Chapter 2

RELIGIOUS CONSTRUCTION OF TIBETANS IN DELHI

Religious construction of Tibetans in Delhi shows the dialectics of religion and Diaspora. The dialectics becomes more important as India is the motherland of Buddhism. It is due to this reason that the Tibetans find themselves in a fix regarding, Tibet and India. In this context, Tibetan Diaspora differs from African, Jews, and Armenian Diasporas as the Tibetans in Delhi find themselves in the motherland of their own religion.

Religious construction is a process aimed to rebuild and strengthen the diasporic elements. It is a binding force for diasporic elements. "In particular, when migrants are confronted by racism and social discrimination, religion is employed to reinforce cultural particularity and to rally behind a shared identity - - - apart from the cultural and national identification, the impact of which is certainly not denied in work, religion takes a crucial role for the reconstruction of identity and maintenance of distinctiveness is a functional interpretation."\(^1\)

The role of religious construction depends on various factors, but primarily, two factors play crucial role viz. religion in homeland and space available in host country. Further, the context of religion also depends upon the context of Diaspora. It implies that if the migration involves religion as a

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reason, the religion is bound to play the most crucial role in the process of nation building and reconstruction of identity.

1. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BUDDHISM IN TIBET**

(i) **Buddhism**

Buddhism is a religion and its philosophy is based on the teachings of Buddha. He was born in the grove of Lumbini near the town of Kapilvastu, capital of the Kingdom of Sakyas. At the age of 29, he left home to learn the eternal essence of life and attained enlightenment at the age of 35. For the next ten years, Buddha taught in the Gangetic plain of North Eastern India.

He laid down a new and simple methodology of enlightenment. This methodology has been called Buddhism over a period of time. The doctrines of Buddhism are Dependent Origination, The Four Noble Truths, The Noble Eightfold Path, Bodhi. The most important contribution of Buddha lies in the establishment of egalitarian monasteries. He founded two Sanghas for monks and nuns. The Sanghas provided the organized platform for the further development and spread of Buddhism.

(ii) **Plantation of Buddhism in Tibet**:

"Before the introduction of Buddhism, a kind of nature worship flourished in Tibet which has been described as Shamanism. Animal sacrifice and magic played a very important role in it. A similar form of religion was
formerly followed by Funs, Lapps, Nachos and Mongols.”

It has been said that Shamanism originated in the land of OLMO Lunguing and brought to ancient kingdom of Shang Shung (i.e Tibet). During eighth century, kingdom of Shang Shung was conquered by Songtsen Gampo and recognised as Tibet. In the contemporary period, there are at least 90 monasteries of Bon religion, in Tibet Autonomous Region.

“Buddhism was given recognition in Tibet during the reign of Strong-brstan-Sgam-Po from 620 to 649 A.D. The warlike king was able to establish his authority over other wild clans of central Tibet and whose son, the Strong-brstan-Sgam-Po, harassed the western borders of China; so the Chinese Emperor Tarts leng of the Tang dynasty gave this young princess, Wencheng of the imperial house in marriage. Two years earlier to this, Strong-brtsan-Sgam-po had also married Bhrikuti Devi a daughter of the king of Nepal, Amsuvarman both these queens were effective in turning their husband to the Buddhist principles, and sent people to India, Nepal and China for Buddhist books and teachers”

Apart from this, the main reason for the establishment of Buddhism can be analysed from Karl Marx and Max Weber’s Perspective. It was required by people as well as the ruling establishment. “The need of the ruling class for a religion as a means to lull the people should also be taken into account. When the Tibetans entered into feudal society after beginning of the 10th century, it

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did not take long for the small scale peasant economy operating in various places to be replaced by feudal manorial economy.”

Thus, the Chinese scholars try to understand the establishment of Buddhism as source of legitimacy for the ruling class, whereas the Tibetan scholars analyze from egalitarian spiritual agenda of religion. The research has not focused on the relations of Tibetan social structure and Buddhist practices.

B.R.Burman says, “The king invited an Indian Scholar named Padma Sambhave, a Tantric Buddhist from Udayane. This school of Buddhism was readily accepted by majority of the Tibetans as they had been under the influence of a major cult”. Tantric Buddhism laid the foundation for the new religion. It started a people to people track with reference to scholars and religious leaders from India to Tibet and vice-versa. The tantric leader, Padma Sambhava, built the first Monastery of Tibet at Samye (30 male from Lhasa). Later, Atisha, the Mahayana master, played crucial role in planting Buddhism in Tibet. “During the 11th century a great Indian scholar, Dipankar Srijnana, knows as Atisha, had come from the Vikramshila University. He was the founder of the Kadam-pa order, from which later the Ge-Iuk-Pa sect emerged.”

Over a period of time, the Buddhism was hybridized into a new form known as Tibetan Buddhism. It is based on Madhyamika and Yogachara methodology and belongs to the Mahayana school of thought. The evolutionary

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4 Wang Furen, *Highlights of Tibetan History*, (Beijing, new World Press, 1984) P. 4.9
6 Ibid, P.6
process of Tibetan Buddhism led to emergence of various schools of thought as given below:

a. **Nyingma (ancient) School of Tibetan Buddhism:**

The term Nyingma means ancient and it has been used for nomenclature of school to contextualize the first translations of Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit to Tibetan language. The school traces origin to the teaching of Padamsambahva (or Guru Rinponchey) and follows Vajrayana methodology. It remained in dominance from 8th to 11th Century.

