

YONGBIN DU  
CHINA TIBETOLOGY RESEARCH CENTER  
NO.131 BEI SI HUAN DONG LU, 100101  
BEIJING, CHINA  
TEL. : 010-64933356(Office), 010-64950061(Home)  
E-mail: yongbd@yahoo.com.cn

## **Abstract**

### **Tibetan Studies in Contemporary China: The Styles and Characteristics**

Tibetan studies is a discipline both about geography and society of Tibetan areas, and about history and today of the Tibetans. China is the hometown of Tibetan studies, and Tibetan studies in China have a long history.

Entered into modern times, particularly, the term Tibetology was created by Hungary Tibetologist Cosma since 1830s, Tibetan studies had been considered as an independent discipline from humane studies, and it become a popular discipline in the world.

Tibetan studies in China has made a great progress since 1980s while the Western Tibetologists' perceptions of it has been changed since 2000. However, the populace in the world have little understanding of it. In contrast, Tibetan civilization, Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan issue are popular in the world, it is unbalance.

The foreign publications on Tibetan studies in foreign countries are well documented, in contrast, the foreign publications on Tibetan studies in China are scant. Based on both researching on the history of Tibetan studies, on researching on the system of Tibetan studies, and on keeping following the progress and trends of Tibetan studies, this paper first defines the conception and definition of Tibetan studies (Tibetology) and outlines the status quo and setup of Tibetan studies in the world, particularly, analyzes the characteristics of Tibetan studies in the West. Then, this paper outlines

the status quo and setup of Tibetan studies in contemporary China. After that, comparing to Tibetan studies at abroad, this paper highlights the styles and characteristics of Tibetan studies in contemporary China. Showing the achievements and latest developments of Tibetan studies in contemporary China, this paper stresses the styles and characteristics based on analyzing the main fields of Tibetan studies, such as history, language, politics, literature and arts, geography, traditional Tibetan medicine and calendar, academy, collected works and dissertations. Particularly, this paper focuses on the two main fields of Tibetan studies: history (general history) study and language study (dictionary compiling, collections and dissertations, collecting, collating and publishing of ancient books and archive collecting, translation). Moreover, this paper points out the limitations or weakness in Tibetan studies of contemporary China in the researching fields of religion (Bonpoism and Tibetan Buddhism), economy, Tibetans in exile and westerners' perception of Tibet. Furthermore, this paper deals with the advantages and disadvantages, the differences and similarities of Tibetan studies both in western countries and in China, it discusses the exchange and interaction between China Tibetology and abroad Tibetology.

Finally, this paper highlights the superiorities and dynamics of Tibetan studies in contemporary China. This paper hypothesizes that we will share with knowledge and information of Tibetan studies, and that this study will be helpful to understand Tibetan studies in contemporary China and it will be hopeful to exchange the perceptions of Tibet between China and the West.