an alternative is seen by Tibetans in Tibet who have created a modernisation project which has partially embraced Tibetan Buddhism and other features of Tibetan culture.

Culture is seen as a dynamic process which is also reflected in the context of Tibet, where Buddhism which is the essence of Tibetan culture through negotiations with the process of modernisation has been able to maintain a foothold in the lives of Tibetans. As a matter of fact in the reform period we do see resurgence to faith by the Tibetans which has been analysed above. However, for Beijing Tibetan Buddhism is a complicated issue and is linked to the growth of Tibetan nationalism. Historically it was a theocratic state propped up on Buddhist principles, where the Dalai Lama was the sovereign. In the other Tibetan areas where Lhasa did not have much sway, local monasteries had great influences among the population. Presently it is the monks, nuns and monasteries who have led numerous protests (in 1987-89 as well as 2008) against China in the region and many of them are vocal opponents of China's rule in Tibet. Majority of the current self immolations have been performed by the monastic population in Tibet. Thus, much of the policies, the modernisation project of China currently underway in Tibet can be understood in terms of integration and securing its rule in the region. This hypothesis stands partially correct in the aspect of religion

and culture as much of the modernisation project by China is geared towards creating an alternative world view for the Tibetans, beyond Tibetan Buddhism, one based on consumerism, technology and economic growth which are rooted in market socialism.

However, with Buddhism being deeply imbedded in the consciousness of Tibetans, perspectives being shaped by it, much of the present circumstances under the modernisation project is partly interpreted through it. This is seen in the case of the protests against Chinese mining in sacred mountains by Tibetans. Many of them are also involved in so called irrational practices such as refusal to increase livestock off take or to kill rodents as it is forbidden by Buddhism even though it would mean depletion of their income (Yeh, 2003:500). There is also the presence of religious leaders who are able to exert sufficient influence on the society and negotiate their way through the policies implemented by the state. In a number of cases, the state also relies on the religious leaders for resolution of a number of crisis, which is due to the presence of primordial socio territorial identities and authorities in the Tibetan region (ibid, 2003:503) which has not been completely mitigated by the modern Chinese state.

CHAPTER TWO: THE QINGHAI TIBET RAILWAY, URBANISATION AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN TIBET – SYMBOLS OF MODERNISATION.

Infrastructure and communications have been seen as the harbingers of modernity to Tibet. It has been portrayed as one of the primary reasons for ending the age old isolation and heralding progress and development in the region. Tibet has always been portrayed as "The Forbidden Land" where geographic access had been quite impossible due to the natural barriers which surrounded it. However, from a historical perspective, it had enormous trade relations with all its neighbours as well as with people from distant Central Asia. It was the British colonial design and the subsequent Great Game among Tsarist Russia, Imperial China and the British being played out in Tibet which led to an isolationist policy being pursued by the Tibetans (Norbu, 2001). Still, geography was a major barrier which gave poor connectivity to "The Roof of the World". This changed in 1951, with the coming of the Chinese, as by 1954 the Qinghai Tibet highway was completed and motorised vehicles rolled into Lhasa under their own power for the first time (Lustgarten, 2007:41). Since the coming of the Chinese, 58000 km of road network in Tibet has been covered, this includes five major highways and a number of subsidiary roads. By 1965 two highways effectively linked Lhasa with interior China.

By 1975 China had completed 91 highways totalling 15,800 km, with 300 permanent bridges in Outer Tibet alone, by which 97 per cent of the region's counties were connected by roads (Arya, 2011:82). The PRC plans to build additional roads in the TAR to link 92 percent of its towns and 70 percent of its administrative villages. The amount expected to be spent on the construction of 103 highway projects is around 20 billion yuan (Chansoria, 2011:14). All of these have been done in the backdrop of 18 January 2010 meeting of the CCP which was devoted entirely to the issue of Tibet and which outlined two goals for the TAR. Firstly, seeking a breakthrough style in economic development and secondly, maintaining long term stability in Tibet. Thus, the infrastructure development is geared for raising the economy of Tibet through boosting investment, smoother transfer of technology and resources especially the easier movement of qualified officials as well as "experts and talents" (ibid).

BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Moreover, with the Western Development Campaign and China's Tenth Five Year Plan, about 16.6 billion yuan was invested in building infrastructure. Beijing also plans to build over 50,000 km of expressways over the next 15 years. In 2001, the investment on infrastructure development was around 12.5 percent while in the TAR it was a massive 33 percent and a relatively high figure of 26 percent in the Qinghai region (ibid, 2011:11). It is also planning to hike up the investment in infrastructure in the 12th Five Year Plan 2011-2015, whereby the Lhasa Shigatse line of the railway will be constructed and as according to Ma Jinglin, a senior official of the Tibet Development and Reform Commission the total highway mileage in the TAR will reach 70,000 kms, more than 12,000 kms at the end of 2010 (Tibetan Review, 2011). The Western Development Campaign is seen as a tool to bridge the widening gap between China's wealthy eastern coast and the Western provinces. This policy covers six provinces, five autonomous regions and one municipality which nonetheless contain 70 percent of China's landmass but only 29 percent of its population. Under Deng's reforms there was an emphasis on the coastal regions in the east to pursue wealth, while the interior western regions lagged behind. The "trickle down effect" as emphasised by Deng Xiaoping through the reforms did not really happen. Hence, by the late 1990's the focus was shifted towards bridging the gap between the East and the West, through the culmination of a series of policies under the Western Development Campaign. Much of it in the prior stages called for the building of infrastructure and hardware development in the region. Major importance being placed on infrastructural development as the health of the economy is dependent on logistical capabilities. The major highways in Tibet are as follows –

1. The Central Highway (Qinghai Tibet Highway) – The Qinghai Tibet route opened on 15 December 1954 (Lustgarten, 2007) and is deemed as the "lifeline of TAR". This highway is 2122 km long and carries more than 80 percent of cargo and 90 percent of passengers in or out of Tibet. Paved with asphalt and has been black topped two ways, it takes around 32 hours to cover the highway (Chansoria, 2011:14-15)

2. The Western Highway (Lhasa – Kasghar/ Aksai Chin/ Xinjiang Highway) – This connects Xinjiang to Tibet especially the old city of Kasghar to Lhasa and is the longest about 3105 km.

3. Eastern Highway (Sichuan-Tibet Highway) – This is the road which connects Chengdu in Sichuan province to Nyingchi which is opposite of Arunachal Pradesh in

India (claimed by China) and is extended to Lhasa. It is black topped and asphalt surfaced covering a total of 2413 km and is primarily aimed at improving lateral mobility between central TAR and its eastern parts. Moreover, 5.3 billion yuan has been earmarked for improving 573 km stretch of this highway along with six regional highways and also 3000 km of roads leading to local counties and villages among other highway projects (ibid).

4. Yunnan – Tibet Highway – It is 716 km long and branches off from the Eastern highway with a width of around four to five meters. It is of much significance to India as rapid troop build up on the border regions can take place through this highway. Thus, the highways have a dual purpose and much of its utility is towards rapid deployment of troops and logistics. More than 50 national highways were built or renovated to military standards, including 3 roads leading to Tibet. Therefore, "the infrastructural development is well beyond the genuine needs of Tibet and Tibetans". (ibid).

The following figure shows the changes in road mileages as well as passenger and freight transport volume in Tibet between 1959 and 2008 (China Tibetology, 2009:7).
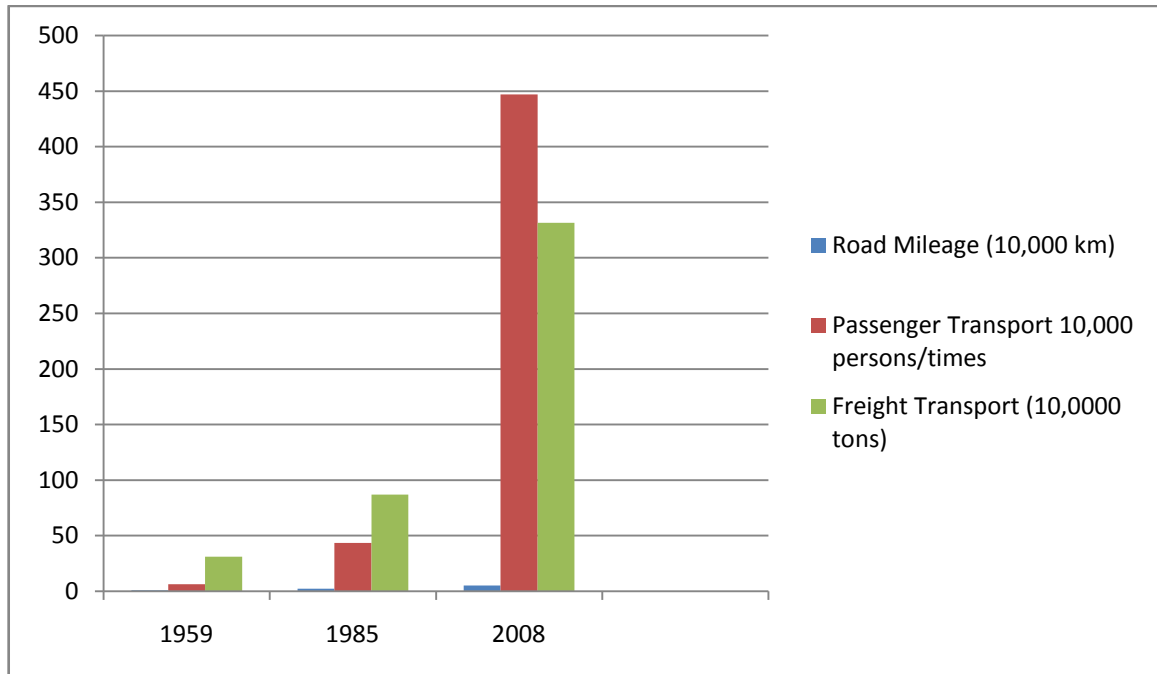
By 2010, around 58,200 kms of highways in Tibet have been completed covering all townships and 80 percent of administrative villages in Tibet. Tibet has also received an amount of 160 billion yuan in direct investment from the Central government from 1952-2010 and also an amount of 300 billion yuan in financial subsidies for the same period

(Beijing Review, 2011:24). In 2009, the region kicked off construction of its first expressway, which ran between the capital, Lhasa, and Gongar Airport. In 2010 a paved road pierced through the mountains to reach Medog, the last county in China without highway access (China Today, 2011:47). As an indication of progress in infrastructure in Tibet the TAR added seven county passenger stations, three rural terminals and 39 country bus stops in 2007 (Tibetan Review, 2007:8). China is also spending an amount of 20 million US dollars on a 17 km long stretch from the border to the Nepalese town of Syaburbensi which will boost trade and the local economy of the TAR (Arya, 2011:87). It is also constructing the first express highway on the Tibetan plateau from Xining in Gansu province to Tsonghka Kar, as a part of the Xining Lanzhou expressway (ibid).

The following table reflects the length of highways and the bridges in the TAR –

Year	Highways in operation (km)	Maintain Highways (km)	Bridge
2001	35537	12419	1293/35240
2002	39760	12419	1293/35240
2003	41302	13129	1528/42106
2004	42203	39243	1831/47238
2005	43716	39501	2012/59514
2006	44813	42645	3507/96062
2007	48611	45488	4265/115526

(Tibet Autonomous Region 2009 Yearbook, 213)

China has also extensively connected Tibet through airways and airports linking it with the rest of the country as well as with Kathmandu. Furthermore the TAR International Airline is presently under consideration in Tibet. Tibet falls under the China South West Airline catering to 10 domestic air routes and the single international route from Lhasa to Nepal. In total there are 5 operational airfields in Tibet and 15 surrounding it (ibid, 2011:89). The major ones are Gongar, Hoping, Pangta, Linchi and Gar Gunsa. Pangta has the highest elevation in the world. Some other important airfields are Donshoon, Nagchuka and Shiquanhe. Gongar and Pangta are being upgraded to cater to 1.1 million and 2.1 million transients per year (Chansoria, 2011:15). Moreover, through the 10th Five Year Plan, the construction of the Nyingtri airport was completed and operations started from July 2006. Under the present Five Year Plan of 2011-2015, the world's highest airport is to be

constructed in Tibet in Nagchu prefecture at an elevation of 4,436 metres above sea level with a budget of 1.8 billion yuan(ibid,2011:16-17). This would "perfect a 3-D transport network which would envelope all Tibet" (Agence France Press AFP, 2010). Only 3 out of the 15 airfields around Tibet are open for civilian activity. The unique topography and rare atmosphere of Tibet poses hurdles for planes which have been much solved by China through purchasing of new transport aircraft. The increase in the number of airfields and upgrading is seen to lure more tourists both domestic and international and thus contribute heavily to the Tibetan economy (Arya, 2011:89-90). However, much of the air transportation like other infrastructural development in Tibet has a dual role, civilian as well as defence.

Rapid connectivity is a key tool for economic development. Under this, the PRC in 2006 had invested 1.447 billion yuan for improvement of the telecommunications services in the farming and pastoral areas. Around 2112 administrative villages are linked through telephone lines which accounts for 35.59 percent of the total in Tibet (Chansoria, 2011:17). It has also been reported that China has laid fibre optic networks in all the 55 counties of the TAR. Lhasa was linked with Golmud through fibre optics in 1999 (ibid). Hence, the plan to connect all the cities and counties of the TAR by 2005 appears to have been successful. Around 1100 km of Optic fibre cables have been laid connecting Lhasa with Nyingchi and Chamdo counties in the east (China Tibetology Research Center, 2009:7). More importantly, in the past 20 years there has also been a growth of business transactions of the telecommunication services in Tibet at an annual rate of 34.4 percent, reaching 4.173 billion yuan in 2008 (ibid). The end of 2008 saw the number of telephone including mobile subscribers rise to 1.562 million, thus there are 55 telephones per 100 persons. The rural telephone subscribers' number to around 27000 household and in also Tibet has 800 internet websites, providing services to around 200,000 netizens (ibid).

The following table reflects the state of telecommunications in the TAR

Year	Capacity of local telephone exchange line	Length of optical distance cable lines (km)	Capacity of long distance telephone exchanges (circuit)	Number of telephone users(1000 sets)	Number of long distance telephone lines(2 trillion)
2001	244160	6789	52800	14.90	536.10
2002	272036	6872	41000	19.50	541.07

2003	293533	6405	41000	24.20	995.47
2004	340824	7565	41166	77.50	921.00
2005	362093	9576	44768	99.50	2852.00
2006	373974	13345	45000	128.70	3395.00
2007	416325	19019	44434	144.30	-

(Tibet Autonomous Region Yearbook 2009, 219)

Thus, the fibre optic communications and advancement in telecom does lead to a boost in the local economy of Tibet as it also indicates a real time connectivity achieved by the PRC in Tibet for the Tibetans. The presence of rapid connectivity through Fibre Optic Networks and satellite communications in Tibet has enabled China to quickly stifle the growth of dissent. Telecommunications has also served as a strong mode through which solidarity among Tibetans have increased, especially among the netizens, who are young Tibetans disenchanted from China's policies and articulate much on lines of Tibetan nationalism. The PRC keeps a tab over the internet through the Great Fire Wall but still materials of dissent in the forms of blogs, poems, articles, photographs and videos showing the state in a poor light are disseminated from Tibet. The telecommunication facilities are extensively used to unify the Tibetan residents from non TAR regions and was much utilised in the 2008 protests which had spread to regions outside TAR.

The linking of urban areas of TAR with neighbouring provinces have also led to the flow of Tibetans from Tibetan autonomous prefectures to Lhasa who had participated much in the recent uprisings and have acted as carriers of information from the TAR to their home counties/prefectures. It is specially the case with monks enrolled in the various monasteries in and around Lhasa, primary among them being Sera, Ganden and Drepung, which attracts a huge number and are mostly the sources of mass dissent against the Chinese state. Therefore, time and again the Chinese authorities have imposed restrictions on the movement of Tibetans from neighbouring provinces (TCHRD, 2009:65). This was specially the case in the aftermath of the 2006 Kalachakra initiation where the Dalai Lama had advised Tibetans against the usage of animal skins and fur as part of their costumes, which had led to massive burning of animal skins in Tibet. The Tibetans from outside TAR were placed on a guest list and employment being difficult to secure by them.

THE TRAIN TO TIBET

The idea of linking Tibet by train had germinated in the mind of Dr. Sun Yat Sen of the Nationalist government in the mid 1900's but it had to be given up as it was too expensive and physically insurmountable (TCHRD, 2009:64). Under the CCP, plans to connect Tibet by train were revived and tracks were first laid to Golmud a small frontier town in Qinghai extended from the capital city Xining (Lustgarten, 2008:48). However, the work was stalled by government bankruptcy emerging from the aftermath of the disastrous Great Leap Forward. This was revived from 1974 as the Chinese carried forward the plan to extend the railway from Golmud to Lhasa which was then obstructed by the lack of technology to tackle the harsh terrain of the Tibetan plateau (ibid, 2008:49). This project finally became a reality in 2001 when under the 10th Five Year Plan (2001-2005) China could muster up the financial requirements along with the technological breakthrough to construct a railway to Tibet. More important was that the international profile of problems in Tibet had diminished. On 29 June 2001 the then Chinese premier Zhu Rongji heralded the start of construction of the Qinghai Tibet Railway from the desert town of Nanshankou, Golmud, Qinghai (ibid, 2007:47). In a record breaking pace of four years, the railway link was completed on 12 October 2005, with initial unmanned trial operations and became fully operational from 1 July 2006. President Hu Jintao termed it as "a magnificent feat", "an engineering marvel" and also a proof of the claim that China is a "technological superpower" (Chansoria, 2011:13). It was Tibet's maiden railway line connecting and integrating the Tibetan plateau with the rest of China at a cost of 4.2 billion US dollars. It covers a total distance of 1118 km and reaches to altitudes as high as 5072 metres (Xinhua, 2002), thus being dubbed as the highest railway in the world. It contains 7 major stations and 17 junctions and runs parallel to the Qinghai Tibet Highway, which facilitated the easy transfer of construction materials and logistical support (Ministry of Railways, 2001)

Under the earlier 9th Five Year Plan (1996-2000) a preliminary route survey and feasibility studies were conducted for linking Tibet by train and numerous routes were proposed. Under this the Number One Survey and Design Institute of China's Ministry of Railways was instructed to prepare blueprints for a Golmud – Nagchu – Lhasa route and an alternative Lanzhou – Nagchu – Lhasa route (Lustgarten, 2007:17). The former idea became concrete but still the construction of three railway links from alternative regions to Tibet has also been started. These are –

1. The Gansu Tibet Railway – Proposed to link Lanzhou to Lhasa as well as the Qinghai Tibet Railway. It will extend over 2126 km, 419 will be in Gansu, 794 in Qinghai, 99 km in Sichuan and 742 km in Tibet. The estimated budget for the completion of this railway is 63.84 billion yuan and much of it will be in high altitude areas. It will pass through 60 tunnels and bridges and is to be completed by 2038. It will connect the nomadic heartlands of Amdo Rebgong, Malho, Kyegudo, Golok and Nagchu. What is of much importance is the train will link the Lanzhou Military Region directly to Lhasa thus facilitating the quick deployment of troops.

2. The Yunnan Tibet Railway – It is an extension of the Guangdong Dali Railway in Yunnan to Lhasa in Tibet and is estimated to be completed in 10 years. It will extend over 1594.4 km and will involve a total of 63.591 billion yuan. It will pass through Dechen Autonomous Prefecture, Zayul, and Nyingchi and then reach Lhasa. This route is of geo strategic importance to China as it is close to the disputed borders with India. What is also expected is the benefit this route will provide as it will link the southern regions of Tibet to the industrialised and affluent regions of Guangzhou, Macao and Hong Kong, which would lead to the flooding of cheaper consumer goods and products these Tibetan areas.

3. The Sichuan Tibet Railway – Starting from Dujiangyan in Chengdu Sichuan to Lhasa, this will cover a distance of 1927 km with 1243 km being in Tibet. Out of this 1180 km will have an average elevation of 3000 – 4000 metres with 132.5 km over 4000 metres. The investment involved in the project is around 76.567 billion yuan. A total length of 819.24 km will be only bridges and tunnels. The Chengdu Military Region will be linked to Lhasa directly through this railway line (TCHRD, 2009:86-95).

