Chapter IV

ETHNIC IDENTITIES IN TIBET AND KAZAKHSTAN
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In multi-ethnic states ethnic minorities strive to maintain their distinct identity vis-a-vis other, especially the dominant, ethnic groups. Ethnic identity takes different forms in different social circumstances. It manifests itself in race, language, culture, religion etc. Awareness of the ways in which various ethnic groups are identified as distinct nationalities, is the first crucial step in understanding ethnic relations and ethnic politics. China and the former Soviet Union are no exception to this. Against this background, in this chapter, the two cases under study, Tibet and Kazakhastan are examined in terms of ethnic identities of Tibetans and Kazakhs.

Tibetan Identity

At the heart of Tibet issue lies a conflict between Chinese and Tibetan ideas of national identity. The barriers to social interaction between the two communities come from the Tibetan side as much as the Chinese. The Tibetans regard the Chinese as outsiders, and have no doubt as to their own distinct identity. This is defined by physical appearance, language, culture, and above all religion. There is no Chinese word for 'Buddhist'. Those who practise Buddhist teachings are nang-pa (insiders). Those who do not are phyi-pa (outsiders).¹ Over the centuries Tibetan national identity became indistinguishable from religious identity and every part of Tibetan society, from the highest to the lowest, was saturated by Buddhist folklore and teachings. Buddhism

regulated their lives, their festivals and holidays, their work and their family activities.²

The forced incorporation of Tibet into the Chinese empire and the various policies of assimilation and integration failed to sinify Tibetans. Chinese communist theoreticians expected ideological enlightenment gradually to override ethnic loyalties, in much the same way as material progress was supposed to remove the need for religious 'superstitions'. However, in practice, the opposite has ensued. The growth of Tibetan national consciousness and reassertion of Tibetan ethnic identity is continuing to take place not inspite of Chinese rule, but because of it. Let us illustrate the various forms of manifestations of Tibetan identity since historic times.

Race:

An important fact about Tibetans is the enormous pride they take in their identity. Tibetans, in terms of their racial features, belong to the Mongolian race. Besides this, they are defined by virtue of their belonging to a race whose origins can be traced back to Avalokitesvara, the father of the Tibetan people. Tibetans feel that theirs is very ancient and culturally more advanced than the Han-race. Tibetan writers trace their history back to a 'king Srong-Tsan-Gampo who brought the scattered Tibetans under his single rule... with its capital at Lhasa',³ during 7th century B.C.

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2. Tibet the Facts, a report prepared by the Scientific Buddhist Association for the UNCHR, Tibetan Young Buddhist Association (Dharamshala, 1990), p.10.
The sense of belonging to a particular race represents the existence of a strong and independent Tibet over the centuries.

**Language:**

Language is fundamental aspect of ethnicity. Tibetans have their own language and literature. It was during twelfth century that Tibet acquired its linguistic identity. Tibetan language was codified and writing introduced. This contributed to the creation of a sense of cultural community, introducing some degree of standardization in the use of language. It also produced literate elites empowered to create a new culture on the basis of fixity introduced by writings. Thus, language and literature express not only the "national genius" but also serve a useful purpose in the production of nationalism: a unifying social communication system across the nation. Cultural heroes are ostensibly projected as the towering and inspiring demi-gods of the nationalist pantheon with which mobilised masses can easily and proudly identify, thereby concretizing their sense of national identity.6

Directions to use Tibetan as official language have been highlighted in various policy statements. The language policy announced in 1988, calling for Tibetan to become the primary language of official communication within two years, has yet to be

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implemented and Chinese is still used as the working language in government offices. Tibetans are extremely critical about this issue. Despite having all the attributes of a nation their basic human rights are not protected. They are forced to learn Chinese language for employment opportunities within their native land. Panchen Lama complained in 1988 that "for the past thirty and more years no importance has been attached to the use of the Tibetan language." Many Tibetans resist the idea of learning Chinese in order to get along better in their own country, with people whose presence was unwelcome.