The school decides six levels of tantric teachings:

- Kriya
- Carya or Rubhaya
- Yogatantra
- Inner Tantra
  - Mahayoga
  - Anuyoga
  - Atiyoga

The most distinguishing feature of this school is keeping away from political power. The supporters of this School have never held political power, and always kept away from political tactics. Similarly, it emphasizes more on
householders and yogins. The school did not have any monasteries till 17th century and never had a head of lineage. In the contemporary period, the school has accepted the request of Tibetan Government in exile of having a head for administrative purpose.

The monastic institutions established by this school in exile are

(i) The kchok Namdro shedru Dargye Ling, Bylakuppe, Karnataka state.
(ii) Thuben E-Vam Dorjey Drag-Shemla (Himachal Pradesh) Himachal Pradesh
(iii) Nechung Drayang at Dharmasala
(iv) Palycel Chkhor ling and E- Vam Gyurmed Leng- Bir
(v) Ngedom Gatsal Ling – Clementown- Dehradun

The tradition is currently headed by Dilgo Khyentse Rinponchey.

b Khadampa School of Tibetan Buddhism

The term Khadampa means ‘bounded by the word’ (or Buddha’s word). It was founded by Dromtonpa, disciple of great Buddhist master Atisha (Dipamkara Shri Vijay). He was born in the village Vajrayogini, Bengal. He studied under many masters and went to Sri Vijay to get education under Daharamarakshita. He wrote and translated many books. Dromtonpa, the principle disciple of Atisha, kept the complete legacy of Atisha and this became later known as the Kadampa tradition of Buddhism. “Atisha was
follower of a school Buddhism which had strains of tantrism and was known as the Kala chakra system”.  

Lama Dromtonpa compiled the teachings of Atisha into a text called “The Four Divinities and Three Dharmas”. He transmitted the various lineages of Atisha by dividing among Geshe Putowa (Puto Runchen Sal), Geshe Chengawa (Chengawa Tsuetrem Bar) and Geshe Phuchungwa (Phuchungwa Shonu Gyaltsen).

- Geshe Putowa - Scriptural traditions
- Geshe Chenngawa - Oral transmissions
- Geshe Phuchungwa - Pith instructions

“Since its inception, this sect rapidly grew in strength with temples and monasteries established in all parts of Tibet. In view of its failure to gain control of the administrative power of a particular area, it fell far behind other sects, like Sa-skya and kadampha in political influence” says Chinese scholar Wang Furan. But, the real strength this school lies in its emphasis on scripture and discipline rather than Tantra.

c Kagupa School of Tibetan Buddhism

The term Kagyupa means to preach orally and its emergence can be located to the teachings of great Indian mystic Tilopa and Naropa. The

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* Ibid, p.7  
teachings of these two mystics were united and taken by Marpa. Marpa, passed
the tradition to his disciple Milarepa. Both Marpa and Milarepa used to wear
white dresses, thus, this sect is also called white sect. The transmission of
Kagyu School was primarily performed by Gampopa.

It stresses the combination of Quasi-Qigong and Buddhism. The main
teaching of this sect is devotion to the Lama. Hence, it emphasizes on Guruyoga. It is said Kagyu’s do not train by debate but by devotion. The
devotion leads to blessings and blessings help to enter the Mahamudra. This is
the final stage of realization. Further, this sect established Tulku system Tulku
means incarnation of Lama and it implies that a Lama can provide clues of his
incarnation Lama.

d Sakya School of Tibetan Buddhism

The term Sakya means pale earth and it implies from gray landscape of
Panpori hills in southern Tibet as the first monastery of this tradition was
established here. This sect is also known as colorful sect as the wall of
monastery was painted white/black and red strips.

Sakya pandita was a monk and he brought monasticism to the Sakyas
and following him the majority of Sakya practitioners became monks or nuns.
The fifth great Sakya was Chogyal Phakpa, the nephew of Sakya pandita and
converted the great Mongol leader, Kublai khan to Buddhism. This was
greatest achievement of Buddhist religious scholars as Kublai Khan
represented the most powerful and ever expanding political power. In return,
Kublai Khan gave back the kingship of Tibet to Sakya School of Tibetan Buddhism.

The central teachings of the Sakya tradition are the Patha and its Fruit. The teachings have been derived from Hevajra Tantra. Once entering Hevajra, the triple vision (vision of impurity) and Triple tantra (Ground tantra, path tantra and Fruit tantra etc.) becomes clearly evident. The Sakya monasteries in India are:

- Ngor E-vam Shadrup Dargye Ling- Bir, Himachal Pradesh.
- Tsechen Dhongag Chorling- Mundgod, Karnataka.
- Ngor E-Van Chodhen- Dehradun, U.P.
- Tsechen Tenpai Gatsal- Rajpur, U.P.

Gelugpa School of Tibetan Buddhism

The term Gelugpa means followers of the virtuous way. Gelugpa is a revived school from kadampa. It was revived by Tsongkhapa, who established first monastery at Ganden. It is also called yellow sect as Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama wear yellow clothes.