A major hurdle in the construction of the Qinghai Tibet Railway as well as the other rail links is the harsh terrain and weather of Tibet. For the Qinghai Tibet Railway, the major technical difficulty faced by it was the construction of the railway infrastructure on permafrost. The condition of the soil was such that it was constantly moving, in a process of thawing whereby the ice which melted in more temperate weather led to the contracting and settling of soil. When it froze, it pushed it upwards, the equivalent of a miniature tectonic plate moving at geologic light speed (Lustgarten, 2007:68). This would not be a major problem if the ground was permanently frozen but much of the permafrost on the plateau hovered just one degree below thawing. About 150 miles of the proposed route were generally warmer and more delicate than that, and so each summer the glaring sun would bear down on the plateau and

warm the region far beyond normal permafrost condition, wreaking havoc on the terrain (ibid). However, with rigorous research by a team of engineers and scientists, this problem was supposedly overcome and the tracks were laid. For the Qinghai Tibet Railway, elevated tracks with foundations sunk deep into the ground were built, with hollow concrete pipes beneath the tracks to keep the rail bed frozen, and using metal sun shades to overcome this problem. Liquid coolant has been added along various stretches to ensure that the permafrost does not melt and thus endanger the structural foundations of the tracks (Outlook, 2006). Much of these hindrances were overcome which truly enhanced the technological capabilities of the engineers involved. Therefore, the high mountain environment of northern Tibet became an open air laboratory for the Chinese scientists and engineers, which eventually granted most of them international recognition for their work on Tibet's permafrost (Lustgarten, 2008:67). The high altitudes and scarce oxygen also led to the need for high performance engines which on 15 November 2002 were built by the Qishuyan Locomotive and Rolling Stocks Work located near Shanghai. The new class of locomotives DF8CJ9001 is termed as the "holy boat on the snow land" (TCHRD, 2009:131). The engine generates 2700 KW at 5100 metre altitude and 3400 KW at 2800 metre. The maximum speed reached by it is 100 km/hr. However, it was completely designed by General Electrics USA (ibid, 2009:131). The Canadian company Bombardier and Nortel were also involved in the railway project. Canada's Bombardier fulfilled a US$280 million contract to build carriages with the capacity to withstand the journey through Tibet's frozen Alps, some with deluxe sleeping compartments equipped with showers, glass-walled sides for panoramic views, entertainment centres and gourmet dining areas, and toilets with sewage and waste-treatment systems (ibid, 2009:133).

The taxing conditions of the mountain environment on the workers led to immense delays and also to a loss of lives which were kept under tight wraps by the authorities so as to eliminate the survey teams' trepidation and also to boost more flow of labour work force from the lowlands to come to Tibet. According to the Railway Minister's Project Chief Zhu Zhensheng, a total of 100000 labourers were employed for the construction of the Qinghai Tibet Railway, of which only 10% were ethnic Tibetans (Melinda Liu, 2006). Thus, the majority of the work forces on the Qinghai Tibet Railway were Chinese from the lowlands. Much of them had great difficulty adjusting to the climate in Tibet. The earlier military campaigns and construction projects were affected by mountain sickness, tormented by the altitude. Tibet was seen as being inhospitable for humans but the Tibetans had adapted

physiologically to the harshness of the place. A senior Chinese Military doctor stationed in Lhasa since the early 1990's reported that PLA research proved that living at high altitudes had a long term negative effect on soldier's life expectancy. The ethnic Chinese women living in Lhasa travelled back to the lowlands to give birth for fear of delivering a brain damaged baby. The human toll was huge during the road construction project (Lustgarten, 2008:101-04). However, the rail road created immense employment opportunity for the lowlander Chinese from neighbouring provinces, especially those looking for better prospects or the numerous unemployed ones (ibid, 2008:235). Thus, the Qinghai Tibet railway absorbed a huge proportion of manual labour, majority being non Tibetans.

Under the leadership of the CCP and Mao Zedong, China embraced modernisation and underwent a process of conquering nature (Beijing Review, 1969). Through the implementation of Maoist thought on the ability to conquer nature by man, the PRC implemented a series of developmental projects gargantuan in proportion and with the urge to dominate nature. Much of these were unable to meet their goals often having disastrous consequences. A prime example is the Great Leap Forward which was marked by such misadventures when Man set out to challenge nature (Dikotter, 2010). It is in the later periods that China undertook mega projects which truly crossed the barriers. Almost all the developmental projects are based on a "bottom down" development strategy where the affected citizens are not much consulted. The Three Gorges Dam is a prime example of a mega project undertaken by China on the Yangtze River which satiated the huge energy demands of China but also led to massive human displacement as well as immense ecological damage. More importantly, with China's growth an insatiable hunger for energy is seen which has further pushed it to pursue developmental projects which truly transform the contour of the natural world. Under the Western Developmental Campaign, three major projects were initiated. The West East Gas Pipeline, the South North River diversion project and the Qinghai Tibet Railway. All of these are enormous projects which push the barriers of the natural world to its extreme (TCHRD, 2009:62)

In the case of the Qinghai Tibet Railway, the harsh terrain of Tibet became the battleground for China's best scientists and engineers to conquer Tibet's fabled topography, truly reaching new heights in scientific research and development and giving Tibet its very first railway (Lustgarten, 2007:108). The idea of taming the Tibetan wilderness especially the semi tundra region in North Tibet, with a majority of the land being permafrost has been likened to the coming of the railway to the American West which first started through explorations by the

pioneers (ibid, 2007:91). The train to Tibet was seen as Tibet's Second Liberation, a vehicle which brought it closer to the rest of China. It has also been strongly seen as a tool of assimilating Tibet, the frontier province finally connected by train. Han engineers and labourers toiling on the plateau constructing the world's highest railway were also imbedded with a notion of bringing civilisation to Tibet. The geography of Tibet was seen as taking the human spirit to its most extreme level, which was to be conquered and it was done much through the Qinghai Tibet Railway (ibid, 2007:161-62). Much of the construction were done by firms based in other Chinese provinces, which enabled them to gain the much required expertise and knowledge of constructing tracks and the train on a never before ventured geography. The linking of Tibet by train has been seen as a major technological leap by the Chinese (Fischer, 2008:265).

THE BENEFITS OF THE RAILWAY TO TIBET

The Qinghai Tibet Railway has been constructed under the aegis of the Western Development Campaign. It is to bring about the rapid economic development of Tibet and open up the plateau for further investment and modernisation. Through the railway, access into Tibet has become much faster and cheaper. It is seen to bring prosperity to the Tibetans and as according to the state the Qinghai Tibet would serve a dual purpose of economic consolidation of the region with the mainland as well as create stability in a restive region of China (Xinhua, 2006). With an investment of 4.2 billion dollars, the train to Tibet is till date the most expensive developmental project undertaken by Beijing for Tibet and the Tibetans. It is seen to improve the economic growth of Tibet by manifold especially trade as transportation prior to the railway line was limited to trucks on the Golmud Lhasa highway. The travel time has been reduced drastically from the earlier 3 days to 18 hours for passenger trains and to a day for freight carriages (TCHRD, 2009:130). According to the regional development planning commission in a report by Xinhuanet in 2002 predicted that the rail project would create 10,000 jobs during its construction and more than 2000 after its operation. Moreover, about US 1.2 billion dollars is to be invested in the extension of the railway line west from Lhasa to Shigatse with an extension south to the border region of Yatung (Dromo) near the Nathula outpost (Chansoria, 2011:13). It has facilitated the increase in the movement of products upto 45 times its current level and cut down transport cost by 7.5 percent.

The Qinghai Tibet Railway thus projects Tibet as a major trade hub between China and South Asia. It will increase the purchasing power of the Tibetan's as goods will be much cheaper, also boosting the income capacities of the Tibetans. The GDP of Tibet in 2009 reached a high of 43.7 billion yuan, an increase of 60 percent to 2005 which is much attributed to the heavy investments in the infrastructure as well as reforms in State owned enterprises and government organisations (China Tibet online, 2010). Following the railway, in 2007 the number of tourists to Tibet hit a record high of 4 million; nearly double the population of TAR. The train to Tibet was seen to be of great benefit to the nomadic communities in Tibet. The benefit has been likened to the train which connected the Haxai Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture to Xining. Earlier, the nomads had to herd their healthy animals by foot for weeks to the market in Xining, and their animals would go from fat to thin over the course of the journey (Lustgarten, 2008:50). However through the railway, the nomads and the traders could herd their healthy animals or transport the meat of the animals killed and refrigerated in the cars of the train, thus giving them much profit. This was the economic benefit touted in the Golmud rail development. Much of this was elaborated by the county officials from Nagchu. It is one of the important stations in the Qinghai Tibet Railway and home to 7.7 million head of livestock owned by around 387000 Tibetans which graze around 34 million hectares of grassland. Therefore, the train is seen to rapidly facilitate the growth of animal husbandry (TCHRD, 2009:89).

In the same county and next to the railway station, China completed the construction of the biggest logistics centre in South West China and in TAR in June 2009, which will further exploit the potential of the Qinghai Tibet Railway and boost the region's economic development. It was built at a cost of 1.5 billion yuan and by 2015 it is expected to handle 2.23 million tonnes of cargo and by 3.1 million by 2020. The PRC has termed that the primary aim of the logistics ramp up in the TAR is directed towards economic prosperity of the region by providing more and more business opportunities (Chansoria, 2011:8). China also intends to make Lhasa a SEZ with all the low tax rates (Barnett, 2006:68). With the Qinghai Tibet Railway high growth rates are expected in Lhasa and in the TAR. This was especially seen with the increase in foreign investments in Lhasa taking advantage of the tourist inflow and the quick transportation of hardware and heavy machinery much required for the build up of industries and for enhancing mining in Tibet. According to a number of reports, the Grand Hyatt and the Intercontinental hotel chains have opened properties in Lhasa, while the Continental Mineral Corporation, a Canadian Mining Company from

Vancouver is investing in a copper and gold deposit located 240 km south west of Lhasa (TCHRD, 2009:101). The Toronto based company Gobimin Inc had invested 1.625 million dollars to acquire 30 percent of the stake in a Chinese company involved in mining zinc and copper in Tibet. With the Qinghai Tibet Railway, 70 percent of the freight traffic will be mineral exports from Tibet (ibid). A greater reason for the construction of the railway to Tibet was exploitation of natural resources. This was the case with the original railway to Tibet planned in the late 1950's which could only be extended till Golmud (Lustgarten 2008:48). This was however never acknowledged officially and the state controlled media focussed more on the economic opportunity this would bring to the people of Qinghai.

However, the train till Golmud was seen to be of major importance to PRC as it was a strategically important place. It forms the gateway to Tibet from the rest of China, the point from where the Qinghai Tibet highway begins and as mentioned earlier it is the main route for men and materials to pass in and out of Tibet. Deemed as the life line of Tibet, the area of Golmud is also extremely rich in mineral resources especially in the Tsaidam basin located in the Qinghai Lake (TCHRD, 2009:111). It has about 50 different kinds of mineral resources, such as petroleum, natural gas, potassium, sodium, magnesium, lithium, boron, strontium, antimony, copper, lead, jade and crystal. It also has the biggest sylvite and magnesium mineral deposits in China, with about 32 million tonnes of sylvite, 316 million tonnes of magnesium and sodium which is 331 million tonnes. The proven petroleum deposit is around 30 million tonnes; natural gas is 300 billion cubic metres, being the fourth largest in the world. Therefore, the basin has around 50 salt, chemical factories and an oil refinery which were mostly established after the completion of the rail link (ibid, 2009:112). To the south of Golmud and where the new tracks have been laid are huge mineral resources of copper, cobalt and gold. Large oil reserves are supposedly detected along the railway line near Lhuenpola basin at an elevation of 4700 metres as well as in Jangthang and Kyegudo (ibid, 2009:130).

The Qinghai Tibet railway aids in the rapid exploitation of minerals and other natural resources especially south of Golmud into the TAR. Therefore, through the train the coal and petroleum deposits in Yushu "TAP" will be easily explored and transported to China (TCHRD, 2009:89). The gold and coal deposits in Nagchu will also be much extracted. The Yushu "TAP" also contains the largest copper mine in China where production started from 2008 onwards (People's Daily, 2008) with an output of 10000 tons of refined copper. It is supposed to contain around 6.5 million tons of copper reserves. For mining, the Yulong

Copper industry Company was set, a joint venture having a registered capital of 625 million yuan (Xinhua, 2006). According to official Chinese surveys, Tibet has proven deposits of 126 minerals, with a significant share of the world's reserves of uranium, lithium, chromite, copper, borax, and iron (Lustgarten, 2008:240-242). However, much of the minerals and natural resources in Tibet were unknown and exploration had not been done due to Tibet's natural barriers as well as the Tibet question garnering much international attention. Thus, in 1999 when Beijing had sent secretly an army of a thousand scientists, divided into 24 research teams on a 7 year mission to create a first detailed report on Tibet's resources. It was kept highly confidential as it would undermine Beijing's message that the primary objective of the region's development projects was improving the welfare of the Tibetans (Lustgarten, 2008:66). With the completion of the Qinghai Tibet Railway, the extracted minerals can be transported to China's industrial zones and also the extraction can be done at a faster pace. On 2 October 2006, two trains from Shanghai and Guangzhou entered Lhasa. The trains had departed on 1 October (China Daily, 2006). The importance of this event is the linking of the Tibetan region with the farthest cities of China which displays a consolidation of Chinese rule over Tibet but also more important is the economic and commercial value the linking of the cities has to Tibet, mainly through the transportation of raw minerals to the industrial zones of China.

The other proposed under construction train routes are seen as facilitators for extracting mineral resources from the regions that it passes through. According to sources, the Lanzhou Nagchu Lhasa route would enable the effective exploitation and exploration of mineral deposits such as gold, coal, tin, and uranium in Thewo, Machen, Golok, Kandze and the Chamdo region. Furthermore, Lithang and Dartsedo which fall on the way also contain minerals like gold, tin, coal, copper and bauxite. As it is linked to Nagchu, the minerals extracted from there can also be transported (TCHRD, 2009:92). The Dali Nyingtri Lhasa route will aid in the exploration and mining of minerals like bauxite in Balung, coal and gold in Gyalthang and uranium, iron, chromite in the Nyingtri belt. More importantly this route is of immense strategic importance to China (ibid, 2009:93). The last of the proposed routes which is the Chengdu Nagchu Lhasa route also has the immense potential to explore and extract mineral resources such as coal, copper, bauxite, gold and tin from Lithang and Dartsedo. From Thewo, Machen, Golog, Kandze and Chamdo more minerals can be exploited and transported (ibid, 2009:92-93). The Qinghai Tibet railway as well as the other train routes has accelerated the exploitation of natural resources which has led to the build up

of an industrial base around which modern cities are constructed. The urban centres are formed around secondary industries which are involved in the exploitation of natural resources. Thus, the Railway to Tibet is seen as bringing in a new wave of urbanisation to Tibet, which is the main seed of China's modernisation project in the Tibetan regions. Golmud can be taken as the perfect example of modern urbanisation accelerated by the Qinghai Tibet Railway (TCHRD, 2009:106).

According to numerous reports, Tibet has more than 300 moderately sized modern industrial and mining enterprises, including key industries such as electric power, mining, building materials, chemicals, textiles, tanning, printing and food processing (Chansoria, 2011:9). Beijing plans to invest 3.8 billion dollars to develop an additional 117 industries in the TAR (Tibet Information Network TIN, 2005). These enterprises are seen to facilitate the growth of urbanism in Tibet. Much of these industries are to be constructed with the aid of the Qinghai Tibet Railway. More importantly China has also built settlements every 60 km of the 1118 km long railway line, which are mostly populated by Han Chinese (Chansoria, 2011:13). The route of the Qinghai Tibet railway has also seen the growth of shanty towns where the migrant labour force settle which however may not be permanent. Much of the urbanisation is in lines with other cities in China which is seen especially in architecture, where traditional Tibetan ones are rapidly disappearing, being replaced by a new modern skyline which dominates cities like Lhasa. The Qinghai Tibet Railway thus brings forth urbanism to Tibet. It is expected to create urban enclaves in lines of Golmud; an urban centre which was propped up by the earlier extended train. The only hurdle seen is the harsh terrain and the inhospitable climate in Tibet but with the construction of the other 3 railway lines to Tibet, especially through Kham and Yunnan, it will facilitate the growth of urban centres as much of the areas that it passes through are much pleasant and fit for the migrant labour force arriving from the lowlands (TCHRD, 2007:93-94). The Qinghai Tibet railway is projected to make Lhasa into a major urban centre with the slow growth of urbanism in the peripheral regions. Billions of funds are pumped into Tibet by Beijing. Large chunk of it goes into urban construction, infrastructural building and maintaining the tertiary sector, which is again a major component of urbanism in Tibet. On the TAR's 30th anniversary it spent 4.6 billion yuan on 62 projects, on the 40th it spent 6.42 billion yuan on 24 projects. TAR former chairman Jampa Phuntsok said that in 2004 over 16.6 billion yuan was invested in building infrastructure (TCHRD, 2007:8).

THE QINGHAI TIBET RAILWAY AND URBANISATION

In 2003, a China wide policy of urbanising rural areas was implemented whereby smaller townships are aggregated into larger administrative units (Kate Saunders, 2003). This was the case when parts of Tolung Dechen County were annexed into Lhasa city municipality (Lustgarten 2008:118). The townships which are near or adjoining an existing town, or which are already a small town are being combined with neighbouring townships and renamed as one administrative entity. For TAR, there are plans to construct 106 new urban centres in a 15 year plan and deemed to be completed by 2005. The 10th Five year Plan (2001-2005) states - "The pace of small town development will quicken, with urbanisation resources will be concentrated into each administrative centre, and health and education administered at this level" (Saunders, 2003). Thus, the rationale for the urbanisation of rural areas is to improve social services, to create new productive enterprises, to raise the standard of income and living for rural people and to improve employment prospects for rural Tibetans. A statement made by the earlier Chairman of the TAR Legqog that "Tibet will speed up the construction of small towns to attract herders and farmers to settle down" reflects the policy of mass urbanisation that China intends to bring to Tibet. Around 81 percent of Tibetans which is the majority reside in rural areas making Tibet into one of the least urbanised regions in China. He further said that in the Eastern Tibetan prefecture of Nyingchi, more than 10 small towns have been built with subsidies being given by the state to farmers and herders to move and also certain guarantee of employment opportunities (Associated Foreign Press AFP, 2003).

Thus, through the implementation of the "Housing Programme" Tibetans are required to built new houses for which the state grants a loan of 10000 yuan while the remaining amount is to be arranged by the Tibetans themselves. This has led to the Tibetans living under substantial loan. Xinhua reports that 312,000 farmers and herders from 57,800 families moved into "new brick houses" in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) in 2008 under a government-subsidised housing project. The five-year programme was started in 2006 aiming to build fixed-location homes for 220,000 families. Upon completion, the project aims to house 80 percent of the region's farmers and herders by the end of 2010. To date, 860,000 farmers and herders from 170,000 families have moved into the new houses, according to TAR government statistics. Thus a rise in the urbanisation rate in Tibet from 22.61 percent to 43 percent is seen (Xinhua, 2009). Much of this is to be placed under the Urban System Plan for Tibet Autonomous Region 2008-10 and drafted by the China Academy of Urban Planning and Design (ibid). The government provides some subsidy for the Tibetans, who have to

contribute the bulk of cost of the building either by themselves or through loans provided by banks under government orders (TIN, 2008-09). More importantly, the houses which are built as mentioned earlier are not of traditional Tibetan design and are made of concrete which the Tibetans strongly dislike. They are built to Chinese specifications rather than Tibetan in terms of design which has led to a strong erosion of identity and culture.

The following table shows the major indicator for construction enterprises in the Tibet Autonomous Region

Item	2000	2007	2008
Construction Enterprises (units)	141	168	175
Value added of construction (10,000 yuan)	45811	145081	161107
Value of building completed (10000 yuan)	133086	606205	540875
Floor space of building under construction (10,000 sq metres)	86.98	211.65	256.63
Floor space of residential buildings (10,000 sq metres)	27.53	108.90	66.36

(Tibet Autonomous Region 2009 Yearbook, 201)

Thus, in 2007-08 we see a major growth in the urbanisation drive in the TAR, which can be strongly accounted to the Qinghai Tibet Railway which started its operations from 2006 onwards.