Culture

Culture is another important manifestation of ethnic identity. When the Chinese PLA liberated Tibet in 1950, the first reaction of the Lhasa government was not either to defend the territorial integrity of Tibet or to protect natural resources, but the sacred person of the Dalai Lama who symbolized Tibetan culture. Tibetans feel that survival of Tibetan identity depends on Tibetan culture. The value and significance of a culture in turn, depends on the original history of that particular culture. Tibetan culture has firm roots in Buddhism, and is associated with Buddhist traditions and customs. The survival of this culture has been at stake since the Chinese communist invasion of 1950 that aimed at incorporating Tibet into China and destruction of the last vestiges of Tibetan culture. All efforts to suppress cultural values by the Chinese authorities failed.

8. Dawa Norbu op. cit, n.6, p.208.
On the other hand, the reform policies helped further strengthen and revive cultural identities of the Tibetans.

**Religion**

Religion has been most effective preserver of ethnic identities. In case of Tibet, Buddhism played a significant role in defining the ultimate identity of Tibetans. It contains a high tradition of great scholarly sophistication which lends itself to purification, and can constitute the banner of political and spiritual 'Reform' and revival. Tibetans made the bond of religion an important unifying factor for their own nationality.

Since the advent of Buddhism, Tibetan life has been revolving around religion. The Dalai Lama, the spiritual and Temporal head of all Tibetans, has come to personify Tibetan national identity. He is providing the necessary leadership to Tibetan nationalist movement. He remains the most important symbol of Tibetan national unity both within Tibet and among the exile community. The creation of the institution of Dalai Lama dates as far back as 15th Century. Notwithstanding the Chinese occupation of Tibet there is no decline in its importance and influence. Its tremendous force lies in its lofty moral character and the spiritual message it holds for the people of Central Asia.

In recent years religious and cultural forms that define 'Tibetanness' have assumed political significance. Tibetans respond with growing confidence to Chinese attempts to obliterate their past. The rituals of nationalist protest build continuities

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between the recollected Tibetan past and contemporary political experience. The Jokhang temple in the centre of Lhasa has become the symbolic focus of political protest precisely because it exemplifies these continuities, linking Tibetan identity to its remembered past. The legends of Songtsen-Gampo and the ancient kings likewise reinforce a collective political identity and sustain a sense of political legacy in the face of Chinese political domination. The Dalai Lama as a symbol and rallying point of Tibetan protest exemplifies these continuities, best of all, since he epitomizes both the Tibetan religious and political past and a bridge to the modern world. The sense of constituting a political community is condensed into the figure of the Dalai Lama, who represents not only the pre-1959 government in Lhasa, which continues in exile in India, but a remembered political history stretching back to the time of the ancient kings. ¹⁰

Other non-institutionalized forms of religious expression, such as oracles, divination, and popular cults have the potential for mass mobilisation and assume volatile political forms. Similarly, prayers invoking protector deities to come to the aid of Tibet, as well as the long life payer for the Dalai Lama (rgyal bai Zhabs brtan) and the 'Prayer of Truth' (bden smon) written by him, have all acquired an explicit political meaning for Tibetans.¹¹

Besides these various forms of religion, a host of non-religious customs that have great practical impact on social life—such as personal names, dietary restrictions, 

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¹¹. Ibid. p.215.
marriage institutions, birth and death rituals, public festivals, even greeting styles and costumes — all of which become additional means of social identification.\textsuperscript{12}

To conclude, with the help of several carefully thought policies, Chinese wanted to replace Tibetan identity by a communist ideology in the form of Mao cult. But they failed to eradicate Tibetans' deep religious faith, their sense of cultural identity or their loyalty to The Dalai Lama. In the last four decades very impressive economic, social and cultural developments have taken place in Tibet. Though the Chinese leaders do not recognize, at least in public, it is a fact that development process also stimulates nationalist identities and generates demands for autonomy and independence.

\textbf{Kazakh Identity}

Ethnic identity of Kazakhs is synonymous with their neighbouring Muslim Asian minorities namely Kirghiz, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmenians. They are linked by race, religion and tradition to the Islamic countries in the South, than to the Slav dominated Russia in the Northwest. The assertion of the identity of Kazakhs has been latent until recently. Gorbachev's liberalising policies, besides Soviet policies after the revolution, revived ethnic identities. Race/Tribe, language, culture and religion provided the raw material of national identity and served as an integral part of Kazakh nationalism and as crucial factors in its maintenance and growth.