The sect stresses strictly on discipline and study of scriptures. Lamrin or the stages of the path is the central teaching of Geluk School. "The monks of the older sects did not have to observe many restrictions, but priests of the yellow sects were forbidden to marry and drink wine, and a stricter moral code
was instituted. The practice of incarnation was also started after the death of Tsongkhapa. The third successor and incarnation, Sonam Gyatso, spread the new faith in Mongolia and received the title of Dalai Lama Vajradhara (“Dalai is Mongolian for ocean, one whose learning is as deep as the ocean from the Mongol ruler Altan Khan”).

The Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama are title of lamas in Gelugpa School of Tibetan Buddhism. The Dalai Lama ruled Utsang (front Tibet) while the Panchen Lama ruled Tasnag (rear Tibet). The term panchen means Great Scholar. It was conferred on Lobsang Chockyi Gyaltsen by Qosot Mongol Gushri Khan in 1645. Further, the emperor Kangxi conferred the title of Panchen Erdenai to the fifth Panchen Lama. The Dalai Lama is considered as the incarnation of Avalokiteshvara where as Panchen Lama as incarnation of Amitayus, Buddha of infinite life.

This tradition has attained international fame as a leader of Tibetans due to globalization and the dynamic guidance of 14th Dalai Lama in the post-1959 period. The globalization of Gelugpa as a monolithic Tibetan Buddhism also paved way for the peaceful assimilation of other Tibetan sects. The Gelug monasteries have been established in various parts of India such as Karnataka, Delhi, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh etc.

Monastery

The institution of monastery has played dramatic role in the evolution of

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human society in ancient and medieval world. The term monastery is derived from Greek word 'Monasterion', from the root Monos, means alone or one and terion means place for doing something. Prof. Romila Thapar says that the emergence of monastery can be traced in the movement of ‘Sharman’ against post -Vedic rituals.

R.W. Southern analyzes the emergence of monastery in the context of Western Europe. The emergence of Benedictian, Augustinian, and Friar sect in Christianity can be understood in the dialectics of faith and rationality. The Benedictians played important role in creating local job sector of Western Europe. In Western society, the monasteries of the male were called Abbey, Priory, Charter house, Friary and Preceptory, where as, the monasteries of nuns were called convent. The monastery emerged as the most powerful instrument to attain enlightenment and organize human resources.

As a result the monastery attained the function of providing parameters for social status. In the case of Tibet, the nomadic pattern offered very less opportunities for development. The land of snow transformed the parameters of achievements in life. The instability of life and development in the land of snow made monastic life as the highest persuasive sector of development. It emerged as the hot job sector in the ancient and medieval period. It is due to this reason that lamas dominated each and every aspect of life. Further, the Lamaism was segregated due to different forms of natural worship prevalent in different geographic areas of Tibet. Though, the Tibetan Buddhism under the leadership of various schools played prominent religio-political role in Tibet.
The Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism played dominant political role till 20th century.

The political domination of Gelugpa sect started due to close association with Mongol rulers. The Mongol rulers Kublai khan, Altan Khan etc. provided much needed political legitimacy to Gelugpa School. The life in monastery was very rigid. The monks were supposed to perform various rituals according to respective schools. The Tantric form of worship was quite dominant in the majorities of monasteries.

These monasteries were epicenter of Tibetan life. The monks used to explain various phenomenon of day-to-day life. The period of Gelugpa dominance witnessed emergence of three most powerful monasteries:

- Sera Monastery
- Drepung Monastery
- Ganden Monastery

The monasteries had the privilege of self management and political power. The representatives of the monasteries played crucial role in the assembly. The two posts of Lord Chamberlain and the regent were always given to the high ranking months. The lord chamberlain was the most influential pillar of political setup and looked after the personal affairs of the Dalai Lama.
Photo -1: Ganden Jangese Thoesam Norling Monastery Mundgod, Karanakata

(Source: Field Survey)

Photo 2: Market in Tibetan Settlement of Mundgod.

(Source: Field Survey)
Photo 3: Way to entrance of Ganden Jangese Thoesam Norling Monastery

Mundgod, Karanakata (Source: Field Survey)
Photo 4: Tibetan market in Mundgod, Karnataka (Source-Field Survey)

Photo: Garden of Monastery showing statue of Mahatma Gandhi
Further, in the absence of Dalai Lama, the Regent used to emerge as another powerful political pillar. The monks played crucial role in influencing foreign policy of Tibet as they represented conservative elements of Tibetan Society. Thus, the immigration of new ideas was always stopped.

2. CONTEXT OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM IN DIASPORA

The role of Tibetan Buddhism in the construction of Tibetan identity can be understood in the context of forced migration. China's alleged continuous effort to annihilate the religious structures in Tibet created a sense of belongingness in the people of land of snow. This incident led to collectivization of various elements of nation-hood. The destruction of religion and religious structure created unification among the Tibetans. Therefore, the Tibetans in exile have given in-depth homage to the Dalai Lama, the leader of Gelugpa sect. Hence, it reoriented various divisions within the Tibetan Buddhism and presented a unified picture of Tibetan Buddhism to the world.