The "Urban" is seen as the site of modernisation, the vehicle of development in present day China. It is a site of progress, valorised and of immense political and cultural importance. This can be much accounted to the reforms launched by Deng Xiaoping, the growth of a market economy in China through which a shift is seen from the rural to the urban (Yeh,

2007:606). The megacities like Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, and Hongkong are seen as the manifestation of New China. Under the Western Development Campaign and the Fourth Work Forum on Tibet held in 2001, urbanisation gained pace. Much of the infrastructure development in Tibet is seen to be complementing the growth of urban towns and cities. It is the same with the Qinghai Tibet Railway, which has provided the logistical and hardware support for the growth of towns and cities to emerge. In numerous cases the railway has led to the gradual growth of urban areas through the resettling of a large number of nomads who were displaced from Qinghai. This began from 2006 onwards when resettling of the nomads took place but in uniformed and poorly built houses on the outskirts of towns and townships. In a number of cases as mentioned earlier, the nomads had to pay a partial amount for the construction of the houses (TCHRD, 2007:42). There are numerous reports emerging from Tibet where the authorities had denied adequate compensation or rehabilitation, seen in the context of Damshung County near Lhasa (Lustgarten, 2008:150-51).

The nomads and the farmers have been displaced by the building of the railway tracks or in a number of cases land have been grabbed from the Tibetans in the name of development, with compensation being promised or rehabilitation provided. However, what has been seen is that the question of livelihood has not been attended to especially for the nomads; whose basic source of existence is his/her herds of cattle and the open pastureland, which are no longer present (ibid). Furthermore, through the policy of fencing of the pastureland and sedentarization their source of income has been stifled. In large number of cases, they have been forced to sell their animals at a cheaper rate (TCHRD, 2007:40). The Qinghai Tibet railway has been the cause of death of their livestock as large numbers of them fell into the pits dug for the train. Also, livestock died due to consumption of poison sprayed on the tracks which was meant for rabbits and marmots. Not much compensation is given and the deaths of the animals are termed as deaths caused by pig disease (ibid, 2007:72). Development as a reason for land grabbing has actually led to the building of grand hotels and malls, which do not benefit the local Tibetans. Significantly, the nomads are alienated when they venture into the urban landscape as they lack the required skills to gain employment in the towns and cities. They lack proper education and Mandarin as a language becomes a hurdle for them to survive in the city (ibid, 2007:70). In 2003, the Chinese state initiated a new domestic law for nomads on the Tibetan plateau, which required them to decrease the size of their animal herds. This was to enable the "modernisation of Western China". It directly affected the traditional centuries old nomadic way of life, further pushing them into poverty and

destitution. The logic provided by the authorities for this act was to prevent the degradation of land. However, it indirectly curbed the nomadic way of life and also enforced them to move into cities and towns. This came under the policy of "Returning Grazing Land to Grassland" (Xinhua, 2012).

What is of major significance here is the differing perception which lies on the level of contradiction regarding the nomadic way of life and the usage of pastureland. The Chinese state bringing in a western scientific technological modernisation, seen in the form of macro projects which are implemented in a "top to bottom" manner which does not take into consideration Tibet's unique regional character and traditional economy. Majority of the Tibetans are rural based while the thrust of China's policies are urban as seen in the large amount of subsidies granted to Tibet, which are channelled into infrastructure and increasing urbanisation. The Tibetans incorporated into the urban are unable to cope due to structural problems and also the comparative advantages the Chinese migrants have over the Tibetans, which has led to an ethnic exclusionary dynamic (Andrew Fischer, 2008:242-43). What is also of significance is the differing notion of development between Tibetans and the Chinese authorities including the migrants. It is here that cultural understandings of work become important which is strongly fashioned by society, religion and political ideas (Yeh, 2007:600). Beijing portrays and sees Tibetans as being rigid, conservative and idle. This is seen as a major reason for Tibet's lack of development. Much of these are played out in the urban field which is the site of modernity (ibid). On the other hand, the Tibetans see development as a hegemonic project and they negotiate it through cultural idioms, portraying themselves as being lazy, which is an acceptance of the state's portrayal and also of being spoilt by modernisation which is seen through the contact of Tibetans with the new city that the Chinese have constructed (ibid, 602-05). In a number of cases this tactic is used by the Tibetans to differentiate themselves from the migrants.

Urbanisation and the coming in of the Han migrants have also changed the value of work where the Han are seen as hardworking, to be emulated by the Tibetans, emphasised by the Tibetan elites and intellectuals (ibid, 600). The urban space is portrayed as one where hard work is nurtured. However, the cultural notions of work needs to be understood where Tibetans work hard when it comes to barley cultivation and not really in vegetable cultivation which is mostly a Han affair (ibid, 602). It is mostly concentrated in periurban areas in and around Lhasa, where land is leased by the Tibetans to Han migrants who are involved in vegetable cultivation and who tend to earn a good profit. The Tibetans culturally consider

vegetable farming as being dirty hence not pursuing it. In many cases, Tibetan Buddhism plays a major role in shaping out notions of development, of work and modernisation, which however is seen to be playing a dual role (ibid, 607). There are instances where development work such as mining in a mountain has been stalled by the locals as it is deemed as a sacred spot (RFA, 2007). What is also important is that numerous practices of the Tibetans are deemed as unscientific and uneconomic by the Chinese authorities, which are much restricted as mentioned earlier in the fencing of pastureland and restricting the movement of nomads so as to prevent soil degradation. However, scientific analysis has proven the fact that the circulation of herds on the grassland has benefits for the land.

Tibetans are also seen as spoilt by China's modernisation project. This is expressed by the Chinese themselves who view the Tibetans as being the recipients of enormous amount of funds but still as ungrateful barbaric people who are spoilt by China's kindness. The view that Tibetan's are spoilt is also expressed by the Tibetans, as they believe that modernisation has spoilt them. The urban is seen as the site of vices and social ills. It is through contact with the city that the Tibetan indulges in a lot of bad habits and is detached from their villages. Thus, the city which is a result of the imposed political economy becomes the hub for the Tibetans to lose their identity and become redundant. The urban is seen as the place for sinicization and it is also the enclaves where the Han dominate. The urban which is a site of modernity is seen with deep discontent by the Tibetans as it attracts the villagers adding to their indolence, spoiling them (Yeh, 2007:606). The urban is further seen as a morally ambivalent place by the Tibetans as seen in the case of Lhasa with its flourishing "sites of vices" such as bars, brothels, karaoke bars etc which attracts the younger generation from the peri urban areas and villages making them more lazy and also unwilling to adapt back to the village lifestyle (Vincanne Adams, 2005:235). Even in the rural, modernisation is blamed much for spoiling the Tibetans with the usage of fertilisers. The enforcing of fertilisers by the authorities is on the basis of "scientific agriculture", a component to herald the dawning of modernity in agrarian practices, which however is deemed by the locals as spoiling the land as well as the crops. In the rest of China, usage of fertilisers has been much reduced due to the ill effects it brings to the land as well as to the consumers, which however is not yet implemented in Tibet. Furthermore, the Tibetans abhor the usage of fertilisers as it leads to the death of insects, going against tenets of Buddhism (Yeh, 2007:608).

The urban landscape is a major site of contestation where the hegemony of the state is put to action. As mentioned in previous pages, Beijing intents to bring a strong wave of urbanisation

to Tibet which is complemented by the train and the other major investments in infrastructure. It is also the sector where China pushes maximum subsidies and investment in the name of development for Tibetans, which however are seen as favouring the Han migrants who reside in the urban enclaves and have comparative advantages over the Tibetans. Even through the urban landscape Beijing has sought to remake Tibet as the traditional Tibetan structures and old houses have been mostly ravaged to the ground and in its place new constructions are made which makes cities like Lhasa look like a Chinese city (Lustgarten, 2008:121). This is generally seen to have led to a loss of identity and the culture of the Tibetans. There is a slow rise of modern style shopping malls replacing the traditional tea stalls which have been at the heart of Tibetan social life. What is most interesting is that in Lhasa, a strong contrast is visible where the Chinese living quarters have better facilities than the older quarters where the Tibetans live. It is also seen that the Chinese business establishments have been steadily making inroads into the heart of the Tibetan areas. Tibetan architectural buildings have been torn which has coincided with the demolition of the quaint "hutongs" in Beijing in 2002 (ibid).

Under the Western Development Campaign, Beijing intends to transform Tibet into a post industrial society on par with Shenzhen, Shanghai or Beijing. Thus, there was a move for the urbanisation of the smallest villages in the most rural regions of Tibet. In the 9th Five Year Plan in 1996, the Central Government called for the creation of more than 70 new towns and several large cities in Tibet by 2020 (ibid). The most immediate step in jump starting Tibet's transformation involved purging any antiquated infrastructure which was most widely seen in Lhasa. Tibetan architecture was torned down especially the old buildings where people still resided. Only one street corner retained the characteristic Tibetan architecture which was splashed out in the tourist brouchers (ibid). More importantly, the urbanisation was seen as for the benefit of the Tibetans and also had a strong political objective to it, which was stability and national unity. According to Luo Rong Zandui, the chief economist at the China Tibetology Centre, he stated that development of the township would lead to the development of the rural areas around. Thus, stressing on a trickle down effect for urbanisation to spread over Tibet (ibid, 2008:123). Urbanisation however has lead to a strong sense of alienation among the Tibetans as well is a strong tool employed by the Chinese state in Tibet to sinicize the land through the imposition of architecture which is more in lines with Chinese taste rather than Tibetan as well as the construction of such leads to a loss of memory and identity along with the rich architectural history that Tibet's few urban areas have.

CONCLUSION

The major highlight of China's modernisation project in Tibet has been the development that it has brought to infrastructure and urbanisation, along with its allied units such as telecommunication, healthcare and other soft investments. These are displayed as the benefits of China's policies in Tibet, which have lifted the region out of destitute and backwardness. This discourse by the ruling group is seen as a hegemonic tool by the Tibetan subjects that have also been blamed for diluting the Tibetan identity. However, it is also through these elements that the Tibetans have also created a sense of unity as seen through telecommunication and infrastructure which has made the flow of information easier and thus the growth of unrest. The infrastructure and other facilities are seen as modes of deriving legitimacy in Tibet by the Chinese state and are also utilised by the Tibetans in the creation of a pan Tibetan identity cutting across regions. Although through the good infrastructure, the Chinese are able to quickly stifle dissent and ensure a firm grip in the region, it has also made it easier for Tibetans to travel and share information. However, the tightening of authority over the plateau by China can also be rapidly done. These policies of urbanisation and the mega scale development have disturbed the flow of life in Tibet. With an increase in migration due to good infrastructure especially the Qinghai Tibet railway, it has led to a further sense of alienation for the Tibetans. Moreover, with rise in urbanisation and the policy of resettlement of nomads, the traditional live style as well as earlier economic opportunities for Tibetans has been immensely low. All of this has compounded to an increase in the angst against the Chinese which are seen in the form of protests as well as the self immolations. The top down heavy approach instituted by China in the case of infrastructure and construction projects are seen to be contradictory to the Tibetan psyche and are tools through which China can maintain stability in the region.

As mentioned in the previous pages, Tibetans have negotiated with the Chinese project of modernisation, through an affirmation of cultural, religious or ethnic idioms, they are partially able to resist the process of complete integration which is a major purpose of the infrastructure, railways and the process of urbanisation. However, this negotiation is also through sharing a space in the dominant discursive which is China's policies and ideologies, where the hegemonic principles and ideas become a way of exacting difference from China. This has been a major response that the Tibetan psyche has adopted in the face of the Chinese project of modernisation.

CHAPTER THREE: THE PAN TIBET PROTESTS OF 2008-11 AND SELF IMMOLATIONS – TIBETAN RESPONSE TO CHINA'S PROJECT OF MODERNISATION

In the spring of 2008, the Tibetan regions of the PRC were engulfed with a series of protests and demonstrations by the ethnic Tibetans, one among the 55 national minorities who form the PRC. These demonstrations were carried out by monks and nuns, who were joined by laypeople having a peaceful orientation to it in the beginning but were marred by violence, termed as the March 14 incident by the state. Much of the violence was directed towards the business establishment and commercial centres owned and managed by the migrant Han Chinese and the Hui Muslims. Numerous government buildings and institutions were also targeted, where the red flag of China was replaced by the banned Tibetan national flag (Warren Smith, 2010:1-70) interpreted as a challenge to Chinese legitimacy in the region. The PRC had incorporated the region in 1951 and after a failed uprising on 10 March 1959, the former sovereign of Tibet; the Dalai Lama had fled to India.

The unrest in 2008 also has its deep roots in the events which unfolded in 1959, remembered by the Tibetans as their National Uprising, which on the other hand is seen by the PRC as the failed revolt fermented by the serf owners in Tibet (Melvyn Goldstein, 2009:80-87). The Sino Tibet issue is one of the most polarized disputes which China is currently embroiled. At the centre of this issue are Tibet's status and the Tibetan people's right to self determination (Diana Jue, 2009:168). On the other hand, China sees it more in terms of a class struggle, one between the Tibetan serfs who have been emancipated and the exploitative upper classes led by the reactionary Dalai Lama. The emancipation was brought about by the People's Republic to Tibet, which also heralded the dawning of the modern age to the backward feudal "roof of the world" (ICT, 2009).

BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE PROTESTS IN 2008 – 2011

However even after 49 years of the liberation of Tibet, The TAR along with the rest of the ethnic Tibetan areas saw mass violent protests against Chinese rule as mentioned above. The immediate spark of the 2008 unrest in Tibet which is termed as the March 14 incident by the PRC can be traced to the arrest of some monks from Drepung monastery in Lhasa (TAR) who

had come out to celebrate the awarding of the U.S Congressional gold medal to The Dalai Lama in October 2007 and were arrested. In the following year 2008, the 10th of March saw 300 - 500 monks from Drepung protesting in Lhasa demanding for the release of their fellow monks who had been detained earlier. This also coincided with the commemoration of the 10 March uprising in Lhasa. Further demonstrations were seen from monks belonging to the other two great monasteries; Ganden and Sera, which were in the form of marches by monks and the display of the Tibetan National Flag. Along with pro independence slogans, the monks also carried out a sit in protest when they were stopped and recited prayers for the long life of the Dalai Lama and also the prayer for Tibet composed by the Dalai Lama; *Dentshig Monlam*.[1] The Chinese authorities were able to stop the marches and numerous participants were arrested. Certain reports mention the arresting of 15 monks from Drepung (Tsering Topgyal, 2011:187). The reports coming out from the Tibet Support Groups and the exile government in Dharamsala India relayed that the monasteries to which the monks were affiliated were surrounded by the security forces, with food and water been cut off. Beijing claimed that these activities were replete with splitting Tibet from the motherland, as the monks had been "shouting reactionary slogans" and carrying "reactionary flags" (Warren Smith Jr, 2010)

More protests were witnessed on the same day in Eastern Tibet, Kham and Amdo, incorporated in the modern provinces of Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan. These were also replete with similar iconography of a "demand for independence"[2] and were also led by monks. The response from the state was similar in the regions, whereby the protestors were detained and the monasteries surrounded with an imposition of an embargo. Warren Smith terms this as a major catalyst for the violence which erupted on 14 March when the Tibetans in Lhasa as well as other Tibetan areas turned violent, burning Chinese owned shops, vehicles and other public properties. In the following few days, the Tibetan areas were witness to scenes of rioting and severe clampdown from the Chinese state. Reports show that on 14 March an altercation in between the monks of Ramoche temple; the second most sacred shrine in Lhasa and the police turned physical which

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[1] Special prayer composed by the Dalai Lama for Tibet, calling for the victory of truth and driving away the enemies of Tibet.

[2] The walls of the towns were pasted with independence manifestoes.

led to the massive rioting in Lhasa. According to the Chinese, 1200 shops, offices, houses were burnt, 84 vehicles were destroyed, 325 people mostly Han Chinese were injured and 22 were dead. The total damage had been of 280 million renmenbi (Xinhua, 2008). As Ramoche is located in the old Tibetan quarters of Lhasa, the monks who were assaulted by the authorities were not taken lightly by local Tibetans, who were incensed at the sight and started pelting rocks at the authorities (Tsering Topgyal, 2011:188). On the same day, protests had taken place in numerous other parts of the TAR, which included Chushul, Samye, Shigatse and Tolung Dechen, and also in Sanchu and Dzoge, traditional Amdo incorporated in Gansu and Lithang and Sershul, traditional Kham areas incorporated in Sichuan.

In the province of Gansu, the official report confirmed the destruction of property worth 230 million Yuan which included 4279 shops and houses and 1500 other public facilities. These were centered on the monastic towns of Tashikyil and Labrang. The protests brought administrative work to a standstill and according to the authorities in Gansu it had affected 105 government organisations, 27 towns, 22 villages and 113 work units in Machu (Maqu), Sangchu (Xiahe), Chone (Zhuoni), and Tso (Hezhou) (Warren Smith Jr, 2010:17). In the Ngaba county (Aba) area of Sichuan, the damage from the arsoning and vandalism was estimated to the county's total revenues for the past ten years (ibid, 2010:15). The protests continued well into the month of May and involved the participation of Tibetans from all walks of life, including students. On 11 April 2008 there were clashes reported between Tibetan students and their Chinese counterparts in the Lhasa Middle School. In the Kardze TAP, protests took place in and around monastic centres such as in Tongkhor, Lithang and Tehor while on 16 March, in Ngaba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture the Kirti monastery was a major centre for protest which led to the death of 10 Tibetans (ICT, 2008). On the same day, in Machu Tibetan Primary and Middle school in Kanlho TAP in Gansu province led a protest of monks and locals which metamorphosed into a complete destruction of non Tibetan businesses and government offices (Topgyal 2011:190). There were more protests from the student bodies in the other regions which included students from Tsoe Teachers' College, Kanlho Qinghai Teachers' College and numerous others from Kardze and Ngaba in Sichuan. There was also the observance of a silent sit in and posting of posters as an act of solidarity by 500 students from the North Western University of Nationalities in Lanzhou Gansu (ibid). On 17 March, the Tsoe Medical College and Mewa Tibetan Middle

School in Ngaba had students protesting while a mass candle light vigil by Tibetan students in Beijing Central University for Minorities and the South Western University for Nationalities in Chengdu were observed. The 18 March saw a similar activity in the Qinghai Institute for Nationalities.

The protests were still continuing in the Kardze TAP which was briefly halted due to the massive earthquake which jolted the region on 12 May 2008. Most of the monasteries stopped protesting and they were involved in the relief work. The authorities were quick enough to prevent the monks from helping in the relief as well as downplayed their contribution. During the period when the Beijing Olympic was taking place a large number of protests were happening in Eastern Tibet, which was not known due to a heavy military presence as well as a virtual media blackout which was imposed on the entire region. A unique form of protest emerged during this period in the form of a civil disobedience movement in Tibet, with the locals refusing to celebrate the Tibetan New Year and the authorities trying to impose celebrations through financial measures which did not have many takers (Woeser, 2009). In April 2009, a farming boycott was initiated in Kardze and Tibetans clashed with security in Machu Kanlho. On 15 April 2009, seven Tibetans were injured as they were protesting and nine were arrested in Nyarong in Kardze TAP (VOT, 2009).

On 19 October 2010, in Rebkong (Tongren) in Qinghai, several 1000 primary and secondary school students started protesting against the policy of curbing the use of Tibetan as a language of instruction in the schools which was perceived as a policy of restricting Tibetan culture and identity. These areas were the centres of massive protests during 2008. Similar demands for the Tibetan language were seen in Gansu province as well as by students from Beijing Minzu University (Woeser 2012). Furthermore, Woeser also mentions about 300 Tibetan teachers jointly composing a letter to the provincial government of Qinghai requesting for the Tibetan students to be taught in their mother tongue and establish Tibetan as the main language of teaching rather than implementing "Mandarin as the first and Tibetan as the second language and opening pre schools in Mandarin". Similar opinions were also given to the higher authorities of the United Front Work Department and the Ministry of Education. This had some positive effects as the Qinghai Party Secretary had mentioned that reforms in 'bilingual education should

be gradually implemented as according to local conditions'. Similar protests occurred in the month of March in 2012, when school textbooks were again turned into Mandarin in these regions. The demonstrations were mostly from students from the middle schools as well as from the Teacher Training Colleges.

