# A CASE STUDY OF TIBETAN EDUCATORS IN INDIA AND NEPAL: CONSTRUCTING COMMUNITY IN DIASPORA

by

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# ABSTRACT

This research explores identity processes and approaches to professional practice of Tibetan educators working within schools administered by the Tibetan Government-in-exile (TGIE) in India and Nepal. Since 1960, schools administered by the TGIE have been centrally involved in the diaspora's efforts to support the physical and cultural survival of individuals, and of the community as a whole. Schools attempt to support the development of youth who identify both as global citizens, and as Tibetans whose practices are consistent with historical values.

Sociocultural theories of identity and community, agency and history-in-person, post-structural theories of globalization, and theories of liberatory pedagogy, are utilized to interpret data from open-ended interviews with 29 educators. Educators' perceptions of their personal histories within the Tibetan diasporic struggle, their views on their positioning in relation to the rest of the world, and their processes of negotiating and making sense of responsibilities they associate with their work are investigated.

Analysis reveals differing perspectives of four generations. The generations are distinguished by their circumstances in their early years: those born before or during their family's 1959 exodus from Tibet, those born in refugee

camps in the 1960s, those born in the early years of refugee settlements in the 1970s, and New Arrivals who escaped from Tibet in the 1980s.

Personal histories, current circumstances, globalization, and hoped-for futures, frame the contexts in which educators shape and implement their professional practices. Notions of personal and community empowerment and liberatory pedagogy are apparent as educators work with youth to promote particular futures for their community.  Five decades of change globally and within Tibetan communities in India and Nepal, have altered the daily lives of Tibetans and generated shifts in the futures educators can imagine. These changes are reflected in an increasingly global outlook amongst Tibetan teachers (and students), and tension in the community struggles to define and maintain Tibetan national identity in diaspora. Efforts of educators to support and maintain cultural continuity and community affiliation for new generations of youth are fraught with challenges, necessitating creativity and innovation in vision and in practice.

# DEDICATION

*For the people of Tibet*

may Peace, Wisdom, and Freedom prevail.


*And*

For my mother, **Wilma Grundmann Bernabei** (1934 to 2006)

and, **Aunt Rena (Claire) Eisenbeil** (1926 to 2004).

Their tenaciousness

gumption

and laughter

live on

in their children and grandchildren.

*And*

For my father, **Richard Bernabei** (1933 to 1979),

who would have been proud.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

that they speak, and seeking peace, dignity, and freedom in Tibet, China, and the world. I cherish the friendship, support, and encouragement that they have provided over the years. When I am in Canada, half a world away from the physical locales where this research is situated, friends in the Tibetan community of British Columbia continue to inspire as they persist in their struggle for community locally, and for peace and freedom in their homeland.

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# GLOSSARY

BEP       Basic Education Policy
CST        Central Schools for Tibetans
CTA        Central Tibetan Administration (aka Tibetan Government in Exile)
CTSA     Central Tibetan Schools Administration
DoE        Department of Education, of the Central Tibetan Administration
GoI         Government of India
HHDL    His Holiness the Dalai Lama
IC          Identity Certificate
ICRC     International Committee of the Red Cross
NGO      Non-Governmental Organization
RC         Registration Certificate, issued by the host Government (India or Nepal)
STSA     Sambhota Tibetan Schools Administration
TCV      Tibetan Children's Village Schools
TGIE    Tibetan Government-in-exile
THF      Tibetan Homes Foundation Schools
TRRC   Tibetan Refugee Reception Centre
TWO     Tibetan Welfare Office
UNHCR  United Nations Refugee Agency

# 1: CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This research began with the overarching question: *"How do Tibetan educators who work within the school system administered by the Tibetan Government-in-exile (TGIE) in India and Nepal perceive and construct their personal and professional identities, vis-à-vis their histories and the TGIE's official discourse (policy) on their professional responsibilities?"*.

The network of schools administered by the Tibetan Government-in-exile (TGIE) is oriented towards the production and maintenance of cultural and community identifications with and to Tibet, in youth in the diaspora. The schools, with locations in India, Nepal, and Bhutan, aim to provide modern education within a value system that Tibetan leaders have identified as essential to the endurance of Tibetan culture. This research explores the experiences and perceptions of educators, because direct responsibility for implementing the TGIE's official objectives in education rests with them, and thus they are implicated in the extent to which those objectives are met, or not met. Intricacies of personal and professional identity processes connected to the interviewees' imaginings of their pasts, and their hopes for the future of themselves and their nation, are revealed and explored.

This dissertation is organized in six chapters:

*Chapter One: Introduction*, provides an overview of the research, including the rationale for the study, and the researcher's personal connection with it. Introductions are provided to the Tibetan education system in exile, educators' positioning within the Tibetan system, the theoretical framework for the study, the methodology, and the potential significance of the research.

*Chapter Two: Contexts of Diasporic Life,* provides an introductory overview of the legal, historical, and administrative processes that impact Tibetans in India and Nepal, and that shape the institutional and systemic constraints and freedoms they experience in everyday life. The historical development of the education system and its' current administrative structure are outlined.

The three part theoretical framework for this study is detailed in *Chapter Three: Theory*, and research methods are explained in *Chapter Four: Methodology* (introduced here in sections 1.4 and 1.5, respectively).

*Data analysis*, in *Chapter Five*, explores multifaceted experiences of educators from four different generations in diaspora. *Conclusion and Recommendations* are presented in *Chapter Six*.

## 1.1  Rationale for the Research

The two core interests that motivated this inquiry are introduced in this section. *Subsection 1.1.1* outlines the contribution of this research to scholarship in diaspora and education, and *subsection 1.1.2* describes the personal interest and lived experience that initially drew me to this inquiry*.*

### 1.1.1 Diaspora and Education

The Tibetan diasporic case reveals specific circumstances of refugees within India and Nepal, and responsive processes that are strongly influenced by Buddhist philosophy, and the political history of the region. Challenges associated with the Tibetan diasporic struggle for political and material survival as refugees introduce additional complexities and tensions to the educators' task of facilitating for youth identity construction, community cohesion, and cultural transmission. The educators' perceptions of their personal histories within the Tibetan diasporic struggle, their views on their positioning in relation to the rest of the world, and their processes of negotiating and making sense of responsibilities they associate with their work, are investigated. Their histories, current lived realities within modernization and globalization processes, and hoped-for futures, frame the contexts the educators live and work within, and in which they shape and carry out their professional practices. Notions of personal and community empowerment come to the fore in educators' attempts, through education of youth, to promote particular futures for their community. Exploring and illuminating layers of complexity experienced and negotiated by educators may help to specify ways in which their challenges might be eased, and paths towards positive change might be facilitated.

Migration and transnationalism are contemporary global phenomena of particular concern in education research. People of minority and diasporic backgrounds typically attend schools that do not recognize or nurture the cultural resources that the children and their families carry with them (Levinson et al.,

1996). Alternatively, schools can potentially be utilized as locations where the growth and elaboration of non-mainstream linguistic and cultural identities are promoted and nurtured (Sleeter, 1991). This research may be instructive to countries and municipalities which serve as host and home to refugees, and which seek to work collaboratively with newcomers. To this end, contrasting Tibetan experiences in India and Nepal is instructive. The Indian government permits Tibetans greater freedom and flexibility in designing and implementing educational curricula, practices, and policies, according to their own aspirations. Exploring Tibetans' experiences in the two countries may aid in identifying practices and policies of host countries that may lead to desired social outcomes.

This study explores aspects of a community's response to diaspora, but not the cause of their diasporic situation. The circumstances surrounding the invasion and occupation of Tibet, the 1959 exodus, and the conditions that continue to prevent Tibetans returning to Tibet, are important to this case but are beyond the scope this study. Scholarship on the political and social history of the era is extensive (Avedon, 1986; Shakya, 1999) and is referenced in this study, but not addressed in depth.

### 1.1.2  Personal Interest and Professional Curiosity

In part, this research is a deeply personal collegial conversation amongst educators who I view as my professional compatriots. The seeds of curiosity that ultimately led me to this inquiry were planted in 1988 and 1989, when I first visited Tibetan refugee communities in Nepal and India. A few months earlier, in October of 1988, I had travelled as a backpacker to central Tibet. I was

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concerned and upset by the apparently pervasive climate of fear that I witnessed, and the lack of official representation of Tibetan voices and values in Chinese government controlled Tibet. In stark contrast, diasporic Tibetans I met in India and Nepal seemed to take delight in loudly and publicly proclaiming their "Tibet-ness", constructing such proclamations as their basic right, and their national duty. At the time I knew very little of Tibet's political or cultural history, China's policies and practices, or of the Tibetan refugee and diasporic experience. Yet, it appeared evident that diasporic Tibetan's social lives and forms of engagement with the world differed substantially in comparison to those within Tibet. My curiosity was piqued regarding the processes in diaspora that appeared to support community development and personal empowerment of individuals. Seeking an opportunity to live and learn there, I decided to volunteer as a teacher to Tibetan refugees in India. Like many other people through the ages who have embarked on journeys of inquiry, my curiosity grew rather than being satiated, and the quantity and depth of my questions increased.

When I returned to Canada I completed a Bachelor of Education program, and, in 1991, began a career as a high school science teacher in a suburb of Vancouver, BC. Meanwhile, I maintained my friendships with Tibetans in India, many of whom were working as educators and TGIE civil servants. I visited them on numerous occasions over the years as a friend and volunteer. I also involved myself with Tibetan-Canadian organizations that advocate for human rights, peace, and self-determination for Tibetans. Over the years, it gradually became apparent to me that my personal identity, and mode of being in the world, had

become that of an educator/activist. The two identity frameworks seem to have become inextricably intertwined.

As I gained experience, expertise, and maturity as a professional educator, I gradually arrived at new understandings of the complexity of the work, and of the diversity of ways educators appear to understand and embody their personal and professional identities. This heightened awareness of the complexities of intertwining of professional practice and personal identity led me to a new appreciation of the challenges educators in all contexts experience, and to new questions for colleagues who work within the Tibetan diasporic education system. The responsibilities in the hands of Tibetan educators, as stipulated by their employer, the TGIE's Department of Education, and by their society's expectations of them, appeared to me to be daunting in comparison to my contractual and social obligations as a science teacher in suburban Canada. Through this research I sought to understand their approaches to making sense of their work and the associated responsibilities.

## 1.2  Tibetan Education in Exile

In March 1959, after a failed popular uprising against the Chinese government's occupation of their country, and the subsequent military reprisals, approximately 85 000 Tibetans fled as refugees across the Himalayan mountains into India, Nepal, and Bhutan (Central Tibetan Administration, 1995). Amongst those seeking refuge was Tibet's spiritual and political leader, the 14th Dalai Lama, who was granted safe haven by the Indian government. Soon after arriving in exile the Dalai Lama formally established the "Central Tibetan

Administration" (CTA), also known as the "Tibetan Government-in-exile" (TGIE). The TGIE assumes the responsibility of caring for Tibetan refugees and governing their political affairs. As a Government-in-exile the jurisdiction of the TGIE is not connected to specific geographical territory with finite physical boundaries, rather, its jurisdiction is attached to individuals who identify as Tibetan refugees, and who consider themselves to be part of the Tibetan exile administrative system. The TGIE functions as the diasporic equivalent to a state government system, but without geographical territory to govern.

On arrival in exile in 1959, the Dalai Lama and the TGIE took immediate steps to work with the governments of the host countries, foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and donor agencies, to settle and rehabilitate the refugees. One of the first priorities in this regard was the provision of care and education for the children. The first Tibetan school was established in 1960 as a nursery for orphaned and destitute children. The Tibetan administered school system has since grown to include 80 schools in India, Nepal and Bhutan. The schools are responsible for addressing diverse goals beyond providing academic education to diasporic Tibetans. Additional expectations include the provision of care for orphaned and destitute Tibetan children, education towards economic self-sufficiency in exile (English language training, math, science, vocational training), and education towards cultural survival facilitated through the practice of socially constructed "Tibetan" identities and values in the youth (Phuntsog, 1994). The education system is centrally implicated in Tibetan community processes of cultural production and reproduction, including an aim to

facilitate community cohesion despite increasing global dispersion of its members. Embodied "Tibetan" identities in the youth is promoted by authorities as the foundation on which all other learning is to be based, including efforts in education towards economic and political survival in exile (Department of Education [1], 2004).

The Tibetan diaspora has changed, materially, socially, and politically over the decades since 1959. The education system has been adapted in concert with changes in the Tibetan diaspora, as well as in response to global change (Bernstorff, 2003, p. 275). The most recent significant change has been the development of a "Basic Education Policy for Tibetans" (BEP) (Department of Education [1], 2004), enacted into legislation in the TGIE Parliament in 2004. The BEP is intended to provide a framework in which valued traditional philosophies, beliefs, and identity markers can be implemented and practiced in school settings. In 2005, when most of the interviews for this study took place, implementation of the BEP at a new Model School was about to begin.

The specific physical locales under consideration in this study are Tibetan schools and settlements in India and Nepal where the interviewees carry out their day-to-day lives and professional practices in the schooling of Tibetan diasporic youth. Yet, social and political considerations and complexities of the research process extend well beyond the physical boundaries of the school grounds. The educators are aware that their work has broad implications for their society as whole, now and into the future, locally and globally.

## 1.3  Educators' Positioning in the Tibetan System

The project of cultural survival, community cohesion, and creation of "Tibetan" identities within the youth is a central concern of Tibetan authorities, responsibility for which lies substantially in the hands of educators (Department of Education [1], 2004; Rigzin, 1994, 2003). As in many societies, educators shoulder responsibilities beyond the transmission of knowledge and skills to their students, also teaching and modelling behavioural and cultural norms geared towards social reproduction (Department of Education [1], 2004). In Tibetan schools, teachers' responsibilities towards social reproduction are overtly articulated in policy (Department of Education [1], 2004). Expectations placed on Tibetan educators by authorities and the wider society are complex and multifaceted, including providing students with "modern" education in addition to traditional knowledge, understandings, and values. The teachers' task is not simply to help the students on their individual journeys towards adulthood, but also to prevent the feared assimilation into majority populations that might result in the annihilation of Tibetan cultural understandings and ways of life (Rigzin, 1994).

## 1.4  Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is organized in three thematic sections, outlined below. Each of the three themes contributes important insights, and is interwoven in the process of making sense of identity and professional practices of Tibetan educators in diaspora.

*Section I – Identity Within Diaspora and Enduring Struggle (3.1),* explores

post-structural theories of identity and diasporic consciousness (Anand, 2000;

Anderson, 1991; Anthias, 1998; Brah, 2007; Chandler, 2001; Clifford, 1994;

Cohen, 1996; Cornell and Hartmann, 1998; Dudley, 2002; Frykman, 2001; Hall,

1990, 1996; Holland et al, 1998; Matus & McCarthy, 2003; Safran, 1991), within

contexts of enduring struggle (Holland and Lave, 2000). Theories of dialogism

(Bakhtin, 1981) are approached through the lens of "history in person" (Holland

and Lave, 2000) in making sense of Tibetan constructions of "imagined

community" (Anderson, 1991). Taubman (1993) contributes perspectives on the

activation of individual identities within community. Also in this section, Tibetan

Buddhist and cultural perspectives are introduced (Craig, 1997; Dalai Lama,

1996, 2000, 2003, 2008; Nadwi, 2004; Reynolds, 2005; Rinpoche, 1992;

Thurman, 1997), because they figure centrally as authoritative discourse

(Bakhtin, 1981) for the interviewees.

*Section II – Global Flows and Geopolitics (3.2),* outlines theoretical

perspectives on globalization processes that are relevant in this case (Robertson,

1995; Savage et al., 2005; Scholte, 2000), with a particular emphasis on

Scholte's (2000) notion of "supraterritoriality". Appadurai's (1996) notion of

"scapes" is utilized to characterize global flows, and Giddens (1995), Holland and

Lave (2000), and Savage et al. (2005) bring perspectives on social responses to

globalization. Factors associated with social and cultural change are explored

(Barber, 1992; Croucher, 2004; Hannerz, 1990; Holland et al, 1998; Holland and

Lave, 2000; Pieterse, 1994), as are notions of boundary definition and the

construction of imagined "local" social and emotional spaces (Appadurai, 1996; Beck, 2002; Brah, 2002; Giddens, 1995; Holland and Lave, 2000; Lash and Urry, 1994; Massey, 1993; 1994; Robertson, 1995; Savage et al., 2005, Thrift, 1993). Political factors and issues of nationalism relevant to the case of forced diaspora and political "statelessness" are introduced (Anderson, 1991; Connor, 1978; Croucher, 2004; Gellner, 1983; Gladney, 1994; Hall, 1996; Savage et al, 2005).

*Section III – Education for Identity and Emancipation (3.3),* deals with issues of identity construction within educational settings (Pinar, 2006; Wenger, 1998) and in contexts of "enduring struggle" (Holland and Lave, 2000). Issues of power and empowerment are explored through the lens of emancipatory pedagogy (Freire, 1996, 2000) with connections drawn to globalization and global change (Matus & McCarthy, 2003; Scholte, 2000; Smith, 2003). Critical pedagogy (Cho, 2006; Greene, 1996), while not a central theoretical theme in this study, is referenced. Local relevance and pedagogical approach (Greene, 1996; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1996), including specific Tibetan concerns (Dalai Lama, 1996, 2000; Department of Education [1], 2004; Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1995; Phuntsog, 1994) are explored.

Each of the three theoretical themes are relevant to the ways Tibetan educators appear to make sense of their experiences of their histories, personal identities, and their situations in global contexts. The themes overlap in mutually influential ways, and appear to influence the educators' approaches to their work within the diaspora.

## 1.5  Methodology and Data Analysis

Qualitative research methods were utilized to obtain data for this study, most substantially in the form of open-ended, in-depth interviews conducted with 29 Tibetan educators at 19 different school and office sites in India and Nepal (Appendix 2, Table 3: Interviewees). Data collection processes and the method utilized to analyse and organise the data are explained in *Chapter Four*. Themes outlined in the theoretical framework for the study (*Chapter Three*) are utilized in the data analysis (presented in *Chapter Five*).

Interviewee responses appear historically situated, varying in significant ways between four generations, each born into different historical, political, economic, and social contexts (detailed in *Chapter Four*). In most data analysis sections responses are organized according to the interviewees' generational group rather than the country or school in which they work. Their generation emerged as the most significant factor differentiating perspectives on their lives and communities in the diasporic struggle, and on their approaches to the work as educators. A significant exception occurs in *section 5.3* where conditions and concerns specific to educators who are based in Nepal are addressed.

## 1.6  Potential Significance and Reciprocity

This research has the potential to assist Tibetan educators by providing documentation and analysis into a layer of their work, potentially shedding light on and more specifically illuminating social complexities with which they must struggle. Quantitative data on exam scores and school completion rates is routinely collected by the Tibetan Government-in-exile's Department of Education

(DoE), but few in-depth qualitative studies on Tibetan diaspora education have been completed. This addition to the body of research may open up new ways of seeing the work of Tibetan educators, and may prove useful to Tibetans in monitoring the outcomes of their efforts.

Beyond the Tibetan diaspora, this research has the potential to provide insights into educational challenges and adaptive responses of refugees seeking to develop and maintain vibrant diasporic community identities. In particular, the research may clarify how education and working relationships with diasporic communities might be constructed to aid host governments and educational institutions in supporting refugee settlement, adaptation, and educational achievement. In this way, it may enrich both the theoretical and empirical scholarship in this area.

In the realm of diaspora studies comparatively little work has been done exploring diasporic consciousness and adaptive responses within developing countries. With the advent of supraterritorial forms of globalization (Scholte, 2000), groups such as Tibetans in India and Nepal that had previously been financially, socially, and politically marginalized due to geographical situatedness and lack of material resources may gain greater access to global information flows and opportunities for outreach, agency and influence on a global scale. It is increasingly important to study and understand how these change processes are taking place.

The following chapter, "*CHAPTER TWO: Contexts of Diasporic Life*",

provides background context essential to understanding perspectives that

emerge in the interview data.

# 2: CHAPTER TWO: CONTEXTS OF DIASPORIC LIFE

This chapter introduces facets of the political, legal, bureaucratic, and recent historical contexts Tibetans in India and Nepal negotiate their lives within. Expansive, in-depth study and analysis of the history and intricacies of the broader Tibetan refugee experience is not within the scope of this research, yet facets are introduced here to frame the study within the context of the Tibetan refugee experience. Although many layers of Tibetan historical, political, cultural, social, and spiritual experience and understanding are absent from this overview, the aspects outlined here are included because they were referenced by interviewees as affecting their perspectives on their daily lives, and the potential futures of themselves and their students. This chapter sets the stage for the exploration of issues and concerns relevant to, and referenced by, interviewees.

The legal residence status of Tibetans in India and Nepal is described in *Section 2.1*. Legal status in a host country determines the civil rights of individuals, and the opportunities and constraints they experience as they go about their lives. This includes opportunities and restrictions in relation to education and employment, travel, and property ownership, and impacts their scope for imaginable hopes and dreams for the future for individuals, their children, and for the community as a whole. Although issues of legal residence status refer to relations between diasporic people and nation states rather than community relations within diaspora and with others, legal status affects the ways

individuals are able to live, their community processes, and their relations with others. The remainder of this chapter provides an overview of the diaspora's history.

*2.2* provides a summary of the history of the refugee settlement process, community life, and the development of the education system over five decades, from 1959 to present. The living conditions and political processes of the day impacted interviewees born and raised in different time periods.

*2.3* provides an outline of the current organizational structure of the Tibetan education system, including descriptions of the various types of schools, and school population statistics.

*2.4* outlines the motivation behind the development and institutionalizing of the Basic Education Policy for Tibetans (BEP) (Department of Education [1], 2004).

## 2.1  Residence Status in Host Country

Complexities of residence status impact Tibetans' personal senses of safety and security, and their current and future possibilities for engagement in the larger world. Neither India nor Nepal are signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees. As such, "no specific and applicable national legislation relating to asylum-seekers or refugees exists" (UNHCR Global Appeal 2005, p. 244). Most Tibetans in diaspora self-identify as refugees, but in a strictly legal sense, in India and Nepal they are stateless resident aliens, rather than refugees. Policies and practices differ between India

and Nepal, and within each country Tibetans are not all treated in the same way. The legal status of Tibetans in India is outlined in *subsection 2.1.1*, and their status in Nepal is explained in *subsection 2.1.2*. The TGIE's internal system for accounting for and identifying Tibetans under their jurisdiction, known as the "Green Book", is described in *subsection 2.1.3*.