Soviet policies on nationalities tried to suppress all forms of ethnic/national identities through oppressive measures. In this process some of the traditional social

\textsuperscript{12} Dawa Norbu, op. cit. no.6, p.69.
structures, mosques, historic places etc. were destroyed but not traditional values attached to those social structures. Kazakhs are known to be most Russified Muslim minorities of Central Asia and least Islamised people. In spite of this, their ethnic loyalties towards Islamic culture and tradition continue to manifest in various forms.

Race/Tribe

Kazakhs consider themselves racially separate from the Slavs or Russians and close to the Turkic peoples. They are descended from Mongol and Turkic tribes that settled in the area about the first century BC. They emerged as a distinct ethnic group from a tribal confederation known as Kazakh Orda, which was formed in the late 15th century A.D.\(^\text{13}\)

The Turko-Mongol Kazakh pastoral nomads of the northern-steppe were quite similar to the Kirghiz herdsmen in the mountains to the southeast. But even though their languages were mutually intelligible and inter marriage common, the Kazakhs and Kirghiz maintained distinct tribal structures and their sense of ethnic uniqueness was strengthened over time as each group created its own relations with the various and ever-changing neighbouring powers.\(^\text{14}\) Historically speaking, Kazakhstan and Kyrghizia have more in common than other ethnic groups. The age-old admonition in

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the epic trilogy 'Manas' that "Kazakhs and Kyrghiz are blood brothers", bind them together.\textsuperscript{15} The imposed Soviet distinction between steppe dwellers —— Kazakhs and mountain dwellers —— Kirghiz, has never been accepted by the peoples involved. They strongly feel about their distinct ethnic identity.

Although Kazakh nomads may live for part of year in flats on collective farms, in the mountains they still live in yurts. They stick closely to their clans, refrain from marrying outside the wider tribe and maintain traditions of hospitality and culture that are centuries old.\textsuperscript{16}

**Language**

Kazakh belongs to the kipchak group of Turkic languages all of which belong to the Altaic family.\textsuperscript{17} Kazakh was written in Arabic script until the early 1930's when Arabic was supplanted by Latin alphabet. A decade later, as part of the Russification effort, the Latin alphabet was again replaced by the Cyrillic alphabet. This created deep resentment among Kazakhs. They feel that it is one of the main duties of every Kazakh, every Kazakh family, everyone who regards himself as a Kazakh and the entire population to be proud of their native language, to be concerned for its purity and to promote its development.\textsuperscript{18} It is, therefore, not surprising that 97.5 per cent Kazakhs


claimed Kazakh as their mother tongue (as per 1979 census). Only 2 per cent regarded Russian as their mother tongue. However, 52.3 per cent of Kazakhs regarded Russian as their second language.\textsuperscript{19}

Many newspapers and journals in Kazakh language like \textit{Kazakhstani Ayyelderi} (Women of Kazakhstan), \textit{Madeniyet Zhane Turmys} (Culture and Daily Life), and \textit{Ontuslik Kazakhstan} in particular contain only Kazakh names and the photographs in them largely feature representatives of the indigenous nationality. For them, preservation of native language is tantamount to preserving awareness of their own national identity.

The Soviet authorities, however, felt that this kind of one-sided coverage of life in a multi-national republic tended to artificially consolidated national isolation. Hence, there were always attempts to make Russian the medium of instruction and relegate Kazakh to a secondary position. This attitude towards Kazakh hurt the feelings of the natives. The Kazakhs were dissatisfied with the low priority given to publication of teaching aids in the Kazakh language such as self-instruction books, phrase books and dictionaries of the Kazakh language. By the mid 1980s, approximately 40 per cent of Kazakh youth were unable to read their native language.\textsuperscript{20}

Despite such official efforts to foster Russian language kazakhs have retained a strong degree of linguistic cohesion. Almost all regard Kazakh as their mother tongue. In September 1989, the Kazakh Supreme Soviet adopted legislation establishing Kazakh

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Current Digest of Soviet Press}, (CDSP), vol. 39, no.19, April 1987, p.11.

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Kazakhstanya Pravda}, June 10, 1989.
as the official language of the republic, while Russian remained a language of inter-ethnic communication. However, all officials communicating with the general public would be required to know both the languages.

Culture

In differing ways and varying degrees ethnic, religious and linguistic forms constitute culture. Kazakhs maintained their underdeveloped culture to assert their identity which is different from the Russian or Slavs. The depth of their attachment to traditional national culture and its religious context remained extraordinarily strong. They have shown a desire to preserve their own characteristics and their own traditions irrespective of the length of the time they have lived under Soviet culture. Seven decades of Soviet rule could not suppress inherent cultural identities of the Kazakh people.