The issue of language in Tibet is highly contentious as a major issue of grievance from the exiled leadership is "cultural genocide", with Tibetan language disappearing from the curriculum of schools. While Beijing mentions about the preservation of the Tibetan language, in schools such as the Tibet Shanghai Experimental School in Lhasa. This has been built with funds from Shanghai where around 900 students are educated mostly from rural backgrounds. However, except for the Tibetan language, all subjects were taught in Mandarin as well as exams were written in Chinese (Grammaticas, BBC News, 2010). For China, it is a matter of stability and nation building, which the Tibetan identity is seen as posing a threat (Tibet Work Forum, 2010). Language is a major identity marker and a need is felt to eliminate it, thus Mandarin is seen as a must for the Tibetan regions for it to be a part of the motherland. This has also led to institutional reforms like the ones in Qinghai province where the elimination of difference through the imposition of Mandarin is regarded as a major political task for the future of the Tibetan region (Highpeaks Pureearth, 2012).

A number of monks and nuns also committed suicide as a sign of protest as well as out of desperation due to the embargo imposed on their monasteries and nunneries (Warren Smith Jr, 2010:13). In total there were about 159 protests in Tibet, out of which 117 took place in areas outside the TAR, regions which form the cultural Sino Tibetan frontiers. The protests in the spring of 2008 have been termed as a national uprising by scholars like Warren Smith, Robert Barnett and Robert Thurman due to its magnitude both in size as well as in territory. It was truly one of the largest protests in the history of modern Tibet after 1959, assuming a pan Tibet appearance. The frequency of the protests was more in regions which are supposedly the most assimilated. This has been seen as the resurgence of Tibetan nationalism by numerous scholars. According to Robert Barnett, "the phenomena of Tibetan nationalism and the idea of Tibet as a distinct nation are much more widespread than 20 years ago" (Robert Barnett, 2008). On the other hand, PRC sees the incidents in March 2008 as a contradiction between nationalities, a law

and order problem, of trouble fermented by "hostile foreign forces" and the Dalai Lama. Beijing saw the protests mainly as riots and thus termed it as the 14 March incident, thus downplaying the peaceful protest which had occurred on 10 March, termed by Tibetans as a National Uprising Day. The protests in March occurred in the backdrop of the Beijing Summer Olympics, which was to be the platform for the display of "China Rise". However, these protests inside Tibet as well as the series of anti China demonstrations outside Tibet marred China's journey to the Olympics. PRC placed the blame completely on the Dalai Lama and also gave numerous examples of a number of exiled groups participating in anti Chinese activities, including a "March to Tibet" from India. The organisers did want some response from Tibet, but however these could not be directly linked to the events of March 2008 in Tibet (Warren W. Smith Jr, 2010:41).

RESPONSE FROM THE STATE

In response to the unrest, Beijing unleashed the repressive arm of the state through mass arrests, detention and also torture which have been reported (ibid). Beijing denies the usage of the military but the People's Armed Police as well as disguised units of the People's Liberation Army were used to curb dissent (Kanwa Defense Review, 2008) and use lethal force on the protestors. As according to numerous defence analysts, there was the usage of T-90/89 armoured personnel carriers and the T-92 wheeled infantry fighting vehicles. The 149th Division of the Number 13 Group Army under the Chengdu Military Region was dispatched to Lhasa. The leopard camouflage uniforms which are meant for mountain warfare was used by the soldiers (Topgyal, 2011:189). A 110 Command Centre was also established in Lhasa under the direct command of the then Party Secretary of the TAR, Zhang Qingli for crushing further revolts and also major posts are held by Zhang Xinfeng, the Vice Minister of the Central Public Security Ministry as well as by Zhen Yi Deputy Commander of the People's Armed Police Headquarters in Beijing (Chansoria, 2011:22). More importantly the infrastructure which was seen as the highlight of Tibet's modernisation programme by China was put to good use in the quick deployment of troops. The blockade in the major monasteries whose residents protested continued. Repression was accompanied by propaganda by the Chinese state in the form of the "Patriotic Education" in monasteries, broadcasting of videos and images highlighting on the

modernisation brought about by the PRC and also the violence done by the Tibetans. Most common Tibetans had to undergo sessions on "expose, repudiate and denounce the evil doings of the Dalai clique and firmly struggle against the separatists" (Warren Smith Jr, 2010:16).

Surveillance, monitoring of the Tibetans increased and Tibet was firmly placed under a lockdown where foreign travellers were barred. The state took foreign journalists on a guided tour around Lhasa to show signs of normalcy which however were disrupted by monks of the Jokhang; Tibet's holiest shrine, who protested and told the journalists that the State was feeding them all lies (ibid, 2010:18). Reports have also shown that officials had prevented the last rites of the numerous dead Tibetans and had cremated many killed, thus not letting the custom of "sky burial" from taking place. In a number of cases, Tibetans have been denied medical care or were too afraid to seek medical help from the Chinese (ICT, 2008:4). A major ploy employed by the Chinese state has been raising strong nationalistic emotions against the Tibetans from the Chinese in other parts of China as well as in citizens based abroad. This was used to the optimum during the Olympic torch relay. The Chinese generally saw the Tibetans as ungrateful for all the Central government investments and funding provided and also emphasised on the liberation of the Tibetans from a dark and feudal past under the Dalai Lama. Thus, the Chinese tried solving the issue of Tibet through domestic repression and through coercive diplomacy. An attempt to change the perception of the world towards Tibet was initiated by China.

According to Woeser, the Chinese and the Tibetan leftists were also in favour of bringing back the language of the Cultural Revolution and of creation of local militias to expose counter revolutionaries. The Tibetan leftists are individuals like Jampa Phuntsog, the current chairman of the Standing Committee of the People's Congress of the TAR, who in an interview to the Hongkong Television station, Phoenix at the sidelines of the meeting of the NPC and the CPPCC stated "in 2012, work teams are stationed in 5000 administrative villages. This is not only to maintain stability; it is more about helping local residents to foster economic development. The cadre stationed in the village will change within the next three years; the entire region will have had over 20.000 different cadres stationed in villages" (RFA, 2012). Thus in the name of stability and development, the Han are to be sent to different regions in Tibet which would certainly dilute Tibetan identity more. Zhang Qingli, the former Party Secretary of the TAR had brought

back the language of the Cultural Revolution, when he stated that the Dalai Lama was a wolf in monk's robes, a human with the heart of the beast, vilifying the exiled leader, blaming him for the riots and protests (the Guardian, 2008). Woeser further mentions that during those periods much of the Tibetan business establishment were closed in Lhasa and other cities (Woeser, 2008). The Patriotic Education was intensified in monasteries and nunneries, which was faced with stiff protest from the Tibetans.

The Tibetans who had been implicated in the riots and caught were handed hefty prison sentences, along with severe beatings and torture. Numerous Rights group claimed that the trails were not "open and public" as claimed by Beijing. The trial had taken place on April 21-25 (Frontline, 11:2008). It was only the sentencing that was done in an "open court session". Defendants were given Beijing's handpicked lawyers and individual Chinese lawyers who wanted to represent the Tibetans were threatened with a revocation of their licenses. However, in Beijing for the annual NPC meeting, the then chairman of the TAR government Jampa Phuntsok said only 76 of the 953 people detained for their involvement in the Lhasa riot had received prison sentences and the rest had been released. The ones jailed were found guilty of theft, robbery, and arson, disrupting public services or attacking government agencies. Only a few were convicted of endangering national security (China Daily, 2009). Beijing also gave the first death sentences for Tibetans involved in rioting in early April 2009. Two Tibetans were sentenced to death, two more to death with a two year reprieve, and one to life imprisonment for starting fatal fires. The spokesperson for the Lhasa People's Court stressed on the defendants been given open trials, the providing of Tibetan interpreters and "their lawyers fully voiced their defences. The litigious rights of the defendants were fully safeguarded and their customs and dignity respected (Xinhua, 2009).

A major response from the state has been the one sided media blitzkrieg that was launched against the rioters and the Dalai Lama. In a report in the official Chinese media, the Public security officials had announced the recovery of massive weapons which included 178 guns, vast quantities of ammunition, 359 swords, 3504 kilograms of dynamite, 19350 detonators and 2 hand grenades which were recovered from the rooms of the monks in the Tibetan temples (Frontline 2008:11). They linked this to the activities of the Dalai clique in exile and the possibility of a

formation of a violent Tibetan People's Uprising Movement to disrupt the Olympics. This was further accentuated through the Chinese netizens who lashed out at the Western media for their biased reporting and condemned the Tibetans and the Dalai Lama (Tsering Topgyal 2011:200). The nationalism of the overseas Chinese came out in the open during the Olympic torch relay when it faced protests from Tibetans in exile and their supporters which led to counter protests from the Chinese. In a manner, the Tibetans and the Chinese were again caught in the same polemical process of trying to capture the narrative of the period, each claiming genuineness and thus legitimacy.

LITERARY AND CULTURAL RESURGENCE IN TIBET

The protests of 2008 and the repressive response from China led to the growth of a strong undercurrent of cultural nationalism which was best seen in the form of writings, songs, poetry and other arts which have led to the growth of a strong Tibetan nationalism and sharpening of identity. Most of the writers or artists were born in a Tibet which was already under Chinese control and many were even born after the tumultuous period of the Cultural Revolution in a period characterised by Deng's reforms. They are also seen to be fluent in both Chinese and Tibetan and are techno savvy, using the internet to disseminate their views. In a number of cases, these Tibetans were close to the Chinese Communist Party and were working in the state's publishing houses or as editors for official magazines. There are also a few who were members of the CCP (TCHRD 2010:23).

However, majority of the known literary figures and public intellectuals have criticised the policies of the CCP especially its handling of the 2008 uprising. Most of the writings of this period are seen as a strong need to propound difference as against the narrative of the state. These works are seen as the alternative version of events which took place in 2008 in Tibet and have risen in the aftermath of the state's brutal crackdown which was disillusioning for a majority of them. More importantly, the aftermath of the protests saw the plateau being shut to the outside world and the state was the sole voice regarding the events in Tibet (Topgyal. 2011:190). The Tibetans were blamed as rioters and attacking the Han immigrants, which was not taken lightly by other Chinese in the rest of China. They saw the Tibetans as being ungrateful

for its benevolence. The Tibetans were also subjected to racial profiling in their own land and were targeted in China. This was a major catalyst for a strong outpouring from the Tibetan cultural figures. In many cases the writers and the singers could voice their opinion to the outside world through the internet or other forms of telecommunications which frustrated the authorities more (TCHRD, 2010:22).

A deep impact was marked in the psyche of the Tibetans through the events of 2008 which led to an increase in the national consciousness of all Tibetans irrespective of their backgrounds. What is significant is the chasm created between Tibetans and the Han through a strong subversion of the truth regarding the protests by the authorities. The policies implemented after 2008 especially the Patriotic Education Campaigns in almost all spheres of life led to a further sharpening of Tibetan identity and consciousness which have been popularly expressed in the writings and songs which emerged then. The works of the scholars, popular writers and artists have an important phenomena of being the medium through which the angst as well as aspirations of a common Tibetan is highlighted, thus creating a popular form of nationalism (ibid, 2010:49). This is best seen in the song titled 'Unable to Meet' sung by Tashi Dhondup a popular singer from Malho TAP Qinghai province who was arrested on December 3 2009 for singing "reactionary songs" and made to undergo "re-education through labour" for 15 months (ibid, 2010:58). The lyrics of the songs are a dedication to the Dalai Lama.

 Unable to Meet

 When I think about it I am unfortunate
   I am unable to meet the Precious Jewel
   Even though I wish, I have no freedom
   If I think about this I am unfortunate

   When I think about it I am unfortunate
   I am unable to wave the Snow Lion Flag
   Even though i wish, I have no freedom
   If I think about this I am unfortunate

When I think about it I am unfortunate

I am unable to sing a song about loyalty

Even though I wish, I have no freedom

If I think about this I am unfortunate

Even though I wish, I have no freedom

If I think about this I am unfortunate (TCHRD, 2011:57)

In the lyrics above the Precious Jewel is a direct reference to the Dalai Lama, whose return to Tibet was a major demand made by the protesters in 2008 and afterwards. The Snow Lion Flag is the banned national flag in Tibet, which was unfurled by many during the protests. Therefore the song above voices directly the lack of freedom especially the lack of freedom in thought in China's Tibet and the anguish in the singer for freedom for Tibet. This song with its bold lyrics was highly popular in the region and 5000 copies were promptly sold (Jane Macartney, 2009). The song featured in the album "Torture without trace" can be seen as a direct result of the events which occurred in 2008. There have been numerous other songs which are subtler in their interpretation of the lyrics such as "The Sun, the Moon and The Stars" or "*nyidakarsum*" in Tibetan sung by the famous singer Kunga in the album titled 'Waiting in Hope' released much earlier in 2004 (Youtube,2010). The heavenly bodies are a euphemism for the Dalai Lama (sun), the Panchen Lama (moon) and the Karmapa (stars) and the singer longs for the return of the trinity.

On the other hand the creative writings and other works emerged with the growth of nationalism as the Chinese suppression was also perceived by them in lines of ethnicity and the state furthering the increase of this perception through a propaganda overdrive in the official media. The brutal crackdown on many a peaceful protests as well as the cultural imperialism which was imposed on Tibet after 2008 led to the Tibetans raising their voices of dissent. A large number of writers and public figures were active in criticising the state prior to 2008. Among them, one of the most vocal and powerful voices has been that of Woeser, the daughter of a Tibetan PLA commander, who was born in Tibet but lost her mother tongue Tibetan due to the Cultural Revolution. Her background provided her with a good education after which she started working as an editor for a leading Tibetan literary magazine. It was her brush with Tibetan literature that

she discovered her strong Tibetan roots (ICT, 2009:9).

Significantly she started writing critically on China's policies in Tibet and in 2004 her book 'Notes on Tibet' was banned and she was made to undergo political re-education. This made her shift to Beijing where she married the Chinese dissident writer Wang Lixiong, who is equally critical of China's policies in Tibet and emphasises that the Dalai Lama is the key to resolving the issue of Tibet. Woeser wrote extensively on the effects of massive immigration of Chinese, unbalanced economic development and on religious repression in Tibet. In 2008, she emerged as the sole unofficial source and through her blogs kept an almost daily updates of the situation in Tibet, thus keeping a proper chronicle of an event which was of utmost importance when information became a valuable commodity. However she was placed under house arrest in Beijing and her blogs were shut as well as came under a series of attacks from state backed hackers (ibid, 2009:10). Apart from her, there were several others who were arrested in the early periods of the protests such as Jamyang Kyi, a prominent Tibetan television personality, singer and song writer, blogger and women's rights activists who was arrested on 1 April 2008 (International PEN, 2008). Numerous intellectuals such as Go Sherab Gyatso, Arig Dolma Kyab, Golog Palchen Gyal and Norzin Wangmo were arrested. Norzin Wangmo was arrested and imprisoned for 5 years, which was simply for communicating with people abroad while the rest were arrested for their roles in the uprising (Topgyal, 2011:191). What can be analysed from such acts is the desire to curb the Tibetan intellectuals and thinkers who can be and to a greater extent were the ideologues of Tibetan nationalism. They were the foundation on which Tibetan nationalism would be propounded hence needed to be stifled.

On the other hand there were a multitude of Tibetan scholars, intellectuals and writers who were aroused by the events of 2008 to produce works which were highly critical of the Chinese. Prominent among them is the case of Tragyal who wrote under the pen name Shogdung which means Morning Conch. He was an editor at the Qinghai Nationalities Publishing House in Xining and was closely associated with the CCP. Tragyal's earlier works were highly critical of Tibetan Buddhism as he blamed it as an impediment towards Tibet's modernisation. However after 2008 in his work 'The Line between Sky and Earth', he describes Tibet as a 'place of terror' and directly challenged the party's views on the representation of 2008. His work is

illustrative of the increased amount of restrictions imposed on Tibetans in the post 2008 Tibet by China and is critical of the ethnic discrimination faced by the Tibetans which displays a perverted form of racial superiority by the Chinese. He also notes that the repression in 2008 has its roots in the 1950's and sees the Chinese as 'conquerors'. What is significant is that he is most critical of the Chinese policies in the monasteries, thus reaffirming faith in Buddhism. This act of defiance by him led to his eventual incarceration on 23 April 2010 (TCHRD, 2010:44). He was one of those who emerged critical in the aftermath of the events of 2008 and the Chinese state's handling of the situation. Tragyal also elaborates on a non violent tactic which is needed for opposing the Chinese state (ibid, 2010:47).

In the post 2008 scenario, the intellectuals and the writers began to express more distinct political views. This period saw the emergence of a strike hard policy against writers and cultural figures that were earlier seen as moderate and secular but were now seen as reactionaries and thus endangering state security. As a response apart from the arrests, the authorities had also launched a campaign whereby restrictions were imposed on businesses providing photocopy services through issuing permits on them (Sharon LaFraniere, New York Times, 2012).This was seen as a policy to circumvent the production of illegal literature and dissident articles. Apart from literature, songs became an important medium through which the turmoil faced by Tibet in 2008 was much highlighted. This has led to a lot of singers like Tashi Dhondup being detained from producing such songs as well as a lot of people from keeping such songs in numerous forms. For in the aftermath of 2008, CCP officials in a high school near Shigatse banned 27 popular Tibetan language songs including the Hope of the Son of the Snow Lion and the 5 Coloured Prayer Flags (RFA, 2010). Xin Yuanming, the Deputy Director of the Lhasa City PSB confirmed on 23 December 2008 press conference that his unit had initiated a crackdown on "rumour mongering" and "rumour spreading" in the form of reactionary songs (TCHRD,2010:55). Songs are an important part of Tibetan culture and heritage, one that is available to all which the state has tried to circumvent and dub it as being reactionary.

However, especially under the Cultural Revolution, Tibetan songs were banned, termed as being decadent and bourgeois by the CCP. There was a slow revival of Tibetan performing arts in the post reform periods, which however faced much flak during the emergence of hard line policies

after the protests of 1989, thus songs which spoke of strong Tibetan identity as well as glorified the Dalai Lama was banned, which made a strong return during the post 2008 period (TCHRD, 2010:55). There is an abundance of songs deemed as reactionary in Tibet which also like the dissident writings brings about a strong sense of nationalism among the Tibetans, for instance these few lyrics taken from a song sung by a nomad who was arrested speaks about the atrocities committed during 2008 by the Chinese. The lyrics are translated by Lamajabb (ICT, 2009:36) and are as follows -

> The year 2008
> The year 2008 when innocent Tibetans were tortured
> The year 2008 when citizens of the earth were killed
> We live in terror of the year

The nomad was eventually arrested, but what is important here is the pain and suffering highlighted of Tibetans during 2008 and equating them as being citizens of the earth which as according to the translator stands for the universal Human rights which are getting trampled in Tibet. In this song as well as in almost all the protest literature emerging from Tibet after 2008, there is an equating of the events of 2008 with the 1950's when the Chinese had first come to Tibet and Dalai Lama had eventually fled (ibid, 2009:36). Songs like these tend to bind the natives together and thus create a strong sense of unity and nationhood among themselves. There is also a strong referencing to the Dalai Lama in them who is seen as a ray of hope for the Tibetans in Tibet. The affirmation of a stronger faith to the Dalai Lama also arose due to Beijing vilifying the Tibetan leader to the extreme and condemning him for all the turmoil in Tibet. In the Fifth Tibet Work Forum 2010, the Dalai Lama was termed as a "special contradiction" by President Hu Jintao, thus intensifying the attacks on the spiritual leader more (US Congressional on Executive Commission on China, 2010).

As mentioned earlier most of the writers and public figures were fluent in Chinese and many wrote in Chinese. This can be perceived as a major blow to the leadership in Beijing as their writings can be now accessed by the greater Mandarin speaking public. On a more ideological level, it emerges as a new challenge to the state as the language of the ruler is employed by the

ruled to criticise. Thus, Mandarin which was a language of liberation for the Tibetans; a gift from the centre to the periphery has been effectively used as a language of dissent. Through the employment of appendages present in the dominating structure, modern Tibetans have been successful in subverting the political space to voice their angst against it. There has also been the flourishing of dissident magazines and newspapers in Tibet; *Shardungri* (Eastern Snow Mountain) being one of the most famous ones, which was banned in mid 2008 when its last publication carried articles which were highly critical of the state's handling of the 2008 protests and squarely blames the government for the failure in its Tibet policy over the past 50 years. The editor Tashi Rabten, a prolific writer and student of the Northwest Minorities University in Lanzhou in Gansu was arrested on 6 April 2010 (TCHRD, 2010:48). He had brought out a book 'Written in Blood' in 2009, recounting the events of 2008, the Chinese brutal Chinese repression and had also written on democracy.