### 2.1.1  Legal Status in India

Over 100 000 Tibetans currently reside in India (Central Tibetan Administration, 2009). Those who arrived before 1979 and their descendants may legally reside in India and obtain a Registration Certificate (RC) from the Indian government (South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre, 2008) but they are not normally granted Indian citizenship. Adult Tibetans who arrived in India after 1979 cannot easily obtain an RC, although RCs are issued to children when they graduate from school. All RC holders must renew their RC annually at the Foreigners Registration Office where it was originally issued (South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre, 2008). For example, if a Tibetan born and registered in South India later moves to North India for school or work, they are expected to travel back to their birthplace once each year to renew their RC. The journey may take days or weeks, and is a financial hardship for many.

Holders of valid Indian RCs are permitted to reside in India, go to school and college, engage in many (but not all) forms of employment, and may have a personal bank account. They are not permitted to own real estate, but they may rent. RC holders may travel within India, but may not cross international borders unless they obtain a second document called an Identity Certificate (IC). The IC

is an UN-sanctioned document that functions as a passport for stateless people. Bureaucratic obstacles prevented many Tibetans from obtaining an IC until the early 2000s when restrictions were eased for a time. The IC system appears to be in a state of flux, as some restrictions were reinstated in 2006 (South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre, 2008). Travel opportunities for IC holders continue to be limited however, partly due to the high cost of travel in relation to income, and, perhaps more crucially, because many countries refuse to issue visas to Tibetans who carry an IC.

In comparison to the situation in Nepal, Tibetans in India have enjoyed greater legal and social freedom, as well as material support from the host government. Yet, their status in India is neither secure nor guaranteed into the future. As pointed out in the "Human Rights Features" of the *South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre*:

> The Indian government has been permissive, but not overly happy with Tibetans in exile in recent years. This position, which has thus far created an environment where Tibetans are able to live in exile, is also a position, which technically allows for wide governmental discretion in restricting their rights. In the context of renewed political volatility in Tibet, the new Maoist dispensation in Nepal and increasing pressure from China, India cannot be counted on to assure the rights protection of Tibetan refugees in the future. (2008)

### 2.1.2  Legal Status in Nepal

Bureaucratic and political challenges for Tibetans in Nepal are more varied and complex than those in India experience, including institutionalized barriers to participation in Nepali society. The total population of Tibetans in Nepal is estimated by the TGIE and the United Nations Refugee Agency

(UNHCR) to be approximately 20 000, although only roughly half are legally

documented as residents (Tibetan Refugee Community of Nepal, 2004). For the

rest, obtaining legal residence documents is currently impossible. Challenges

and opportunities experienced by Tibetans in Nepal are largely determined by

their residence status. There are three types of residence status, described

below.

**Nepali Citizenship**

A few hundred Tibetan families have legally obtained citizenship through a

Nepali father or grandfather, marriage to a Nepali, or family relationship to a

specific group of Tibetan guerrilla fighters that had been based in Northern Nepal

from 1961 until the early 1970s[1]. These people are entitled to Nepali citizenship

with all associated rights and privileges, although many face social and racial

discrimination in Nepali society. They are not subjects of this study because as

Nepali citizens the children attend Nepali or private schools rather than the

schools associated with the TGIE that are the subjects of this study.

**Registration Certificate (RC) Holders**

Like India, Nepal can issue Registration Certificates (RCs) to resident

Tibetans and Identity Certificates (ICs) for the purpose of foreign travel.

According to informal policy characterized as a "gentlemen's agreement", the

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[1] Mustang, a region of northern Nepal on the border with Tibet, served as the base for Tibetans trained by the CIA to carry out a resistance campaign against the Chinese Army from 1961 until 1974 (Tibet Justice Center, 2002). One of the guerrilla leaders, Baba Yeshi, is a controversial figure amongst Tibetans for a variety of reasons, including his early surrender to Nepali authorities. After his surrender, he and his followers were granted land near Kathmandu and other privileges such as Nepali citizenship (McGranahan, 2010).

Nepali government should issue Registration Certificates (RCs) to Tibetans over the age of 16 years who arrived in Nepal prior to January 1, 1990, or are children of RC holders (Tibet Justice Center, 2002). In practice, the application of this policy has been sporadic and incomplete, fraught with institutionalized barriers. The Nepali government has issued RCs on only two occasions, in 1974 and 1998 (Tibet Justice Center, 2002). According to Nepali government statistics, in 2003 there were 10 766 RC holders (Tibetan Refugee Community of Nepal, 2004). But, until 2003 there were no Nepali government facilities or processes whereby Tibetans could register the births of their children. If the Nepali government begins to issue RCs again children of RC holders may attempt to acquire one, but proving parentage is impossible without a birth certificate. In 2003 the Nepali government entrusted the responsibility of issuing birth certificates to local ward offices, but this service is only available to people who are already RC holders (Wangchuk Tsering, former representative of the Dalai Lama in Kathmandu, personal communication, March 2005).

Documented and undocumented Tibetans face multiple systemic obstacles in Nepal. Under Nepali law, non-citizens, including those who hold a valid RC, are not permitted to attend state run educational institutions, work in paid employment, establish businesses, operate schools, have a personal bank account, or own property (Tibet Justice Center, 2002). Therefore, everything that Tibetan refugees have been doing in Nepal since 1959 to earn a livelihood and educate their children is illegal. Some authorities turn a blind eye, although bribes are often necessary in order for schools and businesses to continue functioning.

If the Nepali government so chooses, it has the right to close down all Tibetan operations and expel all Tibetan refugees.

**No Legal Status**

In 2003, the Tibetan Welfare Office (TWO) in Kathmandu gathered the names of 4617 Tibetans aged 16 years and above who were without any status (Tibetan Refugee Community of Nepal, 2004). The majority of the people on the list had been born in Nepal to Tibetan RC holders, and some had arrived in Nepal after December 31, l989. Tibetan children under 16 years old have no status, and cannot attempt to apply for an RC until they turn 16. Children of RC holders are not automatically eligible for their own RC, nor are they eligible for Nepali citizenship. Without status, in a legal sense, these people do not exist. Their opportunities within Nepal are extremely limited, and they cannot legally acquire an identity document for travel outside Nepal.

### 2.1.3  The Green Book: Citizenship of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile

In 1971, in a process not connected to the host governments, the TGIE developed the Green Book system (Tibetan: Gyalthon Mangyul) whereby people who identify as Tibetan pay a nominal annual fee (Tibetan: Chatral), and are granted a passport sized Green Book as proof of their Tibetan identity. The Green Book system was first implemented in 1972 to aid in the administrative processes of accounting for and providing care to Tibetans in the diaspora, and to raise funds for the TGIE (Department of Finance, 2006). Annual Green Book fees support the operation of the TGIE, with further funding generated through

grants from various governments and international donor organizations (Tibetan

Computing Resource Centre, 2009). The Green Book is used by the TGIE

administration as a primary identification document, but is not recognized as a

legal document by the UN or any nation state. Nonetheless, it is an important

document for Tibetans. In addition to, for some, serving as a representation of

their emotional attachment and patriotic allegiance to the TGIE, the condition of

limited rights and opportunities for Tibetans within the nation states where they

reside may compel individuals to turn to Tibetan community and TGIE authorities

for support, care, and protection.

In order to obtain a Green Book, Tibetans must register at an office of the

TGIE. For residents of India, Nepal, and Bhutan, the annual fee amounts to the

equivalent of approximately $1. For residents of other countries it is $46 US, or

$96 depending on employment status (Department of Finance, 2006; Canadian

Tibetan Association of Ontario, 2010). The Green Book is stamped with an

official seal, and the holder is granted rights and privileges of "citizenship" of the

Tibetan diaspora. This includes support services provided by TGIE offices and

voting rights for TGIE Parliamentary elections.

## 2.2  Refugee Settlement

This section outlines the historical development of the refugee settlement

process and societal changes that have occurred over time, with particular

attention to issues of education. *Subsection 2.2.1* addresses the early years of

the refugee crisis, starting from 1959. *Subsection 2.2.2* provides an overview of

developments in education in the 1960s, when the first Tibetan schools were

established in India. *Subsection 2.2.3* describes shifts that occurred in the 1970s when many Tibetans were moved to settlements established by the TGIE, or found independent means to achieve more stable living conditions than were possible in the 1960s. *Subsection 2.2.4* introduces two key changes that impacted Tibetan schools in the 1980s: an influx of refugee children from Tibet; and, the implementation of "Tibetanization" programs in the schools. The final subsection, *2.2.5*, outlines the more recent issue of dispersion of Tibetans away from India, Nepal, and Bhutan, to Western countries.

### 2.2.1 Refugees: 1959

Tibetans who fled Tibet after the failed 1959 uprising against Chinese government forces experienced physical and emotional shock and hardship in the early years of exile, as well as disruption of their social and cultural lives and identities. In addition to adapting to exile in a foreign country, many Tibetans in refugee camps and settlements were for the first time living in close proximity with people from different regions of Tibet who spoke different dialects and practiced different cultural and religious traditions. Although they all identified as Tibetan, they were not all the same, and in some cases struggled with difficulty to live and work together productively.

The Government of India (GoI) agreed to provide some support and cooperation in ensuring care for the basic needs of the Tibetan refugees who were pouring across the border. Other governments, UN agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also provided support. Refugee camps were established immediately, and plans were set in motion for long-term care and

settlement of the refugees who arrived around that time (Avedon, 1983). Some refugees stayed in Nepal, but the Nepali government did not provide them support or material aid.

The acute Tibetan refugee crisis lasted for approximately the first decade of exile, with tented refugee camps and extreme challenge providing adequate food, shelter, and medical care. The first formal refugee settlements with housing and small plots of land were established by the TGIE in the early 1960s, but at that time they could not accommodate all refugees. Many adults worked as labourers on road construction crews in mountainous regions of India (Avedon, 1983). The mortality rate amongst refugees was high due to malnutrition and exposure to new (to Tibetans) infections, diseases, and parasites that did not exist in high altitude Tibet. For the majority of refugees this decade was a period of loss, poverty, grief, and uncertainty. For individuals and the collective, the future was entirely uncertain.

Initially, many Tibetans held out hope that the Chinese army would soon leave Tibet and they would be able to return home. For this reason, some in Nepal, Northern India, and Bhutan, were reluctant to move away from Tibetan border regions or establish themselves with a sense of permanence in exile (Tibet Justice Center, 2002). On the other hand, Tibetan authorities, community leaders and International Aid organizations were preparing infrastructure required to support the community through a protracted refugee situation. In the 1960s the primary focus of the TGIE, the GoI, and aid organizations was the physical survival of individuals. Authorities saw community cohesion and the creation of

social and material support networks as necessary to the survival efforts. Education of the children was a high priority, and was linked to concerns for physical, emotional, and cultural survival in diaspora (Avedon, 1983; Pema, 2003).

In contrast to Tibetan's experience in India, the Government of Nepal did not provide material or other support toward physical or cultural survival of Tibetan refugees (Tibet Justice Center, 2002). Foreign aid and development organizations including the Nepal Red Cross (NRC), United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Swiss Red Cross, Swiss Association for Technical Assistance, USAID, the Protestant United Mission, the Nepal International Tibetan Refugee Relief Committee, and United Nations affiliates, took substantial leadership and financial roles in the development of Tibetan schools and settlements in Nepal (Tibet Justice Center, 2002).

### 2.2.2  The 1960s: The First Decade of Schooling in Exile

Before 1959 the vast majority of the population in Tibet worked in traditional vocations such as farming, semi-nomadic herding, business trades, or monastic life. Most formal schooling was in the form of monastic education or apprenticeship in trades. There were a few private secular schools in towns and cities and some families arranged private tutors for their children, but there was no state organized education system (Rigzin, 2003). Although some aristocratic families sent their children to boarding schools in India before 1959, the majority of Tibetans did not consider schooling to be necessary for themselves or their children. Learning to read the scriptures was considered admirable, but in most

cases secular schooling carried no social or economic currency in supporting their traditional way of life (Rigzin, 2003).

The Dalai Lama and the TGIE's efforts to establish a school system in exile to serve all children, regardless of their family background or socio-economic class, represented a radical departure from past tradition in Tibet. Within the first year of exile the Dalai Lama appealed to India's Prime Minister Nehru for permission and support in establishing separate schools where Tibetan children could live and learn together. The Indian government agreed, and helped facilitate a form of segregation of Tibetans from Indian society by providing material aid and expertise in accomplishing separate schools (Nowak, 1984).

Throughout the 1960s the TGIE, the GoI, and Aid organizations struggled to provide basic care for the children, while also working to develop infrastructure and create efficient organizational processes that could be sustained into the uncertain future. In 1960, the Dalai Lama's eldest sister set up the first orphanage for Tibetan children, in Dharamsala, India (Pema, 2003). It was soon filled over capacity. More orphanages, nurseries, and children's homes were established, and ultimately transformed into schools. In India, Nepal, and Bhutan representatives of the TGIE rescued orphaned and destitute children from roadside labour camps, refugee camps, and from towns and settlements where children in need were identified (Avedon, 1986). The children were taken to the care facilities, and when healthy were placed in schools. In the 1960s there were not enough Tibetan schools to provide for all the children, so several hundred

were sent to Indian private schools and Christian Missionary schools, funded through charitable aid (Avedon, 1986).

For Tibetans in exile, the question of the value of knowledge, particularly of the sort that is acquired and derived through schooling, took on new relevance. Before 1959 Tibet was a relatively insular country and most Tibetans had no need to interact directly with outside world. In their lives as stateless, landless, refugees, some of their forms of traditional knowledge and expertise were functionally useless (e.g. high altitude agriculture and animal husbandry practices). Other forms of knowledge that had carried little, if any, currency for them in Tibet became essential to their physical and political survival in exile (for example, knowledge of English and Hindi languages). Modern schooling came to be viewed by many as a survival necessity, resulting in concerns that traditional learning to may drift to lower status. Consequently, issues of national identity and cultural preservation became central concerns of Tibetan authorities.

### 2.2.3  1970s: Refugee Settlements and Scattered Communities

By the 1970s the most harrowing stage of the refugee crisis had passed and individuals and authorities turned their attention towards settling in and establishing regular day-to-day routines. Formal refugee settlements administered by the TGIE were established in locations where the TGIE was granted land or was able to purchase it (Subba, 1990). Adults were moved from refugee camps and road labour crews to homes on the settlements, and children were transferred from boarding schools to live with their parents and attend day schools at the settlements. Orphans, semi-orphans, and destitute children were

given priority admission to spaces in boarding schools. Financial hardship was still an issue throughout the diaspora, but material facilities in the settlements and at the boarding schools had improved to the extent that children were better fed and regular educational routines had been established. Sanitation and health care had improved, reducing mortality rates. Poverty continued, but people were physically healthier overall.

Tibetan authorities hoped that the settlements would ultimately be self-sustaining as agricultural and handicraft centres (Avedon, 1986; Subba, 1990). The settlements provided stability in terms of housing, schooling, and administrative infrastructure, but in many cases financial income from settlement businesses was too small to sustain the families. Seasonal sweater selling, an independent roadside business in the winter months, became the primary income source for many (Avedon, 1986). Some settled independently without the assistance of the TGIE in areas where they found work or started businesses, typically living in clusters of Tibetans referred to as informal "scattered communities". Tibetan schools were set up by the TGIE to serve scattered communities at the request of parents, and if the population of children in the region was sufficient.

Throughout the 1960s most of the teachers and administrative staff at Tibetan schools in India were Indian, supplied by the GoI. In the 1970s people from the first batch of Tibetans to finish high school in India were called upon by the TGIE to teach in Tibetan schools, replacing (or displacing) the Indian teachers. With more Tibetan teachers and administrators, the social and cultural

climate of many schools changed, and it became possible to embed more Tibetan content and culture within curricular and extra-curricular activities. Tibetan schooling in Nepal was less developed than in India, with just a few elementary schools serving settlements. Nepali government policies and curriculum were required in all schools, including private schools, so embedding Tibetan content and employing a higher percentage of Tibetan teachers was more challenging than in India.

### 2.2.4 1980s: New Arrivals and Tibetanization

Chinese government policies and restrictions effectively blocked cross-border flow of people and information between Tibet and the outside world from the early 1960s to the late 1970s (Avedon, 1986). Policy changes within China in the late 1970s and early 1980s meant that Tibetans in Tibet gained degrees of freedom of mobility, and it became possible for some people to reach the border and escape through Nepal to India (Avedon, 1986). Most transited quickly through Nepal because the Nepali government did not provide support or permit them to settle there, whereas in India the TGIE was better able to provide care and education.

A trickle of children smuggled over the border in the late 1970s grew to several hundred per year in the 1980s. The "new arrival"[2] children were received at the schools as de facto orphans, since their families remained in Tibet and could not reach them physically or through telecommunications media. The

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[2] People who escaped from Tibet in the late 1970s or later are known amongst Tibetans as "new arrivals".

children needed full care. Tibetan Homes Foundation (THF) and Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) schools adapted their facilities and programs in response to the needs of the children (Pema, 2003). Year-round boarding facilities were expanded, new school branches were built, and an accelerated academic program called the Opportunity Class (OC) was developed to accommodate the needs of children who were older than the usual age for school entry but had little or no previous schooling (these children are referred to by Tibetans as "over-age"). In OC they were provided care and education intended to help them progress quickly to their age-appropriate grade level.

A move towards a radical overhaul of the Tibetan education system in India began in the 1980s with "Tibetanization" initiatives at Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) (Pema, 2003). The overall organizational structure of the school system remained essentially the same as the Indian system, but the language of instruction up to class 5 (typically at age 10) was converted to Tibetan rather than English, and more Tibetan topics were woven into the curriculum and classroom routines. As noted by Jetsun Pema, President of TCV and former Minister of Education, Tibetans were worried about the potential loss of cultural knowledge due to protracted exile: "now educating the second generation and third generation of Tibetans born in exile, the need to enrich and strengthen our education on the basis of our language and culture is crucial" (Pema, 2003, p. 292). TCV fully implemented Tibetanization in all branches in 1985, and all other Tibetan schools in India under the umbrella of the DoE had implemented it by

1995. Tibetan schools in Nepal could not implement the program because it was not permitted under Nepali government regulations.

### 2.2.5  Further Diasporic Dispersion: Migration to "the West"

Until the early 1990s very few Tibetans migrated to countries beyond India, Nepal, or Bhutan. This is partly due to a desire on the part of Tibetan authorities to keep Tibetans together in South Asia, although money to pay for travel was also a barrier, and few countries were willing to admit Tibetans. Switzerland and Canada sponsored the migration of Tibetan refugees in the 1960s and 1970s (Switzerland sponsored 1500, and in 1972 Canada sponsored 228), but those programs were not extended (Department of Manpower and Immigration, 1976). Over the subsequent four decades a trickle of Tibetans migrated to other countries through various independent means such as marriage, work, or study.

Migration rates changed in the early 1990s when the United States government instituted a resettlement program in cooperation with Tibetan authorities in diaspora, and issued 1000 residence visas for Tibetans who were based in India, Nepal, and Bhutan (MacPherson, 2008). This group of visa recipients is still known amongst Tibetans as "The One Thousand". Their departure to the United States marked a paradigm shift in Tibetan authorities' response to migration away from South Asia, and shifted Tibetan diasporic social, economic, and other contexts in many ways.

Visa recipients were chosen by lottery, with only one visa granted per immediate family. Consequently, many adults who moved to the United States did so without their spouses and children, hoping to sponsor their family members as immigrants as soon as possible. Financial challenges and lack of travel documents meant that many families were separated for years, with children remaining in the care of Tibetan boarding schools in India and Nepal. This was emotionally difficult for many, but remittances those in the US were able to send to support their relatives in India, Nepal and Bhutan increased the living standards of some families significantly. For many in South Asia, a monthly salary of $100 would be considered a liveable middle-class wage. Remittances of as little as $20 per month could alter the recipients' material quality of life substantially.

Many of The One Thousand were eventually able to sponsor their relatives to migrate to the United States and help friends to obtain visitors visas. Thousands migrated legally to the United States, and others overstayed their visitors' visas and remained in the United States illegally. In the mid to late 1990s, some Tibetans who had been undocumented in the US travelled to the Canadian border at Buffalo, NY and claimed refugee status in Canada. More followed, and by 2006 there were over 4000 Tibetans in Canada, more than triple the number of Tibetans who were resident in Canada in 2000 (MacPherson, 2008). Financial remittances sent from Tibetans in Western countries to relatives, friends, and organizations in India, Nepal, and Tibet helped improve the material conditions of recipients, but geographic dispersal of family and community

outside South Asia introduced new social and emotional challenges to individuals, families, and the diaspora as a whole. For example, Emily Yeh's (2007) analysis problematizes the social struggle for authenticity within Tibetan communities in the United States, revealing tensions between groups and individuals that identify as "Tibetan" differently, and reached the United States in different ways.

## 2.3  Administrative Organization of Tibetan Education System

The Tibetan education system was originally developed in response to Tibetans' circumstances as displaced people after the 1959 exodus from their country. Tibetan schools under the broad administrative umbrella of the Department of Education (DoE) are spread across three host countries (India, Nepal, and Bhutan), each with its own domestic and international policies and practices, and each with its own government approved curricula and examination system. The DoE remains the central administrative body for Tibetan schools, but procedures must be flexible enough to adapt and adjust to regulations of each host country.

Over the decades in exile, school systems and procedures have been adapted to address the needs of children born into the diaspora as well as new arrivals from Tibet, but the overall objectives have remained consistent. Tibetan authorities and educators strive to prepare youth for eventual return to Tibet while at the same time providing them with the economic, social, and cultural tools that they need to survive in exile. The official objectives of the DoE are (Department of Education, 1998; Department of Education [1], 2004):

- To oversee the educational needs and welfare of Tibetan children in exile
- To provide primary education for every child in order to achieve 100% literacy (in Tibetan and English language) among the Tibetan refugee community
- To inculcate values of personal integrity and universal responsibility
- To develop modern scientific and technical education and skills, while preserving and promoting Tibetan language and culture
- To address human resource requirements of the Tibetan community in exile and a future free Tibet.