The post-1959 period placed a number of socio-economic problems to the Tibetans in exile. They had become refugee from a citizen of sovereign state. Hence, they required immediate help from the community of world to address their problems. The solution of the problem was located in the unified assertion of Tibetan cause to the nation states. Thus, the religious construction of Tibetans in India must be understood in this context. Unlike Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Delhi offers a different trajectory of religious construction.
A.V. Arakeri depicts, “There are 908 monks and lamas including, child monks and the Lamas settled in two lama villages in the Mundgod settlement (1978), of them 393 are child monks and remaining 515 are adults. Their rehabilitation is financed by U.N. Refugee Rehabilitation Organization, Geneva. They have been provided with 400 acres of cultivable land for their subsistence. The land is given for their subsistence and it is given to a group of monks and Lamas in common who belongs to one sect or sub sect. All the members of a group work eat and live commonly. Now, more and more younger monks from other settlements in India are joining the monasteries there is a dearth of agricultural land to them.”

The continuous interference of imperial powers in China and Japan had repercussion in the neighboring areas of these countries. Due to this reason, China had continuously tried to interfere in Tibet. The Tibetans tried to consolidate and launch a united front against the external forces. It led to the emergence of “Four Rivers, Six Ranges” (Chu-Bzhi-Sgangdrug) movement in Tibet. The movement was led by traders from Kansa in Lahsa to unite Tibetan masses under the banner of the most powerful political institution of Tibet, the Dalai Lama. They started collecting funds from all parts of Tibet to mobilize people and offer a golden throne to the Dalai Lama. A ceremony was conducted on 4\textsuperscript{th} July 1957 to offer the Golden Throne. It was aimed to show legitimacy of the Dalai Lama to the world. Thus, for the first time Tibetan

masses united under the banner of the Dalai Lama to create a space for all segments of Tibetan society, i.e. Tibetan Nation.

The Tibetan nation was being created with the help of traditional religious themes such as karma and Avalokiteswara. The nation-hood of Tibet is defined by karma and the bond between Tibetans and Avalokiteswara. Further, the religious nature of Tibet is very well expressed in the national Anthem.

"Tibetan National Anthem"\(^{11}\)

Let the radiant light shine of Buddha's wish-fulfilling gem teachings, the treasure mine of all hopes for happiness and benefit in both worldly life and liberation,

O protector who holds the jewel of the teachings and all beings, nourishing them greatly, may the sum of your virtuous deeds grow full.

Firmly enduring in a diamond-state, guard all directions with compassion and love.

Above our heads may divinely appointed rule abide endowed with a hundred benefits and let the power increase of four fold auspiciousness, may a new golden age of happiness and bliss spread throughout the three provinces of Tibet and the glory expand of religious-secular rule.

\(^{11}\) www.tibet.com
By the spread of Buddha's teachings in the ten directions, may everyone throughout the world enjoy the glories of happiness and peace.

In the battle against dark negative forces may the auspicious sunshine of the teachings and beings of Tibet and the brilliance of a myriad radiant prosperity's be ever triumphant

of socio-economic fabric of Delhi has re-oriented and re-directed the context of Tibetan Buddhism in Diaspora.

The analysis of Tibetan national Anthem shows repetition of some religious words such as Buddha twice, teaching four times and Tibet twice. The repetition of Buddha and Buddha's teaching dominates the territoriality of Tibet. The national Anthem is a prayer of the Buddha for the well being of Tibet and its people. Therefore, the Tibetans-in-exile attach national significance to another Anthem called “Prayer of Truthful words”.

In the case of Delhi, the context of Tibetan Buddhism in Diaspora can be understood into two periods 1959 to 1990 and 1990 to 2000. The periodization has been done on the basis radical transformations in the socio-economic structure of Delhi.

3. TIBETAN BUDDHISM AND DIASPORA IN DELHI FROM 1959 TO 1990

The forced migration of Tibetan to various parts of the world created new waves of transformations in the sacred space. The new sacred space was
different in many ways to sacred space in Tibet. It was a space, which gave away regional animosities and made the Dalai Lama as undisputed leader of the community as they had become refugees overnight.

David defines refugees, "the Refugee is an involuntary migrant, a victim of politics, war, or a natural catastrophe. Every refugee is naturally a migrant, but not every migrant is a refugee. A migrant is one who leaves his residence (usually for economic reasons) in order to settle elsewhere, either in his own or in another country. A refugee movement results when the intention leading to migration are so acute that what at first seems to be a voluntary movement becomes virtually compulsory. The uprooted become either internal refugees, i.e. national refugees (persons who have been displaced in their own country or international refugees (persons outside their country of origin). The later are designated refugees in legal terminology when they lack the diplomatic protection granted to nationals abroad.”

It shows that the status of refugees reflect political and economic helplessness of a community/individual. Earlier, the refugee problem was taken as a limited phenomenon, but over a period of time, it is not only continuously reoccurring but also become universal. Due to this reason, the United Nation's Convention relating to the status of refugees and Protocol of 1967 made it compulsory to a signatory nation to grant asylum to refugees.

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The United Nations has given the task of protecting the rights and well being of refugees to UN’s High Commissioner of refugees. The UN’s High commissioner has reported a total of 9,236,500 official refugees (excluding Palestinians).

A Refugee camp is built up by governments/NGO’s to receive refugees. “Since the early 1980, when Tibet had to trade and tourism, the second exodus of Tibetan refugees have joined the Tibetan exiled community in India and Nepal, fleeing religious persecution, political repression, aggressive sino-cization and cultural genocide. From 1986 to 1996, approximately 25,000 Tibetans have taken shelter in India increasing the exiled population by more than 18 percent. About 44% of these new arrivals are Buddhist Monks and nuns 30%, are children seeking placement in exile schools and the remainders are adult lay person.”