The last edition of the Eastern Snow Mountain had articles which stressed on numerous Western liberal ideas such as democracy, equality and human rights. It also analyses the National Regional Autonomy Laws and termed it as nominal, subverted by the Chinese to meet their own ends. There is an extensive criticism of the Communist state through the deployment of Marxist ideas and lexicon, making it more potent as it can be termed as the reclaiming of a sense of justice through the strategic usage of Marxism, which the CCP is blamed to have forgotten (Lamajabb, 2009:33). In another article, the writer quotes extensively the ideas of Will Kymlica, a Canadian political theorist and a strong proponent of multiculturalism. Kymlica is used to vouch for linguistic freedom through institutional protection as well as through limiting migration. The contributors of the Eastern Snow Mountain are not only critical of the Chinese leadership but show their strong disapproval of all form of established authorities especially the Tibetan ones, who are seen as colluding with China. They include few senior Buddhist clergy, Tibetan officials and Tibetologist scholars who are seen as collaborators of China, aiding in the creation of the official discourse regarding Tibet (ibid). Therefore, most of the contributors along with the editor Tashi Rabten are young Tibetans, many who are still in university, are recipients of an education which is distinctly Chinese and are highly internet savvy, however in the aftermath of 2008, there has been a flourishing of voices through numerous mediums which are highly critical of China and its policies in Tibet.

There is also an increase in the reclaiming of the events of 1950 by the Tibetans which were earlier spoken of only in private circles, but now there is an open comparison between the events of 2008 and the one's which took place in the 1950's, which is highly crucial from the sense of nationalism, as 1950 is generally marked as the year when the Tibetans lost their de facto independence with the coming of the PLA and the CCP. This period also saw the numerous uprisings in Eastern Tibet and the National uprising in 1959 in Lhasa which eventually led to the flight of the Dalai Lama. Hence the equating of the events of that period to 2008 is an affirmation of Tibetan nationalism which is given a form through the writings, songs as well as other art forms of the present period. Therefore a strong surge of Tibetan nationalism is witnessed which percolated to all sections of the Tibetan society. Benedict Anderson saw the growth of print capitalism as an important factor for the growth of nationalism or the idea of a nation state where literature and the press play an important role in the growth of nationalism. This can also seen in the context of Tibet, where through written literature as well as the writings posted in the internet a strong sense of national solidarity among Tibetans have increased.

Some of the other important figures who were arrested in the aftermath of the protests in 2008 are – Kunchok Tsephel, a former official in a Chinese environmental department and founder of a Tibetan Cultural Website, who was sentenced to 15 years in prison for charges on passing information regarding 2008 to the outside world. Dhondup Wangchen, a filmmaker who along with Jigme Gyatso a monk from Labrang Tashikyil his assistant had directed the documentary "Leaving Fear Behind", which had a series of interviews of local Tibetans voicing their opposition against China's policies in the backdrop of the Olympics in 2008. The documentary was eventually sent out of Tibet and the filmmaker and his assistant were arrested. While Jigme Gyatso was released, Dhondup Wangchen remains in custody where according to sources he is suffering from Hepatitis B and has been denied adequate treatment (TCHRD, 2010:86). Apart from this, the state has also targeted individuals who are considered to be non political but are prominent members of the Tibetan community. The case of the philanthropist, antiques dealer and environmentalist Karma Samdup who was noted as a model Tibetan citizen, and was recognised as China's "philanthropist of the year" by the state run CCTV(ibid, 2010:70). He was also considered close to the CCP and had built schools as well as provided financial support to the poor housings in Chamdo. However on 24 June 2010 he was arrested on charges of robbing

graves in Xinjiang, an earlier charge which was had already been denied much earlier but was revived now. It was the direct defence of his two brothers who had accused local officials for killing endangered animals and their eventual arrests which made him a prime target of the authorities. There can be numerous other reasons such as his offering of ideas to people from his home village in Eastern Tibet to petition the government in Beijing over grievances related to low compensation for farmlands which may have angered the local officials as well as his environmental activities may have also acted as a reason for angering businesspeople whose investments in an ecologically fragile yet rich Tibetan region could suffer (ibid, 2010:71).

What is of major importance is that the local officials in Tibet were amply using ideas of "separatism" and "endangering state security" to meet their own ends. This led to a strong feeling of ethnic discrimination among the Tibetans who could be arrested for asserting their civil rights. It was seen in the case of the numerous Tibetans who were arrested on grounds of "splittism" for protesting against mining activities in their region. In another case, on 26 June 2010, a Tibetan tycoon Dorjee Tashi who is also a member of the CCP was arrested for offering money to the Dalai Lama (Topgyal, 2011:191-192). Thus, under the context of the 2008 uprisings in Tibet, more violations of the basic civil rights of the Tibetans took place as any form of angst or disagreement against any policy of the state was coded as endangering state security. This led to a further alienation of the Tibetans from the idea of belonging to the motherland China. Although, the Chinese state denies the issue of 2008 as an ethnic issue and blames it on outside forces led by the Dalai clique, through their harsh policies it has led to an ever increase in the gap between the Chinese and the Tibetans and a sharpening of Tibetan identity.

In most of the dissident work emerging from Tibet, there is a strong emphasis on ideas such as 'human rights', 'equality', and 'democracy', which are immersed more in the fashion of a liberal modernity which has emerged from the West. Whether it's the song '1958 and 2008' sung by a Tibetan nomad (Lamajabb, 2009:36) or 'Unable To Meet' sung by Tashi Dhondup, they exhibit strong tendencies to embrace ideas and values as mentioned above. More importantly the articles which came out in the last edition of '*Shardungri*' edited by the prolific Tashi Rabten who was subsequently arrested, focuses majorly on such ideas of democracy, rights and freedom. Writers like Woeser, Tragyal and Kunga Tsayang in their post 2008 writings have stressed on ideas

which can be linked to liberalism emitting from the West. There is also a genuine appreciation of the Middle Way policy initiated by the Dalai Lama, along with the dialogues between Dharamsala and Beijing which is rejected by the Chinese and thus seen also as a reason for increasing dissent among the Tibetans. However, this affirmation of liberal values which are Western as well as shaped by Tibetan Buddhism acts as an important factor in understanding the psyche of the Tibetans. The writer Tragyal who was close to the CCP and criticised Buddhism in his writing ' The Line Between Heaven and Earth' also apologises for his earlier comments on Buddhism and stresses on the need for a non violent approach to counter the policies of the state, which can be seen as emerging from Buddhist principles (TCHRD, 2010:44-45). Human rights are a major bone of contention between China and the Tibetans and their supporters.

 Most of the Western nations are critical of China's handling of its human rights towards its national minorities. Beijing officially does "advocate full consideration for and application of existing United Nations laws, human rights documents and supervision mechanism, full respect for the internal laws of all nations and their functions, and at the same time, due consideration for the protection of human rights and the preservation of the normal judiciary functions of nations" (Information Office of the State Council of the PRC, 2004). It has also "acceded to 21 international human rights conventions, and has taken every measure to honour its obligations under those conventions" (ibid). More importantly Article 35 of the Constitution of the PRC provides citizens with the right to "enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration" (TCHRD, 2009:13). Article 33 of the Constitution was amended in March 2004 to include "the state respects and preserves human rights" (TCHRD, 2009:14). However in most cases, the state through numerous provisions is able to undermine rights and freedoms of individuals as seen in the case in Tibet. These are generally done under the ambit of preventing the breaking up of China which is placed under Article 52 of the Constitution to safeguard "the unity of the country and the unity of all its nationalities" (Constitution of the People's Republic of China, 1982). Article 53 is more explicit regarding upholding this principle as it states the "Citizens of the People's Republic of China must abide by the constitution and the law, keep state secrets, protect public property and observe labour discipline and public order and respect social ethics" (ibid).

Under the guise of protection of state secrets numerous rights and freedom of the citizens are curbed as seen in the case of Tibet during and after the protests of 2008. What is also significant is China's stressing on collective human rights as well as a stronger emphasis on 'survival and development' (Xinhua 2005). This provides for the idea that political rights can wait as subsistence is primal and needs to be fulfilled first. China strongly believes in the universality of human rights but also the local characteristics of a nation needs to be kept in mind thus 'the specifics of the human rights vary from one country to another' (ibid). Therefore, the universality of human rights as propounded by the West is seen as advocating the imposition of Western ideas of human rights on China, which needs to be resisted. There is also an undue importance given to state sovereignty which is seen as the 'guarantor of human rights' and thus needs to be uplifted. Therefore, a gap is seen between the Chinese concepts of human rights and the Tibetan demands for it as for the Tibetans, human rights are a combination of political, economic as well as religious rights which are fashioned more on lines of ideas emerging from the liberal West. This has been accelerated more with the Dalai Lama championing human rights on a global level where his standards of rights are seen as being opposite and challenging the notion of human rights in China. He emphasises strongly on the link between human rights and democracy and the need to strengthen it for preservation of human rights. In a message delivered by him on the 60th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights which coincided with the protests in 2008, the Dalai Lama strongly suggests on the need to avoid a difference of views regarding the universality of human rights (Tenzin Gyatso, H.H the 14th Dalai Lama, 2008) which stands in strong contrast to the views of the CCP.

SELF IMMOLATIONS AS A FORM OF PROTEST

One of the most visible forms of protest which has emerged lately from Tibet is self immolations carried out by Tibetans. It is seen as a lethal mode of protesting against China where the ultimate sacrifice of one's body is seen as a final act of dissent. Around 42 Tibetans have committed self immolations since February 2009 inside Tibet. The first case of a protest against China by a Tibetan through such an act was by Thupten Ngodup in 1998 at an indefinite hunger strike organised by the largest nongovernmental organisation in exile the Tibetan Youth Congress in New Delhi, India. In the modern period, there have been numerous instances where dissent has

been shown through such acts. One of the first incidents of a protest through self immolation has been by the Vietnamese monk Thich Quang Duc, who committed self immolation in 1963 as a sign of protest against the perceived unequal treatment shown by the then President Deim's regime towards Buddhists in Vietnam. His act was followed by immolations by a poet, four monks and a nun which eventually led to a decline of the regime (Gillian Tan, 2012). This does reveal the idea that self immolation which is a highly personalised act is seen as being directed towards a collective cause which also inspires and spawns numerous similar acts. In 1969 in former Czechoslovakia, Jan Palach a student in Charles University self immolated himself on the eve of the Soviet invasion of the country, which eventually led to the downfall of the iron curtain. Self immolation has also been seen as a strong form of protests in India especially during the anti reservation stir of the 1990's and also in the recent agitations for a separate state of Telengana (The Times of India, 2012).

One of the most significant self immolation that occurred recently was that of Mohammed Bouazizi on 17 December 2010, the Tunisian fruit seller whose self immolation eventually led to the toppling of the regime and a series of democratic upsurges in West Asia, known as the Jasmine Revolution and which has brought democratic change to numerous countries in the region and is still in the process (The Time Magazine World, 2011). Most of the self immolations in Tibet have taken place outside the TAR, in the Tibetan areas of the neighbouring provinces of Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai, which in 2008 were rife with protest against China's rule. What is also significant is that these areas especially traditional Amdo which has been divided among Gansu, Qinghai and Sichuan did not have street protests against China for decades. Thus, the self immolations can be seen as a continuation of Tibetan dissent against China's policies in the Tibetan region which came out in the open in 2008. Out of the 41 self immolations in Tibet, 35 self immolations were committed by men and the remaining 6 by women (ICT, 2012).

More importantly, 25 are from Ngaba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan, mostly from Kirti monastery which was a hotspot of protests in 2008. There are 7 monks from Kirti and 9 former monks who have committed the act. There are 2 nuns from Mamae Dechen Chokerling nunnery in Ngaba who performed the act and 40 such acts have taken place after 16

March 2011 (ibid). According to the report 31 have died following the protest and a large number of them have been detained by the authorities, with their current location and well being not known. On 27 May 2012, two Tibetans Dargye and Dorjee Tsetan who respectively were from Ngaba and Labrang in Gansu committed the act in front of the Jokhang temple in Lhasa which has always been the principle site of protest in Tibet since the late 1980's. Dargye was a former monk from Kirti monastery and the self immolations had coincided with the holiest month for Tibetan Buddhist "*Saga Dawa*", which commemorates the birth, enlightenment and the death of the Buddha (ibid).

There can be a series of reasons for such an act committed by the Tibetans which are primarily linked to a heavy repressive atmosphere imposed by the state in the region since 2008. Significantly, much of the spaces for expressions have been curbed by the Chinese state in Tibet through a military and information clampdown, which has led to the Tibetans expressing dissent in such a drastic manner. These western regions of China were turned into "states of exception" by Beijing (Makley, 2009). The clampdown had led to a sense of disorientation, fragmentation and immobility especially the loss of familiar spatio temporal context which had been revivified earlier during the post reform periods when a silent agreement was present between Tibetans and the Chinese state (ibid, 2012). The protests in 2008 and the repressive response from the state led to an end of the available space in Tibet, which makes self immolation into a much preferred outlet. Self immolation is a spectacle which acts as an evidence of state repression, thus the immolating body turns into a medium of communication. The self immolations are seen as piercing the uncomfortable silence that had descended on Tibet in the aftermath of the military clampdown in 2008-09.

The act of self immolation is a solitary, individual form of protest that can take place in an instant with little chances for the authorities to prevent it, or shut out the protestor's message (Eliot Sperling, 2012). Through the testament of Lama Sobha, a reincarnated monk, from Darlag county, Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province who committed self immolation on 8 January 2012, it is quite clear that he mentions a loss of culture, identity and freedom as major causes for his act. He also saw himself as offering his body as a light to the other brave Tibetans who had immolated before him (Giovanni Col, 2012). Thus, this portrayal

of self immolation as self sacrifice or an offering has strong connotations to Buddhism which remains problematic and is a site of major contestation till date. Taking one's life is forbidden in Buddhism which has been taken up as a major argument to criticise such acts in Tibet by the Chinese state. It is seen as violating the central tenets of Buddhism (Li Decheng, 2011). These acts have been placed by the author in lines of religious extremism as propounded by a few in Tibet. Dai Qingli a Chinese official with the Chinese Embassy in Britain also spoke of the immolations as violation of Buddhism. This notion regarding self immolation violating the tenets of Buddhism was also accepted by Buchung K Tsering, the Vice President of the International Campaign for Tibet, which nonetheless received numerous criticisms.

These selfless acts are also seen to be parallel to the acts committed by a Bodhisattva who in the Buddhist world forgoes his/her own enlightenment for the well being of all sentient beings. The self immolations are seen to be similar to the story of the Buddha who in one of his previous lives offers his body to a hungry tigress and its cubs to save them from dying, seen as a virtuous act which is also a tag ascribed to self immolations (Sienna R. Craig, 2012). Self immolations have also been deemed as purely a Buddhist form of protest which is similar to the idea of linking suicide bombing to Islam which is rife with reductionism. It is simply due to large number of monastics being involved in immolations that the act has been linked to Buddhism (Shakya, 2012). There are still a number of other instances such as the self immolation by the Medicine Buddha in Buddhist stories and the practice of offering one's finger as a lamp of offering by devout Tibetans. Practices of self immolation have also been recorded much earlier in 1948 in the city of Harbin in China when a monk committed the act to protest against the treatment of Buddhism by the Chinese communists (Jamyang Norbu, 2012). Through the last testament of Lama Sobha, self immolation is also seen as a union with the greater other and is not seen as an act arising out of despair or helplessness but can be portrayed as being strong willed, politically motivated and a high form of resistance against the state. Hence, a strong spiritual and metaphysical idea has been associated with the acts of self immolations in Tibet.

It is seen to be highly effectual as it strengthened Tibetan sentiments and unity in the face of China's rule, which was caught off guard as it was initially unable to comprehend the self immolations (Lixiong, 2012). This is perceived initially in the Chinese statements and media

reports, where a somewhat relative silence is noticed on the issue, marked by a denial by Wang Zhongchen, a publicity officer with the Sichuan provincial government (Global Times, 2012). However, Beijing also started seeing the self immolators as misguided individuals or having mundane personal reasons for the act (Losang Gyatso, 2012). The state media narrative shifted to a more personalised accounts of the self immolators such as Lama Sobha's self immolation was seen as arising out of disgrace and shame for coming between a married couple (Xinhua, 2012). The two immolators who committed the act on 6 January 2012 were due to them being involved in theft and the guilt had made them commit such an act. Hence, the state launched a smear campaign against the immolators, questioning their character and tarnishing the image of the immolators (Woeser, 2012).

The Party chief of the Ngaba Tibetan Qiang Autonomous Prefecture Wu Zegang termed the self immolators as separatists and linked them to the Dalai clique (Xinhua, 2012). There is a confirmation to them shouting separatist slogans like "Free Tibet" while setting themselves on fire (ICT, 2012). Thus, the acts are seen as pre meditated political moves by the officials. Another official Liu Qibao, the provincial CPC chief of Sichuan, did admit to the self immolations as a problem, for which efforts have been made to protect the culture of the ethnic Tibetans. They also stress on the idea that self immolation or taking of life in any form is forbidden in Buddhism and is seen as disrupting the normal activities of Tibetan Buddhism. The vice minister of the CPC's United Front Work Department Zhu Weiqun also mentioned the fact that most of the self immolations are linked to Kirti monastery and thus links it up to the Dalai clique, especially the role of the exiled Kirti rinpoche based in Dharamsala who was also a former Minister of security in the exile setup and is seen as instigating the monks in Kirti monastery in Ngaba. Li Changping, a member of the standing committee of the Sichuan Committee of the CPC and a deputy to the NPC termed it as a fight with the Dalai clique on a political level and sees it as a ploy to disrupt the development activities in the region (Xinhua, 2012). Xiong Kunxin, a professor in the Minzu University in Beijing also states that it was through the championing of the self immolators by the Dalai Lama that has lead to further protests, which is a major violation of Buddhism. He had also linked Tibet's historical and geographical factors as making the Tibetans highly aggressive and thus committing such acts (Global Times, 2012). Along with this, the Chinese media generally applauds the role of the

state as protectors, promoting law and order and thus promptly rescuing the immolators who are all reported to be in stable conditions (ibid).

These official statements regarding the self immolations in Tibet are symptomatic of China's ploy of blaming it on the Dalai clique and pondering much on situations which are external rather than dwell on matters which can be traced to its lopsided policies in the Tibetan regions where the self immolations have occurred. These regions came under the ambit of the Fifth Tibet Work Forum of 2010, when the Chinese leadership decided to implement uniform policies in all the Tibetan regions. Hard line policies which were implemented especially with regard to culture, religion and Tibetan identity in the TAR was now asserted in these regions, which can be seen as a reason for the unrest in these regions. The mass participation of Tibetans from these areas in the uprisings of 2008 also led to such uniform policy implementation in the entire region (U.S Congressional Executive Commission on China, 2010). However, this fixation with blaming the Dalai Lama also does dent the idea presented by the state that the exiled Dalai Lama has no influence among the Tibetans. Thus, the media later saw the immolators as people with dubious backgrounds, as outcasts, criminals and the mentally ill who were manipulated by the exiled leader. However, what is most significant is that in modern history, the series of self immolations in Tibet is by far the largest, which gives a strong sense of urgency to the issue. Still in 2011 it remained the most underreported event of the year (Time Specials, 2011), owing to the media clampdown in the region and almost all the reporting of self immolations have been done through by individuals who have used the internet to transfer graphic pictures and videos of the self immolators to the outside world.