A flexible and multi-faceted approach to administrative organization is required to address the complexities of diaspora life. A variety of types of school and administrative bodies to run them were developed to address the diverse needs and challenges in the different settings and countries. School administrative bodies under the umbrella of the DoE include Central Tibetan Schools Administration (CTSA, jointly administered by the Tibetan DoE and the Indian government) and four different Autonomous (private) school bodies (Figure 1, p. 37).

The CTSA, headquartered in New Delhi, receives partial funding and logistical support from the GoI. The schools within this system must adhere to GoI regulations, including employing a minimum percentage of teachers from India's "scheduled castes". Due to this regulation the teaching population at CTSA schools is approximately 50% Tibetan and 50% Indian. Most day schools located in Tibetan settlements in India are CTSA run, as are some Tibetan schools that serve scattered communities. Children born in India may attend

CTSA day schools free of charge, although there are costs for school uniforms and supplies.

All other Tibetan schools in India and Nepal are Autonomous in that they are registered as private schools and do not receive funding from the government of the host country. Funding is derived from charitable donations, income generation projects, and tuition fees from some students. Autonomous administrative bodies under the umbrella of the DoE include Tibetan Children's Village (TCV), Tibetan Homes Foundation (THF), Sambhota Tibetan Schools Administration (STSA), and Snow Lion Foundation (SLF, based in Nepal). Autonomous schools in India are free to embed Tibetan curriculum and religious studies throughout the school program and are not bound by GoI staffing policies. In most Autonomous schools in India, well over 90% of staff are Tibetan. This is not the case in Nepal, where Nepali government curriculum and staffing regulations must be adhered to, thus the percentage of Tibetan teachers is lower, in some cases in the order of magnitude of 50%.

New arrival children, born in Tibet, attend TCV and THF free of charge, with all services provided (including room and board, tuition, health care, and all living expenses). Exile-born children who are orphaned or from economically destitute families may be deemed Wards, and receive full funding and support at Autonomous schools. Other children born in exile may apply for admission to the Autonomous schools, but they are typically required to pay fees scaled according to family income.

Figure 1 (p. 37) illustrates the administrative organizational structure and

approximate population statistics of the education system, headed by the

Minister of Education of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA, aka TGIE).

**Figure 1: Administrative Structure of the Tibetan Education System (2005 data, student population is approximate, obtained from Tibetan Children's Education and Welfare Fund, 2010)**



**Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)**
Tibetan Government in Exile
Minister of Education

**Department of Education (DoE)**
Headquartered at Dharamsala, India

**Autonomous Schools**
(not administered by Host Government)

**Central Tibetan Schools Administration**
CSTA (founded in 1961) - Jointly administered by the CTA and the Government of India (GoI)
28 schools, 10 000 students

**Tibetan Children's Village (TCV)**
(founded in 1960) India
HQ – Dharamsala
17 Branches, 10 000 students

**Tibetan Homes Foundation**
(founded 1960) India
HQ – Mussoorie, India
2 Branches, 2000 students

**Sambhota Schools Society**
(founded 1999) India and Bhutan
HQ 0 Dharamsala
15 schools, 2300 students

**Snow Lion Foundation**
(founded 1972) Nepal
HQ – Kathmandu
13 schools, 3000 students

## 2.4 Education Reform: Basic Education Policy for Tibetans (BEP)

By many measures, including access to education, healthcare, housing, and community cohesion, Tibetans are amongst the most successful refugees in the world (Dawa Norbu, in Bernstorff, 2003). But, in relation to transmission of values, linguistic, and cultural understandings to the youth, according to a Research Officer and policy developer at the Tibetan Government-in-exile's Department of Education (DoE), "we are still not satisfied" (Tsering, C., personal communication, May, 2004). In an attempt to address perceived weaknesses in Tibetan education, a "Basic Education Policy for Tibetans" (BEP) (Department of Education [1], 2004) was developed over a period of years through a process that involved extensive community consultation. It passed into legislation in TGIE Parliament in 2004.

The move towards systemic reform came about as a result of a general feeling of dissatisfaction amongst many community members and educators. Many Tibetans believed that the root cause of problems in Tibetan education could be traced to the fundamental values and assumptions on which the system was based, tracing those values to British colonialism in India. For practical, materially and logistically pragmatic reasons, in 1960 Tibetan authorities modelled their schools after India's English medium system (Tsering, C., personal communication, May, 2004). But, they believe that the Indian education system represents for Tibetans a double disadvantage in their work towards cultural preservation, because as a remnant of British colonialism, not only is it a foreign system for Tibetans, but it is also foreign for Indians (C. Tsering,

Research Officer at the Tibetan Department of Education, personal

communication, May, 2004).

In a global sense, consensus on *what* and *how* to teach remains elusive,

with disagreements and debates rooted in questions of *why* we teach and learn.

Questions of values are not always in the forefront, but neither are they ever truly

absent from discussions on education: "Education, being a deliberate, purposeful

activity directed to the development of individuals, necessarily involves

considerations of value" (Hirst, 1973, p. 89). According to Tibetan policy and

Buddhist perspectives, in addition to education towards enlightened

understanding of the truth of things, education towards being useful is an

important practice of compassion, since it could lead to being better able to help

others. From this perspective, a schooled mind is of no use in the absence of

profound compassion: "Our intelligence is something like an instrument. Whether

we use that instrument properly or not depends on our good heart" (Dalai Lama,

1995). Samdhong Rinpoche, a highly respected monastic scholar who was

elected Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government-in-exile in 2001, strongly

expressed his views regarding the ultimate importance of education in Tibetan

society:

> The traditional Tibetan educational system, originated from the land
> of the Buddha, always aimed at guiding individuals for attaining
> elevation and perfection. The purpose of human life is to attain
> supreme freedom and in that process to lead a blissful and holistic
> life for which dispelling of ignorance and awakening of wisdom are
> indispensable. Hence, education is directly aimed at dispelling
> ignorance and generating wisdom combined with compassion. This
> essential traditional value of education shall not be allowed to be
> lost in trivialities of forms and modalities of education system.
> (Rinpoche, 1996, p. 25)

Tibetan school students in India and Nepal have achieved strong results on the host governments' standardized exams (Department of Education [2] and [3], 2004), but for those who were promoting education reform, exam results alone were not seen as the primary problem. Rather, concerns were raised over Tibetan language proficiency and factors of a less quantifiable nature such as personal embodiment and deep internalization of Tibetan cultural beliefs, behaviour, and understandings that might be termed "cultural identity". The fact that community leaders had appropriated the education system from others rather than using their own wisdom and creativity to develop locally appropriate learning systems is seen by many as contributing to a culture of dependence on others rather than stimulating self-confidence and modelling initiative, and self-reliance (Tsering, C., personal communication, May, 2004).

A fundamental assumption underlying the reform initiative is that providing a complete "Tibetanization" experience to the youth in schools will instil within them enduring and unshakable senses of their "Tibetan" selves and empower them to thrive socially, spiritually, and economically, whether in exile or in Tibet. The process includes language immersion and a reframing of school policies and practices to align with Tibetan cultural and religious values. Modern education is embedded within the program as an "essential co-partner" to traditional values. This "Two Wing" approach asserts the vital importance of both modern and traditional knowledge systems in a complete and balanced education.

Although this study does not specifically focus on the BEP, the field research and interviews with Tibetan educators took place in the first few years

after drafts of the policy had been discussed, critiqued, and sometimes hotly debated, amongst educators throughout the system. The final draft passed into legislation less than a year before the interviews took place, and the first pilot implementation project was to be launched a few months later in India. Tibetan educators were in a reflective moment of transition as they considered past struggles and accomplishments in relation to hoped-for future directions for their work and community. Some schools in India were preparing to begin a process of gradual implementation of the policy. Teachers in Nepal were aware of the BEP, but were not able to implement it because Nepali government regulations forbade the introduction of non-Nepali policies and curriculum.

The specific political and historical contexts of the Tibetan experience outlined in this chapter are implicated in their approach to diasporic community building, interactions with the world, and education within community. The interviewees' understandings and struggles with the contexts and complexities in which they work and live are considered in relation to relevant theories of identity and diaspora, globalization, and education for identity and emancipation outlined in *Chapter Three*.

# 3: CHAPTER THREE: THEORY

Complexities of personal, social, and global relations are relevant to this study. These combined factors are implicated in identity construction of Tibetan individuals, and in educational decisions, policies, and practices of authorities attempting to chart paths and directions for the community. The chapter is organized into three sections, summarized below, outlining the major theoretical constructs and the positions that come into play in analysing the struggle of Tibetans in the diaspora and the positioning of educators in that struggle. The idea of "*enduring struggle*" (explained in greater detail in Theory Section I) has special resonance in the Tibetan case, where Tibetan leaders and community members struggle to survive both as a diasporic community (physically, emotionally, and spiritually), and for self-determination in Tibet. It is a struggle to live well in exile for the time being, and ultimately to create the conditions by which return to their homeland is possible. Individuals struggle for personal identity, identification, and position in relation to the varied communities in which they participate. Authorities and community leaders struggle on global scales for voice, power, positioning and opportunities to forward communal goals.

**Section I – Identity Within Diaspora and Enduring Struggle**

This section outlines post-structural theories on individual and community *identity construction* processes and interrelationships, with specific attention

to contexts of enduring struggle in diaspora. Perspectives on identity specific to Tibetan cultural and Buddhist philosophical approaches are introduced.

**Section II – Global Flows and Geopolitics**

*Globalization and geopolitics* factor significantly in shaping the opportunities and constraints Tibetans encounter in their daily lives, and in their work to further their group struggle. This section outlines issues and intersections of global and political processes that may impinge upon or be utilized by Tibetan educators in their work and their lives.

**Section III – Education for Identity and Emancipation**

Post-structural theories on *identity and education* and *emancipatory pedagogy* are examined in connection to Tibetan education goals, processes, and systems. Community leaders and educators believe individual and community goals may be propelled forward through schooling (Rigzin, 1994), thus theories of identity in education and emancipatory education are relevant to this case.

All three of the theoretical threads are necessary to the analysis, and become interwoven in the process of making sense of Tibetan education systems, and identity processes of the educators themselves. Individual and authoritative processes and goals intersect, with educators themselves tasked with facilitating the construction in youth of Tibetan national identities and affiliation with the group struggle.

## 3.1 Section I – Identity Within Diaspora and Enduring Struggle

Theoretical considerations of individual and group identity processes relevant to this case are explored here in four sub-sections. Holland and Lave's (2000) notion of "history in person" is outlined, diasporic identities and enduring struggle are considered, and cultural constructs specific to the Tibetan case are introduced.

*Subsection 3.1.1* outlines *"history in person",* Holland and Lave's (2000) notion that identities are shaped in complex ways involving personal, intimate processes, impinged upon by lived experiences, histories, and the influence of interactions with other people and ideas. In this subsection, Holland et al.'s (1998) notion of "figured worlds" in which identities are shaped, is introduced.

Post-structural views of *identity and diaspora* are presented in *subsection 3.1.2*, with specific attention to concepts of diasporic consciousness and identity (Anand, 2000; Anderson, 1991; Anthias, 1998; Brah, 2007; Chandler, 2001; Clifford, 1994; Cohen, 1996; Dudley, 2002; Frykman, 2001; Hall, 1990, 1996; Holland et al, 1998; Matus & McCarthy, 2003; Safran, 1991). This aids in making sense of the apparent endurance of emotional attachment to Tibet, despite the fact that many in the diaspora have never been there (Anand, 2000; Bernstorff & von Welck, 2003; High Peaks Pure Earth, 2010; Nowak, 1984; Phuntsog, 1994; Rinpoche, 1996).

*3.1.3* addresses identity construction processes associated with the condition of *"enduring struggle"* (Holland and Lave, 2000) and other key post-structural notions*.* The sense of on-going crisis and state of urgency associated

with the Tibetans' diasporic struggle factors largely in the professional and personal lives of educators, and is characterized as a primary motivator to educators and students. As such, contexts of enduring struggle and identity frame the study, and return to the analysis repeatedly. Bakhtin's (1981) notion of dialogism provides the overarching theme regarding the mechanisms by which identities are shaped. Also referenced are Anderson's (1991) notion of "imagined communities", and post-structural notions of identity (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998; Holland et al., 1998). Taubman (1993) provides another perspective relating to generativity.

Relevant aspects of Tibetan culture and Buddhist philosophy are introduced in subsection *3.1.4* with a focus on *Tibetan views on learning* as practiced in contemporary secular educational settings. The diversity within Tibetan culture is referenced (Nadwi, 2004; Reynolds, 2005), and Anderson's (1991) notion of "imagined community" is revisited. Tibetan Buddhist and cultural perspectives (Craig, 1997; Dalai Lama, 1996, 2003, 2008; Rinpoche, 1992; Thurman, 1997), form the core of authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 1981) that impinges on educators' views.

### 3.1.1   "History in Person": The Individual, Community, and the World

"History in Person", as Holland and Lave (2000) have framed it, refers to a "constellation of relations between subjects' intimate self-making and their participation in contentious local practice" (p. 5). Contentious local practice occurs in the social space at the intersection of practices of historically institutionalized struggles, and personal historical struggles in self-making of

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individuals. In the case of this research, the contentious social space under consideration is where individuals who, while also engaged in personal individual processes of living and struggles for identity, participate as educators within institutions geared toward forwarding the enduring Tibetan diasporic struggle for material survival, creation of community, and for political emancipation of their homeland. The individual participants and the group struggle are not identically configured, but are constructed and mediated in relation to each other, and sometimes in tension.

The collection of studies of "history in person" compiled by Holland and Lave (2000) focus on particularly intense identity processes associated with participation in long-term group struggles, such as political activism amongst Mayans in Guatemala. Although personal histories and identities are not the same as histories in or of institutions or long-term group struggles, individual and institutionalized structures and processes come together repeatedly in local practice where they experience, confront, and may propel or impede material, social, and cultural change. History in person includes considerations of personal and individual experiences of struggles and contestations locally and within broader regional and global contexts. Attention to personal processes of individuals includes consideration of their relationship to the local as well as global factors, influences and impingements that they experience as implicated in their own identity formation.

Individual identity processes are understood to involve complex interplays of many factors, internal and external to the person, that are themselves going

through processes of change and flux. Local struggles and identification practices are explored with consideration of the broader forces at play that influence or impinge on the local and personal, without considering any single element, component, or person, in decontextualized isolation. The post-structural view that social beings and relations are always in process, rather than completely formed, is central to this approach. Viewed from within this framework, identity and identification are not products or end goals, but are processes and intertwined sets of processes, always in motion and constituted in social relations.

The notion of "history in person" provides a lens through which community construction and identification processes can be explored without an essentialized and narrowly limited view of individual identities rooted to only one space, time, or set of external conditions. For example, Tibetans born and raised in India may identify with the history of their ancestors, but in different ways than their parents or others might. As adults, working as educators, their personal struggles and awareness of external opportunities and constraints may differ substantially from their experiences of childhood struggle. The identities and relations to others that were configured in childhood may change and be reconfigured, but the past is not erased by the present, and hoped-for futures may figure as influential.

Complexities abound when exploring human relations and the influences, inducements, tensions and impingements that are part of lived experience, but ultimately in the context of this study, the focus I return to is individuals, and their

various ways of identifying. Contextualizing is necessary to building understanding of the identification processes and forms of representation of individuals because identity and identification are "always but never only 'in' the person, never entirely a matter of autobiography nor, on the other hand, entirely reducible to membership (voluntary or involuntary) in culturally, politically distinctive groups or social categories" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 6).

Conceptualizing this case as an "enduring struggle", rather than through the more narrow theoretical lens of "resistance", widens the scope to allow for considerations of multiple and varied forms of action and agency that may include, but are not limited to, resistance. The specific case under investigation here involves individuals who, in their professional lives, are embedded within institutions associated with the enduring Tibetan group struggle. As Holland and Lave (2000) point out, "'Struggling' suggests active engagement and avoids static notions of conflicts as stable or self-contained things in themselves. The notion of long-term struggles offers a view of structure as process, as a matter of relations in tension" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 23). Rather than considering the struggle or the institutions associated with it as the structures that move the process, processes of contentious social relations and tensions within, and associated with, the larger struggle are implicated in its' structuring.

Individual and group identity processes may at times seem incongruent, and individuals may seem to embody several different conflicting and non-harmonious identities in various social, historical, and political contexts. Holland et al. (1998) attempt to make sense of these complexities through consideration

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of identity configurations within various social contexts that individuals experience and inhabit, referred to by Holland et al. (1998) as "figured worlds". In these figured worlds individuals develop distinct personal identity frameworks enacted differently in relation to the contexts they inhabit at different times, and in different social spaces. The notion of "figured worlds" makes sense of people's multiple senses of self not as contradictory, but as adaptive acts of agency appropriate to different contexts of their lives. In this way, Tibetan individuals who may appear to embody multiple identity frameworks that appear incongruous, or in dissonance with larger community processes, may nonetheless consider themselves integral participants within Tibetan community (e.g. a Buddhist monk working at a photocopy shop in New York City, refugee youth from nomadic families posting their performance of rap songs on YouTube, or a Shaman studying computer technology).

To make sense of individual, inter-individual, and community processes of identification within the Tibetan diaspora, a myriad of cultural, social, economic, political, historical, and other contexts must be included in the analysis at personal, local, and global levels. Amongst those considerations are "diasporic consciousness" (Anthias, 1998), and identity within enduring struggle (Holland and Lave, 2000). The next subsection (3.1.2) explores diasporic identity processes. Specific consideration is given to identity within contexts of enduring struggle later, in subsection 3.1.3.

### 3.1.2 Identity and Diaspora

Diaspora is often characterized as expatriate minority communities that meet the following criteria: they are dispersed from an original "centre" to at least two "peripheral" places; they maintain a memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland; they are not (or do not feel) fully accepted by their host country; they harbour hope for eventual return to their homeland; and, they maintain an ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness (Cohen, 1996; Safran, 1991). Group consciousness is sustained over time, but is not stagnant in specific form or nature.

Measured against the above criteria, the Tibetan case may be considered "diasporic". Tibetans have migrated to settlements and communities throughout India, Nepal, and Bhutan, and global dispersion has increased dramatically since the early 1990s. Yet, emotional attachment to symbols and myths of homeland appears to have endured (Anand, 2000; Nowak, 1984). In India and Nepal their legal status as resident aliens (or lack of legal status) serves as a reminder to them that they are not fully accepted there, and expressions of group consciousness and hope for return to homeland appear frequently in official and unofficial community discourse (Anand, 2000; Bernstorff & von Welck, 2003; High Peaks Pure Earth, 2010; Phuntsog, 1994; Rinpoche, 1996).

Postmodernism, globalization, and post-structural theories of identity are particularly compatible with current conceptualizations of "diasporic consciousness" (Anthias, 1998, p. 560). Hall (1996, p. 598) argued that previously the "sociological subject" was seen as having a "unified and stable

identity", but as modernity came into fruition identities were characterized as fragmented by societal and structural change. The "post-modern subject" is conceptualized as having no fixed, essential, or permanent identity: "The subject assumes different identities at different times, identities, which are not a unified coherent self" (ibid, p. 598). Identity is constructed, fluid, always a process of becoming, and never fixed or "finished" (Brah, 2007; Hall, 1990). It is mediated by creative improvisations and agency (Holland et al., 1998). Contemporary conceptualizations of "diaspora" probe beyond genetic connotations of race, ethnicity, and "minority", and blur the significance of geopolitical borders in relation to cultural identity and national loyalties. Diaspora evokes concern for internal processes such as emotions, multiple attachments, longings, and "entangled tensions" (Clifford, 1994). It can be conceptualized as "*social form*, as *type of consciousness*, and as *mode of cultural production*" (Frykman, 2001, p. 16).

Brah (2007) argues that although social and political identities may be intertwined and inseparable in life, they must be distinguished in analysis (p. 254). The proclamation of a specific social identity "is a conscious action seeking to make sense of 'self' in relation to everyday life", whereas "political identities are by definition attempts at creating shared, common goals through conscious agency" (Brah, 2007, p. 254). In this light diasporic identities may be both socially and politically motivated, enacted differently depending on context and aim. Brah (2007) connects the forming of identities and forging of difference to the desire for belonging and security (p. 255).

Contemporary diasporas may appear to inhabit the space between "modern" and "traditional". They may function in modern contexts involving rapid travel, communications, and interrelationships with others, but still remain attached to their histories, or at least the aspects of those histories and belief systems that they deem to have continued currency. While immersed in the apparently turbulent flow of post-modernity, diasporas often attempt to maintain a sense of continuity through a group centredness, even if mythologized, and symbolic focal points represented by "homeland" and the hoped-for future return home.

A defining notion that distinguishes diaspora from other forms of migration is the necessity of experiencing feelings of attachment to the imagined and mythologized "homeland" and "home" community (Clifford, 1994; Cohen 1996; Safran, 1991). It becomes necessary in this context to distinguish between legal citizenship in politically defined nation-states, versus emotional attachment to a group that self-identifies in nationalistic terms (the distinction between the two is explored in greater depth in section 3.2.5). The voluntary nature of membership in a diaspora cannot be equated with legal definitions of citizenship: "While diaspora by its very nature connotes a group, the requirement that individuals conceive of themselves as members of a diaspora in order for that characteristic to have any legitimate purchase returns us to an individualistic foundation" (Chander, 2001, p. 1017).

Explorations of diaspora identity now promote a "less essentialized and more historically and analytically informed vocabulary than the traditional

concerns of 'race and ethnic relations'" (Anthias, 1998, p. 557). The experience

of diaspora entails more than belonging to a race or ethnicity; it also includes a

longing attachment to another place, ideal, or symbolic centre. The symbolic

centre serves as a focal point in relations within the group, and in representations

outside the group, but diasporic identities, like all identities, are malleable, fluid,

constructed within social relations, are historically situated, and are subject to

discursive processes (Holland et al, 1998). As such, manifestations of identities

are not uniform or readily predictable in different individuals, political contexts, or

social situations.

Hall (1996) asks us to "bear in mind (the) three resonant concepts of what

constitutes a national culture as an 'imagined community': *memories* from the

past; the *desire* to live together; the perpetuation of the *heritage*" (p. 615). In

diaspora, living together may not be practically feasible, but "togetherness" may

occur in psychological and symbolic fields. Physical spaces may now be more

easily traversed than previously (even if through cyber-space rather than in

physical body), and the idea of "national culture" is not limited to nation states.

Geopolitical (i.e. State) borders do not delineate the boundaries of the imaginings

of diasporic cultural identities. People may live hybrid cultural identities, across,

between, and within nation-states.