Kazakh culture has pre-Islamic and Islamic elements and aspects of ceremonies in the form of local traditions. All these continue to serve as means of ethnic identity. The leaders are conscious that the assertion of religious roots is an avoidable phase of building a new socio-cultural identity.

Religion

The predominant religion of Kazakhs is Islam, most ethnic Kazakhs, being Sunni-Muslims of the Hanafi School. Islam is embedded in the life of the Kazakhs. It is not only a religion but a way of life. The pervasive presence of religion is all too apparent, especially in traditional festivals, marriage and death rites, inheritance laws,
inter personal ethics, primordial outlook on life and world etc.\textsuperscript{21}

The impact of Islam is more clearly felt in the countryside, but it is also evident among the urban population, most of them migrated there and retain close ties to relatives remaining in the countryside.\textsuperscript{22} Islam served as a force to integrate society, securing its stability and acting as a symbolic expression of ethnic identity.

However, Soviet anti-religious policy has been far less successful in eliminating the more unstructured and informal religion as practised in the countryside, and even in the cities. The type of religious practice that has been preserved is based more on ritual than on doctrine. Religious practices have become more syncretic often infused with local pre-Islamic rituals, and thus with some justification may be viewed as ethnic or national traditions as much as religious ones.\textsuperscript{23}

Sufi brotherhoods played crucial role as preservers of Islam as a faith, a way of life and as an ideology. Atheistic education and mockery of rites and rituals by the Soviet authorities failed to reduce the tenacity of Islam among the Kazakhs. They preserved their historical and cultural monuments and restored mausoleums of religious and quasi-religious figures.\textsuperscript{24}

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23. Martha Brill, Olcott opcit, n.12, pp.269-270.

24. For example, the Kazakhs have embraced Ahmad Yasawi the first great Turkic saint, mystic and builder of the Yasawi Sufi order. His tomb is in the town of Turkestan. He is considered as a Kazakh national saint, although the Kazakhs appeared on the historical scene several centuries after his death.
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Towards the end of Soviet era, perestroika has radically changed the religious situation in central Asia. Islam now holds a fascination for Kazakhs, not just for religious reasons but because it is a part of their historical and national identity which they want to assert and which makes them decisively different from Russians. Until January 1990 Kazakhstan’s Muslims were governed by the pliant, Soviet-backed Muslim Religious Board based in Tashkent. However, the ambitious Qazi of Alma-Ata, Radbek Nisanbai, staged a minor coup on 12 January 1990, having himself elected grand mufti of Kazakhstan and setting up his own religious board, independent of Tashkent.25 Nisanbai opened Kazakhstan’s first Madrasah in 1991, published his own translation of the Koran into the Kazakh language and began a monthly Islamic newspaper. At least 250 mosques were built through public subscriptions. "Perestroika had been useful for Islam. Our people now want more Korans, mosques, and Islamic schools. I will give that to them", he said.26

In recent years the Kazakhs envisage Islam as a safety-valve not only to reassert their ethnic identities but to define themselves as 'nation'. Contrary to the Soviet predictions that modernisation, assimilation and integration will undermine ethnic identities, these identities are further strengthened with the advent of Gorbachev’s perestroika and glasnost. Kazakhs have become more aware of their past history, national heroes, traditions etc which reflect their distinct identity vis-a-vis Russians.


26. Ibid.
Ethnic identities of Kazakhs are taking national form to justify their position as powerful independent nation.

Soviet Union and China which talked about new vision of man during the revolutionary period ended up in imposing the language and culture of the dominant group on reluctant minorities. These processes, in the long run, had a humiliating implication to the minorities' ethnic identity. Nevertheless, liberalisation and democratization revitalized ethnic and national identities. A careful examination of ethnic identities of Tibetans and Kazakhs tells us that although ethnic identities are functionally similar, subjectively and objectively they exist in different forms — Buddhist or Islamic, Tibetan or Kazakh. The deep faith of Tibetans and Kazakhs in Buddhism and Islam, respectively, illustrate how religion pervades all aspects of life — social, religious, political etc, and intensifies ethnic and national ties. The powerful communist institutions failed to eradicate religion which has become a source of strength to re-assert ethnic identities in order to compete for legitimate political power as nations.