The mass communication facilities more specifically the internet and rapid telecommunications on the plateau, highlighted as a strong element of modernisation has been utilised by the Tibetans to communicate with the outside world through blogs, social networking sites, uploading photographs, mostly taken from a cellular phone or through a simple providing of information about the situation in Tibet to foreigners or the Tibetans in exile (Sangster, 2012). Thus, most of the events of 2008-09 were known through the blogs of the Tibetan writer Woeser titled as "Invisible Tibet" and numerous pictures of the protests and the subsequent clampdown has reached the outside world through the internet. The communication through the electronic media

has led to numerous Tibetans been detained and punished, with the state imposing a 'Great Fire Wall' to block information which it deems as 'state secrets'. However, all the reports of self immolations, few pictures and few videos of the protest have made it outside Tibet through such medium. Along with dispersal, there is also the ensuing of a lively debate on the self immolation. Hence it is through the narratives which are present in the cyber world that reasons for a protest of such a calibre are formulated (Dechen Pemba, 2012). On the other hand self immolation depends completely on the visual imagery and the availability of these acts by the Tibetans on web postings and the blogs which have turned into rallying points for ensuing strong solidarity among the Tibetans. The circulation of such videos and images on a global scale has also strongly dented the image of China. One of the extensively documented acts of self immolation has been that of the 35 year old nun Palden Choetso who self immolated on the 11 March 2011 in Tawu Kardze TAP, which was recorded in short periods from different angles and at a later stage her funerary rites are also shown. The video also shows the locals protecting the body and preventing the officials from taking it away, reasserting the right to death according to the local customs (Leigh Sangster, 2012).

Majority of the self immolators are also within the age group of 20 – 40, a relatively young population mostly born in the reform era when the focus was shifted towards economic well being. They did not experience the Maoist upheavals nor were brought up in the feudal setup of pre 1951 Tibet. They are the descendants of the 'liberated serfs' who are portrayed by China as denouncing the old way of life, which makes the self immolators and their demands more embarrassing to the Chinese government, challenging its sovereignty. Almost all the demands articulated in the form of 'cries' during the self immolation or in testaments left behind, are an unequivocal plea for the return of the Dalai Lama, freedom and cultural religious rights in Tibet. The following table shows the age group to which the immolators belonged, which is clear that it is the younger generation brought up in an age of consumerism and rapid communication who have taken up this extreme form of self expression –

On the basis of age ranges

■ Age (years)

19	8	6	4	1
11 ~ 20	21 ~ 30	31 ~ 40	41 ~ 50	51 ~ 60
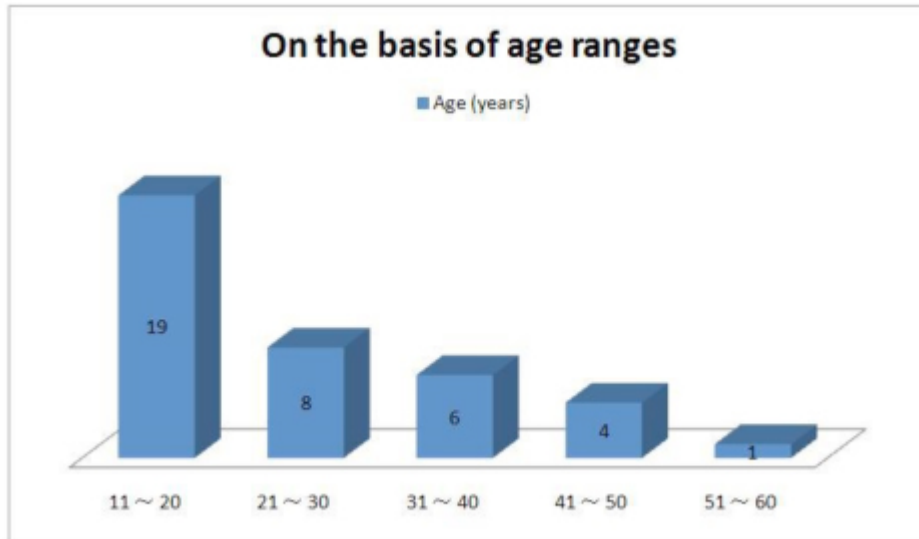
(Cultural Anthropology, 2012)

People of this age group are seen as being politically aware of their rights, of the Dalai Lama and decades of China's ideological onslaught and economic freebies in the region have not diluted their urge for more religious and culture rights, political freedom and for the Dalai Lama. The self immolations are seen as an act which has increased the political consciousness of the Tibetans as through it and through a spread of information it has led to an increased solidarity among the Tibetans in Tibet and in exile. The powerful image of a monk, nun or a layperson immolating serves as a catharsis for the reinvigoration of the consciousness in the political community (Costica Bradatan, 2012). For a China, that is reinventing itself as a modern nation, one which is set to be a global power, the self immolations by a minority population in its territory which is a site of contestation does not augur well. It dents the image of China Rise and shows that there is a lack of harmony in the 'Middle Kingdom'.

Kirti monastery in Ngaba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan has been an epicentre for self immolations with seven monks immolating since 2009 and also nine former monks committing the same. It was also a site of major protests on the 16th of March 2008 which led to ten people getting shot (ICT, 2008). On 17 March 2008, students from the Tsoe Medical College and the Mewa Tibetan School in Ngaba also started protesting which led to more reprisals from the state (Tsering Topgyal, 2011:190). The authorities had started monitoring the monastery and had implemented patriotic re education on the clergy, also affecting the day to

day activities in the monastery. As according to the pro Tibet organization International Campaign for Tibet it was the cancelling of a prayer ceremony in the monastery which may have provoked Tapey, the first to self immolate. The scars of 2008 still run deep and the extreme clampdown by Beijing has aggravated the matter more. Although the interference in the monasteries have been a regular feature specially in the TAR, the post 2008 saw maximum invasion of space of the monastics by the Chinese government (Matthew Akester, 2012:10). The mode of control was present in the form of the democratic management committees which were elected bodies comprising of monks from the monastery who would implement party policy and government regulation, which have however been replaced by work teams sent by the state. These were seen as gross violations of their relative autonomy which was accelerated further through the Patriotic Education Campaigns.

On 16 March 2011, a 20 year old monk Phuntsok committed the second self immolation in Kirti during the third anniversary of a protest in 2008 when the authorities had shot numerous protestors. There was a confrontation between the monks and the authorities regarding Phuntsok who was still alive but was eventually allowed to be taken by the authorities for further treatment as permission was needed for admittance in the hospital (ICT, 2012). Kirti was further subjected to intense patriotic education campaigns and soon 300 monks were taken away under the guise of 'legal education', which two elderly Tibetans tried preventing but were beaten to death. On 6 May 2011, 1200 monks were expelled from Kirti monastery (Tibet Post International, 2011) and their rooms were taken over by the state. This issue was highlighted during then EU China Dialogue on Human Rights held in Beijing as well as taken forward by the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance in June 2011 (ibid). The state termed it as "legal education" which was needed to rectify the monks who were indulging in anti social activities.

 According to the US State Department Acting Deputy Spokesperson Mark Toner, he stated that restrictions were imposed on the general public as well as on the monastery as such which stood as a major violation of their human rights (ICT, 2011). More importantly, a couple of monks were also arrested and charged with aiding in the immolation of Phuntsok and were all sentenced to lengthy prison terms (Xinhua, 2011). On 26 September 2011, two teenage monks, named

Lobsang Kelsang and Lobsang Kunchok committed self immolation in Ngaba. One of them was related to Phuntsok who had self immolated earlier. Following this seven monks and nine former monks from Kirti have committed the act (ICT, 2012). Therefore, the self immolations by monks and nuns can be seen due to the gross interference from the state in their daily activities, the intrusion of their space, which is unique and completely different from that of the general public as the monastic population are seen as living aloof from the rest. They provide religious guidance and are seen as pure and not yielding to temptations by the laity.

Even though Tibet had a unique theocratic setup where the lama was the ruler, they were still governed by the regulations of the Buddhist sangha. It was through maintaining a level of purity and discipline that the laity supported the monastery, rendering faith in the institution (Janet Gyatso, 2012). This is a major reason why the monastics and the 'living Buddhas' appointed by the Chinese are not granted equal amount of respect by the general public. This is the case with the 11th Panchen Gyaltsen Norbu appointed by the Chinese who has not received popular legitimacy from the Tibetans. The monks and nuns in Tibet are viewed as unproductive and also barring development in many cases by China, thus out of sync in the present scheme of things for China in Tibet, hence seen as having no value to the modern Chinese state. It is this, sense of impossibility of change which has led to the monks and nuns commit acts of immolations (Tsering Shakya, 2012).

On the other hand the self immolations can also be seen as a direct result of certain policies which have been detrimental to the Tibetans, for instance a 19 year old student named Tsering Kyi from the Tibetan Middle School in Machu set fire to herself on 3 March 2012 in Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu province apparently as a sign of protest against the imposition of Mandarin in all the school textbooks (Phayul, 2012). The recent immolation by the Tibetan herder Tamding Thar on 15 June 2012 in Chentsa county town in Qinghai can be seen as a result of the nomadic settlement programme that the government had imposed on the area. While the self immolation by a woman named Dickyi Choezom on 27 June 2012 in Kyegudo Qinghai has been connected to the unfair land seizures by the state (ibid). Hence, most of the self immolations can be seen as outbursts by Tibetans against a set of policies implemented by China in Tibet, which in most cases has led to a strong sense of alienation among the monks and

dislocation and disenchantment among the common people. These have further widened the gap between the Chinese state and its Tibetan subjects, which can be seen as the state's failure in understanding the psyche of the Tibetans.

Stemming from the policies implemented by Beijing on the Tibetans, a strong sense of rage is fuelled which is induced by humiliation and an intolerable demand for conformity and obedience. This is especially seen in the context of the Patriotic Education Campaigns in monasteries where the denunciation of the Dalai Lama by the Tibetans is enforced, which for a monk or a nun is the greatest sin. Thus, most of the self immolators have called for the return of the Dalai Lama, and may have chosen this path instead of offending their spiritual teacher. Self immolation as a protest can also be seen as being against the process of modernisation that China claims to have brought in Tibet, as it is made clear through the last testament of Lama Sobha, whose self immolation was an act against the lack of cultural and religious freedom in Tibet. The following lines are from his last testament translated by the International Campaign for Tibet –

> "To all my spiritual brothers and sisters, and the faithful ones living elsewhere: You must unite and work together to build a strong and prosperous Tibetan nation in the future. This is the sole wish of all the Tibetan heroes. Therefore, you must avoid any quarrelling amongst yourselves whether it is land disputes or water disputes. You must maintain unity and strength. Give love and education to the children, who should study hard to master all the traditional fields of studies. The elders should carry out spiritual practice as well as maintain and protect Tibetan language and culture by using all your resources and by involving your body, speech and mind. It is extremely important to genuinely practice Buddhist principles in order to benefit the Tibetan cause and also to lead all sentient beings towards the path of enlightenment".

Tsering Kyi's act which may have emerged due to the imposition of Mandarin can also be seen in similar terms and the self immolations which arose out of angst against certain policies of the government such as nomadic resettlement or land acquisition can also be seen in a likewise manner (Fischer, 2012).

The Chinese have termed the self immolators as terrorists (Reuters, 2012). Terrorism is generally seen as the systematic use of violence towards the common public or towards a state to create a general climate of fear to achieve certain political objective (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

However, the notions on terrorism might differ from place to place. The central idea in terrorism is the element of violence which is directed to the outside, mostly to the public, which stands in contradiction to the self immolators, whose violence is directed to the self or within. Although a single act inspiring many and the Chinese state terming the Dalai clique as instigating the Tibetans to self immolate can be seen as the state constructing a narrative on self immolations as a form of terrorism (The Guardian, 2012). However, the self immolations can also be understood as an act which threatens the territorial sovereignty of the Chinese state as the acts have been perceived as calls for Tibetan independence, orchestrated from abroad (Yeh, 2012) thus termed as acts of terrorism. A modern nation state generally requires a constant mobilisation of threat for maintaining sovereignty within its boundary which is being challenged by the Tibetan self immolators, who are seen as "splittists" by China (ibid). The self immolators offer a horrifying spectacle of inciting pain on oneself to induce the state to bring about change which has not really occurred; instead Beijing has been castigating the self immolators and imposing a more hard line stand on Tibetans.

A campaign to coerce the Tibetans to be loyal to the Party was launched in 2011-12, termed as the '9 must haves' which stresses on material benefits to the general public and more specifically to the monastics but also an important aspect of the campaign is the distribution of posters and subsequent display of pictures of CCP leaders to around a million Tibetans in the TAR, which is to be extended to the other Tibetan regions (Akester, 2012). What is significant here is the idea of sovereignty, where self immolation challenges the supreme power of a modern nation state, not only in terms of territory but more strongly in terms of a right over the body, which an act of self immolation denies to the state. Through the committing of such an act, the individual claims power over one's body (Shakya, 2012). The state prevents individuals from taking one's own life and bestows upon itself through legal measures the right to punish or grant capital punishment to anyone. In the case of the PRC through extra judicial rights of preventing splittist activities or stopping the endangering of state securities, protests and any perceived expression of dissent are stifled. In such cases, a 'state of exception' is imposed over the region, seen in the form of a martial law or a military clampdown which leads to "violence passing over into law and law passing over into violence" (Yeh, 2012).

The modern state is seen as the perpetrator of legitimate violence, having monopoly over the use of violent force over its own citizens (Ralph Litzinger, 2012). Thus, it an institution which has sanctioned rights over death, which an act like self immolation directed against the state, raises serious issues of legitimacy as the death is occurring without the sanction of the state. As a matter of fact, it can be seen as a direct challenge to the Chinese state on the monopoly that it started extending over the lives and deaths of the Tibetans as was seen in many cases. The intrusive behaviour of the Chinese state in such matters is seen with the case of the dead Tibetan protestors not being able to perform their funerary rites according to traditional culture, especially through the 'sky burial', an ancient death custom where the corpse is fed to the vultures. In most cases it is the fear of getting caught by the authorities which has prevented their families from performing such acts in the open. This has also led to a fear of seeking treatment from the hospitals as in most cases the wounded protestors get reported (ICT, 2008:4). Therefore there is a tight regulation over life and death in Tibet, which self immolations are able to challenge as it reclaims sovereignty over one's body.

There is a complete rejection of the right of the state over one's body (Tsering Shakya, 2012). The fundamental claim of the state over the body, the physical essence of life is denied through self immolations, an act which reasserts the right of the self over one's own body, seen as the greatest assertion of rights. According to Tsering Shakya the spate of self immolations can also be linked to the modern notion of a nation state, which also thrives on the idea of self sacrifice as a key to the context of Tibetan nationalism. The giving up of one's body is a major idea in the construct of a modern nation state, thus conflating the body with the nation, which is done by the self immolators. However, these acts are seen as acts of splittism by China and are seen to stand in opposition to another modern concept of patriotism. The self immolations can be understood as embracing the narrative of self sacrifice and thus leading to a resurgence of Tibetan sub nationalism.

CAUSES FOR THE PROTESTS

There are numerous causes for the uprisings of 2008 as well as the ensuing protests and the self immolations which are still occurring. Primary among them can be a sense of identity insecurity

(Topgyal 2011) faced by the Tibetans, which has been there from the period of the arrival of the Chinese but which was accelerated during the aftermath of the protests of 1989. The Chinese government in the Third Work Forum (1994) and the Fourth Work Forum (2001) had figured out that the Tibetan identity linked to Buddhism was the chief cause for the instability in Tibet. Tibet is seen as primal to China's national security and national unification, thus the Tibetans with a separate set of identities are viewed as being problematic to the nation building process. As Tibetans occupy a highly strategic peripheral territory in the PRC, they are seen as expendables in the long run. The uprising and the Chinese response illustrates the dichotomy between the Tibetan and the Chinese conception of the issue of Tibet as seen in their different attitude towards Patriotic Education. For the Chinese, as well as for some Tibetan officials, patriotic education was the direct panacea to the issue in Tibet especially the uprising of 2008.

For, Tibetans, it was part of the problem as it diluted their sense of autonomy and sharpened the attacks on the Dalai Lama, who has a pan Tibetan following and for whom a strong sense of devotion is evoked in the hearts and minds of the Tibetans irrespective of their regional affiliation. The attacks on the Dalai Lama have further acerbated the situation in Tibet (Warren W. Smith JR, 2010:34-35). The Patriotic Education is led by China's Religious Affairs Bureau and implemented by the Public Securities Bureau (PSB). It is directed to prevent major external influences in interfering in China's religions; where under this a new generation of leaders are created in the image of the Chinese Communist Party. It was initially launched in 1991 to boost the Chinese people's political beliefs, loyalty to the Communist state as well increase morality among the public (Ruoxi Du, 2011:2). The Patriotic Education Campaign emerged as a result of an increase in a sense of nationalism among the Chinese in the post reform period, when an ideological crisis was ensured due to the emphasis on economic reforms. Thus, to regain legitimacy, the CCP harped on nationalism as a factor to legitimise itself. It is under this context that the state launched the patriotic education campaign which "elevated nationalism to the status of a spiritual pillar of the Communist state" (ibid, 2011:7).

More importantly it was also targeted towards ethnic nationalism, which becomes extremely important in the case of Tibet, where a contentious history, differing narratives and an arduous process of assimilation has led to a conflict between the state and its Tibetan subjects. In most

cases, China's integrationist polices are seen as eroding the Tibetan way of life which has also further accelerated the Tibetan identity. Thus, the Patriotic Education Campaign is seen as being sino centric and leading to an attack on the ethnic groups' culture and traditions. In the case of Tibet, it entails the following –

- Agree to the Historical unity of China and Tibet
- Recognise the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama
- Deny Tibet would ever be independent
- Denounce the Dalai Lama as a traitor and splittist
- Declare opposition to splittism (Getzelman, 2009:49)

Hence, the Patriotic education campaigns in Tibet can be seen as a process of consolidating China's firm grip over the region (Akester, 2012:6). This is seen on an ideological, psychological level through such campaigns, which was one of the first steps undertaken by the state after the protests in 2008 in monasteries and also in schools, government work units and in neighbourhood units. It has become an overarching all pervasive institution which also reveals the lack of innovations among the authorities to tackle the Tibetan Question. There is a fundamental belief that the Tibetans are protesting due to a lack of exposure towards state ideology (ibid, 2012:6) thus a need for more ideology to be imposed on Tibetans. The campaign also entails the screening of patriotic films and adapting quasi populist patriotic campaigns from mainland China and primary school parents are made to attend school meetings on patriotic education as well as aid their children with the homework provided during the campaigns (ibid).

The pan Tibetan uprising of 2008 needs to be understood from the lingering grievance of the Tibetans against the Chinese state suppression of religious and cultural freedom as well as the demographic pressure caused by the influx of Han migration into Tibetan areas. This has further led to the socio economic marginalisation of the Tibetans as well as a burgeoning urban rural divide in the Tibetan areas. According to Melvyn Goldstein in "The Snow Lion and the Dragon: China, Tibet and the Dalai Lama" where he makes an analysis of the 1989 uprisings in the TAR. He terms it not solely due to historical reasons but more due to the contradictions and problems created by rapid modernisation and planned economic development in Tibet. In the ground breaking field survey conducted by the Beijing based Gongmeng or The Open Constitution

Initiative a year after the 2008 uprising, they emphasis on the process of modernisation brought by the Chinese to Tibet (Gongmeng's analysis translated by the ICT).The analysis post field survey reveals that the process of modernisation in Tibet and the thinking behind the development policies has not guided the Tibetan regions to realise a smooth transition to modernisation and in fact in many fields structures have been created which marginalise Tibetans and which have intensified a series of contradictions. According to them, the Tibet problem has arisen due to theoretical blind spots created over a long period due to ideological considerations and also due to emergence of new contradictions during the reform and opening up.

Much of their analysis is steeped firmly in a Marxist framework and strongly portrays the issue of Tibet as one of governance and polity. The report suggests the Chinese state to look into the living conditions of the masses in Tibet and also calls for a path of development which respects Tibetan social characteristics and motivations and the construction of a harmonious society with Tibetan characteristics. The process of modernisation is not termed as the direct cause that led to the March 2008 uprising but it did provide the foundation for understanding the aspirations and hopes of the Tibetan people. Tibet underwent massive structural changes from the traditional to the modern especially brought about by the CCP in 1951. This led to an intrusion of a market and of a commoditised modern economy which have led to strong strains in between the traditional and the modern. Along with this, the Tibetans have been unable to guide or steer the project of modernisation in their own land as much has been directed by the Central government in Beijing.