Matus & McCarthy (2003) describe an approach often utilized by minority

groups to emphasize the importance of group identity:

> to think of *culture* and *identity* within the crisis language of
> imaginary unity, of singular origins, singular ancestry, bounded
> nationality, and so forth. *Culture* is thus defined as a tightly

bounded set of linguistic, aesthetic, and folkloric practices specific
to a particular group. *Group identity* is seen as the true self within
the collective association – as the fulfilment of a linear connection
to an unsullied past and ancestry. (p. 76)

However, neither individual nor group identity can be considered to the exclusion

of the other. The two are interdependent in important ways. Neglecting the

individual removes personal agency from the picture, and neglecting the group

can remove important senses of connectedness, belonging, and responsibility to

the world beyond the individual. Social formation is always in process and in

progress, involving important interplays between histories of institutions, social

networks, and persons. Flux, flow, and transformations are to be expected, but

the nature of those processes and outcomes is not necessarily predictable, and

the course of change may be altered radically by unforeseen events.

Identity construction processes are strategic acts of power: "Not an

essence but a positioning. Hence, there is always a politics of identity, a politics

of position" (Hall, 1990, p. 226). These notions are particularly salient in cases

such as the Tibetan, in which global support toward political change, ultimately

resulting in return to homeland, is amongst the hoped-for outcomes. Identity

politics in movements such as the Tibetan (Anand, 2000) and Burmese (Dudley,

2002) involve "the conscious formulation and re-formulation of cultural identities

in the context of movements targeted against nation states" (Dudley, 2002, p.

173). The people involved in these processes are "self-conscious about identity,

culture and heritage, and deliberately and strategically mobilize and manipulate

cultural material, including ideas, history, language, images and objects" (ibid, p.

173). These processes of creative innovation are in keeping with Clifford's (1994)

notion that: "diaspora consciousness makes the best of a bad situation", and that it "lives loss and hope as a defining tension" (p. 312).

The Tibetan case involves considerations of diasporic consciousness and long-term (enduring) struggle where the dynamics of the diasporic loss/hope paradigm may emerge in multiple ways. Enduring struggles such as the Tibetan diaspora's survival and freedom project may bring to light new layers of human agency, characteristics of resistance and resilience, and creativity in attempting to maintain degrees of control in shaping their lives and futures. At issue are the struggles for change within their own local contexts, politically in relations with China, and in larger global contexts where they hope Tibetans will thrive materially, politically, socially, and culturally. Simultaneously present are expressions of longing for familiar community connections, and for change in global circumstances.

Identity formation within contexts of enduring group struggle evokes considerations of the person as historically fashioned (Holland and Lave, 2000), and of the agency and creativity of people in shaping histories and social relations. Specific factors connected with the shaping of identities within enduring struggle are explored in the next subsection.

### 3.1.3  Identity within Enduring Struggle

Holland and Lave (2000) contend that long-term (enduring) struggles are particularly intense sites for the construction of individuals' "historically fashioned identities-in-practice" (p. 3). In the Tibetan case, new members are now being

born into the community struggle that has endured for over half a century. Geographic locales where local practice takes place include settlements and scattered communities across the length and breadth of India, Nepal, and Bhutan and in other locales worldwide. Individuals experience and negotiate site-specific complexities, and engage in struggles for personal identity mediated in relation to the larger enduring community struggle. In cases of enduring struggle, personal and communally shared histories and practices can be powerful forces guiding peoples' thoughts, actions, and self-authoring processes. Holland and Lave (2000) argue that:

> … we cannot understand enduring struggles as crucibles for the forging of identities unless our accounts encompass the working creativity of historically produced agents and the interconnected differences among their interests, points of view, and ways of participating in the production of on-going struggles. (p. 3)

Creativity and agency are revealed in people's various ways of fashioning their personal identities, which are also in part fashioned and culturally constructed in historically, socially, and locally situated ways.

Participants construct personal identities, in part activated through their practice in historically, socially, economically, and politically situated group struggles, and those participants in turn impact the nature of the struggle itself. In other words, personal identity and enduring struggles, although not equivalent, are mutually constituted. In contexts of contentious struggle, where individual identities are formed, contested, and shaped in relation to local and larger struggles that are also contested, emotional intensity and attachment may be revealed and expressed. Processes of personal and community identity

configuration may stand out in starker relief than in less contentious contexts. In these settings:

> the fashioning of cultural forms and identities as intimate furnishings are high stake, salient issues for those involved. Participants gradually become just that – they take the standpoints, personalize the dialogues and other cultural forms salient to their lives – they answer to burning issues and interests that may or must be vital. The structuring effects in practice of long-term struggles are inescapable, and other aspects of life tend to bear durable, well-felt relations to them – to be enmeshed in, cordoned off from, masked by, or confused with such struggles – because they are deeply significant to the limits and possibilities of social existence. (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 21)

In this research, processes of personal identity construction and agency within the larger community struggle are investigated by exploring Tibetan educators' perspectives on the positioning they were born into (family, community, socio-economic and political), as well as their experiences of schooling, and their adult, professional lives. Tensions and agency in their personal struggles for identity are explored in relation to the group struggle.

Holland and Lave (2000) identify five themes central to identity formation processes within contexts of enduring struggles. The themes are: (1) dialogism; (2) cultural genre and self-authoring; (3) identities as configurations of self and other; (4) boundaries; and, (5) dialogism and generativity. These processes are personal and individual, as well as communal. They take place in local settings, within contexts and against backdrops of political, social, and cultural struggle, in turn influenced by (and perhaps influencing) global contexts. The five themes, outlined on the following pages, constitute a central frame of reference for the data analysis within this study. They illuminate processes that are at play in the

lives of Tibetan educators as they engage in shaping their own personal

identities, and as they attempt to guide the youth to desire and seek community

membership, including participation within the struggle.

**Dialogism**

Holland and Lave (2000) draw attention to Bakhtin's emphasis on

"persons in practice" (p. 9), reminding us that people are "always in a state of

active existence" (p. 10). People are always engaged in interactions and dialogic

exchanges in which they are being addressed and answering in processes of

meaning making. People, whether alone or with others, receive information and

stimuli in the form of language, social codes, ideologies, or in other forms, and

through response processes production of meaning may result. Dialogism

presumes that meanings are generated and regenerated through processes of

shared utterances and interactions, influenced by prior experience and

understandings:

> Everything means, is understood, as part of a greater whole - there
> is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the
> potential of conditioning others. Which will affect the other, how it
> will do so and in what degree is what is actually settled at the
> moment of utterance. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426)

In contexts of enduring struggle, dialogic interactions may be particularly intense

and overtly expressed because the struggle itself is high-stakes for the

participants. Personal histories and prior understandings may influence how the

exchange and meaning making process takes place, including the form and

intensity of individuals' internal and external dialogic response. For example, an

item in the news that may escape the notice of non-participants in the Tibetan

struggle could evoke emotional reactions in Tibetans. An announcement that the

Chinese government was providing funds and expertise to the Nepali

government for road construction, thus indebting the Nepali government to the

Chinese government, may have been perceived by Tibetans in Nepal as

threatening to their personal security. To most others, the news would be of little

interest.

Authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse are interactive

positions in dialogue. Engaging in these discourses propels transformative

processes as people consider and reconsider meanings, and formulate and

reformulate responses in the dialogic exchange. The authoritative voice may

consist of spoken or written words of individuals, or may stem from histories,

traditions, or other practices that we attend to as important, whether we agree

with them or not:

> The authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we
> make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it
> might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its
> authority already fused to it. The authoritative word is located in a
> distanced zone, organically connected with a past that is felt to be
> hierarchically higher. Its authority was already acknowledged in the
> past. It is a prior discourse. It is therefore not a question of
> choosing it from among other possible discourses that are its equal.
> (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 342)

Authoritative discourse may contain "authority as such, or authoritativeness of

tradition, or generally acknowledged truths, or the official line and other similar

authorities" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 344).

External dialogue occurs between different people, and internal dialogue

occurs within an individual between an "earlier and a later self" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.

427). Internally persuasive discourse consists of the discussions and arguments we have with ourselves, that can serve to solidify and shift inner beliefs at the very core of our "selves". It "is, as it is affirmed through assimilation, tightly interwoven with 'one's own word' " (Bakhtin, 1981 p. 345). Bakhtin (1981) contends that the history of an individual's "becoming" is determined by the struggle and dialogic interrelationship of authoritative and internally persuasive discourse.

Holland and Lave (2000) build upon Bakhtin's analysis by extending the notion of dialogism beyond the realm of language to cultural forms and other spheres of interaction and relations. This is particularly useful in the Tibetan context, where notions and emotions associated with spirituality figure prominently in personal, social, and political life. Language is just one of many modes of dialogic interaction that people engage with and within.

**Cultural Genre and Self-Authoring**

The dialogic complexity of processes by which individuals make sense of the world and their relationship to it is highlighted in Holland and Lave's (2000) notion of identity construction. They extend Bakhtin and Vygotsky's emphasis on the verbal "by moving to the more encompassing category of 'cultural forms' as the significant media through which identities are evoked in social practice and in intimate dialogue" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 12). They emphasise that self-authoring and meaning making are never completely solitary ventures because they always take place in dialogic contexts, with reference to other people, ideas, histories, and relationships, as well as personal histories and prior thoughts.

Consistent with Frykman's (2001) notion of diasporic consciousness as a mode of cultural production, "self"-authoring involves dialogical processes within personal, historical, and social contexts.

**Identities as Configurations of Self and Other**

The notion that individual processes of meaning making never occur in isolation, and that they are always informed or influenced by interactions with others, is central to Holland and Lave's (2000) third theme, "identities as configurations of self and other". This refers to the "sociality of the intimate self: just as local struggles are dialogic, the self-process is dialogic. It incorporates the others of its social world" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 13). Practices of all sorts refer to or reference other people, practices, histories, or experiences, and thus: "to the extent that the practice invokes that other - one's feelings and associations with the practice become thoroughly entangled in one's relationship to that other" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 16).

In addition to the notion that in all instances of self-authoring, inter-relationships with and with reference to others are implicated, in this case of enduring diasporic struggle, power relations may be at issue. Echoing Hall's (1990) characterization of identity construction as a political positioning, in contexts of struggle, Holland and Lave (2000) note that identity forming discourses include symbolic and institutional power relations (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 13).

**Boundaries**

Physical and symbolic boundaries (such as geographic proximity, and emotional attachment to particular cultural traditions) are vital to the creation, maintenance, and resilience of communities and personal identities. Boundaries define "insiders", limit access to "outsiders", and may be utilized by individuals engaged in acts of positioning. In diaspora (and in other social contexts), boundaries cannot be defined along purely national geographic lines. People who consider themselves to be members of a diaspora may live in many different countries and locations that they do not think of as their homeland. Boundaries are traversed and created in these contexts, whereby people may move physically and socially into the lives of others whom they define as outside their diasporic community, while also maintaining an internalized sense of attachment to their diasporic identity and degrees of separateness from others outside it. This connects to the notion of diasporic consciousness occurring in psychological and symbolic fields, rather than rooted in attachment to physical locality or proximity, as previously discussed in section 3.1.2.

The notion of boundaries helps to describe the nature of the influence of cultural forms, and transmission or reinterpretation of values, norms, understandings, and processes of identification. This includes ways in which important diasporic boundaries are maintained through identification, and non-identification, with select others. As Holland and Lave (2000) suggest:

> Through being forced or seduced into using their words, we can be colonized by others. On the other hand, we can become more and more distant from others and their words and practices. We can

> break radically from the other. We can sneer at their words and practices and stop attending to them seriously. (p. 14)

In this way, rather than constructing the appropriation of some beliefs and practices as colonization by others, "Through embracing their words and practices, socially marked others can be incorporated into "us"" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 14).

In personal processes of internalizing meaning, involving interplays of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses, some discourses are attended to and incorporated into self more overtly and readily than others. Thus, "the self is an orchestration of the practices of others, but we do not relate to all such practices in the same way" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 15). In educational contexts (for example), students will not all glean the same meanings or attend to authoritative voices in the same ways. Outcomes in thought, understanding, and action will vary.

As the nature of global relationships and interactions shifts and evolves, individuals and communities also shift their positioning and self-conceptualizations. Viewed from the post-structural perspective that identities are imagined and constructed (Anderson, 1991; Holland et al., 1998), individuals, groups, and societies can be seen as inhabiting multiple "figured worlds" (Holland et al., 1998) in which they develop and play out different aspects and layers of their senses of self as individuals and as members (or non-members) of groups. Identity and belonging are states "that people accept, resist, choose, specify, invent, redefine, reject, actively defend, and so forth" (Cornell and Hartmann,

1998, p. 77). These identities are fluid and malleable, and vary in salience across time and depending on contexts.

Further exploration of boundaries includes attention to intergenerational transmission and the evolving nature of "enduring struggle". Practices and discourses of others, or of ourselves across time and in various lived contexts, are influential, whether overtly or subversively. Identity processes that may feel or be described as intimate and personal senses of self are actually rooted in: "the dynamic tension of a socially given constellation of self (selves) and others, identified and interpreted through culturally given discourses and practices" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 13). Intergenerational transmission can involve complex, multifaceted, and strategic reformulations of cultural discourses.

In order for diasporic community struggles to endure through time and across geographical expanses, processes of intergenerational transmission must be in place. But, differences between generations, segments of society, and individuals, are always a factor, and may be contentious.

> As a more general feature of social life, intergenerational and age associated struggles, genres, and identities are likely to divide persons. Opportunities are often open to those of a particular age; they bypass those who are too old or too young. It is even the case that younger members of a radicalized group, for example, come into a context already layered with owned forms of radical expression. Younger actors dialogue with the struggle at hand …
> (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 17)

Intergenerational transmission takes place dialogically, never purely through direct transmission of information passed from one person to the next. Each individual and each generation brings the sum of their unique experiences to the

process of making meaning, always with back and forth exchange of information and ideas, and renegotiation of meanings and internalized understandings.

**Generativity**

The fifth of Holland and Lave's (2000) themes deals with dialogism and generativity, emphasising the intensity of processes within struggles and contentious practice. It is important to note that endurance of struggle does not imply that the nature of the struggle is unchanging. From the perspective of dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981), there is no fully independent self nor any self fully enmeshed in others, potentialities are negotiable and fluid, and a multitude of outcomes are possible when ideas and ideals of practice are transmitted. Cultural practice, and novel reformations of practice, can serve as modes by which power and positioning can be restructured by the actors themselves.

Intergenerational transmission, outlined in the previous subsection, is a component of a far more complex set of social relations, dynamics, and personal internal dialogues associated with generativity.

> Dialogism insists upon the always engaged-in-practice, always-engaged-in-dialogue, unfinished character of history in person. The person is necessarily "spread" over the social environment, becoming in substance a collection point of socially situated and culturally interpreted experience. And herein lie important sources of stability and thickening. Weaker parties to struggles, as well as the strong, can durably create their own discourses, practices, and emblems of struggle. (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 18)

It is these interrelationships that form the chain of endurance of the struggle. The multiple interrelationships across generations, power brokers, outsiders, and insiders of a struggle, influence individual self-authoring.

Often a consumer, sometimes a co-producer, of cultural forms and practices, or at least a spectator, a person is vulnerable to being identified by others. Enmeshed in dialogues across difference, often sharply contentious ones, over which they lack total "say", persons are ever open to radicalization and the experience of heightened structural apprehension, or to its partial opposite, incorporation of the other into the "I for myself." Especially for the weak, it seems that one is probably always being pushed and pulled, positioned first this way and then that, drawn into one transvestism and then another – willingly or not, into describing one's self or enacting one's self in the words and behaviors of another. It would appear that dialogism offers little possibility for accounting for durability. But this would follow only if "the person" is taken as separate from others. (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 18)

Notions of power and empowerment are implicated in cultural production and generativity, whereby the marginalized may author themselves more centrally:

In the course of local struggles, marginalized groups create their own practices. Participants in these groups both are identified by these practices and often identify themselves as "owners" of them. These practices thus provide the means by which subjectivities in the margins of power thicken and become more developed and so more determinant in shaping local struggles. (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 19)

Another lens through which to view processes of generativity appears in Taubman's (1993) notion of "registers", in which "the construction, meaning, and function of identity are addressed" (p. 288). The "fictional" register is where individual identity emerges as a construct of language, and the "communal" is where identity is "activated and given meaning by and through the group, and in turn can illuminate experience. In this register movements mobilize around identity, and identity serves as the ground for action and reflection" (p. 288). The third register, "autobiographical", is where identity "emerges as a personally meaningful and continually developing aspect of one's Self, as a private center of

being or as an autonomous subject capable of excavating his or her own history in the service of transcending it" (Taubman, 1993, p. 288). The notion of registers illuminates mechanisms by which different aspects of our identity frameworks are interconnected, activated, and moved toward transformation.

Of particular relevance in this case is the communal register, where the individual and the group are connected. It is the "identity which produces meaning and is both inseparable from the person who participates in the identity and also exists as a sense which a group of people share about themselves" (Taubman, 1993, p. 294). As is mirrored in the notion of "history in person", individuality and community are not mutually exclusive, since "autonomy and relatedness are equally important for the development of identity" (Taubman, 1993, p. 296).

### 3.1.4 Tibetan Buddhist and Cultural Perspectives

Analogous in some ways to Anderson's (1991) notion that the origin of "national consciousness" (p. 37) in Europe is connected to widespread circulation of printed text, in Tibetan regions printed text has been an important medium by which information and understandings have been shared across vast geographical distances for centuries. Bell (1992) refers to the 7th century as "the dawn of Tibetan civilization" (p. 23), when King Songtsen Gampo introduced reforms to governance and social life, including the advent of the written language. Much, but not all, of the text that has been preserved in printed book form (rather than personal letters or official government documents) has been in

the form of Buddhist scriptures, discourses, and commentaries on those scriptures.

Nonetheless, despite what may appear as a tightly bounded cultural community, religious, linguistic and other forms of diversity are prevalent amongst individuals and groups who self-identify as Tibetan. The majority of Tibetans practice Mahayana Buddhism, although there are several different sects and sub-sects that emphasise different aspects of the belief system and practice, and many Tibetan Buddhist rituals and practices have roots in Bon, an ancient pre-Buddhist spiritual practice indigenous to Tibet. Some Tibetans maintain adherence to Bon faith and practice, rather than Buddhism (Reynolds, 2005), and Tibetan Muslims have been part of the cultural fabric of Tibetan society for centuries (Nadwi, 2004). Various regional dialects of Tibetan language are spoken, and food, music, dance, and folk tales vary from region to region. Spiritually, linguistically, and culturally, Tibetan society is diverse.

Although not all Tibetans identify as Buddhist, most do. Buddhist philosophy and Tibetan spiritual and cultural traditions have permeated the Tibetan form of government and its' dominant authoritative discourse from the 1600s onward (Bell, 1992). Tibetan Buddhist philosophy frames the core authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 1981) in most aspects of Tibetan social and political life. The notion that interdependence (Rinpoche, 1992) and interrelationships are necessary to social existence and to vitally important learning processes, is central to Buddhist interpretations of the nature of human society, and modes of personal growth. Analogous to Bakhtin's (1981) theory

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that there is no self independent of discourses of others, Buddhism denies the existence of a "self", or "I" unto itself. Notions of interdependence (Rinpoche, 1992) assert that all existence and processes of becoming are relational, thus dialogical. Nothing can exist without reference to and with others, and all interactions are mutually experienced, even if experienced and understood differently by different parties.

Buddhist notions of the "truth" and purpose of suffering (Dalai Lama, 2003), and of impermanence (Rinpoche, 1992), are important in making sense of Tibetan authoritative discourse on how individuals should respond to experiences of hardship and loss. Suffering is understood to be a natural condition of existence, experienced by all beings (Dalai Lama, 2003). Seeking to erase suffering from one's life is considered to be both futile and foolish. Being born as a human (rather than animal, god, or other being) is seen as a precious opportunity (Dalai Lama, 2008) because humans are capable of intellectual responses, using their experiences of suffering and hardship as reference points for learning and deepening their spiritual understanding, insight, and compassion. In this light, experiences of loss should be treated as important lessons in impermanence (Rinpoche, 1992) and in the nature of suffering (Dalai Lama, 2003).

Rather than drawing upon dichotomies in order to make sense of the world and human relations, Buddhism emphasizes explorations of contexts, nuances, and gradients of understanding of the nature of existence. Rather than describing actions and behaviours as good or evil, actions and motivations are

described as stemming from individuals' greater or lesser clarity of understanding of the ultimate nature of existence. Those whose understanding is more clear will think and act with more wisdom, kindness, and compassion, and will experience greater personal joy (Dalai Lama, 2008). Those with less clarity of understanding may behave more selfishly and destructively, and they will not achieve personal happiness. Learning and change are always possible if study is engaged in purposefully, and developing greater understanding can lead to actions and interactions that are more positive (Dalai Lama, 2008).

All beings are understood to have core essences of profound wisdom and compassion, that we can reveal and activate more fully, and thus decrease our misunderstanding. Rather than viewing understanding as constructed, Buddhist discourse asserts that essential human goodness and seeds of capacity for profound understanding are already in place, and are revealed when misunderstandings are diminished through study, practice, and internal dialogic contemplation (Thurman, 1997). Also central to Tibetan cultural understandings of learning is the notion of reincarnation (Rinpoche, 1992). Authoritative discourse advises people to make the most of the learning opportunities afforded them in this lifetime, and to expect that their learning will continue over countless lifetimes, rather than expecting to reach the ultimate learning goal (spiritual enlightenment) in this current lifetime. Suffering experienced in this lifetime may have developed due to negative actions in previous lifetimes, and learning that occurs in this life may carry over into the next.

In the Buddhist framework, the core or "essence" of humanity is loving kindness. As explained by the Dalai Lama, focus must always return to this fundamental human quality:

> At the highest level, we cannot find an absolute existence for that which we call reality. Now on a more general basis, I often say that the true essence of humankind is kindness. There are other qualities which come from education or knowledge, but it is essential, if one wishes to be a genuine human being and impart satisfying meaning to one's existence, to have a good heart. (1996, p. 50)

Although this essence of kindness is described as innately existing within all individuals, it is manifested in dialogic relations with others. Kindness, to be revealed, exercised, understood, and developed, must be expressed and practiced in relationship, whether through direct contact or through thoughts and motivations. There must be a recipient outside ourselves, and therefore kindness is dialogical.