There are 54 Tibetan settlements in Indian subcontinent and can be categorized into agricultural, agro-industrial, handicraft and industry based settlements. According to 1994 census, 69,426 Tibetan refugees live in settlements and 51,715 lives in a scattered community across the Indian subcontinent,

Regarding conditions of settlement, A. Tom Grunfeld says, “Two temporary transit camps were established (Miss Mari in Assam state and Buxa in Bengal) until such time as the refugees could be moved to a more permanent

resettlement are as in different parts of India. The camp at Buxa was a former British detention Camp for political prisoners and was now used for Tibetan refugees. At one time there were as many as 1500 monks despite the almost intolerable living conditions. The situation at Buxa was so bad that by 1969 A.D., 200 monks had contracted tuberculosis, 80 of them died, then, 90 monks who were finally moved to the Tibetan settlement at Bylakuoppe and Mundgod”.14

In the case of Delhi, the Tibetans were initially settled near Ladakhi Budh Vihar, I.S.B.T., New Delhi. The area has a Buddhist monastery which helped immediately to heal religio-emotional wounds. The Ladakhi people of this area are Buddhist and utilized the place for cultural reproduction. The Tibetans were given shops on lease to maintain economic structure. But, the population of Tibetans continued to increase in the I.S.B.T settlement, thus the Government of India, finally, shifted the Tibetans to Majnu-Ka-Tila.

Unlike Tibetan settlements in Himachal, Delhi offered multilevel shades. It ranged from climate to staying among new religious groups. Delhi is a region of hot climate, and the summer season continues from March to October, whereas the winter season from Nov-Feb. Due to this reason, they had to adjust in the alien hot climate.

The Majnu-Ka-Tila is primarily dominated by the Punjabi/ Sikh people. The Sikh people of Majnu-Ka-Tila represent an enterprising community. They

are always ready to help and compete. As the Sikh religion is a new entity of India, thus, the community can be located freely practicing Sikh methods of spirituality such as visiting Gurudwara, offering prayers, devotional songs etc. as Sikhism dominated the other identities of a Sikh.

This peculiar situation stressed heavily on the Tibetan community to come up a religious front. Further, religion play very prominent role in 1960s, 70’s and 80’s, even the Bollywood productions were incomplete without having a single reference to God/religious occasions in the movies. The religion used to define the categorization of society. Though, all the religions of India have history of living peacefully.

The Tibetans of Majnu-Ka-Tila were primarily followers of Gelugpa sect of Buddhism. Though, all the sects of Tibetan Buddhism had already put a united front for the cause of Tibet. The Tibetans established monasteries whereas the Lamas wearing the religious symbols of Buddhism became main pillars of Diasporic identity. Because, the types of houses were quite different, similarly, the neighborhood to the settlement was also very different. “Three types of houses can be found in this camp. The first type is those, which are made of RCC (Reinforced Cement Concrete). They are also called houses. All the houses in New Tibetan Refugee Camp are made of R.C.C. The second type of houses all those which have walls made out of R.C.C or bricks share wooden plats, thatches and plastic sheet of roof”.

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The Tibetans immediately realized the need for not only to preserve the Diasporic elements but also reproduce continuously. As most of them were hopeful for immediate solution of the problem, the Diaspora followed exclusive policy. The settlement was dominated by Tibetan Buddhism’s signs and symbols. The lamas became living symbols of Buddhism and also human resource to overcome various problems. It sharply rallied behind the main pillars of Diasporic identity: Monastery, Lamas, language, Dalai Lama and Tibetan Buddhism. “Monasteries play important roles in the life of Tibetans. Being the seats of religious activity, they attract commoners at the time of major festival and celebrations.

The worship conducted by the Aborts and senior lamas provide the Tibetans with an opportunity to visit the monastery and receive blessings from the lamas. The commoners visit monasteries on their own also to offer food, money, prayers etc. when their wish are fulfilled; the monks from the monasteries attend to the lifecycle rituals performed by householders. They are invited to conduct worships before they start any new socio-economic activity. Their help are also taken in conducting rituals for curing diseases.”

The monasteries are main institution to define/redefine the identity of Tibetans. It is a scared space and also creates a line of demarcation with their sacred space. The land of settlement and architecture had local elements but, the sacred space revitalized the territoriality of Tibet. The monastery was a

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reflection of Tibet and in a way, most easy and visible institution of Tibetan identity. Helene Basu has focused on the importance of sacred space in cultural reproduction of African diasporic identity in India. In this context, the shrine of Saint Gori Pir in Gujarat shows remarkable features.

Helen says “Since 19th century, this dargah has become a major place for the spiritual rooting of constructions of identity (in tombs of Siddi pirs) for displaced African lower classes. As a place of worship of lower classes, it was removed from political power centers as a form of dominant religious norms; the new sub culture which has emerged at the shrine of Gori Pir was the result of Siddi acculturation in Gujarat. Africans in Gujarat acculturated themselves by picking up and reinterpreting diverse beliefs and ideas not only from one dominant group (Muslims) but from their neighbors and masters who happened to belong to different communities. As a result, the dargah became a site for re-defining and re-adjusting boundaries.”