Andrew Martin Fischer points out that although the Tibetan areas have undergone an entirely new modernisation process under the aegis of China. The Tibetan areas have been transformed from the traditional to the modern, greatly improving the fundamental appearances of Tibetan areas and raising the standards of living for the Tibetan people. But this process of development has excluded the Tibetans, majority of who are in the rural areas. Furthermore, the Tibetans' low level of education contributes significantly to their slow economic and social progress. The illiteracy rate among Tibetans, 47.55 percent is five times greater than China's national average illiteracy rate. This has been due to a lack of access to a bilingual Tibetan Mandarin Chinese

education system. Primary school is the only educational level for which Tibetans are comparable with the national average. Han migrants in culturally Tibetan areas graduate from Universities at more than three times the Tibetan rate and from senior middle school at five times the Tibetan rate and from senior middle school at five times the Tibetan rate. This makes the competing for unemployment and economic benefits vastly arduous for Tibetans. This has further accelerated their slow economic and social progress (Andrew Fischer, 2008:151). In 2004, the annual per capita income of Tibetan farmers and herdsmen was 1861 Chinese renmenbi and the disposable income of urban Tibetans was 8200 Chinese renmenbi. According to the Chinese National Bureau of Statistics, TAR's 2009 GDP ranked 31st out of 31 province level divisions and 28th in GDP per capita. It also ranked lowest on the Human Development Index in the same year. (Diana Jue, 2010:168).

Under the Western Development Campaign launched in 2000, a policy of giving grazing land back to Grassland has been launched which has curbed the economic activity of the Tibetan nomads and pastoralists, who comprise a majority of the population (Yeh, 2003). This policy is meant for the ecological reconstruction of the region as the state stresses on the idea that excessive grazing is detrimental to the environment. However it has been seen that the continuous usage of pastureland by herding animals is beneficial to the pasture as it leads to a rotation of the soil. More importantly, the Tibetan herders have been utilising the pasture for centuries and are intricately involved in the maintenance of the land and sustaining an ecological balance. The authorities have implemented the policy of 'nomadic resettlement projects' to rehabilitate the nomads, which also serves a purpose of facilitating urbanisation. However what is also equally important is the state's distrust of roaming communities and a need to control them through a process of sedentarisation (Fischer, 2012). It is still not much known whether the resettlements are voluntary or coercive or incentivised, partial or complete, permanent or reversible. The degree of resettlement of nomads and pastoralists especially in the areas of Kham and Amdo, incorporated in the other provinces of China, has been intensified. These are the areas which rose up against China in 2008 and are sites of self immolations in Tibet (ibid, 2012). Tamding Thar, a herder from Chentsa county in Qinghai on the 15 June 2012, who had been relocated in the nomadic settlement project committed the act of self immolation.

These eastern areas of ethnic Tibet have also benefited from the economic reforms of the 1980's which has led to the growth of a vibrant business community, who are seen to be funding the monasteries. Most of the earlier reconstruction was funded by the local business communities who also funded the growth of schools. These schools were also looked after by the monasteries which were closed by the authorities in the aftermath of 2008. While in the TAR, majority of such schools were targeted earlier and shut, the non TAR regions received similar strictures in the post 2008 phase when these schools were seen as potential sites of dissent by the Chinese state. The local schools were mostly opened for the preservation of Tibetan language, culture and tradition and hence seen as providing expressions of strong Tibetan identity which were seen as fertile grounds of splitting away from the motherland (ibid). This has been the case with the closing down of two private schools in Luchu county in Kanlho prefecture in Gansu which catered mostly to orphans (RFA, 2012).

Many Tibetans, especially during the 2008 protests made it clear that the modernisation process brought about by China led to massive exertion of pressure on the Tibetan culture and heritage as it also attracts Han migrants to Tibetan areas. According to the state ethnic Affairs Commission Minister Li Dezhu, the migration of Han Chinese has been termed as "the phenomena of the peacock flying west" and the "encouraging of proper inter regional population circulation" (Li Dezhu, 2000:22-25). The 2000 census shows that the percentage of Han population in the TAR has been only 6 percent of the total. These are however, those Han whose legal place of permanent residence is registered as within the TAR. The local officials have however, admitted the presence of a huge undocumented Han population who are mostly seasonal, but still are able to grab the economic opportunities that Tibet presents, which were the targets of the Tibetans who had gone violent on the 14 March 2008 and thereafter. More importantly, the ethnic Tibetan areas of Amdo and Kham which have been incorporated into the neighbouring provinces of Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai and Yunnan have considerable Han and Hui Muslim populations. Few counties have a majority of the Han Chinese over the Tibetans, which serve as a flashpoint for Tibetans from the TAR to catch a glimpse of the future..

The state has justified much of the nomadic resettlement in the name of "development" and "modernisation" and also to protect China's environment. The concentration of Tibetans closer

to towns would have meant a better access to jobs, education, and medical services. However, the state has failed to consider what the Tibetans want and have not responded favourably to complaints (TCHRD, 2009). The Tibetans have failed to participate in the decision making process and the reasons given for their resettling remain unclear. More importantly, the cramped resettlement area of the nomads stands in contrast with the pastoral areas which are wide open spaces. Thus, through the interviews and discussions conducted by the Open Constitution Initiative, it is quite clear that the Tibetans have been a marginalised lot. They are marginalised in the towns and cities through the Han Chinese migrants who tend to capture much of the economic activities in urban areas, while the rural areas have seen less attention from the state, thus widening the urban rural gap in Tibet.

The 2008 protests have been termed as a pan Tibetan uprising, which spread throughout the plateau as well as to traditional Tibetan areas of Gansu, Qinghai and Sichuan and Yunnan. Much of these protests however was centered on monasteries and temples and was led by monks and nuns as peaceful demonstrations. The protests have been more in registered temples and monasteries who were allowed a whiff of liberalism during the 1980's and had been much curbed and monitored from the 1990s. They, along with Tibetan Buddhism plays an important role as Buddhism is the raison d etre of the Tibetans. The essence of life for the Tibetans since centuries has been Tibetan Buddhism, which formed the principle on which governance was based. The ruler of Tibet before 1951 had been the Dalai Lama, a monk and the head of the Gelug one of the sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Thus, it is seen that the incidence of protests have been more in the Gelug monasteries and temples as they have lost more with the coming of the Chinese. (Han and Paik, 2011).

The temples and monasteries do have strong resources to influence the public to protest and dissent. It was the three great monasteries in Lhasa, Sera, Ganden and Drepung who ignited the spark in the March uprising of 2008. The monasteries of Tashikyil in Gansu, Lhamo Kirti and Kandze monastery in Sichuan were also major sites of protest. Monasteries and Buddhist institutes in Tibet can also be seen as the vehicles for the growth of a national consciousness among Tibetans, even though during the pre 1951 period regional divide between Tibetan regions were strong, but still monks belonging to a particular sect could join monasteries in a

different region. Gelug monks generally got enrolled in the three great monasteries in Lhasa, Sera, Ganden and Drepung monastic universities which attracted monks from places as far away as Kham and Amdo. This can also be seen as a major reason for the spread of the uprising in 2008 as the crackdown on the monks marching on the 10th of March from Drepung and Sera in Lhasa may have caused Tibetans from protesting from far flung regions like Ngaba in Sichuan to which many of the monks originally belonged. Many have seen a conflict emerging in between modernisation and religion, where especially in a religion like Buddhism which calls for renunciation, an inevitable clash can be observed between the Buddhist way of life and the inherent materialism brought about by modernisation.

The opening and reforms and the eventual embracing of such policies by Tibet have increased the flow of wealth into Tibet which have also seeped into the religious institutions. In the discourse of development and modernisation for Tibet initiated by Beijing, Tibetan Buddhism; the crux of the Tibetan identity is deemed as the major hurdle towards development for Tibet. According to Li Dezhu in June 2000, he interlinked religion and culture among the national minorities as a prime obstacle in implementing development. This was said in context of the Great Western Development Campaign, the "opening up of the West" by China, which accelerated growth in the Western provinces of PRC, Tibet included and which has alienated the Tibetans more. Religion in the context of Tibet has been termed as a problem, which totally deduces the Sino Tibetan issue and also reduces the value and scope of Tibetan Buddhism, a religion which had deeply permeated into the Tibetan society. This has been seen as the core of the problem, the imprint of religion in a Tibetan's life which poses a major security threat to the nation and to stability.

The 10th Five year Plan of the TAR as well as the Fourth Forum of Work on Tibet 2001 laid out an assertive policy to deal with Tibetan separatism which include strong anti Dalai Lama rhetoric, the strike hard and the patriotic education campaigns and more rigorous Party management of religious personnel, activities and institutions. Buddhism is linked the Tibetan national identity where the conflict lies as China calls for religion to bring about strong patriotism to China. This has been further stressed by policy makers from Beijing. Jiang Zemin and Li Dezhu have stressed that culture; inseparable from religion in Tibetan societies must

become supportive of Chinese ideological, political and developmental objectives. (Sussete Cooke, 2007).

Religion is seen as a cause for the stalling of development and thus a major reason for bringing about instability in the minority regions. Thus, the Dalai Lama is constantly seen as being against development and progress and hence portrayed as a splittist from the motherland, but also seen as being bad for Buddhism. Thus, there is a strong desire to manage religion to indulge in social engineering. Therefore, inherent in the process of modernisation by China is an objective to control Tibetan Buddhism and to make it subservient to development. In June 2008, there were more measures implemented to control the monasteries, for instance the People's Government of Kardze TAP, launched an order which threatened the entire monastic hierarchy with reprisals for anti Chinese disturbances whereby those who had participated in the disturbances their monasteries would be sealed off, searched and suspect persons detained (Akester, 2012:9). Those monks and nuns who failed to conform to the Patriotic Education campaigns would be expelled and their residences demolished. There would also be the deputation of officials to assume control of management in the monasteries in case of the officials participating in the disturbances. Living Buddhas would be stripped off their right to hold reincarnation lineages for communicating with foreigners or engaging in anti Chinese protests (Topgyal, 2011:198). More importantly those monks and nuns who had participated in the disturbances were to reregister and a continuation of such would lead to a complete removal from the monastic institution as well as a shutdown of the monastery.

This gross intrusion in the monasteries and the imposing of the Patriotic Education campaigns with a need to denounce the Dalai Lama is seen as a major reason for the alienation of the monastics towards the Chinese state, which has reached its ultimate peak expressed through the self immolations, which are concentrated more among the monks and nuns. In December 2011, the minister of Public security Jia Qinglin issued a memorandum on 'mechanisms to build long term stability in Tibet' whereby CCP cadres would be stationed in the main monasteries to further strengthen and innovate monastery management, which is a sign of further intervention from the state in the administration of the monastery which had earlier received some nominal autonomy (Akester, 2012:10). This "invasion of space" has led to a strong disenchantment

among the monastics and the lay believers who see the policy as being detrimental to Tibetan religion and culture. These have led to an ever increasing insecurity dilemma among the Tibetans regarding the Chinese rulers. For China Tibet remains a top priority and in the rank order of security issues for the leadership Tibet remains on top followed by Xinjiang and Taiwan. The global popularity of the Dalai Lama and the major campaigning by the Tibetans in exile has also led to the issue of Tibet remaining fundamental to China's sovereignty. Tibet is at the periphery of China but its stability remains the key to China's unity and integrity. However the Tibetans are seen as being unfit in the national narrative of China, seen as an ethnic group which harbours strong tendencies of splitting away from the motherland. In this respect, their religion and its proponents, the monasteries and nunneries with a strong monastic population are seen as challenging the national narrative. They are the upholders of tradition who have preserved the Tibetan identity for centuries thus are seen as blockades to the road to development and integration of Tibet into China.

The uprising in March 2008 was widespread in its timeframe as well as in territory, thus being termed as a Tibetan national uprising by many scholars and by Tibetans. Modernisation can be seen as a causal factor to the protests as the Chinese induced development in the Tibetan areas had led to a growth in resentment against the policies which has been acerbated by the historical and ethnic issues present in the Sino Tibetan conflict. However, through the project of modernisation, we do get a strong idea of a rise of Tibetan nationalism, which is figured through the protests and the demands made by Tibetans of all standing. It is not a total rejection of development but more of a demand for inducing development with Tibetan characteristics, a reaffirming of the "sons of the soils" sentiment. This has also emerged due to the economic and social marginalisation faced by the Tibetans. The inability of the Tibetans to be equal participants in the modernisation process has led to the fuelling of the idea "Tibet for Tibetans", which were seen in numerous displays during the protests of 2008. The Tibetan national flag banned in Tibet was openly displayed in numerous occasions.

The protests were generally led by monks and nuns, whose beatings and arrests were then protested by more monks and laypeople, leading to more beatings, shootings and arrests and the surrounding of monasteries by security forces. The monasteries and the monks became the

living, breathing symbols of a resurgent Tibetan nationalism (Warren Smith Jr, 2010). The 2008 uprising had spread to the eastern areas of Kham and Amdo due to coordination received through extensive use of telecommunications, cell phones, internet and the radio. Thus, Tsering Shakya points out that few protests took place in Western Tibet which is sparsely populated and not well connected. This is an excellent example of the tools of modernisation facilitating the growth of national consciousness in Tibet. Much of the activities in Tibet in 2008 were known from the writer Woeser's blogs.

Since 1996, a ban has been imposed on keeping the image of the Dalai Lama in Tibet Autonomous Region whereas this has not been so in the provinces with a sizeable Tibetan population, such as in Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai (Getzelman, 2009). The image of the Dalai Lama has changed from a religious figurehead to a more political one where he is symbolized as a focal point against China's rule in Tibet. The Dalai Lama is also the rallying point for almost all protests in Tibet. Almost all protests during the year 2008 were centred on the "Return of the Dalai Lama". Strong waves of cultural nationalism have also gripped the Tibetan areas in the aftermath of the 2008 uprising. This is seen in the form of the observance of "*Lhakar*" on every Wednesday, the day when the present Dalai Lama was born, whereby much of the Tibetans especially in Lhasa are seen offering prayers as well as burning juniper for the long life of the Dalai Lama. Even when, the Dalai Lama was conferred the Congressional Gold Medal in 2007 by the United States Congress, there were reports that the monks of Sera, Ganden and Drepung, the monastic institutions in Lhasa had burst into revelry as well as had whitewashed their monastic complex, which is reserved for the Tibetan New Year or for other occasions. Earlier personal devotion were not seen as a threat, but now the Chinese officials relegated independent Buddhist acts to a manifestation of a solidarity faction. For instance, circumambulation around the Jokhang and the throwing of "*tsampa*" or barley flour has been seen as a show of protest against China's rule. The Tibetan music world has also been rife with songs of dissent.

The uprising in 2008 termed as the 14 March incident by PRC can be understood as a response from the Tibetans against the top down approach applied by Beijing in the implementation of the process of Modernisation. It reveals the deep discontentment that Tibetans have towards the policies that China has imposed on Tibet which has led to a dilution of Tibetan culture and

heritage, thus 2008 is a reaction against this authoritative project where the Tibetans have not reaped the fruits of benefit from modernisation. It also does herald the dawning of a new phase of Tibetan sub consciousness especially among young Tibetans who have lost out in the economic race with the Chinese and also the hardening of China's policies towards TAR and the ethnic Tibetan areas which have facilitated the growth of an idea of a Tibetan Nation.

CONCLUSION

Protests and uprisings especially on a mass scale such as the one in 2008 and the current spate of immolations in Tibet can be perceived as a challenge to the legitimacy of the state. This legitimacy has been built on the idea of development of the Tibetan regions and bringing in of modernisation by Beijing through the uprooting of the earlier feudal order. Thus, the protests can be partially understood as being against this project of modernisation. The majority of the actors in spearheading the movement in Tibet have been monks and nuns who feel that their religion is under duress. They are supported by the lay population who call for a right to preserve and protect a Tibetan way of life, which is mostly expressed through calls for 'freedom' and 'independence' and which has led to the state imposing more sterner policies in Tibet, further deteriorating the situation. Dissent and protests have been present throughout the history of Tibet. In 1921-22, when the Thirteenth Dalai Lama wanted to bring about modernising reforms in Tibet, it was opposed by a large section of the elite population, the aristocracy and the clergy. It was marked with strong protests against the policies especially by the monks from Drepung monastery who marched into the summer palace of the Dalai Lama. In the aftermath, the government troops laid siege on Drepung and were able to control the situation (Schaik, 2012:241). Hence, protests were prevalent earlier, which then ironically were totally against the western modernising tendency of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama.

At present, the protests and the self immolations can be understood as a strong response from the Tibetans against China's policies. Its modernisation tendencies are a factor for integrating the plateau with the rest of China, as a project of a nation state, which has incidentally led to a dilution of the Tibetan identity. The Tibetan way of life is a set of values, customs and culture which stands in contradiction to the Chinese conception of life. However, with globalisation and

the spread of telecommunications there has been the dissemination of popular culture, which lures the majority of the population. There is a notion of 'the good life' which consists of economic and social advancement, which does attract the Tibetans in China. However, through structural factors and the lack of resources, which in itself is a result of the lopsided policies of the state, the Tibetans are unable to achieve 'the good life'. This concept of a 'good life' is also seen to stand in contradiction with Tibetan consciousness which is strongly fashioned by Buddhism which is also debatable. Thus, there have been protests against mining in places deemed sacred by the Tibetans. The demonstrations in 2008 and the self immolations are calls for religious freedom, protection of Tibetan culture and also upliftment of Tibetan identity which is seen as standing contradictory to Chinese consciousness and especially to the nation's unity and stability (Li Dezhu, 2000:22-25). Thus, the hypothesis stands strong with regard to China's responses towards the Tibetan protests and self immolations as it is through such measures that stability and security is achieved as the project of modernisation is seen to be aimed at integration and assimilation of Tibet. The response from the Tibetans in the form of protests and self immolations can be seen as the physical manifestation of the contradictory consciousness present in Sino Tibetan ties, where the concept of a "good life" brought by the Chinese in Tibet is not viewed as such and is somewhat rejected by the Tibetan psyche.

CONCLUSION

Modernisation in the context of Tibet can be seen as a hegemonic tool, a dominant discourse launched by the PRC from the period of liberation in 1951. It is deemed as a correct historical path on which China is treading along with its nationalities; including the Tibetans. It is more so for the Tibetans as it is seen as the tool of emancipation which, liberated the masses from the feudal monastic overlords as well as from the imperialist forces. This has been a major site of contestation between the Chinese rulers and the Tibetan subjects. The ruling groups believe modernisation to be the key to resolving the Question of Tibet, whereas this specific Chinese project is in itself a major problem for the Tibetans as the ownership of modernisation is a contestable agenda in the Tibetan regions. It is through a process of modernisation that legitimacy is derived by Beijing which however has not transcended into popular legitimacy. Furthermore, modernisation in Tibet is also seen as being rife with the imperialistic undertones that it comes with, especially towards the Tibetan way of life. The authorities see the Tibetan identity linked strongly to Tibetan Buddhism to be stunting the process of development and modernisation in the region. Through modernisation which was given a greater boost in Tibet with the Western development campaign launched in 2000, its architects aim for a "profound social transformation" (Cooke, 2003) thus encompassing all aspects of life on the plateau. What is significant is the nation building process that China is involved in, which is to be realised through the 'vector of economic development' (ibid) and which will not tolerate a distinct Tibetan identity, seen as opposing modernisation tendency in Tibet.

Thus, in this research China's modernisation project in Tibet are seen as being geared towards securing its rule in the region and is also aimed towards integration and assimilation which is also the hypothesis tested. It can be termed as a project of the consolidation by a nation state, whereby unity and stability are considered superior over distinctiveness. This is also reflected in the Tibet Work forum meetings where the highest decision regarding Tibet is undertaken. The importance of Tibet, a peripheral region to the PRC is immense as in the Third Work Forum (1994) onwards it was deemed as being central to China's unity and integrity and thus stabilisation and development were considered to be of high vantage point. This has remained so in the fourth (2001) and fifth (2010) work forums on Tibet where the region's importance to the sovereignty of the Chinese state became extremely important. What is equally important is that in these meetings a plan for modernisation of the Tibetan regions were chalked out which were mostly a top down approach without much

consideration for local characteristics. The Work Forum Meetings on Tibet are the blueprints for modernisation in the regions. The Tibetans are about 0.4 percent of China's population who are residents of a vast region of 1.1 million square miles which represents 30 percent of China's territory. More importantly, the 55 minority nationalities which make up the PRC along with the majority Han population are supposed to be governed according to a single policy, but of the 65 "official White Papers" released by China since 1992, eight were on Tibet or Tibetans, thus highlighting the importance of Tibet in the Chinese scheme of things (Barnett, 2010:317). Jiang Zemin in 1994 at the Third Work Forum had mentioned that "maintaining stability in Tibet was crucial to the success of reforms, development and stability throughout the country" (Xinhua, 1994). Thus, Tibet is seen as an important indicator of China's national unity and sovereignty. It is in this that the project of modernisation plays an important role brought about by the nation state which in itself is a result of the process of modernisation. There has also been a strong internationalisation of the Tibetan issue with a vibrant exile population based in many countries under the leadership of the Dalai Lama. They have whipped up popular support for the case of Tibet, with numerous states acknowledging the need to recognise the rights of the Tibetans in Tibet. This is seen as a major catalyst for the PRC to emphasise on modernisation in Tibet not only to justify their rule but also to further consolidate their hold over the strategic area.