At the most profound level of ultimate Buddha-like understanding and clarity of insight, there is no individual "self" to which a personal identity could be attached. Even the belief in the existence of physical bodies is, at the level of ultimate wisdom, considered to be an illusion. But, it is also clearly acknowledged and understood that we live our day-to-day lives in the "conventional reality" of mundane human existence, carrying with us our thoughts, emotions, physical bodies, and associated needs that must be identified, addressed, and attended to. It is important to make sense of personal identities and attachments that are lived and practiced in daily life, in order to transcend the mundane and come to deeper understandings of existence.

In addition to the core human attribute of kindness, other human qualities, understandings, and imaginings are deemed to be arrived at dialogically, within community, and through active physical, intellectual, and emotional engagement with other people, ideas, words, and experiences. Conventional understanding is arrived at through study and purposeful interaction with other people and ideas, deepened and internalized through internal personal contemplation.  Analogous to Bakhtin's (1981) notion of coming to understandings through engagement with authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse (as detailed in section 3.1.3), traditional Tibetan practices of teaching and learning acknowledge that authoritative voice, as well as personal inner contemplation, are inherent within the process of internalizing understandings, making the learning one's own (Department of Education [1], 2004).

Beliefs about the nature of life, learning, and relationships, are represented in the design and implementation of the Tibetan school system, as well as the community's response to authoritative discourse, and to the experience of diaspora. The Tibetan response to diaspora parallels patterns of other diasporic cases (discussed previously in section 3.1.2) although some nuances and methods used to forward the struggle reflect specific characteristics of the Tibetan case, including their ancient and recent history, and religious philosophies.

Current processes of globalization, involving rapid flows of people, material, and symbols, have shifted the nature of diasporic imaginings and potential for various futures. In the next section, concepts and phenomena

associated with globalization, including intersections of identity and globalization processes, are introduced, with an exploration of the influence of globalization on the nature and scope of the Tibetan struggle.

## 3.2 Section II – Global Flows and Geopolitics

Global processes and interrelationships factor importantly in the Tibetan diaspora's struggle and community building efforts. Individual and community relations in diasporic contexts are in constant interplay with the global. Contexts and forces outside the community's symbolic boundaries may impinge and constrain, and/or provide opportunities for agency and movement in the direction of individual and group goals. This section is organized into four subsections, specified below, each addressing an aspect of globalization salient to the Tibetan case.

*Subsection 3.2.1* explores *phases of globalization* that parallel important periods of political and social change in Tibetan society. Globalization phases proposed by Scholte (2000) are referenced, with further insights gleaned from Robertson (1995) and Savage et al. (2005). Juxtapositioning and cross-referencing pivotal moments in the Tibetan political and diasporic experience with those of the larger world illuminates some of the conditions implicated in producing distinct perspectives amongst the different generational groups subsequently outlined in the interview data.

*3.2.2* explores Scholte's (2000) notion of *contemporary globalization as supraterritoriality* as it relates to diasporic flows of people and symbols. Rather

than geography, this exploration focuses on the symbols that serve to connect people and unite them in community when, as in cases of forced diaspora such as the Tibetan, their homeland is no longer available to them. Within this framework, traditional boundaries are transcended, and global flows take place in new ways, at increased rates. Also within this section Appadurai's (1996) notion of "scapes" as mechanisms for flows is introduced and connected to ideas of Giddens (1995), Holland and Lave (2000), and Savage et al. (2005).

3.2.3 explores *social and cultural production* and *change* associated with globalization processes. Croucher (2004) notes political complexities that impact social life, and Holland and Lave (2000) connect historical subjectivities to personal and communal lived processes. Also referenced in relation to cultural hybridization are Appadurai (1996), Barber (1992), Hannerz (1990), Holland et al. (1998), and Pieterse (1994). In these contexts of social and cultural change associated with globalization, new forms of interaction develop amongst geographically dispersed people, such as Tibetans who are adjusting to new lives in India and Nepal, including reinventions of the notion of "local" beyond geographical boundaries.

3.2.4 explores complexities that emerge in relation to the concept of "local" in globalized contexts, whereby the local must be defined in psychological and symbolic ways rather than as physical territory. Local is constructed as a state of mind, arrived at through processes of *"boundary definition"* Savage et al. (2005). Other theorists brought into the discussion include Appadurai (1996), Beck

(2002), Giddens (1995), Holland and Lave (2000), Lash and Urry (1994), Massey (1993; 1994), Robertson (1995), and Thrift (1993).

Also vital to the Tibetan case are considerations of the impacts, influences, constraints, and possibilities associated with political factors. Tibetans struggle to survive physically in diaspora as politically stateless residents of India and Nepal, and engage with global political processes in the emancipation struggle in relation to the Chinese government. *Subsection 3.2.5* looks at Croucher's (2004) work in *connecting political factors* to social complexities. The role of the nation state is critiqued in relation to diasporic contexts. In contrast to nation state, the nature of nationalistic attachments are explored (Anderson, 1991; Connor, 1978; Gellner, 1983; Hall, 1996). Tibetan identities emerging in opposition to China's characterization of minorities is introduced by Gladney (1994), and Savage et al.'s (2005) notion of "elective belonging" to identity in global contexts are explored.

### 3.2.1   Globalization – Phases Relevant to the Tibetan Case

The term "globalization" has been applied to a vast and diverse array of situations, contexts, and processes, and has come so much into common usage as to have attained the status of buzzword (Scholte, 2000). Meanings of the term vary depending on the perspectives and goals of the speaker. This takes place at the level of international political and corporate relations, as well as in microcosms of social and economic relations, in towns, villages, and neighbourhoods. From various points of view, globalization has been glorified,

vilified, embraced, or grudgingly accepted as a fact of contemporary existence.

Yet, a clear and specific definition of globalization remains elusive.

Scholte (2000) attempts clarification by distinguishing three phases that

shape the macro stages of globalization. He cautions that his analysis is directed

towards social life on a large scale rather than the local and personal.

> we are referring here to questions of *macro* social space, that is,
> relating to the geographical setting of larger collective life: districts,
> countries, etc. Social space also has *micro* aspects that lie within a
> person's realm of direct sensory experience, such as the built
> environment. However, micro spaces are not of immediate concern
> to a discussion of globalization (Scholte, 2000, p. 46).

While not assuming that this paradigm is relevant in all diasporic contexts,

Scholte's (2000) phases are particularly apt in relation to the Tibetan case,

serving to help make sense of the micro-level experiences of groups and

individuals.

Scholte (2000) defines Phase One of globalization as the *"emergence of a*

*global imagination"* (p. 23). According to Scholte (2000), this phase has no exact

starting point, but came to fruition after a long gestation period, up to the 18th

century. In the Tibetan case, during this period cultural and material exchange

between Tibetan regions and the larger world were largely confined to Asia

(Dhondup, 1984; Shakya, 1999). The few European travellers and missionaries

who ventured into the region brought stories home that fuelled the Western

imagination (Buckley, 2008), but their impact on Tibetan people and Tibetan way

of life was minimal (Bell, 1992). The European "global imagination" included

Tibet, but the Tibetan imagination, as far as we can tell, remained primarily insular.

Phase Two, *"incipient globalization"*, dating from the late 1850s to the 1950s, is characterized by the emergence and consolidation of communications technologies, global markets, and some globality in finance and organization (Scholte, 2000). Substantial turmoil and change in Tibet's foreign relations took place during and after the reign of the 13th Dalai Lama, who lived from 1876 to1933 (Gelek, 1982; Shakya, 1999), coinciding with Scholte's (2000) "incipient globalization" phase. During this period, Tibet experienced periods of internal political turmoil, instances of foreign encroachment on its territory, negotiation of treaties with other states, and periods of relative political stability (Bell, 1998; Gelek, 1982; Shakya, 1999). The 13th Dalai Lama's efforts to strengthen the Tibetan government's position on the global stage, including his formal declaration in 1913 of Tibet's status as an independent political state, were in response to change globally, and in anticipation of possible future impingements and pressures from the outside world (Bell, 1998; Dalai Lama, 1962; Gelek, 1982).

Individual and societal changes had taken place in Tibet over the centuries, but without motorized vehicles, roads, radios, or telephones, the mechanisms for propelling change were slow, as was change itself (Bell, 1992). Geography and topography had contributed to sustaining Tibet's self-imposed political and social isolation (Bell, 1992). In 1949, still in the era of Scholte's (2000) "incipient globalization" phase, but after the death of the 13th Dalai Lama,

China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) began its military invasion into Eastern

Tibet (Avedon, 1986). Tibet's political leader, the 14th Dalai Lama was then 14

years old.

The influx of Chinese from 1949 onward, first with the military invasion and

later with migrant workers and settlers, brought cultures, technologies, and

political and social forces, that had not previously had substantial influence on

day to day life (Norbu, 1987). With the introduction of communication and

transportation technologies that facilitated the breaching of Tibet's physical

geographical boundaries, encounters with the outside world took on new forms,

and took place at an accelerated rate (Shakya, 1999). From 1959 onward, exile

forced those who left Tibet into entirely new material and social contexts (Subba,

1990). Politically, socially, economically, and spiritually, Tibet as a nation of

people was forced into new relations and relationships with itself, and with the

world (Dalai Lama, 1962). Decades after the exodus, the interviewees in this

study made frequent reference to reverberations of the changes that occurred at

that time, and impacts within their families and communities.

The period since 1959, when the first wave of refugees left Tibet,

coincides with the increased pace and volume of global interactions that Scholte

(2000) terms a "supraterritorial phenomena". This 3rd phase of globalization, from

1960 until present, is characterized by "far and away the greatest increase in the

number, variety, intensity, institutionalization, awareness and impact of

supraterritorial phenomena" (Scholte, 2000, p. 74). Robertson (1995) describes

the same period as the "Uncertainty Phase" of globalization. During this time

period there has been rapid increase in the number of global institutions and movements, growing interest in world civil society, consolidation of global media systems, the end of the "Cold War", the spread of nuclear weapons, and (in Robertson's view) an increase in problems related to multiculturality in societies around the world. It is within this supraterritorial era that the subjects of this study were born and raised, and the education system that serves the diaspora came into being.

Within Tibet, from 1959 to the late 1970s China's "bamboo curtain" effectively confined Tibetans physically and socially, separating them from the outside world.  Travel was restricted, and Tibetans in diaspora could not easily communicate with relatives and friends inside Tibet (Avedon, 1984). Changes in Chinese government policy in the late 1970s and early 1980s introduced some relaxations of state controls, including some easing of Chinese government regulations that had restricted movement of people. However, many restrictive policies and practices remained, and discontent reached crisis levels that culminated in public protests and government crackdown in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Shakya, 1999). Four of the interviewees in this study fled Tibet in this era and enrolled in Tibetan schools in India, three as children smuggled out of Tibet by family, and one as an adult seeking political asylum.

As it relates to the invasion, occupation, and colonization of Tibet, widespread political, economic, technological, and social change associated with contemporary globalization has had, from the perspective of Tibetan authorities, catastrophic impacts on Tibetan society. The specific forms and mechanisms that

propelled change in Tibet (invasion and occupation of their country) were not the result of choices that Tibetans made, but adapting to change was a necessity of survival. On-going changes locally and globally have elicited a variety of responses, reactions, and acts of agency from Tibetan individuals and the collective, but forces and conditions external to their direct control limit the degrees of choice and power they can exercise.

Phenomena associated with supraterritoriality (explored in more detail in the following section) have impacted Tibetan society, facilitating the advancement of colonialism in Tibet (e.g. through use of rapid transportation systems, media, communications, and surveillance technologies), and has been utilized strategically by Tibetans in advancing their struggle (e.g. media and communications technologies utilized to gather information from within Tibet, and share information amongst people outside China). The increase in the pace, volume, diversity, and complexity of exchange of people and information associated with Tibet, including wider access to a variety of modes of long-distance communication, opened space for new visions and interpretations of national identity, new forms of self-imaging and representation to others, and re-envisioning of potential futures for individuals and the collective (High Peaks Pure Earth, 2010; Piltz, 2006).

### 3.2.2  Supraterritoriality – Transcending Boundaries

Scholte (2000) argues that current globalization processes should be characterized as "the rise of supraterritoriality" because "this conception requires us fundamentally to rethink some of our assumptions about social relations,

particularly in relation to space" (p. 42). Beyond providing a historical framework useful to this case, Scholte (2000) points out a key distinction between global relations and international relations: "Whereas international relations are *inter*terrritorial relations, global relations are *supra*territorial relations. International relations are *cross*-border exchanges *over* distance, while global relations are *trans*-border exchanges *without* distance" (p. 49). This perspective is well suited to explorations of identity and diaspora, where social relations rather than geographic proximity or geopolitical borders define community.

In a caution against the idea of globalization as universality, Scholte (2000) differentiates the two, referring to globalization as phenomena that transcend material and territorial boundaries that he associates with the notion of the Universal. He explains that, "Universality says something about territorial extent, whereas globality says something about space-time relations" (p. 50). This is a significant distinction, as "globality marks a distinct kind of space-time compression, and one that is mostly new to contemporary history" (Scholte, 2000, p. 48). Globalization processes transcend material boundaries such that virtual spaces and imaginations are activated and engaged in new ways. This notion echo's Harvey's (1990) observation that: "we have been experiencing, these last two decades, an intense phase of time-space compression that has had a disorienting and disruptive impact on political-economic practices, the balances of class power, as well as upon cultural and social life" (p. 284). Scholte's (2000) theoretical approach shifts the emphasis from physical territory and geopolitical boundaries to contexts defined by "growth of 'supraterritorial'

relations between people", and "refers to a far-reaching change in the nature of social space" (Scholte, 2000, p. 46).

Regarding physical territory, Scholte (2000) clarifies his stance with a nuanced position that has resonance for diaspora, especially in cases such as the Tibetan where there is a hope of return to geographic homeland: "while the spread of supraterritoriality means that some aspects of social space are no longer reducible to territorial geography, it by no means follows that territoriality has become irrelevant" (Scholte, 2000, p. 42). He does not discount the continued importance of territory, rather, he proposes the notion of '*relative* deterritorialization': "Territory still matters in the contemporary globalizing world …globalization (as an increasing transcendence of territorial space) can also be linked to processes of *reterritorialization* such as localization and regionalization" (Scholte, 2000, p. 42). The relative importance of physical territory has shifted: "Although … territory still matters very much in our globalizing world, it no longer constitutes the whole of our geography" (Scholte, 2000, p. 46). People may claim emotional and historical attachment to physical locales, and simultaneously identify with socially and symbolically (rather than geographically) defined communities. This has implications regarding how people perceive their relationships to physical territory and state governments, leading to new considerations of the concept of "belonging", in legal, psychological, and symbolic senses. In concert with shifts in the salience of physical territory, changes in social relations are under production within current globalization processes. Scholte (2000) argues that spatial and social relations are deeply

interconnected, whereby changes to societies' geographic positioning are likely to be connected to its' culture, ecology, economics, politics and social psychology (p. 46).

Appadurai's (1996) notion of "scapes" provides a useful framework for understanding processes by which cultural information and understandings traverse space and time, and influence the organization of imagination in regard to identity and belonging. He divides global cultural flows into five "scapes" that are in disjuncture from one another i.e. they don't necessarily move together at the same pace. They are: ethnoscapes (movement of people), mediascapes (media technologies and images), technoscapes (technologies), financescapes (financial and investment flows), and ideoscapes (flows of political ideologies and narratives). Complexities of globalizing processes account for the tensions between the flows, such as discontinuity between physical movements of people and shifts in their internalized ideologies and understandings. Some people may physically move great distances, yet struggle to adjust to social constructs already in place in their new locale. Alternatively, while remaining physically at their original locale, others may through exchange of ideas via mediascapes, embody ideological beliefs that appear new to the region. Supraterritoriality allows for complex and multidirectional combinations of flows, connected to complex processes of social change, in addition to material change.

At the most basic level, diaspora concerns the flow of people (ethnoscapes), but other scapes are involved in various ways. For example, communications media, which Giddens (1995) characterizes as a catalyst for

rapid change that is "the leading influence in the globalization of society over the past 20 to 30 years" (p. 10), can traverse space with much more ease and speed than people. When people physically move, whether across town, across the country, or around the globe, they do not erase their past from their memories, lives, and imaginations (Holland and Lave, 2000). Through use of communications technologies that allow ideas, images, and finances to cross space and state borders with far greater ease than previously, people are better able to retain lived connections to geographically dispersed others, shifting the dynamics of diasporic community relations. In the Tibetan case, where political and socioeconomic contexts often constitute barriers, communications technologies have opened access to broader relations with the world beyond their lived locales (although not all have access).

The task of pinpointing the mechanisms enabling and driving the "scapes" covers broad territory, but the response of people to these flows, and their agency in driving them forward or restricting flow, is central to questions of power and identity, including emotional attachment to people, ideas, and territorial locales. The nature of people's involvement in "scapes" is of central importance to their senses of belonging (Savage et al., 2005). Interview data reveals ways Tibetan educators in this study have responded to supraterritorial processes.

### 3.2.3  Social and Cultural Production and Change

The dialogic interplay between global factors, relations, local practices, and historical subjectivities, are what Holland and Lave (2000) refer to as "a living edge to change" (p. 20). By exploring the lived complexities at this edge we may

gain new insights into the past, contexts by which to make sense of the present, and potential futures may come into clearer focus: "To look at enduring struggles and local contentious practice as they mutually inform each other offers one way to trace processes by which present efforts to give birth to the past shape and obtain advantages for some futures over others" (Holland and Lave, 2000, p. 28). Supraterritorial processes impact the nature of change, and in the case of the Tibetan diaspora, additional influences and pressures stem from a political context that includes the fear of cultural genocide within Tibet, and fear of assimilation into other cultures in diaspora (Phuntsog, 1994). As reflected in interview data, the official and social paradigm is far more complex than simply seeking cultural preservation through attempts to recreate or relive past cultural forms.

With the rapid social change that is associated with globalization, concern is often raised in relation to whether globalization is replacing cultural pluralism and local diversity with mass, homogenized world culture (Appadurai, 1990; Barber, 1992). Globally, concerns that Western (or, more specifically, U.S.) economic and political dominance are leading towards a "McWorld" (Barber, 1992) have been seriously considered, but others argue that a more complex process appears to be materializing:

> The debate arises over whether the outcome of this interchange is the convergence and uniformity of a Western-imposed and commodity-driven world culture, or, a more dialectic, multilateral, reflexive process of negotiating the local meaning and significance of global cultural symbols (Croucher, 2004, p. 24).

In Pieterse's (1994) view, globalization should be recognized as a process of "hybridization" that gives rise to "translocal mélange cultures" (p. 161). Rather than being seen as a one-dimensional process of homogenization, globalization should be understood as fluid, indeterminant, open-ended, and multidimensional. The term *hybridization* may more accurately describe the process whereby: "when different cultures interact over an extended time period, even if on unequal terms, what typically emerges are new cultural forms that are not merely derived from one or the other culture" (Hannerz, 1990, cited in, Croucher, 2004, p. 27). Societies may experience change that on some levels appears to be "Americanization", but in actuality the process is "a far more complex fusion, incorporation, and reinterpretation of cultural symbols" (Croucher, 2004, p. 27). Hybridization processes may involve complex interactions including various forms of resistance, appropriation, and creativity through which people and groups claim proactive agency over change processes. This approach is relevant in the Tibetan case, where there have been conscious efforts in official policy and in lived practice to avoid assimilation into the host society or other global cultures, while at the same time steps have been taken to accept, embrace, and utilize practices of other cultures that are deemed to have practical currency in relation to the community struggle (Department of Education [1], 2004).

The re-envisioning of space and social relations that has taken place in contexts of supraterritoriality has shifted the parameters around which the notion "local" is imagined and construed. Mechanisms by which local relations take

shape and boundaries defining "local" spaces and understandings are explored in the next section.

### 3.2.4 Boundary Definition: "Local" as a State of Mind

Some theorists in the 1980s and 1990s predicted that the shift away from the geographically defined "local", and increased global flows, would reduce face-to-face interactions, and that people would define salient relationships through media rather than face-to-face contacts (Giddens, 1995). Consequently, people's sense of identification associated with place would diminish. Indeed, change has occurred, but perhaps in more complex and multi-layered ways than previously predicted.

Savage et al. (2005) point out that over the past two centuries numerous sociologists have predicted of the demise of the "local", yet people's attachment to place appears to persist (p. 1). Rather than erasing the local, considerations of globality are given meaning through reference to the local, and globalization may draw into clearer focus the notion of local as an essential component of the whole. However, "local" as a concept can no longer be limited to geographic proximity. Rapid and efficient forms of communication mean that widely geographically dispersed diasporic communities can create "local" spaces in a virtual sense, without the necessity of close physical proximity. This notion is echoed in Appadurai's (1996) reference to emerging forms of complexities in the production of locality, "destabilized by human motion, and displaced by the formation of new kinds of virtual neighbourhoods" (p. 198). It appears that potential has widened for more multifaceted "locals" to be imagined, and for

individuals to position themselves or be positioned in a variety of physical,

psychological, emotional, and symbolic spaces. A shift in diasporic relations was

noted by Savage et al. (2005) in their study of diasporic groups in England,

where global communications appeared to facilitate the emergence of virtual

"locals", and gave rise to new identification processes and reinforcement of

longer term spatial relationships (p. 204). Rather than producing "generic 'global'

identities", diasporic identities appeared to be fostered in new ways (Savage et

al., 2005, p. 204).

Robertson (1995) frequently used term "glocalization" to describe the

dialectic process through which local and global interact, where "globalization

has involved the reconstruction of 'home', 'community', and 'locality'" (p. 30). This

is particularly poignant in diasporic contexts in which people consider themselves

to be interconnected with other members of the community who physically reside

in multiple, widely dispersed nation states and regions, none of which is the

geographic location they call "homeland". That the relationship between the local

and the global is dialectic, highly complex, and that the two are inextricability

intertwined, is now generally accepted by globalization theorists. As Beck (2002)

describes it, "Globalization is a non-linear, dialectic process in which the global

and the local do not exist as cultural polarities but as a combined and mutually

implicating principle" (p. 17). And, Brah (2002) points out that a new subjectivity

in social relations is emerging in connection to globalization and globality, that

"invokes commonality and difference as relational configurations instead of

oppositions" (p. 44), manifesting in practices of "recognition of another's 'difference' without 'Othering'" (p. 44).