The search for ethnic identities in multi-ethnic nations has led to new forms of nationalism. Religious, cultural and linguistic symbols have attained nationalist characters in the conditions of modern world. The two ethnic groups discussed in this chapter, Tibetans and Kazakhs, clearly followed this trend. In the long run, Communist propaganda aimed at assimilation of various nationalities into a single whole Marxist education, anti-splitist campaign and anti-religious policies were carried out accordingly to erase all forms of minority identity. All these efforts proved to be counter-productive. Revival of national identities is taking place in an unprecedented
manner. Simultaneously, demands for more autonomy and independence are on the rise. The notions of 'democracy', 'self-determination', 'protection of human rights', have become slogans of nationalist demonstrations.

The history of the Tibetans, and their continued resistance to domination by the Chinese as evidenced by popular uprisings (see chapter V), underground resistance movements and protracted guerrilla activity illustrate the people's extreme and real disidentification with the Chinese people. The enormous pride Tibetans take in their identity is strengthened by the ordeals they have been endured since 1950's. The sense of Tibetans' collective identity can be characterized in ethnic, religious as well as political terms, which is constructed around shared memories. Cultural and historical heroes and king Strong-btsan-sgampo, Ge-Sar are becoming popular in the process of reassertion of national identities. The greater the Chinese struggle to present Tibetans as members of a religious and cultural minority without significant historical or political identity, the more Tibetans adhere to these identities. Some of the most prominent features of renewed ethnic consciousness have taken the form of religious revival, especially, among the followers of Tibetan Lamaism. For example, circumambulation or "Khorra" (bskorba) has a central place in Buddhism. If offers a religious practice without status distinctions, and thus an opportunity to recognize common features shared with other Tibetans from every background and every part of Tibet. In 1987 demonstrations that look place in Lhasa used Khorra as a form of public

protest which effectively distinguishes Tibetans from Chinese who do not practice khorra. By combining Khorra with symbols of Tibetan nationhood the Dalai Lama, the flag - the Drepung monks (who led the demonstration) forged a link between the powerful motivation that underlies religious ritual and the national consciousness that divides Tibetans from Chinese. This monastic protest has an explicitly nationalist content. Tibetan nationalism is very much a modern phenomenon: the thinking of the young monks today has been politicized in a way that could not have been possible in pre-1959 Tibet. Today infact, western political ideas — democracy, human rights etc. — are perceived as compatible with Tibetan nationalism. Western cultural influences which are the result of opening Tibet to tourists, are valued positively by Tibetans, Westerners are generally regarded as allies in the struggle for Tibetan independences. During the last forty years, Tibetan Buddhism, which once worked to counter a strong sense of nationality, now works the other way. With the Dalai Lama as its spokesman and with his policy of non-violence, Tibetan Buddhism has come to symbolize Tibet's national identity. Moreover, it is proving an effective ideological counter-balance in the face of the advance of the Chinese brand of Marxism in Tibet. And for Tibetans in exile, Buddhism is rendering immense strength to continue their peaceful struggle for independence.


29. Ibid p.92.

Tibetan language, too, has been politicized. New linguistic categories are propagating new ideology inside and outside Tibet. While the Chinese tried their best to spread Marxist teachings in Tibetan language, the exile community has developed their own notions about nationalism and patriotism. For example, one of the most frequently used words among the exile community today is ‘sems shug’ made up of the two morphemes, ‘sems’ meaning ‘mind’ and ‘shug’ meaning ‘strength’. It can be translated as ‘love of one’s country’, or ‘having conviction in the cause’. The cause in question here is (obviously) that of Tibetan independence.31

Besides religion, language and culture played equally significant roles in reviving ethnic identities and fostering nationalism. Every form of cultural expression has acquired political importance. Customs that were spontaneously recovered after the end of the Cultural Revolution and the lifting of restriction in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s are now self-consciously identified with the cause of Tibetan independence and resistance to the Chinese. Folk culture and traditions became vehicles of reassertion of national identities which Tibetans boast of. Tibetans want to establish themselves as a meaningful demographic and cultural entity. Most nationalist movements began as ethnic aspirations of a group whose bonds were racial, linguistic and cultural.32 Tibetans are no exception to this phenomenon. Tibetans’ yearning for recognition ‘as nation’, in every sense of the term, has found expression in several declarations by the Dalai Lama, symbol of Tibetan nationhood.