The survey shows that Tibetan settlements are supposed to be microcosm of Tibet in Delhi. The monastery has become the site of contestation and rebuilding identity. The Tibetans have started interacting with Indians/ non- Tibetans in various capacities. The Delhi of 1960s and 70s was primarily dominated by Gurudwara, Mosque and Temples. Thus, the psychological feedback was provided to the Tibetans by the monastery. According to Max Weber, the god is creation of human beings as he/she

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requires super parents due to various hardships of life. The monastery provides a space for collectivization of Tibetans-in-exile. It represents a place given supreme value in the Tibetan society.

The flags of monastery represent the nationhood and nature of Tibetan nation. These flags are the placed in the four corners of settlements. The flags reflect the territoriality and sovereignty of Tibetan Diaspora. The history of flags goes back to ancient period. The state as well as religious institution used to keep flags. Further, the different dynasties of Tibet have history of employing flags as result flags gained religious significance in Bon tradition. It is believed that if mantras are wrapped in five colored silk and placed on the mountains, it would bring good lucks and avoid bad spirits.

In Tibetan Diaspora, flags keep importance on the occasion of New Year marriages and official functions. The Tibetans combine flag hoisting with incense burning. Arakeri says about Tibetans in Mundgod “As one enters a Tibetan settlement of village, he first comes across flags tied to large poles and fixed at the entrance. He also comes across lines of thread with small paper flags stuck to them, on these are printed the pious sentences. Charms and prayers and tied across the load ahead. Individual families also hoist such flags in front of this house.”

There are various types of flags on a broader level, the flags can be categorized:

I. Dar-ding: Dar-ding flags have long strips of flags and are hoisted horizontally between trees or pillars. The sequence of colour is yellow, Green, Red, White and Blue.

II. Darchen: Darchen are put vertically and can also be hoisted outside houses.

The auspicious day for flags hoisting are Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Tuesday, Friday provided stars are also on an auspicious arrangement. The following calendar shows inauspicious days:

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(Source: www.tibetnet.com)

The following photo shows importance of flags in day to day Tibetan life in Yella Pur.
The flag hoisting involves a number of rituals such as incense burning, offering traditional Tibetan scarfs. The reference of Incense offering is found Guhyasasmaja Tantra and story of Bhadri of Magdha. Two terms are used for Tibetan offering scarf: Khata and jael-Dhar. The scarf is made up of cotton, silk or other materials can have auspicious symbols. The colour of Khata can be white or ivory, Blue, Red, Green, and Yellow/Gold Yellow.

Further, Tibetan people also practice Tsampa ritual. Tsampa is roasted barley and it is used in a number of auspicious occasions. The completion of flag ceremony is mainly done by throwing a hand full Tsampa in the air. It symbolizes wish for well being of human beings and praying God for protection.
i. Elements of Diasporic Identity

There are various manifestations of Buddha in Tibetan Buddhism. "Everything in nature has spirit or energy, so it follows that the earth is sacred and there can be no divide between the spiritual and earthly." Van Beek says, "Elaborate propitiation rituals were developed to quell malevolent spirits to served human needs."

Bla is the life force for all Tibetans. It fills objects such as people, mountains, lakes, trees, etc. being similar to Mana, which then become ganas. The cosmology of Tibetans is constituted by bla-ganas structure an order of spirits ranging from sky, mountain top gods, spirits of valleys, water demons to elementals.

In Tibetan Diaspora, the cosmology of spirits has been redundant. The main powerful spirits are the important figures of Tibetan Buddhism in Diaspora are:

A Deities of Tibetan

- Sakyamuni:-

The term sakyamuni implies a monk of saka kingdom i.e. Buddha. He was born in the grove of Lumbini near the town of Kapilvastu. He came across the four passing sights: an old man, sick man, dead body and a monk. These

incidents and his observation of life for twenty-nine years led him to march for essence of life. He attained enlightenment at the age of thirty five.

The main contribution of Buddha lies in the creation of logical understanding of universe as well as establishment of monetary as an institution for collective working of society. His teachings were codified as Buddhism and his egalitarian approach to socially discarded society made him the chief God of Buddhism. In the contemporary world, Buddhism is found in various parts of the world with a number of folk religious practices. But, Buddha remains among many Gods of various types of Buddha. Tibetan Buddhism depicts him as seated cross legged on a lotus throne with hand in Mudras. His left palm is shown in a position on his foot where as the right palms down on his cross leg. Further, the right side of upper part of body is generally depicted unclothed and his hair is knotted.

- **Chenrezig / Avalokiteshwara**

Chenrezig/Avalokiteshwara is the earthly reflection of Amitabha, the eternal Buddha. He is reflection of the embodiment of commission of all the Buddha has depicted. He is esteemed as the patron deity of Tibet and his images can be depicted in various ways such as multi-arms and eleven headed etc. He is the most popular of all deities of Buddhism except Buddha. He has been given various names in different courtiers such as Avalokiteshwara in India, Kauon in Japan and Kuan-yin in China.
Dalai Lamas and Karmapas are considered to be incarnation of Chenrezig / Avalokiteswara. The famous mantra of Chenrezig is ‘Om Mani Padma-hum’, the mantra is said to have contain of all the teachings of Buddha. The saying of mantra loudly/silently or spinning the written form of mantra around in a Mani is believed to import blessings from the God.

The mantra OM MANI PADME HUM is supposed to have originated in India and transplanted in Tibet. It is evident from the following comparison of Sanskrit and Tibetan form of mantra:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit form</th>
<th>Mantra of Avalokiteswara</th>
<th>Om Mani Padma Hum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tibetan Form</td>
<td>Mantra Chenrezig</td>
<td>Om Mai Padme Hung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The syllables of the mantra help to achieve six features of Bodhisattvas.