### 3.2.5 Political Factors

The Tibetan diaspora's existence and persistence is due to international political factors, beginning with the military invasion and occupation of Tibet that forced the exodus in 1959. People continue to flee Tibet due to on-going political challenges, and those already in exile cannot easily gain permission from the Chinese government to return to their homeland. In this case, the term political is broadly construed, in line with Croucher's (2004) analysis that it "can be interpreted broadly and somewhat loosely to encompass an array of circumstances that range from state relations to trans-state organizations and networks" (p. 17). Political factors tend to influence types, forms, speed, direction, nature, and relative freedom (or constraint) of flows of economic, technological, human, cultural, and other resources. For example, policies and practices of the governments of the host and other countries determine access to residence permits and travel documents, work permits, bank accounts, and ability to buy land, own a business, or go to school.

Political factors and relations under consideration, in subsections here, include the *nation state* (Croucher, 2004), *nationalistic attachments* (Anderson, 1991; Connor, 1978; Croucher, 2004; Gellner, 1983; Hall, 1996), *identities formed in opposition* to political forces (Croucher, 2004; Gladney, 1994), and concepts of *"elective belonging"* (Croucher, 2004; Savage et al., 2005).

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**The Nation State**

Despite global contexts of supraterritoriality, nation-states still hold sway in

a variety of ways, acting as gatekeepers controlling flows:

> Globalization or global interconnectedness is intimately related to
> the nation-state form, and because this political formation has been
> predominant since the eighteenth century, much of what constitutes
> global interaction and exchange is mediated through or in some
> way shaped by states and the state system. (Croucher, 2004, p.
> 17)

In contemporary contexts, state powers and influences appear to be

strengthened in some ways and weakened in others. A variety of issues

connected to nation state systems are relevant to the Tibetan case, from

emotional attachment to the Tibetan state, to lived complexities associated with

ensuring their material and social survival despite being non-citizens of the nation

states they live within (India and Nepal, in the case of this study). Responses of

governments and other agencies worldwide affect Tibetans materially, and may

impact their senses of hope (or lack of hope), including their perceptions of the

range of imagined and imaginable possibilities for a collective future.

Increased inter-state mobility resulting from improved transportation

systems and easing of restrictions to movement appears to have, for some

people, reduced exclusive reliance on legal citizenship in providing emotional

senses of belonging. However, this is not the case for all, in particular, people

who feel that they need the forms of protection that citizenship in a state can

confer. Most Tibetans in India and Nepal do not have citizenship of any country,

and many do not have legal residence status for the country in which they live

(refer to chapter 2.1), and thus they do not have the right to demand or expect support or protection from the host government.

Although the Tibetan-run state system ceased to function in post-invasion Tibet, in diaspora a sense of nationhood persists, connected to the Government-in-exile. Since the 1600s, when the 5th Dalai Lama was the first of the Dalai Lama lineage to serve as both spiritual and political leader of Tibet, many Tibetans have viewed their government as intimately connected to the Dalai Lama himself, and thus is embodied within him (Craig, 1997). In recent years the current Dalai Lama, viewed in Tibetan tradition as the 14th reincarnation of the deity of pure compassion, has distance himself from the regular workings of the TGIE, imploring the Tibetan populace to embrace the notion of democracy, including direct election of TGIE representatives (International Campaign for Tibet, 2011). Yet, the emotions associated with the historical connection between the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government persist for many Tibetans.

Croucher (2004) pointed to complexities at the intersection of global, nation state, and nationalism that are pertinent in situations such as the Tibetan, where attachment to nation appears to persist despite the loss of geographical territory that defined the physical boundaries of the state:

> aspects of contemporary globalization, whether in the form of
> international economic interdependence, technological
> advancement, or unprecedented human migration, create a context
> in which nationhood as a form of belonging persists and even
> flourishes. States that find their autonomy and sovereignty under
> siege turn, in defence, to their role as representatives and
> defenders of nations. Individuals and groups who inhabit a
> particular state view membership in that state as a refuge from
> global turbulence and nationhood as a mechanism for clarifying the

boundaries of who belongs to the political community and who does not. (Croucher, 2004, p.110)

Despite the loss of political sovereignty over territory, emotional attachment to the Tibetan state appears to persist in diaspora, with the "Green Book" (refer to subsection 2.1.3) serving as a material symbol of national allegiance. Rather than connecting emotional attachment to the nation state in which they live, nationalistic attachments connect to diaspora. The next section explores the nature and currency of nationalism.

**Nationalistic Attachments**

The Tibetan struggle is anchored to identification with nation-ness. If Tibetan people did not view their community as a "nation", there would be no need to struggle for preservation of national identity or for self-determination in a geographic homeland. The importance of this phenomenon is reflected in Anderson's (1991) seminal work on nations as "imagined communities" in which he places nation-ness as, "the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time" (p. 3). The nation is "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (p. 6). The nation is imagined because the members "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 1991, p. 6).

States are the major political subdivisions of the world and are readily identifiable through quantitative criteria (Connor, 1978). Nations, on the other hand, have an intangible essence and must be conceptualized through

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subjective or psychological criteria. The terms "state" and "nation" are often, imprecisely, used interchangeably, but they should not be considered to be congruent. As Connor (1978) explains, "many groups who believe themselves to be a nation do not have a state and/or are spread across different states; and many states contain within them more than one nation" (for example, Canada's First Nations, Uyghurs who, like Tibetans, identify as an occupied nation, and members of the "Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization"). There may be, in the collective imagination of those who consider themselves a nation, senses of nationhood attached to the political state in which they live, but this is not necessarily the case. Alternatively, people may consider their historical and emotional nation-ness as distinct from their current legal citizenship, or deny the legitimacy of the state that claims them as citizens. In the Tibetan case, the Chinese government labels Tibetans as ethnic minorities who are citizens of China, yet many Tibetans claim that China is illegally occupying their country and has no legal right to the land or historical claim to the people.

A conundrum faced by nationalist movements, including Tibetan, is that although "National culture seeks to unify them into one cultural identity, to represent them all as belonging to the same great national family" (Hall, 1996, p. 616), constructions of national identity cannot erase individual differences of its members, including identity markers related to race, class, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or other factors. In the Tibetan context, despite individual differences, and diversity of spoken dialects and cultural practices amongst people with regional affiliations, a nationalist sentiment has persisted largely

through attachment to symbols such as Tibetan language and the Dalai Lama (Nowak, 1984).

Emotional sentiments and historical attachments that define nationalism are not necessarily connected to state systems, yet many states have attempted to induce or create nationalistic sentiments in their citizens. Nation-ness, from the point of view of its utility, can "provide and/or consist of a potent sense of community and shared consciousness that typically attaches to and serves the interests of a given polity" (Croucher, 2004, p. 84). Nationhood has a more subjective and psychological nature than statehood, and "nations must be understood by reference to a 'sentiment of solidarity'" (Croucher, 2004, p. 86). Boundary definition around nation-ness in the Tibetan case shares characteristics described by Croucher (2004) that occur within other national struggles, including "that this sense of community often reaches far back in historical memory and relies heavily on symbols and myth; that governing elites play a central role in shaping the nation; and that the forging of a national "Us" typically involves differentiation from a "Them""(Croucher, 2004, p. 84).

Tensions can arise in the "us/them" paradigm, particularly when power relations are central and pressing. In cases such as the Tibetan, on-going occupation of their homeland and fears of cultural genocide within Tibet (Phuntsog, 1994) are connected to identities shaped in contexts of resistance. The notion of identities formed in opposition is outlined in the following sub-section.

**Identities Formed in Opposition**

As important as identification and belonging appear to be, "not belonging" is also an important identifier in the process of establishing boundaries of personal and national identity. As Croucher (2004) points out, the social construction of boundaries that include an "Us" takes place in relation to excluded "Others". Boundaries may be social, cultural, political, or economic in nature, and range in importance depending on the context and the individual. Personal self-definitions do not necessarily overlap or intersect with the ways in which others represent or mythologize individuals or groups, thus, new forms of identity and representation may be constructed in opposition.

In keeping with the notion that recorded and imagined histories are subjective, Lopez (1998) and Norbu (2001) point out that perspectives on Tibetan history, social life, and belief systems, differ in sometimes radical and sometimes subtle ways, depending on the tellers. Public discourses on Tibet and Tibetan-ness include individuals' tales of lives lived, official Chinese government voices, official Tibetan Government-in-exile representations, Buddhist and other religious scholarship, Western, Chinese or Tibetan academic representations, traditional oral storytellers, travellers stories, and more.

Gladney (1994) explores representations of minority ethnic groups (i.e. non-Han) within China as portrayed through government sanctioned, authoritative discourse. In that context, portrayals of minorities are constructed such that the Han majority identity is cast in a positive light, in contrast to minorities who are often characterized as backwards: "Their 'primitivity' contrasts

with supposed Han 'modernity' " (Gladney, 1994, p. 102). Han are depicted as providing paternalistic guidance to help bring the "backward" minorities forward into the civilized, materialistic era. The minority groups themselves do not have a say in the framing of this official discourse.

Prior to the 1980s, this form of discourse took place primarily within China's geopolitical borders, but is now more widely disseminated outside. Gladney (1994) contends that "Successful marketing of these images in the global capitalist economy perpetuates minority/majority discourses in China and abroad" (p. 117), and from the point of view of Chinese authorities is necessary for construction of nationalist identities within China:

> the objectified portrayal of minorities as exoticized, and even eroticized, is essential to the construction of the Han Chinese majority, the very formulation of the Chinese "nation" itself. In other words, the representation of the minorities in such colorful, romanticized fashion has more to do with constructing a majority discourse, than it does with the minorities themselves. (Gladney, 1994, p. 94)

Although minorities may possess little official power to direct the language and tone of the public discourse that appears to essentialize and exoticise them, Gladney (1994) argues that they do activate their agency when and where possible. Echoing post-structuralists such Holland et al. (1998), he says:

> Minorities, too, by allowing the objectivizing gaze of the state-sponsored media, establish their identity and right to a voice in their own affairs, appropriating and turning, wherever possible, these objectivizing moves to their own benefit. In this way, the maintenance and assertion of minority "culture", no matter how exoticized or contrived, may be seen as a form of resistance. (Gladney, 1994, p. 117)

People who consider themselves to be members of ethnic groups that the

Chinese government claims as its minorities have the potential, through words,

deeds, and images, to resist, contest, and challenge China's official discourse.

Assertions of Tibetan nationalism may be viewed in this light. This form of

identification is psychological and symbolic, rather than legally recognized,

reflecting the notion of "elective belonging" (Savage et al, 2005) described in the

next section.

**Elective Belonging**

Geographic localities or legally recognized forms of belonging (such as

legal citizenship) do not necessarily define or limit notions individuals may hold of

their own senses of belonging or not belonging. When people move, either by

choice or in contexts whereby they feel they have no choice (such as forced

diaspora), the journey itself, as well as their prior history and their life in the new

location, become woven into their story of self and connectedness to others.

Savage et al. (2005) use the term "elective belonging" (p. x) to describe the

nature of local attachments in a globalized world. The notion refers to:

> articulated senses of spatial attachments, social position, and forms
> of connectivity to other places. Belonging is not to a fixed
> community, with the implication of closed boundaries, but is more
> fluid, seeing places as sites for performing identities. Individuals
> attach their own biography to their 'chosen' residential location, so
> that they tell stories that indicate how their arrival and subsequent
> settlement is appropriate to their sense of themselves. (Savage et
> al, 2005, p. 29)

Globalization, including global flow of people, may have increased rather

than diminished the importance of identity and community, and may have

resulted in clearer illumination of the voluntary and imagined nature of identification.

> the growing number and sophistication of various transnational movements and organizations, … part of an emerging global civil society, attests to the desire and the capacity of individuals and groups to negotiate new forms of belonging – many of which are disconnected from more familiar attachments to territory, geography, or polity. The literature on globalization points to a world in flux, and the politics of belonging is a central part of that flux. (Croucher, 2004, p. 35)

This carries poignancy in the case of Tibetan diaspora, where authorities discourage deep emotional attachment to local geography in host country (India and Nepal, in the case of this study), with primacy given to Tibetan homeland and symbolic non-material markers of communal identity.

Schools are the sites, and education is the vehicle by which authorities and community members attempt to encourage in youth the establishment of Tibetan identities, nationalistic attachment, and strategies for living well in community and in the world. The following section explores mechanisms by which education might be used as vehicle and location for individual self-authoring and community empowerment.

## 3.3  Section III – Education for Identity and Emancipation

Tibetan authorities hope that by schooling Tibetan children together rather than sending them to pre-existing schools in the host countries, youth will identify as Tibetan and maintain community affiliations, including building feelings of connectedness to the enduring struggle. This section is presented in three

subsections, each exploring aspects of education processes that appear highly relevant to this case.

Subsection 3.3.1, *Schooling Identity: The Individual Within Community*, relates to the Tibetan Department of Education's goal of developing within youth identities that connect them to Tibetan social spaces, emotional attachments, and values. Pinar's (2006) perspectives on the interrelationships between identity, community, and scholarship, and Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger's (1998) notion of "communities of practice", connect identity processes with active engagement in social worlds in schools. Taubman's (1993) notion that activation of identity through participation in community is described as echoing Tibetan authoritative discourse (Dalai Lama, 1996). Social constructivism (Higgs, in Byrne-Armstrong et al., 2001) is compared with Buddhist discourse (Dalai Lama, 2008; Rinpoche, 1992).

The second part of this section, *Power and Pedagogy (3.3.2)* addresses issues of power in connection with the DoE's goal of empowering children to grow to be self-sufficient adults who can live well in diaspora or in Tibet, and who can forward the Tibetan struggle through diplomacy in global networks. Issues connected to global change are introduced (Matus & McCarthy, 2003; Scholte, 2000; Smith, 2003), as are Tibetan responses in the realm of education (Department of Education [1], 2004; Phuntsog, 1994; Rigzin, 2003). I review Paolo Freire's (1996, 2000) work on emancipatory pedagogy, relating it to Tibetan cultural perspectives (Dalai Lama, 2000), and I reference critical

pedagogy in relation to the importance of local context (Cho, 2006; Giroux, 1996; Greene, 1996).

The final subsection, *Local Contexts, Local Pedagogy (3.3.3),* explores Tibetan authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 1981) on human nature and education (Dalai Lama, 1996, 2000, 2008; Department of Education [1], 2004); Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1995; Rinpoche, 1992). Notions of locally appropriate policy, pedagogy, and practice are considered.

### 3.3.1  Schooling Identity: The Individual Within Community

Identity construction is part of the process of negotiating our positioning within and outside social communities, marking ourselves as participants or non-participants, and helps us in the negotiation of meanings in relation to our experiences. Identity construction takes place in all realms of life, yet schooling is of particular interest in the context of this study because schools are heavily utilized as locales where Tibetan authorities hope construction of particular identities and community affiliations will take place. The Tibetan Department of Education's aim to facilitate the development of personal, internalized senses of attachment and identity as Tibetan community members (Department of Education [1], 2004) appears to be in alignment with curriculum theorist William Pinar's (2006) view, that the link between the individual and community is essential to scholarly learning processes, and to identity formation:

> Scholarship occurs, of course, as the solitary labor of the studying individual; it occurs, as well, intersubjectively, in collaborative investigation with colleagues and students. Thinking itself may be

said to occur in those "in-between" spaces between the individual and his or her community. (p. 167)

Ideally, for Pinar, reflexivity between individual and community is nurtured and facilitated within scholarly endeavours: "In this sense, scholarship becomes the medium through which one achieves individuality within community while contributing to formation of community through one's individuality" (Pinar, 2006, p. 171). His view is that the interdependence of individual and community should be structured in such a way that each supports the development of the other.

Lave and Wenger's (1991) and Wenger's (1998) notion of "communities of practice" describes mechanisms by which this reflexivity can take place. The Tibetan approach appears to be in alignment with Wenger's (1998) view that identities and modes of belonging are so fundamental to the workings of societies that they should be centrally addressed in educational contexts. Consideration of educational processes must extend well beyond the traditional focus on youth in academic institutions and socialization into a culture, but more fundamentally in terms of "rhythms by which communities and individuals continually renew themselves" (Wenger, 1998, p. 263). Issues of learning are implicated in connecting individuals to the practices of their communities, and for the refinement of community practices and generation of new members (Wenger, 1998, p. 7).

In Wenger's (1998) view, individuals and community are interdependent elements in the participatory processes of learning and meaning making (p. 6), suggesting a focus on the mutual constitution (Wenger, 1998, p. 146) of the

community and the person in a community of practice rather than considering the two in isolation from each other. Groups of individuals do not necessarily qualify as a community of practice simply for existing, rather, communities of practice are created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise (Wenger, 1998, p. 45). Wenger (1998) suggests that the three key dimensions that must be present amongst the participants are: mutual engagement; joint enterprise; and, shared repertoire (p. 73). Tibetan authorities perspectives on community building appear to have been in line with Wenger's when, in 1960, they made the decision to school Tibetan children together rather than disperse them amongst Indian schools. They hoped to create learning environments in which, through participation and shared practice, individual identities and Tibetan community affiliation might be co-produced.

The fluidity and creativity evoked in the "community of practice" (Wenger, 1998) paradigm makes the framework particularly apt for exploring experiences of diasporic groups such as Tibetans, struggling to create and sustain amongst its members senses of personal identification with a shared history, with each other in contemporary contexts, and with goals for a common future. It provides space for acknowledging individuality and diversity of community members, as well as stressing the importance of community processes, shared understandings, and practices. Individual and community are in continual processes of interaction, change, and identity construction and reformulations. Placing the emphasis on participation in communities shifts the focus of understanding of learning processes from isolated individuals studying and

learning within a school setting, to broader contexts in which they are positioned

historically, in the current moment, and in their anticipated, hoped-for future.

Taubman's (1993) analysis of the ways individual and group identities are

constructed draws the focus back to the individual and their relationality to the

group learning processes, implying that identity is, whether intentionally or not,

produced and driven forward through community interactions. The Tibetan

practice of working to influence community within educational processes mirrors

Taubman's (1993) view. Individuals are expected to take responsibility for

shaping their own mind, but support and guidance amongst and between

community members is also deemed to be essential: "Faith, of course, is

important but education is even more important. The entire community must be

responsible, not just the authorities. In order to build a healthy society, each

member of the society must share the responsibility" (Dalai Lama, 1996, p. 23).

The Buddhist view of human experience (Dalai Lama, 2008; Rinpoche,

1992) is consistent with aspects of social constructivism, where "reality exists

because we give meaning to it" (Higgs, in Byrne-Armstrong et al., 2001, p. 52).

Individual identities are created in social contexts, therefore imagined, but they

are also deemed practical necessities for human survival. Identity can serve as a

tool for fashioning "the good life", including providing ways and means for

individuals to be of service and benefit to others. Thus, personal identity and

identification with society are connected to personal and communal

empowerment. As will be seen in the next section, identity becomes the

foundation from which issues of power and empowerment may be explored and addressed.

### 3.3.2  Power and Pedagogy

In this study, attention is focused on how Tibetan diasporic educators use education to forward the community struggle and empower individuals to survive well in diaspora, despite personal and global contexts that might marginalize them. The ways in which education and schooling have been central to official (authoritative) community building processes in diaspora are also centred to this study, as are the responses of educators to the processes in which they are immersed.

Tibetans constitute a specific example, but phenomena associated with global change have stimulated reconfiguring of education processes in other contexts worldwide. Global change and supraterritorial contexts (Scholte, 2000) are associated with reconfigurations and rearticulations of cultural and social life that have "shifted the ground of commonly taken-for-granted stabilities of social constructs such as *culture, identity, race, nation, state*, and so forth" (Matus & McCarthy, 2003, p. 80). This shift in perceptions of culture, and identity, has had profound and far-reaching implications for educators, including those within the Tibetan system.

Smith (2003), reflecting on the impact of globalization on identity and questions of values, draws us back to fundamental questions in relation to education and humanity. He refers to new forms of identity crisis that have

become pressing issues, "ranging from eroding senses of national identity to unprecedented losses of indigenous languages and cultures under the homogenizing pressures of global capital" (p. 36). In the realm of curriculum theory and development, Smith (2003) contends that it is necessary to re-examine the value assumptions on which education processes and policies are based.

> Within the dominant mode of globalization theory, neo-liberal market theory, Herbert Spencer's classic question of the 19th century about what knowledge is most worth has been replaced by another: How much is knowledge worth?  In turn, another question is begged: Is knowledge to be the ultimate arbiter of worth? (p. 36)

Reactions of governments and educators to globalization have taken a variety of forms, from a focus on hoped-for opportunities that may result from economic globalization, to negative reactions, fearful of and working against the anticipated muting and disappearance of locally distinctive cultures. The response of Tibetan authorities to diaspora and global change has been to attempt to ensure group identification and reproduction of cultural identities and values through focused effort on the schooling of youth.

Separate schools and education processes were designed to combat "The on-going saga of blatant human and cultural genocide in Tibet" and to prepare the youth for their eventual return to a "free Tibet" (Phuntsog, 1994, p. i). Authoritative discourse emerging from the Tibetan Government-in-exile and community leaders emphasises the importance of deep emotional rooting in tradition (upholding the heritage), as well as embracing positive aspects of societal and global change (Department of Education [1], 2004). The political and

social necessity of creating a cohesive diasporic community was never in question. Schools are seen as essential components of that project, while at the same time addressing the realities of living and working within other societies such as Indian and Nepali (Rigzin, 2003)

In contrast to the apparently market-driven response to global change in countries such as the US, policy movements in the Tibetan diaspora's education system have turned the focus back to the (imagined) "traditional", based on culture and fundamental human values relating to relationships with self and others. Attempts have been made within policy and practice to resist some perceived dangers of globalization, while at the same time selectively privileging features of globalization that are deemed to be of currency now, and potentially in the future (e.g. telecommunications, news media, and transportation technologies). Individual freedom and empowerment are advocated within the BEP (Department of Education [1], 2004), but are also constrained within the context of a bounded value system, and the hope of authorities that youth will develop identities and allegiances deeply rooted within community.

## Empowering Community - Emancipatory Pedagogy

Freire's theories of emancipatory pedagogy are relevant, although the Tibetan case introduces social and political contexts beyond those addressed in Freire's initial work. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, first published in 1970, articulated theories regarding educational practices aimed towards emancipation of people from oppression through challenging state-based class structures. In the Tibetan case, contested power relations

manifest in areas well beyond the scope of "class", but Freire's notions are useful

nonetheless.