In the case of Kazakhs, too, ethnic identities renewed nationalist aspirations. Though Kazakhs are thought to be least Islamised and most russified people, religion acts as a basis on which Kazakh identity rests. Inspite of anti-religious propaganda by the authorities, Kazakh incorporated many elements of religion, and culture into emerging 'national clutures'. Today ethnic nationalism is communicated through Islamic symbols. For example, the modern political party, the 'Alash' party of Kazakhstan, uses these symbols to link its campaign to the historic past and to Kazakh nationalism. National awareness is shown by the often heard expression 'you cannot be a Kazakh or Uzbek or Kirghiz without being a Muslim'. Thus religion is being used as a channel to mobilize people and to assert their distinct national identity as against the Russian and Slavs.

Kazakhs's Knowledge of Russian language is the highest among Central Asian Muslims. But almost all of them claim Kazakh as their mother tongue. They fear that increasing use of Russian would result in a loss of their ethnic identities. Linguistic identities are being adjusted in relation to, or within the framework of Islamic political identity. This kind of formation of an Islamic political consciousness is finding expression in demands for ethnic territory's preservation — 'Kazakhstan for Kazakhs'

33. The name dates back to 1917. Alash Orda Kazakh National Party Organized Third All Kazakh National Congress in Orenburg. It proclaimed the autonomy of the Kazakh-Kyrgyz region and set up the Provisional People's Council of Alash-orda.

— at various demonstrations. Kazakh's struggle to preserve their national cultures and to save them from extinction is out-spoken. Writers and poets are taking lead in putting forward the national position. The eloquent spokesman of Kazakhs, Olzhas Suleimenov, has advanced this cause before all-union audiences.\(^{35}\)

It is a fact that Islamic culture, traditions, cultural heroes are honoured as part of their national histories. An attempt is being made to rewrite the period of collectivization. Celebrations of landmark birthdays of previously suppressed figures, such as the Kazakh poet Shakarin,\(^{36}\) are underway. Every effort to preserve remnants of historical and cultural monuments, mausoleums of religious and quasi-religious figures, directly or indirectly, is being linked to nationalism and assertion of ethnic identity of Kazaks. Thanks to Gorbachev's policies which permitted this kind of nationalist political behaviour which, though existed prior to 1985, was repressed by the authorities.

Nationalism of Kazakhs and Tibetans adopted several elements from history, culture and religion as marks of ethnic identity. While religion played greater role in case of Tibetan national formation and nationalism, the linkage between religion and nationalism seems to be inevitable for Kazakhs also. 'Islam not only compensates man's weakness, but can also satisfy his needs unconnected with religion: It can help man express himself, to 'find' himself among people, to develop a sense of identification with a nation and its history, to satisfy his needs in social intercourse, and


\(^{36}\) Ibid p.274.
so forth. 37 This phenomenon of resurgence of ethno-religious nationalism and thereby reassertion of ethnic identities is unexpected. Both liberalism and Marxism in their different ways, implied that the attachment to the local and particular would gradually give way to more universalistic and cosmopolitan or international values (Great Han People or New Soviet Men) and identities; that nationalism and ethnicity were archaic forms of attachment — the sorts of thing which would be 'melted away' by the revolutionizing force of modernity. 38 On the contrary, these very processes brought to fruition the particularist tendencies that lay dormant and accelerated the differences of ethnicity and gave them a new direction along state lines. This illustrates that all elements of ethnicity are nationalized.

Symbols and values as means of mobilization instill a high emotional potential in people and serve as a major source for political parties and religious elites in their march toward independent nationhood. Thus, politics of ethnicity create conditions for nationalism. Nationalism never became a great system of ideas, as did liberalism or Marxism. But its influence on politics is even more important then these, if we look at the history of the modern world. Nearly all the wars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had their roots in nationalism, and all states now owe their legitimacy to some version of the national idea. 39 In our present context, in the ultimate analysis,


nationalism marks the emergence of a cohesive social group out of its ethnic womb into the modern political arena. If its political revolution is successful it becomes the nation in charge of the state (as Kazakhstan): if not, it continues its struggle for nationhood and remains an ethnic group (as Tibetans). 40

40. Dawa Norbu, op.cit, n.6, p.225.