The mantra means

- **OM**: perfection in the practice of generosity.
- **Ma**: perfection in the practices of pure thinking.
- **Ni**: Perfection in the practice of tolerance and patience.
- **Pad**: Perfection of perseverance.
- **MA**: Perfection in the practice of concentration.
- **Hum**: Perfection in the practice of wisdom.
• Tsongkhapa

The term Tsongkhapa means born in Onion. He is regarded as second Buddha in Tibet, and main teacher of first Dalai Lama Gendun Drub. He was an eminent scholar and created Gelugpa sect (system of virtue) and transmitted the sect to the various regions such as Mongolia and Himalayan kingdom. He established the largest monastery in 1409, Garden Monastery University, thus, he is considered as an incarnation for the Buddha of wisdom, Manjushree.

The work of Khapa is the Great exposition of the Path, Secret mantra, three principle Aspects of Path etc. Khapa’s Three Principle Aspects of Path are:

❖ The definite thought to leave cyclic existence and the abandonment of pleasure.

❖ The cultivation and altruistic intention by viewing all beings as precious as our own mother.

❖ The correct view of emptiness.

B Prayer Wheel

Prayer wheel is commonly called Chokhor in Tibet and these are very common religious objects utilized to ward off the influence of evil spirits. It is not a prayer in any usual sense of the word, but a part of a programme related to spiritual practice involving visualization as well as Mantra recitation and one
aimed at generating the commission of a Bodhisattva within oneself. On the other hand, Elvin Hunter argues that, the prayer wheels are creation of Tibet.

A prayer wheel is a whole cylindrical mechanical device attached to a rod handle made of metal or wood and attached in a row on wooden plate. The wheel is printed with the most important mantra of Mani Padme Hung. A chain is attached to the cylinder to facilitate the rotation. The prayer wheel used to be one of the most powerful symbols of Diasporic identity in the Tibetan settlement of Majnu-Ka-Tila before 1990s in Delhi; the rotation of prayer wheel symbolizes utterance of mantra which in turn help to accumulate good karma.

Though, Tibetan settlement at Majnu-Ka-Tila has witnessed reduction in the use of prayer wheel, particularly in public. Further, the survey could locate few Tibetan youth to rotate hand prayer wheel, whereas the young Tibetans are found to rotate the prayer wheel in Temple.

Regarding Mundgod, Arakeri observes, “In a Tibetan settlement, it is a common site to see an old men and women roaming around rotating their prayer wheels with the right hand counties the beads in a Rosary by the left. The prayer wheels are made of wood and lined with sober or copper and fixed with a wooden handle. They are tied with a weight- so that when rotated it turns on the axil in hand.”

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C. Manistone

The term Mani stone implies stone plated/pebbles/rocks inscribed with Om Mani Padme Hung and the auspicious eyes of Buddha. The evolution of mani stone is inherent in the geographic condition of Tibet. Tibet is located in the Top of mountains; therefore, stone plates are very predominantly found. These Mani stones were creations of handicraft workers in the Tibetan community.

Generally, Mani Stones are pilled on a top of mountains, auspicious places, outside temples, holy sites, across roads etc to offer prayers. The mani stone provide an outlet to the Tibetan community to visualize/conceptualize their duties with a little investment. The Mani stones are found in almost all areas of Tibet but in Diaspora, it has become marketable.

The symbolic attachment of Mani stones with Tibetan identity force the Diaspora to purchase from market. In Delhi, Tibetan prayer wheel ,mani stone can be purchased from Tibetan market at Janpath in Cannaught Place, New Delhi. Further, the selling of Mani stone has been started on line also on the basis of material depiction such as natural black, colors, conch shell, Buddha eyes, yak and Yin Yang Mani.

The conch shell mani stone reflects religious sovereignty and proclaims the truth of Dharma, Yinyanf, yavyum reflects the cosmic duality of all phenomenon. The yak mani stone is found at the height of 30,000 feet and it used as a common symbol of life in Tibet.
Ten-wa (Rosaries)

Ten-wa means rosaries and the aim of rosaries are to accumulate good deeds by moving beads in the rosary. A rosary should be consisted of 100 beads but generally rosaries are consisted of 108 to avoid any omission of beads while counting the mantras.

Arakeri says, "The two ends of the beads are knotted in such way passes through three of extra beads. The middle one will be larger then the other beds. These extra beads are called Mdo-dsin which means union holder and they indicate the completion of one cycle of rosary art while chanting mantras" 21

Apart from this, Tsa-Tsa, Butter sculpture, madala stupa, a da’dar etc are also divine symbols of Tibet. The Diasporic community tries to maintain these divine artifacts to maintain Diasporic identity. But, the late 80’s have witnessed radical relocation cosmology of Tibetan Buddhism in Diaspora.

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21 Arakeri n14p. 266.
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4. TIBETAN BUDDHISM IN DIASPORA DURING POST-1990 PERIOD

The period of 1990 in Delhi have sharp impact on social as well as religious structure of Tibetan Diaspora. The capital of India has been re-structured; it’s infra structure and technology are re-brushed to meet global challenges. The 1990s period witnessed new politico-economic formation for example disintegration of USSR. The period is marked by withdrawing of state from the arena of society for various socio-economic issues. The world level market as well as individual has become the main pillar of society. Further, globalization in the perspective of economy has eroded political power of states.