Freire envisioned an emancipatory process whose initial stage was transformation

of individuals. Through self-actualization and transformation of society, they were to

shift out of the position of being "oppressed", where oppressive forces were perpetrated

by other individuals, political structures, and institutionalized systems of overt or covert

exclusion. Ideally, it was hoped that the shift would position them within the fabric of

larger society in empowered, rather than oppressed, states of coexistence. As he

eloquently put it:

> [T]he oppressed are not "marginals," are not people living "outside"
> society. They have always been "inside"- inside the structure which
> made them "beings for others." The solution is not to "integrate"
> them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure
> so that they can become "beings for themselves". (Freire, 2000, p.
> 74)

Through reflection and dialogue, the oppressed were to come to realizations and

understandings of the nature of oppression. In this way they would develop the potential

to shift their personal self-imaginings, empowering them as activists for personal and

societal change. As in Taubman's (1993) view, individual and community, for Freire,

were intertwined in a reflexive process of meaning making and transformation. Similar to

the Buddhist approach, the starting place for reflection was within the individual, but the

ultimate goal was transformation of human society on global scales whereby the notions

of hierarchical power and class structures would dissolve. Students were to uncover the

truths of their own realities through a "problem-posing" methodology: "In problem-

posing education, people develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in

the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not

as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation" (Freire, 2000, p. 83).

It was essential to Freire's notion of empowerment and activism that the

people themselves direct the process. Others, even if well intentioned, would not

have the moral or ethical right to impose their ideals and assumptions. For him,

educators could and should enable the unfolding of situations in which their

students came to honest realizations of *their* "truths", but the educator must not

impose his or her own conceptions of those "truths":

> If people, as historical beings necessarily engaged with other
> people in a movement of inquiry, did not control that movement, it
> would be (and is) a violation of their humanity. Any situation in
> which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the
> process of inquiry is one of violence. (Freire, 2000, p. 85)

In Freire's pedagogy, the oppressed must engage in deep analysis of their state

of oppression as a precursor to activism. In order to begin to believe in

themselves, they must identify the oppressive conditions and the oppressor, and

take action in the liberation struggle (Freire, 2000). In the Tibetan case the notion

of "oppressor" may be multidimensional, requiring layered conceptualizations of

emancipatory pedagogy. Through the lens of the political struggle for the

emancipation of homeland, the political state of China is depicted as the

oppressor of the Tibetan people as a collective. Yet, Freire's pedagogy appears

to more specifically address individual and personal experiences and responses

to oppression. Tension may manifest within individuals making sense of

themselves, while embedded within and attached to group struggles where

identification with a collective is encouraged.

In Freire's (2000) pedagogy, dialogue was vital to processes of coming to awareness and transformation for both the oppressed and the oppressors. The oppressed must engage in dialogue because "Those who have been denied their primordial right to speak their word must first reclaim this right and prevent the continuation of this dehumanizing aggression" (Freire, 2000, p. 88). To engage in dialogue is to be involved in a process of being human, and in trusting others. Transformation must be a communal enterprise, founded on faith, love, and hope (Freire, 2000). By faith, Freire was referring to faith in humankinds' power to create and recreate, and in their vocation to be "more fully human". He viewed people's commitment and activism toward liberation as dialogical acts of love. Freire saw hope as essential to transformative processes because without hope, dialogue cannot exist. In hope, people reach out in "a search which can be carried out only in communion with others" (Freire, 2000, p. 91).

Freire's notion that faith, love, and hope are essential ingredients in the work of emancipation is compatible with the Tibetan Buddhist philosophical paradigm. From the perspective of Buddhist notions of cause and effect (karma), the oppressors are worthy of pity, compassion, and love (Dalai Lama, 2000) because their negative action of oppressing others is rooted in their misunderstandings. The inevitable result of the oppression is that the oppressors themselves will experience comparable or greater suffering in this lifetime or in future incarnations. Thus, from a Buddhist perspective, working to end oppression is loving in multiple ways. The emancipation of the oppressed would ease their struggle in this lifetime, and may also help the oppressors to achieve

happier future lives than they would inevitably experience (due to karma) if their

oppressive, ill-motivated, actions continued unabated. The struggle against

oppression is, at its' foundation, a struggle in hope for relief from current

suffering, and ultimately for the enlightenment of all.

Ideally, for Freire, emancipatory pedagogy within the classroom can help

students develop strategies for understanding themselves and their positioning in

the world, so that they will be better able to direct their own courses in the world,

rather than feeling controlled by circumstances imposed upon them externally

(for example birthplace, race, region into which they were born, or political

contexts in the world around them). Freire envisioned a process that may be

difficult to achieve in contexts of community practice where inducements toward

social conformity may feel pressing. Freire (1996) cautions that in this

pedagogical process the teacher must maintain a high degree of self-awareness

and attentiveness to their own involvement, to ensure that they do not impose

their personal understandings and meanings on the students:

> What dialogical educators must do is to maintain, on the one hand,
> their epistemological curiosity and, on the other hand, always
> attempt to increase their critical reflection in the process of creating
> pedagogical spaces where students become apprentices in the
> rigors of exploration. (Freire, in Freire, & Macedo, 1996, p. 208)

This does not mean that educators should attempt to mask, or avoid exposing,

their personal realities (Freire, 1996). It would be dishonest to pretend that

teachers do not have their own historical and experiential contexts that inform

them and shape their identities, but they should not expect their students'

histories and interpretations to be the same as theirs.

The theories Freire articulated in *"Pedagogy of the Oppressed"* were adapted and reconceptualised in North American contexts of critical pedagogy, expanding the critique beyond class. Explorations include a broader range of issues of inequity and claims of oppression, including politics and power relations viewed through lenses of class, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and all other categories of society where experiences of "silencing" have been felt. Although methods, concepts, and values within critical pedagogy may be relevant within Tibetan education processes, focused observation of classroom practice in this light was not within the scope of this study.

In Greene's (1996) summary of the chronological and thematic development of American critical pedagogy, what emerges is the vital importance of attention and attentiveness to local context. American versions grew and developed out of American experiences in relation to politics, tensions between and amongst racial and ethnic groups, religious groups, etc. Within the United States, regional nuances impacted application. Likewise, it would be inappropriate to impose American processes on other groups or regions, since they develop their own versions as stimulated, provoked, inspired, or constrained by their own local historical, and situated contexts.

> Critical pedagogy … is not reduced to the mastering of skills or techniques, but is defined as a cultural practice that must be accountable ethically and politically for the stories it produces, the claims it makes on social memories, and the images of the future it deems legitimate. (Giroux, 1996, p. 103)

As such, teaching methods and educational practices are widely adapted to suit the needs and concerns in various local contexts.

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Cho (2006) suggested that a limitation of North American versions of critical pedagogy is the narrow focus on the individual. Cho (2006) contended that the lens should be expanded to bring structural and other constraints into the field of view, and into the dialogue. He suggested that a fundamental reconfiguration of critical pedagogy is required: "critical pedagogy, in its search for 'possibilities,' needs to explore and produce real, feasible alternatives by linking the micro to the macro, the subject to the structure, the culture to the economy, and the local to the global" (Cho, 2006, p. 138). Elements of these forms of linkages are relevant in the context of Tibetan diaspora education, with its concern for the development of individuals who are aligned with the group's enduring struggle and are autonomous and self-sufficient in global contexts, but who are also constrained by local and global political factors that are beyond their direct control. Specific pedagogical processes cannot be assumed to be relevant or applicable to all regions, or universally transferable from one local context to another. The next subsection details consideration specific to the Tibetan diasporic case in India and Nepal.

### 3.3.3  Local Contexts, Local Pedagogy

Regional nuances influence the application and adaptations of pedagogy, including the development of various understandings of what "success" in outcome means. One of the challenges Tibetan authorities face is striking a balance between traditional spiritual beliefs and practices, and contemporary material requirements for physical and political survival. The Tibetan schools must use the host country's academic curriculum as a vehicle towards success

on government exams, potentially serving as a route to material self-sufficiency for individuals. For Tibetans, educational approaches were developed and continue to evolve through frameworks informed by the broadly framed notion of "local" as a geographically dispersed cultural community, and with consideration of conditions associated with each physical locale, and social and legal conditions in the host country (India and Nepal, in this case). Tibetan content and contexts are woven through the curricular and extra-curricular programs of Tibetan schools where possible. Academic programs appropriated from host governments are depicted by Tibetan authorities primarily as the sites of acquisition of knowledge that will be practically useful in the material world, but education and development toward becoming a more profoundly "good human" involves approaches more deeply personal and internal.

In the Tibetan idealized paradigm (as articulated in Buddhist teachings), fundamental human nature is characterized by generosity and compassion (Dalai Lama, 2008; Rinpoche, 1992). Negative actions and motivations that may harm self or others are believed to be rooted in misunderstandings of the true nature of existence. Within the Tibetan Buddhist framework "conventional reality" and "conventional" consciousness correspond to life as it is typically experienced by beings who inhabit physical bodies and go about their lives in the material world. At deeper levels, "ultimate reality" refers to profound spiritual truths that transcend the conventional and the material. "Ultimate" wisdom and clarity of consciousness is acquired through spiritual study and contemplative meditation. Tibetan authoritative discourse (Department of Education [1], 2004) asserts that

through various forms of education, including direct instruction, practice, and internal personal reflection, people should strive to access and act upon the deep layers of their inner selves, where their "goodness" is more pure. Competition and aggression are viewed as contradictory to natural processes of positive human development and accessing higher levels of consciousness and clarity of insight (Dalai Lama, 2000).

Scholarly training in traditional Buddhism traditionally involves many years of study, beginning with memorization of scriptures, later followed by dialectic debate and exploration of nuances and intricacies of the scriptures and texts (Rinpoche, 1992). Initially, the education process appears to be rote, but deeper analysis and contestation of the Buddhist texts are encouraged within the tradition. The notion of critical analysis and challenge is not new to Tibetan experience, though the modes and forms of expressing critique differ from Western paradigms. Echoing aspects of emancipatory pedagogy, Buddhist precepts insist upon individual accountability, and encourage seeking to transform the world by first transforming one's inner self (Dalai Lama, 1995; Rinpoche, 1993). Inner reflection is necessary to effect change in one's internalized beliefs, and external actions. The intentionality of reflection, with a goal of inner transformation, may be viewed through the lens of Bakhtin's (1981) notion of internally persuasive discourse. The authoritative discourse presented through Buddhist precepts and advice of community leaders implores Tibetans to strive for "goodness", starting within oneself. Inner shifts are understood to come

about through consciously applied internalized effort (Dalai Lama, 1996; Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1995).

Within the BEP (Department of Education [1], 2004), the distinction between "conventional" and "ultimate" reality is specifically and overtly drawn out. "Ultimate" is depicted as more important in a profound sense, but "conventional" is the arena on which people play out their daily lives. Complexities and intricacies of the conventional realm are not denied, but neither are they considered to be as important as "ultimate" profound truths. In this way, although the physical and material (such as exam and career preparation) must be seriously attended to, Tibetan authorities hope that youths' emotional attachment to the physical and material will be minimized. Tibetan educational philosophies, as represented in the Basic Education Policy (Department of Education [1], 2004), note that the methods used for mind training in spiritual practice can also be useful tools for deepening understanding of conventional knowledge systems, and making the understanding one's internalized own. The methods require deep contemplation, analysis of issues from multiple perspectives and layers of depth, and engaging in debate and dialogue with others and within oneself.

Within the Tibetan education system, despite philosophical perspectives that appear to be widely accepted throughout the community, and policy frameworks that are promoted by respected authorities, as in other societies, dissonance may occur. From individuals engaged in processes of self-authoring and going about their daily lives, to community relations in local and global contexts, power relations are always a factor of social existence. Perspectives of

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interviewees whose professional positions range from classroom teachers to policy developers illuminate complexities in the transference of official TGIE policy to individuals and locales where lived classroom practice takes place.

## 3.4  Summary

The theoretical themes outlined in the first three sections of Chapter 3 are each useful analytical frameworks independently, and analysis becomes more nuanced as they mutually influence each other at their points of contact and intersection. The theory sections focus on different aspects of the overall of process by which individuals become participants, and by which participation and community membership are shaped and recognized by self and others.

Section I focuses on the person as participant within their individual historical (Holland and Lave, 2000) and communal contexts. Post-structural theories on identity posit that individuals interpret and reinterpret their personal histories and relationships with others in a variety of ways, and that these identities are fluid. Identities are constructed, informed, and influenced dialogically through authoritative and internally persuasive discourse (Bakhtin, 1981). In this study, forced diaspora, long-term struggle, authoritative discourse shaped by Buddhist philosophy, and symbolic representations of its connection to Tibetan communal history (e.g. the Dalai Lama) are implicated in the shaping of the responses and identity frameworks of community members. Individual and shared histories and cultural frameworks influence interactions and responses to the larger world.

Section II widens the lens to look at global relations and change in connection to the Tibetan diaspora. Globalization and global flows may variously introduce constraints or opportunities to individuals and the collective. This broad lens helps connect the notion of "history in person" (Holland and Lave, 2000), introduced in Section I, to global contexts and the influences on individual and group identity processes. In the Tibetan case, local and global political contexts have special relevance because the enduring struggle is political as well as ideological.

Education, discussed in the third section, can serve as a material, intellectual, and symbolic location where individuals engage in acts of shaping personal identities in relation to local and global spaces and networks. Viewing schooling through the lens of "communities of practice" (Wenger, 1998) helps make sense of ways in which Tibetan authorities attempt to support the shaping of individual identities within, and connected to diaspora. Yet, emancipatory pedagogy can potentially act in tension with community practices and pressures that may appear gear toward constructing social conformity. In the Tibetan case, notions of emancipatory education shift attention outward from community to the quest for individual and community empowerment in global contexts. The work of Freire (1996, 2000) helps make sense of Tibetan authorities efforts to support the development in youth of identities connected to the Tibetan struggle.

The three theoretical themes frame the data analysis (Chapter 5). Individual and local community identity processes (Section I) connect to global (Section II), mediated through education and schooling (Section III). Processes

that take place at the thematic intersections, and ways in which the themes

mutually inform and influence each other, are explored.

# 4: CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research approaches were utilized in the exploration of the overarching research question: *"How do Tibetan educators who work within the school system administered by the Tibetan Government-in-exile (TGIE) in India and Nepal perceive and construct their personal and professional identities, vis-à-vis their histories and the TGIE's official discourse (policy) on their professional responsibilities?".* In this chapter outlining the research methodology, *section 4.1* provides the rationale for using qualitative methods, and *section 4.2* presents the methods and introduces issues associated with data collection and analysis. Key considerations of researcher positioning and access are explained in *4.3*, followed by, and related to, ethical issues and reflexivity in *4.4*, and representation in *4.5*.

## 4.1 Qualitative, Interpretive Approach

Qualitative, ethnographic research methods including in-depth open-ended interviews, participant observation in the form of site visits, and analysis of policy and other documents, were utilized to provide detailed descriptions of the experiences, perspectives, and lived contexts of the educators. The qualitative interpretive paradigm is consistent with my research aim of seeking to explore and make sense of processes and complexities associated with the personal identities, experiences, and understandings held by educators working with the Tibetan school system. Consistent with this aim, the interpretive approach has a

"central goal of seeking to interpret the world, particularly the social world" and involves the study of "everyday experiences and practice in ways which retain experiential and contextual integrity" (Higgs, in Byrne-Armstrong et al, 2001, p. 49). "Thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973) presented in the voices of Tibetan educators immersed in school life are at the centre of this research. Interview data, contextualized in relation to the interviewees' lived experiences of their personal histories, culture, spirituality, and connections to the global, serves to generate not simply an intellectual understanding of the topic and contexts in which they were situated, but also conveys a sense of the emotions of interviewees.

Complexities of the lived experience of Tibetan educators are echoed in social and political complexities that influenced the process of carrying out the research. Research sites and interviewees were diverse, including Tibetans born and raised in India, new arrivals from Tibet, and Tibetans living in Nepal. Each harboured different hopes and fears, some of which are implicated in the research process. Most of the interviewees based in India appeared confident and comfortable speaking about their experiences without fear of negative consequences, but some of the new arrivals were more concerned about anonymity due to fear for their relatives still living within Tibet. In Nepal, the tense political climate impacted flow of communication with interviewees. It was necessary for me to provide interviewees wide latitude in the interview process. Some chose not to discuss their personal histories, and others wanted to discuss their histories at length. Some were guarded when speaking about political

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constraints associated with the host country, and others were more open. Although the specifics of each interview differed, similar theoretical themes emerged repeatedly.

Qualitative research methods allow for adjustments and adaptations as new and unexpected intricacies come to light. Qualitative research design:

> requires subtle adjustments to be made to accommodate all partners (the researchers and their collaborators) interests and needs. In doing so, an element of subjectivity arises, but as long as it is made clear, it should be seen as a valuable part of the research process. (Higgs & McAllister, in Byrne-Armstrong et al, 2001, p. 38)

In this case, with multiple research locations, each differently situated within local political and social constraints and complexities, the fluidity of the qualitative research process was a strength, opening the process to nuanced and layered explorations and interpretations.

## 4.2  Data Collection and Analysis

Open-ended interviews and site visits are the primary sources of data for this study. I visited and conducted interviews at a total of 19 different Tibetan schools and administrative offices in the Indian states Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and in Nepal in the regions of Kathmandu and Pokhara. The research sites in both countries included boarding schools and day schools, in rural and urban settings. The variety of sites and the diversity of personal backgrounds, working contexts, ages, and professional experience of interviewees (beginning teachers to senior administrators) contribute to delineating the dynamics and complexities of the Tibetan diaspora's teaching,

learning, and living communities. All schools and educators involved in this study are connected to the Tibetan Government-in-exile's Department of Education (DoE) as their central administrative authority, yet diversity across the system occurs because school sites work within locally specific configurations of opportunities and constraints.

Methodological triangulation processes that aided in validating, contextualizing, and situating the interview data included observation of community and working environments at the interviewee's worksites and towns, and analysis of DoE policy documents, independent articles, and Tibetan creative writing and art. At the Tibetan Department of Education (DoE) in Dharamsala I collected information regarding the authoritative discourse of the TGIE, the relationship between the DoE and the host governments, philosophies and practices regarding teacher training, and the DoE's goals for future developments in education.

Details on the interview process and interviewees are presented in subsection *4.2.1*, and the data analysis process is outlined in subsection *4.2.2*.

### 4.2.1   Interviews and Interviewees

The primary source of data for this study is in-depth open-ended interviews with 29 Tibetan teachers and administrators working in 19 different Tibetan schools and offices in India and Nepal. Including a large number of interviewees at different sites was necessary to get a sense of the diversity and complexity of the Tibetan education system, and explore values and processes

that may appear to transcend the geography and political borders that separate

the various locales. I visited each workplace and surrounding community,

attempting to gain a sense of the rhythms and flows of daily life in each setting. I

have visited some of the sites on multiple occasions since 1989 for social and

professional reasons, and some sites I have visited only once, for the purpose of

this research. My familiarity with some locations was connected to people I knew

who had previously worked or studied there, but I did not know any of the

interviewees before conducting this research. I attempted to remain conscious of

biases that may have been connected to my previous experience, or lack of

experience, in the various locations, hoping to mediate those biases by asking

open-ended questions, and providing space for the interviewees' processes of

flow in conversation. An advantage associated with my previous experience is

that I was familiar and unsurprised by local routines and ways of life, and thus

interviewees may have felt comfortable speaking more freely than they might

have had I appeared less at ease in the environment.

All but one of the interviews took place in 2005. Lhakpa's initial interview

took place in 2004, and I met him again in 2007 for further discussions. Although

some years have elapsed since the interviews took place, the data retains its

validity as representations of adaptive and discursive processes. An interview

protocol (Appendix 1) was used to initiate and frame the conversations, and the

interviewees' responses served as launching points into other threads of

conversation. The interviews explored personal histories, motivations and

philosophies with respect to education, cultural reproduction, community

attachment, and strategies interviewees employ towards achieving their personal and professional goals. The interviews were conducted at locations chosen by the interviewees such as workplace offices, school classrooms after school hours, and in their homes. The interviews were tape-recorded, ranging from one to 1.5 hours in length. Immediately after each interview, I recorded my personal reflections and thoughts in a journal. I transcribed the interviews at a later date.

Lists of interviewees summarizing their current working contexts and their personal backgrounds, are presented in Appendix 2. All interviewees have been assigned pseudonyms to protect anonymity, and their workplaces are identified by number rather than name or specific location. The key characteristic that all the interviewees share, and that links them to this study, is their professional involvement as educators in the Tibetan school system in India and Nepal. Otherwise, their personal histories, experiences and interpretations are diverse. Interviewees include teachers, school administrators, and administrators at branch offices and the Department of Education. Twenty-two of the interviewees are based in India, and seven are working in Nepal. They range in age from 24 to 55 years, and their teaching experience ranges from one month to over 30 years. The elder interviewees are all male, and the majority of younger interviewees are female. The age-related gender imbalance amongst interviewees did not occur by design, but may reflect current demographics within the Tibetan education system, with a higher percentage of men as senior educators, and more women currently entering the profession. All interviewees came from working class rather than aristocratic family backgrounds (farmers, nomads, and merchants).

Twenty-six of the interviews were conducted in English. Most interviewees
had completed post-secondary degrees at English medium universities and felt
proficient enough in spoken English to complete the interview without translation.
A translator was utilized on three occasions, at the request of the interviewees
(listed below in Table 1). All three are Tibetan language teachers who completed
post-secondary education in Tibetan language at Tibetan run institutions. They
did not feel confident that they could express their ideas to their satisfaction in
English language. The translator was born and raised in India, and was a
practicing teacher.

**Table 1: Interviewees Who Utilized Translators**

| Pseudonym | Gender | Country |
|-----------|--------|---------|
| Karma | Male | India |
| Migmar | Male | India |
| Ugyen | Male | India |

### 4.2.2  Analysis of Interview Data

A variety of processes were utilized for triangulation of data and research
methodology, although challenges were more substantial at sites where
geographic distance made follow-up visits impossible, and with interviewees who
were less comfortable communicating in English language. While transcribing the
interviews, I attempted to be highly vigilant to, and respectful of, the tone and
intent of the interviewee's responses, particularly because I knew that it would
not be practically possible for interviewees to review the interview data and
analysis personally. The interviewees were widely dispersed geographically, at

19 different sites in two countries. Although I was able to return to some sites for multiple follow-up meetings and site-based observations over a period of several months, I was not able to revisit Nepal or the more remotes sites in India. Although I maintained contact with some of the more geographically distant interviewees via e-mail, their internet access was sporadic. They did not have easy access to printing facilities, nor did they express interest in working with the interview data in an analytical process. Nonetheless, I attempted to remain connected to the various communities, even if remotely, by regularly reading Tibetan community news websites, blogs, newsletters, and school websites. At the schools sites that I was able to revisit, I met with interviewees on several occasions, and engaged in further discussion on their professional practice.