Thus, modernisation is a political matter, imposed from the top down, designed for state interests. It is seen by Beijing as resolving the "nationalities problem" in China (Cooke, 2003) as well as silencing its foreign critics once and for all. However, this has not completely materialised and the Chinese project of modernisation is seen to be alienating Tibetans, bringing about a strong sense of dislocation and disenchantment towards the state. Therefore, the Tibetan responses towards the Chinese project of modernisation can be understood through a dual manner of firstly resistance; seen mostly in the form of protests and secondly through negotiations by the locals with the project of modernisation which is seen as the dominant discourse in Tibet. The research is based on these two aspects of Tibetan response towards China's policies. Protests and demonstrations are not directly aimed at the project of modernisation but towards China's rule in the region or as a reaction towards the unfair policies in the region. However, in cases of the protests against certain policies such as mining in mountains which are deemed sacred or against the policy of fencing or sedentarisation of nomads and grabbing land from the Tibetans, it can be seen as being against the modernising policies. The protests against the imposition of Mandarin

language in the schools in the Tibetan regions notably in Machu, Gansu province or the self immolation by Lama Sobha one among the 42 self immolators in Tibet can be taken as a case of protest against modernisation brought by the Chinese. In his final testament, Lama Sobha had cited the lack of culture and freedom as a major reason for him committing such a drastic act. The self immolations of the herder Tamding Thar, who self immolated on 15 June 2012 and Dickyi Choezom on 27 June 2012 has been related to specific economic projects launched by the Chinese as a process of modernisation that is the nomadic resettlement policies for the former and the unfair land seizures for the latter.

The Open Constitution Initiative or Gongmeng based in Beijing have also linked the pan Tibetan protests of 2008 to the lopsided development project that China has initiated in Tibet, which as according to them has led to further alienation and disenchantment towards the Chinese state. The protests in 2008 which spanned across the entire Tibetan region are an indicator of the brewing discontentment towards China's policies in the region. There have been numerous interpretations regarding the protests, but a primary focus of the protestors towards the Chinese owned business establishments which turned riotous and dubbed as the March 14 incident by the Chinese is symptomatic of the negative reaction towards modernisation by the Tibetans. Modernisation is also seen synonymous with the Han migrants, who are imbued with a sense of civilisation and are the harbingers of modernity to Tibet. Thus, inherent in this formulation is the idea of a superiority of the Han population as well as the Han cadres over the Tibetans, who are to learn the skills from the migrant Han population. The migrant Chinese population also have a structural advantage over the Tibetans which is a result of the policies implemented by the Chinese state in Tibet. Thus the majority of the Tibetans especially the rural villagers as well as the urban poor are usually at a severe disadvantage in the labour market compared to Han migrants in terms of quality as well as quantity of education they have received, as well as in their language competency as Mandarin is the dominant language of transaction (Yeh, 2007:597).

The presence of Han migrants in Tibet is a matter of major concern for the Tibetans as well as their supporters as it has been deemed to be leading to "population invasion" and the erosion of the Tibetan culture. However, in the TAR as well as in the other Tibetan areas, majority of the population remains Tibetan and much of the migrant Han population are seen as temporary migrants, who are termed as the "floating population" (Ma, 2008). Many of the Chinese migrants come to Tibet with a strong sense of responsibility, while majority are pre fixated with taking advantage of the opportunities present in Tibet and thus becoming rich

(Abraham Lustgarten, 2008:236). In the rest of China, the migrant workers are denigrated and treated as second class citizens to the cities to which they float even though they are the cogs and the wheels which are turning the growing Chinese economy (Yeh 2007:598). However in the case of Tibet, the migrants are seen as being superior to the Tibetans and have brought quality to the land and the people (ibid), which is an inherent idea of the Chinese project of modernisation in Tibet. It is a civilising process which will bring development to the Tibetan areas which is however with Chinese characteristics and Tibetan flavour (Tibet Daily, 2010). The presence of migrants has led to the rise in the "sons of the soil" sentiment, fuelling the growth and development of a strong Tibetan national identity. Modernisation is also seen as a discourse which is pitted against the earlier narrative of pre 1949 Tibet, which has been termed as dark, backward and feudal, whereas the present state of affairs is seen as China heralding the Tibetan areas towards progress, development and modernisation. Thus, China tends to justify its rule over Tibet on lines of bringing in modernisation and terming it as liberation. This is reflected in almost all the government papers and documents on Tibet as well as being a popular idea among the Chinese public, which has been a result of the state media propaganda on Tibet. Thus, the Tibetans who protest and oppose China's policies are seen as ungrateful towards the benevolence of the great motherland. Under this, China portrays Tibet as a static society prior to 1949 and that dynamism occurred only with the coming of the Chinese in the region.

Modernisation is also seen as a device to uproot "separatism" and "splittism" in the context of Tibet as it is seen to be directed more towards creating stability and security in the region. As mentioned earlier, China's modernisation project is geared towards securing its rule in the region rather than for the general benefit of the Tibetans. Therefore, in this context any expressions of explicit dissent with state policies, including development policies, are subject to the possibility of being interpreted and treated as a political threat to national unity (Yeh, 2007:597). This flexibility of splittism is an effective tool for the authorities to curb dissent in Tibet. Thus, the project of modernisation is an all pervasive ideology imposed by China on Tibet and Tibetans which is also seen as bridging the gap between the affluent east and the poorer western regions; with Tibet being one among them. The process of modernisation in Tibet as seen by numerous analysts is mostly urban based and follows a top down approach where state subsidies account for more than 95 percent of the TAR's budget. Statistical data reveals that a greater share of this budget is diverted towards the urban, more towards hard investment such as highways, railways, pipelines, mineral extraction, dams, power stations,

and irrigation facilities. Limited priority is given to soft infrastructure such as health, education, and local human capacity-building that would enable more local employment and participation in the modernization process. The Western Development strategy gives little priority to investment in local agriculture and livestock, although the majority of the western population, especially non-Chinese ethnic populations experiencing most acute poverty, are in these two sectors. It is evident that the selection of priority infrastructure investment projects under the Western Development strategy does not correspond with the priority needs of the poorest populations in the traditional agricultural and livestock sectors. The only Tibetans prospering as a result of China's leap-style intensive investment in Tibet is the small group of Tibetan salaried workers in government departments and state enterprises. Based on the above findings of widespread poverty, social exclusion, and marginalization of the Tibetan population, the State economic development efforts so far have not affected the Tibetans, particularly the rural areas in Tibet, in a positive way. Hence, it cannot be assumed that rural Tibet is progressing or that development is inevitable (Tibetan Bulletin Online, 2004).

This is seen as the fundamental problem inherent in China's economic policies in Tibet, which are leading to a marginalisation of the rural population. However, modernisation in the rural areas from mid 90's have accelerated and the rural economy has expanded so greatly that it can be said to be in the throes of a major paradigm shift from a predominately subsistence agricultural economy with some supplementary non-farm income to a new mixed agriculture/non-farm income economy. This has been taken as a revolutionary step in the rural setup of Tibet which was lacking in the earlier periods (Goldstein, Childs and Wangdui, 2008:517). The Chinese government has also implemented projects to bolster the quality of life in the rural areas, which encompass both hard investments as well as soft investments which has also being emphasised by Premier Wen Jiabao (ibid). However much of this can be understood in lights of the massive protests in 2008 when rural areas had also participated in the pan Tibet protests giving a strong jolt to China to rethink its Tibet policy.

What is also strong is the idea that in rural areas it was through Chinese involvement that a paradigm shift occurred with the intrusion of a non farm income for the Tibetans which is mostly in the form of the going outside the village to secure temporary wage paying jobs (ibid, 2008:518). This is also seen as a part of a project of modernisation that the Chinese have brought to Tibet to emancipate the Tibetans. It has been facilitated through the growth

in telecommunications, the spread of information through the telephone and through plain connections in the urban areas where they go and work. This new income sources has led to an explosion in cash income as well as in the standard of living (ibid, 2008:525). Thus in the process of economic modernisation, there is mobility along the economic spectrum, which is mostly through the non farm income method in the Tibetan areas. This includes working in mostly the low rung sectors of the urban economy, where they have to compete with the Han migrants who are seen as possessing a structural advantage over the Tibetans. There is also a rise in the Tibetan women from rural areas participating in the booming sex industry in major cities like Lhasa. It is seen that in many cases, much of the Tibetans are alienated and face severe dislocations in the urban areas which are seen as a result of the modernising policies in Tibet.

The responses from the Tibetans can also be understood on lines of negotiations towards the project of modernisation which are generally through their culture; the essence of which is Tibetan Buddhism. Since the 12th century particularly after the Buddhist Revolution, life in Tibet was geared towards Tibetan Buddhism and the monasteries and monastics gained prominence (Norbu 2001: 39-54). The form of government present till 1951 was a theocratic setup where religious leaders held much sway over administration and the highest sovereign was the Dalai Lama. The Tibetans saw their relationship with China through religious terms as a "priest patron relationship". Hence, monasteries were the repository of Tibetan culture and its distinct identity, which came into conflict with the coming of the Chinese and the Communist ideology. The intrusion of modernisation is seen to be creating strains in the traditional Tibetan community. The policies implemented by Beijing have been termed as eroding the Tibetan way of life, leading to what the Dalai Lama terms "a cultural genocide". However it has also led to Buddhism and the Tibetan culture adjusting to the numerous changes taking place, leading to the creation of alternative modernity(s) or the indigenisation of modernity. Modern concepts of human rights, individualism and even Communist notions of serving others have been well incorporated into Tibetan Buddhism (Harkonen, 2009:53).

The Tibetan Buddhist way of life is also used as a mode of defence of the Tibetan values and opposing Chinese intrusions in numerous aspects of the Tibetan identity (Yeh, 2007:602). In this research the Tibetan responses can be partially understood through a mode of contradictory consciousness expounded by Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist philosopher along with the project of modernisation being placed under the scanner of hegemony.

Gramsci's notions of hegemony and contradictory consciousness takes into precedence the importance of culture and consciousness as being the foundations for a culture of resistance. He emphasised on the need to refuse to accept passively and supinely from outside the moulding of one's own personality (Gramsci, 2010:323). In the case of the Tibetans it becomes more important when the project of modernisation is seen as a hegemonic project by them and there is a need to express it in an oppositional counter hegemonic manner. However, this arises out of a space shared by both the dominating group as well as the subaltern group. This is strongly seen in the case of the Chinese state utilising the Tibetan tulkus or "living Buddhas" to gain legitimacy and in the process they are able to aid in the preservation of the cultural aspect of Tibetan life such as in the case of the opening and financing of Tibetan schools mostly in the ethnic Tibetan regions. What is also significant is that through Gramsci's analysis the opposition of the Tibetans to China's policies on lines of the earlier socio territorial identities of the Tibetans also become clarified (Yeh, 2007:504). Thus, the Tibetan protests of 2008 which swept across the plateau including the Tibetan regions in the neighbouring Chinese provinces can also be understood in such a manner.

Chapter one is on the impact on Tibetan Buddhism which is denoted as the essence of Tibetan culture by the project of modernisation. It provides an outline of the policies and the modernisation as imposed by China on traditional Tibetan culture. What is also important is the idea that the modern is viewed as being antithetical to the traditional by the Chinese leaders' thus viewing religion with much scepticism. Much significant is that in Tibet religion provides for the groundwork of a strong separate identity, of a Tibetan nationhood which is seen as fuelling separatist tendencies and thus development is seen as the correct way to handle this contradiction. This is further fuelled by the idea that the Tibetan culture and Buddhism has certain inherent features which will stall development and blocks the path of modernisation. Thus, religion has been strictly monitored and curbed in the Tibetan areas through numerous institutional mechanisms by the state even though the constitutional and legal provisions in China provide for the freedom of religious belief. There is also a strong belief among the authorities that with the rise in wealth among the Tibetans, a process of secularisation will lower the influence of religion among the Tibetans, which however has not being successful as the policies of the state has further alienated the Tibetans and sharpened their identity consciousness which is reflected through Tibetan Buddhism. This in turn has led to the negotiations ensured by religion with the process of modernisation as mentioned earlier. It is here that the ideas of contradictory consciousness as counter hegemonic culture

can be used to test the hypothesis, whereby the process of modernisation is deemed as a tool of bringing stability or security in the region. It is precisely in the interactions with religion and Tibetan culture that modernisation by China proves to be a hegemonic culture. Tibetan Buddhism's interaction with modernisation and the defence of a Tibetan value that it puts up or the amalgamation of modern values can also be seen along similar lines, where the counter hegemonic culture is seen as sharing the same discursive space as the hegemonic dominating culture and is allowed to be in that space.

The second chapter on infrastructure and urbanisation with a particular focus on the Qinghai Tibet railway is reflective of the numerous elements of the modern introduced in Tibet by China. These are the physical representations of modernisation which have emerged as the primary sites of contestations between the ruling Chinese and their subject the Tibetans. A large portion of investments as well as subsidies in Tibet are diverted to these sectors; towards the building of infrastructure which is done for the development of the Tibetans. However what has been known is that much of the development goes well beyond the need of the Tibetans and is generally meant for the stability of the region. As Tibet is of great strategic value in both military and economic terms it remains a crucial region for China to control, which has also been facilitated through the infrastructure and communication build up in Tibet which will facilitate the easy deployment of troops. These infrastructural facilities also aided the authorities to quell dissent and stop protests through easy troop mobility during the March 2008 protests which swamped the region. Thus, the hardcore symbols of modernisation are seen to be bringing about integration and assimilation of the region to the rest of China as well as to secure the rule of China in the region.

 The urban is a major zone of cultural supremacy by the ruling groups in Tibet which is strongly contested in terms of contradictory consciousness as well as negotiations by the Tibetans. It is here that the counter hegemonic culture of the Tibetans is propped up against China's narratives regarding the urban which entails differing notions in work, time as well as the city as a space. The vast infrastructure especially telecommunications are however used by the Tibetans as a mode to negotiate and raise their alternative ideals regarding Tibet and development seen mostly in the case of the spread of a pan Tibetan nationalism in Chinese cyberspace. With the development in infrastructure and communication in the Tibetan regions, spaces have shrunk and thus creating a sense of unity among the Tibetans. They see themselves not only as sharing the same space but also the same suffering under

China's rule, thus bringing a strong sense of unity amongst themselves. This is seen as a major reason for the protests in 2008 turning into a pan Tibetan protests, which not only covered the entire plateau and brought life to a standstill but also transcended to different parts of the world, where solidarity protests against China by Tibetans in exile and their supporters were experienced especially during the course of the Olympic torch relay. The protests in Tibet in 2008 and the ensuing brutal crackdown by the authorities was expressed by pictures and videos uploaded on the internet by Tibetans from Tibet which led to this strong wave of anti China protests throughout the world.

The last chapter highlights the response of the Tibetans to the Chinese project of modernisation through the 2008 protests, the self immolations from 2009 onwards and the cultural resurgence which has emerged as a strong form of cultural resistance in Tibet. Protests however cannot be termed directly as an opposition to modernisation but it can be seen as being facilitated partially by the project of modernisation that the Chinese state has brought about in Tibet, leading to strong cultural and economic dislocation and alienation amongst the Tibetans, further fuelling the identity insecurity that is strongly present in the psyche of the Tibetans. The protests can be partially seen as affirming this identity and a disagreement to China's nation building process, which in itself is a project of modernisation. The protests in 2008 was unprecedented in its spread both in space as well as time, and has been referred to as a "national uprising" similar on lines of the 1959 uprising in Lhasa. It was also the advancement in techno communications which is seen to have facilitated this spread. These protests were directly against the hegemonic power as cries for independence and the banned Tibetan national flag were displayed during the protests. Therefore the protests in 2008 can be understood in terms of the growth of Tibetan nationalism which has increased exponentially due to the insecure policies implemented by China in the region. The Open Constitution Initiative or Gongmeng which conducted a field survey in a few regions in Tibet after the 2008 protests have linked the lopsided effects of China's modernisation project to the Tibetan protests, thus giving pre eminence to economic alienation faced by the Tibetans.

However, modernisation can only be seen as a single facet explaining the protests which rocked Tibet in 2008 and it can be seen as a combination of a variety of factors with the project of modernisation being an equally important reason for the Tibetans to protest and develop a contradictory notion of consciousness, which fuels the protest further, percolating in the form of the self immolations as an extreme form of protests adopted by numerous

Tibetans from 2009 onwards. Around 42 Tibetans inside Tibet have committed the act of self immolation, of enacting violence towards the self as a form of denying the state the agency over their body which is the final site of exercising hegemony by the state. This act is seen as the ultimate protest against all agencies exercised by the state over an individual. Through the last testament of Lama Sobha, it is clear that his act of self immolation was incited by the dilution of Tibetan culture, due to the project of modernisation in Tibet. The same can be said of Tsering Kyi, the 19 year old student from the Tibetan Middle school in Machu who self immolated on 3 March, 2012 which has been linked to the imposition of Chinese language textbooks in her school seen as a tool of cultural hegemony arising from the need to modernise. On the other hand numerous economic policies which are seen as a part of modernisation has also led to a few Tibetans from protesting through self sacrifices as can be deducted from the acts of Tamding Thar, a herder, self immolated on 15 June, 2012 supposedly against the act of nomadic resettlement policy implemented by the state as a process of development in the region. The self immolation by Dickyi Choezom on 27 June 2012 is seen to be against the illegal land grabbing by authorities in the name of development with low compensation.

It is the cultural and literary resurgence in the Tibetan areas in the form of songs, poetry, publications and simply writing blogs which are seen as acts of resistance against an overbearing state. In the post 2008 phase, a plethora of writings and cultural activities has emerged from Tibet which can be seen as the growth of a counter hegemonic culture partially facilitated by the modernisation process currently underway in Tibet as the dissemination has taken place through the internet, publication houses and also through the availability of electronic mass production methods like photocopying machines. These activities are also expressed through the Mandarin language which has been depicted as a language of liberation, of progress, brought by the Chinese to Tibet, but is now used as a tool to express dissent and criticise the state. Much of the literary and cultural resurgence has led to a stronger growth of a sense of differentiation, of a Tibetan identity which fuels sub nationalism, and stands in confrontation with China's project of the nation state in the Tibetan areas. This is seen as a strong response of the Tibetans against the Chinese policies of modernisation which is expressed through contradictory consciousness highlighted in the literary and cultural works of the Tibetans.

Thus, the Chinese project of modernisation in Tibet has led to immense changes, which is marked with great development in the region and an increase in the standard of living of the Tibetans as well as of the other nationalities based there. However the response from the Tibetans, who constitute the majority population in the Tibetan areas and who are the indigenous community is seen as being mostly negative towards this project of modernisation. It has also however evoked a process of meandering through and negotiating with modernisation, a process that has led to the emergence of local hybrid forms of modernity which can be understood as resistance within structures of domination (Yeh, 2007:503). It is through the discursive space of modernisation that there is an interaction between the dominant and the subaltern, which is also seen in the form of a contradictory consciousness as imbibed by the Tibetans in understanding and resisting the Chinese project of modernisation.

Modernisation is seen as a desired requirement for China which is moreover more important in the case of Tibet as it is used as a device to strengthen China's rule over the region. The term modernisation has come under immense criticism in the past decades and is seen as an ideological tool which reeks strongly of cultural imperialism, which to a certain extent is true in the case of China and its national minorities as the state imposes strong central top down policies on them to bring about development but also to stifle any form of dissent. It is this notion of equating modernisation with securing state sovereignty which is the root cause of much of the protests and demonstrations against China's rule, which is also portrayed as being against development. This presents an incomplete picture as Tibetans want modernisation and development but also the rights over them; the need for development with Tibetan characteristics which will take into account the uniqueness of Tibetan culture and identity. However, with security and stability as overriding factors and the need to maintain a firm grip over the Tibetan regions, the change in China's project of modernisation is not seen.

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