Not only this, the phase is also marked by a transformation in method of governance. It has been further made accountable due to increasing importance of media. The knowledge-based economy has given utmost power to media and people. It has spread the knowledge and this expansion of knowledge has made various components of society accountable.

In the case of Tibetans, the phase has re-located various elements of religious structure. The modernity and post modernity of Delhi have generated space for rational thinking; the rationality has re-brushed Tibetan structure of
religious faith. It means that the Tibetan Buddhism dominated by Folk religion has been reoriented by Delhi’s cosmology.

The reformulation of religious structure of Tibetan has also been affected due to forty seven years stay in exile. The religious belief system is always dependent upon socio-cultural belief system. The Tibetans in Delhi, have passed almost half century in a democratic and secular space, due to this reason, faith has been passed from community to individual entity. The assertion of individual has led to the emergence of rational space and interaction with the local people. The people of Delhi are highly urbanized and have developed cosmopolitan outlook. Delhi has a powerful history of politico-economic movement. It became capital of Indian political system from medieval period.

Delhi became epicenter of Indian political power from the establishment of Delhi Sultanate. “By the end of 12\textsuperscript{th} century, Muhammad Gauri was successful in occupying Delhi, with the occupation of Delhi, Turkish rule in India began methodically and spread with rapidity - - - Five dynasties ruled at Delhi from A.D. 1206 to 1526 A.D”.

After the Delhi Sultanate, The Mughals established the most powerful kingdom in medieval India. The rule of more than 250 years led the construction of legitimacy for Delhi and Mughals. Prof Harbans Mukhia says “The centering of the great rebellion of 1857 around the last Mughal emperor

\textsuperscript{22} P.N.Chopra, eds., The Gazetteer of India. Vol. II- History Culture, (New Delhi: Publication Divison 1990) P.325
Bahadur Shah Zafar, physically decrepit and surrounded by a territorial and political void, symbolizes the survival of Mughal legitimacy sharply and poignantly, for it cemented bonds between the rival groups that had all chipped away at the grand imperial structure to begin with".\textsuperscript{23}

It shows that Delhi has developed a powerful cultural capital. The cultural capital reflects the practical knowledge developed by experience and transmitted through socio-cultural interaction. Guru Nanak and Kabir have continuously emphasized alternate method of knowledge production. The interaction of more then four decades with local people evolved the process of individualization as well as decreased the role of monks and monastery as the interpreter of day to day phenomena. The University of Life in Delhi has filtered the corpus of folk religious practices of Tibet and the Tibetans have found new a vision for religion.

The religion has found new context and structure in Delhi. The context and structure provides limited space to religion in life. The de-ritualisation of Tibetan Buddhism has finally left the religion in Diaspora with symbols and spirituality. The symbols and spirituality has found space for diasporic identity and nationalism. The Tibetans have built religious institutions for diasporic networking, cultural reproduction and spirituality in various parts of world such as Europe, North America, Switzerland, Southern France etc. In North America, places like choling in Vermont, Karma Triyuana Dharamchakra in

\textsuperscript{23} Harbans Mukhia, \textit{The Mughals of India} (U.S.A; Blackwell Publishers, 2004). P. 14
Wood stock New York has been quite important as centers of cultural reproduction.

The settlement of Majnu-ka-Tila and Shops at I.S.B.T shows that the religious images and symbols have been given limited public space. In J.N.U., Khiccha restaurant was run by a Tibetan till 2004-05, and later, it has been given to a Nepali citizen. But, the photos of Dalai Lama inside the restaurant continue to maintain the continue supply of customer. The restaurant and photos of the Dalai Lama has become integral part of the Tibetan economic structure. Similarly, the local shopkeeper in Majnu-Ka-Tila have also kept images of Dalai Lama along with other Tibetan religious deity. The increasing globalization has forced the Tibetans also to secularize public life, so that, the marketing elements can be sharpened.

It does not mean that Tibetan deities, religious symbols such as rosaries, Prayer wheel, Mani stone, Mandala etc have lost utility. The main point is that these symbols of Tibetan belief structure have been reconfigured in the milieu of modern and urban belief structure. The symbols are still useful but their context of utility has changed.

The new generation of Tibetans prefers to wear symbols of modernity such as Caps, T-shirts with images cricketers / Football Champion visiting places Mac- Donald’s etc. The Tibetan religion has become one of the most powerful elements of binding in the newly born nationalism in Tibetan Diaspora. The concept of nationalism reflects the formulation of modernity. In
the case of Tibetans, the modernity has been sustained and reinforced through religious structure. It shows that the religious structure of Tibetan Diaspora has been focused in a new context. The religious cosmology played crucial role in the social-cultural life of Tibet and pre-1990 India. The day to day life activities and ancient, medieval retrogressive method of worship has been given away to worship practices emerged in the modern period.

The religious construction of Tibetans in Delhi reflects the process of formulation of religion for a wider perspective. The Lamas and Monastery are not places of Tantric/folk rituals but a place of cultural reproduction. The cultural reproduction is transmitting the elements of binding to the new generation: The religious construction of Tibetans in Delhi shows modernity, nationalism, cultural reproduction, and diasporic elements.