Validity of the data and the analysis process may be considered in relation to discursive processes, rather than seeking absolute determinations of "truth". When transcribing the taped interviews I relived the experiences and conversations from a more emotionally distanced stance than when I was face-to-face in conversation with interviewees. I made note of new insights as they came to mind, and read each of the transcribed interviews multiple times, seeking the emergence of themes and patterns. The imposition of emotional distance was particularly important in the analysis of the Nepal-based interviews, where a tone of sadness permeated many conversations. The data analysis process involved deep engagement with the interview data and on-going reflection on the relationships and linkages between the interviewees' discourse and broader contexts of their lived experience, such as the social, political, and

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socio-economic contexts in which they live and work. Through this process, the interviewees' early childhood contexts and experiences appeared to emerge as highly significant in shaping their perspectives, and influencing their personal choices and values later in life.

Ideas, issues, and perspectives interviewees brought forward appear patterned according to the interviewees' lived contexts in the early years of their lives, a pattern that appears consistent with discursive processes more broadly in Tibetan society, such as through representations in published academic, journalistic, and creative writing by diasporic Tibetans (for examples, refer to, www.tibetwrites.org; High Peaks Pure Earth, 2010; Norbu, 1987; Norbu, 2001; Rigzin, 1994). Therefore, for the purpose of data analysis, I have clustered the interviewees into four generational groups according to the historical and political contexts into which they were born, outlined in the next paragraph, and summarized in Table 2 (p. 129).

The interviewees I have designated as *generation one* (Appendix 2, Table 4) were born in Tibet prior to the 1959 exodus, or during their parents' escape. Their early childhood was marked by loss of homeland, deaths of family members, transience, and rescue into the care of the TGIE. Their schooling took place in Tibetan, Indian, and Christian schools, although all spent their school holidays in Tibetan boarding facilities that they considered their home. *Generation two* interviewees (Appendix 2, Table 5) were born in India or Nepal between 1960 and 1967, into living conditions that were more stable than generation one experienced, but less so than generation three. Their families

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struggled to survive, but most ultimately managed to subsist. More Tibetan

schools had been opened than existed during the school years of generation

one, and thus all generation two interviewees attended Tibetan schools. By the

time the *generation three* interviewees (Appendix 2,

Table 6) were born, between 1972 and 1981, most of the tented refugee camps and road labour crews of the 1960s had been disbanded. Tibetans from the camps had moved to settlements administered by the TGIE, or established households in independent scattered communities. In childhood, generation three interviewees experienced greater material stability than the previous two generations. The fourth generational group, referred to as *"New Arrivals"* (Appendix 2, Table 7), represent a second wave of refugees who entered the pre-existing diaspora. These interviewees were born in Tibet between 1966 and 1974 and experienced life there under Chinese government rule. They escaped to India between 1979 and 1991 seeking education, and political and religious freedom.

**Table 2: Four Generations of Interviewees**

| Generation | Context | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Generation One | Children of the 1959 Exodus | 8 interviewees, born in Tibet or in transit before 1960. |
| Generation Two | Camp children | 4 interviewees, born between 1960 and 1967 in refugee camps and scattered communities in India and Nepal. |
| Generation Three | Settlement generation | 13 interviewees, born in India and Nepal between 1972 and 1981 in settlements or scattered communities. |
| New Arrival | Second wave of exodus from Tibet | 4 interviewees, born in Tibet between 1966 and 1974. Escaped to India between 1979 and 1991 seeking education. |

Themes that emerged in the data analysis are organized in *Chapter Five* according to generational groupings, as well as, within section *5.3, Education for*

*Identity and Empowerment,* subsections addressing concerns and issues specific to teaching and living contexts in Nepal.

## 4.3  Researcher Positioning and Access

I first travelled to Tibet in 1988, and subsequently volunteered in Tibetan refugee communities in India. More than ten return trips to India and Nepal have been in the capacity of volunteer teacher, human rights activist, student, resource person for grass roots NGOs, educator, education researcher, and friend. I have been active in the Tibetan human rights movement since 1989. My history within the diaspora, both in terms of longevity and the nature of my involvement, were key factors in establishing access, trust, and open lines of communication with TGIE officials, school administrators who provided me permission for site visits, and with the interviewees. This history was also a potential limitation, because I carried my previous experiences and associated analyses and assumptions. My experience as a school teacher in Canada also carried advantages and disadvantages. I am sympathetic to the challenges and joys that teachers experience in their work, and thus may have noticed nuances that people who have not worked as classroom teachers may have been unaware of, or, I may have been less critical than a more distanced observer. Throughout the research process, it was vital that I strive to maintain an awareness of the ways in which my prior experiences and may influence my processes and analysis, and that I work to minimize and mediate researcher bias.

Before this research I was familiar with some of the school sites, having often over the years visited friends who worked there, and students who were

children of close friends. I had attended many school festivals, exhibitions, and family picnics on site, as well as enjoying social activities with friends who were teachers. My site visits to those familiar locations felt relaxed and informal. In towns and school sites that were new to me (and I to them), site visits were more brief, and formalized with guided tours led by staff members. Conversations there may have been less open and nuanced.

My positioning carries advantages and disadvantages in the research process. As an outsider, I may notice patterns that people within the community take for granted, or I may fail to notice or be aware of issues that they deem significant. My ways of "seeing" are influenced by my previous experiences within Tibetan society and in other areas of my life. I observe and interact with others through my unique eyes and mind-set, and the Tibetans with whom I work interact with me as an "other", with their prior experiences and assumptions in tow:

> The ethnographer, as a positioned subject, grasps certain human phenomena better than others. He or she occupies a position or structural location and observes with a particular angle of vision…. By the same token, so-called natives are also positioned subjects who have a distinctive mix of insight and blindness. (Rosaldo, 1989, p. 19)

I am keenly aware that I will never have the same life experiences or perspectives on future possibilities as the interviewees. The fact that I hold citizenship of a country that is politically stable, and have not personally experienced the loss of country, forced exile, or severe economic hardship, means that my experience of the world will have different flavours as compared

to people who live in a refugee context, as politically stateless residents of developing countries. In my personal and professional relationships with Tibetans it is essential that I feel, talk, and behave in manners that are open, receptive, and respectful of divergent viewpoints. I cannot pretend to know their lived experience in an embodied sense. Open and responsive listening is essential, as is attention to multiple perspectives and contextual nuance.

In India, where I had many years of previous experience working with Tibetan educators, it was particularly important that I identify my previous beliefs and assumptions, and remain open to new perspectives. In this context, the younger interviewees in particular raised issues and perspectives that surprised me, and appeared to reflect the contexts of rapid global change that they live within. In Nepal, where I had far less previous experience in Tibetan schools than in India, school climate, community social life, and teacher's perspectives on their current situation and concerns for the future, were more starkly different from India than I had anticipated. There were fewer expressions of hope for positive outcomes in the near future, and there was an overall tone of sadness. Superficially, the schools and communities look similar to those in India, yet lived contexts of the residents there differ in important ways.

I utilized a variety of strategies to locate interviewees, including introductions through Tibetan friends and colleagues and "cold calls" to educational institutions to request permission to visit. The aspects of my history with Tibetans that proved most vital in gaining access, and developing greater levels of trust and candour, were my work in human rights activism and my

volunteerism in grass roots community development projects. My credential as academic researcher was the only layer of my background that seemed to be a hindrance rather than a boon to the task of generating trust and openness. One education administrator told me that he agreed to the interview with me because I introduced myself as a classroom teacher who happens to be pursuing a PhD, rather than introducing myself first as an academic. He told me that he trusted that a classroom teacher could understand the complexities, challenges, and imperfections of school life, and he hoped that I would bring a higher level of understanding and empathy to the study than might someone who had never been a classroom teacher. He also told me that he was impressed that I appeared to privilege my identity as teacher of children over my identity as an academic researcher. I do not know whether his assessment of me was correct or valid, but I do hope to have taken a balanced position that was both sensitive to the challenges of the professional practice of teaching, and distanced enough to support the development of analytical perspectives and approaches.

At one school, staff expressed distrust and exhaustion in relation to Western academic researchers. The school is located in a region frequented by Western tourists, volunteers, reporters, and academics; thus, it receives more foreign visitors than any of the other schools I visited. Doors opened and tensions eased when Tibetan friends and colleagues introduced me as a long-time advocate for Tibetan human rights and an active supporter of their community building efforts. Interviewees appeared less guarded in their conversation, and more nuanced in the analysis they expressed to me, after I

was introduced as a long-time "friend of Tibet" who did not romanticize, idealize, or expect Tibetans to be "perfect". At other school locations, in regions that foreigners visit less frequently, people did not indicate feelings of "foreigner fatigue". They were open and relaxed from the outset.

My credential as an experienced activist was of vital importance in Nepal, but for different reasons than in the India context (explained in greater detail in subsection 4.4). School authorities and interviewees needed assurances that I would be sensitive to the constraints they worked and lived with regarding legal limits to freedom of expression. A prominent Tibetan community leader in Kathmandu communicated with authorities at each of the schools I planned to visit, vouching for my sincerity and understanding. In India, my work as human rights advocate indicated bonds of emotional solidarity, but in Nepal, my experience was viewed as a measure of my understanding of the complex security issues people who live there contend with daily. Due to the political climate in Nepal at the time of the interviews, safety and security were pressing concerns for local residents, but nuances may not have been immediately obvious to newcomers.

## 4.4 Ethical Issues and Reflexivity

Tibetans are responsible for initiating, designing, and implementing change in their education system, within allowable limits of the host country's regulations, therefore they are free to take or leave the findings of this work as they see fit. That having been said, it is also important to recognize that issues of power are not absent. Tibetans may perceive this work as having the potential to

influence outsiders, encouraging or discouraging (depending on the outcomes) foreign support, and thus their responses may have reflected this awareness.

Qualitative research acknowledges that "the researcher and the research are intertwined" (Byrne-Armstrong et al, 2001, p. 5). Thus, the researcher must state and continually reflect upon and reassess their position and stance. My personal history with its accompanying assumptions, and the research and educational framework that I bring to this research, are a product of my own education and socialization as a middle class, white, Canadian woman, a teacher, and a social justice activist. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) draws attention to the often negative and destructive impact of Western researchers, methodologies, and "research products" on colonized indigenous peoples. Although Tibetans are diasporic rather than indigenous to India and Nepal, issues of "othering" and "colonization" of knowledge systems and ways of being are at issue, and must be considered and addressed directly. Throughout the research and reporting process I endeavoured to open the discursive space to the "alternative story" (Smith, 1999), welcoming criticism of my perspectives and processes, and of the cultural and social systems in which they are situated. I was raised in a family and social context where education was considered important for personal development and for ensuring employability (thus, for personal economic security). I internalized those values and as an adult became a professional educator. Yet, Tibetan refugees, and educators in particular, regularly introduced me to perspectives and values in relation to education that were outside the scope of the paradigm in which I was raised. They encouraged

me to revisit and problematize my notions of the core purposes of education and learning, and consider seriously other frameworks that more substantially include considerations of education toward the development of "good people" motivated by compassion for others.

An important layer of concern in terms of ethical representation relates to political realities of life for Tibetans in diaspora. As stateless residents of India and Nepal, the interviewees chose their words carefully when discussing the host country's policies and practices. Tibetans in India enjoy greater access to privileges of civil society than those in Nepal (explained in 2.1), but they do not have full rights of citizenship. Tibetan administrative authorities told me that they felt that they had good relationships with Indian authorities, and that maintaining positive and productive relationships with the Government of India was vital to their work and community life. If they harboured deeper concerns about their relations with the Indian government, this research was not the appropriate venue for airing those concerns.

Those who live in Nepal faced a more challenging set of political circumstances and uncertainties. In the spring of 2005, when the interviews took place, Nepal was at a crisis point in the civil war that had begun 10 years earlier. It was evident that Tibetan authorities' efforts at diplomacy with the Nepali government had been muted amidst a far larger and more complex set of political circumstances that included Nepali authorities' concerns about their diplomatic relations with China. In January 2005, a few months prior to the interviews, the Nepali government closed and deemed illegal the Tibetan Welfare Office (TWO),

and the Office of the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in

Kathmandu, the two offices in Nepal that had been working in support of Tibetan

refugees since the early 1960s. A few weeks later, on February 1, 2005, King

Gyanendra dissolved the Nepali parliament and assumed direct control of the

government. He declared a "state of emergency" that included legal restrictions

to freedom of expression. The interviews for this study took place during the

"state of emergency", and with the knowledge that Tibetan offices had already

been targeted as problematic to Nepali authorities.

Considerations of how, where, and when research takes place are

relevant. For example, in this study, perhaps the interviews with the Nepal based

educators would have unfolded differently, with different levels of emotion and

politically charged intensity, if the interviews had taken place at a location

physically removed from Nepal rather than at their physical worksites in Nepal,

hovering between Nepali army camps and footholds of anti-government

insurgents. There were potential personal risks associated with voicing

complaints about the Nepali government, but many Tibetans there expressed

their desire to speak, because they felt they had little left to lose. The Nepali

government had never provided material support to Tibetans, and official

tolerance of the Tibetan presence in Nepal appeared to be decreasing. The

larger political issues in Nepal were complex, and interviewees felt powerless to

address them. The decision by interviewees to share their concerns with the

outside world through this research carried a tone of agency and advocacy. The

stakes were high for their community, and they wanted to be heard, and helped.

Thus, to a greater extent in Nepal than in India, the data reflects a politically charged local context in the interviewees' relationship to the host government, and host society.

Due to the delicacy of the moment, Tibetan authorities and I agreed that I should restrict my formal interviews in Nepal to the elder, more experienced educators, although I also met with younger educators informally at the school sites. The interviewees chose their words carefully, understanding the potential risks and benefits. They kept their conversations with me within acceptable limits according to Nepali law, yet they were eager to express their fears for the future of the children under their care, and for Tibetans in Nepal in general. I did not press interviewees to discuss topics or follow conversation threads that were uncomfortable for them, and I offered to omit comments or entire interviews at their request. In India, where relations with the host government are less fraught, interviewees were more relaxed and at ease.

## 4.5 Representation

Assessing the validity of interview data is a contentious issue in research, but Silverman (2001) suggests an alternate point of view: "we need not hear interview responses simply as true or false reports on reality. Instead, we can treat such responses as displays of perspectives and moral forms" (p. 107). In collecting, analyzing and reporting data, the researcher must keep in mind that "qualitative research can no longer concern itself with discovering truths which are unmediated by the situated use of forms of representation" (Silverman, 2001, p. 179). This approach allows for explorations of the discursive process as a valid

form of analysis, and anticipates shifts in research processes, and in researcher orientation and positioning as the project unfolds and new information and relationships emerge. It provides space for acknowledging and honouring a variety of points of view. It is a framework within which participants can have substantial voice.

"Like all areas of knowledge production, power relations are embedded in every aspect of the research process" (Carmody, in Byrne-Armstrong et al, 2001, p. 169). This is relevant not only between researcher and researched, but also between participants in the study and their environment, including co-workers, students, superiors in the workplace, and in their relations with the rest of the world. I attempted to mediate these pressures by assured interviewees that a variety of procedures would be utilized to protect their anonymity, but only they know to what extent they were conscious of being open or guarded in their communication with me. Power relations are likely to be implicated in forms and modes of representation, as participants attempt to represent themselves, and the researcher represents them to the public, whether we are entirely aware of our self-censoring processes or not.

Interviewees appeared to demonstrate various degrees of comfort, openness, and confidence in their communication during the interviews. Those who had substantial prior experience with Western academics were the most sceptical about potential benefits of the research. They felt that their community had been frequently misunderstood and misrepresented by outsiders. They expressed concern that representations often lacked nuance or insight into the

complexities of their lives and work, and the motivations and values that propel and support them in their struggles. They claimed that they were not afraid of being seen, "warts and all", but they were weary of misrepresentations, whether depicting Tibetans in a positive or negative light. Individual anonymity had been promised to the interviewees, yet they may have felt that in addition to representing their own personal views, they were also publicly representing their community. In that light, some may have chosen to filter their words. Nonetheless, several expressed hope that this research would help outsiders understand their community, and that the research might help Tibetan society by documenting an aspect of their on-going struggle.

In popular Western culture, romanticized images of Tibetans presented through Hollywood movies, fantastic "mystic" tales of spiritual masters, "travellers' tales and adventurers' adventures" (Smith, 1999, p. 8), and romanticised images of Dalai Lama or characterization of him as being like a "rock star" (McDowell, 2010), are not generally helpful in understanding daily human existence for diasporic refugees in a developing country. Those stories dehumanize, and fail to recognize the complexities and challenges of diasporic life, and thus fail to celebrate the creativity, ingenuity, and tenacity required by marginalized groups such as Tibetans in their efforts to survive individually and communally. The interviewees were well aware of the stereotypic images of Tibet and Tibetans that seem to permeate media representations and non-Tibetan thinking. Rather than referencing or criticising ways in which they appear to succeed or fail to live up to Western or other myths of "Tibetan-ness" (for

example, Misra's (2003) apparent disappointment with Tibetan people who he

feels exhibit modern forms of consumerism), my hope in this research is to

respect the interviewees' representations of themselves, as people struggling for

recognition and belonging the world, on their own terms, with recognition of

challenges and opportunities they experience in diaspora.

# 5: CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS

The overarching research question, *"How do Tibetan educators perceive and construct their personal and professional identities, vis-à-vis their histories and the TGIE's official discourse (policy) on their professional responsibilities?"*, framed the interview protocol (Appendix 1). Subsequent analysis of the interview data revealed three central themes, exploring questions related to the identities, lives and practices of Tibetan educators, and their positioning within the diasporic struggle. Each section of this chapter addresses one theme:

- Section 5.1 - *Identity within Enduring Struggle and Diaspora,* explores the question, "*How do Tibetan educators perceives themselves as historically situated participants within diasporic community?"*

- Section 5.2 - *Global Flows and Geopolitics*, addresses the question, *"How do Tibetan educators view their community's relationship to the world within contexts of global change?"*

- Section 5.3 - *Education for Identity and Empowerment*, explores interviewees articulations of questions in relation to, *"How do they view and practice their work as educators?"*

The interrelated themes that were important to the interviewees in the development and performance of their identities as educators are explored here with reference to the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3. In their personal histories and struggles, Tibetans across four generations (Table 2, p. 129) appear in diverse ways to embody specifics that characterize the larger

community struggle. In spite of the range of perceptions and individual understandings of their circumstances there were some key points on which individuals within generational groups appeared to be in accord. These points are connected to some broad commonalities in socio-historical circumstances which characterized the conditions of diaspora for these individuals. In addition to providing windows into the larger diasporic struggle, interviewees' "histories in person" trace the trajectories that led them to their current work as professional educators. The perspectives of interviewees appear to be connected to their historically situated positioning, to a greater extent than the location in which they currently live and work, with the exception of the case in Nepal. Differing perspectives of Nepal based interviewees emerged in their views on education, presented in section 5.3.

The unique character of this diaspora is established in relation to the authoritative discourse of Buddhism that they employ to articulate and make sense of the personal histories that connect them to their community. Buddhist philosophical approaches and lived practices are central determinants of how and what discourses participants internalize, and how relations within community are constructed. Their personal and community identities are interwoven with their professional missions to support their students' processes of developing community affiliations and attachment to the Tibetan "enduring struggle".

In Section 5.1, *Identity within Enduring Struggle and Diaspora*, interviewees' personal history (Holland and Lave, 2000) narratives trace their processes of becoming participants in the community struggle. These personal

narratives reveal insights into the larger narrative of the Tibetan diaspora, and the shaping of the "enduring struggle" and diasporic consciousness. "Figured worlds" structure the analysis, and Bakhtin's (1981) notion of dialogism is utilized to make sense of non-linear processes by which individuals internalize various discourses throughout their lives. Holland and Lave's (2000) expansion of the scope of dialogism to encompass non-verbal symbols and cultural genres is apt in this case, in which community is prominently imagined (Anderson, 1991) in connection to historical, cultural, and spiritual symbols, practices, and rituals, in addition to language. Identity and boundary definition processes are analysed in relation to the struggle's generativity and intergenerational transmission, and interviewees' responses are contextualized in light of Buddhist approaches.

5.2, *Global Flows and Geopolitics*, explores the interviewees' perspectives on globalization and political attachments and influences, illuminating the four generations' processes of making sense of their current circumstances in relation to past and present global contexts. Reflexivity is revealed in the interviewees' various ways of relating to areas of tension in the non-linear processes of change. The notion of boundaries is employed to identify processes by which "insiders" are distinguished from "outsiders", and to make sense of ways "insider" identities are generated within current contexts of rapid change and supraterritoriality,

5.3, *Education for Identity and Empowerment,* explores more specifically the interviewees' understandings of their personal and professional mission in their work as educators, connecting their personal histories and global

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perspectives to their attempts to support their students' processes of negotiating personal and community identities through participation in "communities of practice" established within academic settings. Interviewees struggle to address interrelated goals of supporting the development of students' community affiliations, individual empowerment in the world, and emotional attachment to the long-term, enduring national struggle. The interviewees' perspectives on the their mission as educators are analysed according to their generational positioning, as well as within specific circumstances of teaching new arrival Tibetans, and teaching in Nepal.

## 5.1 Identity Within Enduring Struggle and Diaspora: Personal Histories and Education

I analysed interview data on personal histories in relation to the theoretical themes presented in Section 3.1. Aspects of the history of the enduring and evolving community struggle are revealed in the interviewees' representations of their individual experiences. The personal history (Holland and Lave, 2000) narratives of each of the four generations are explored here in chronological sequence, revealing transformation processes both in the community struggle, and in individuals' historically situated interpretations of their positioning as community members and as educators. "Figured worlds" (Holland et al., 1998) provide a useful frame for the analysis of change and continuity in this context. Despite differences in specific individual experiences, all interviewees negotiate and practice their identities within figured worlds (Holland et al, 1998) that are specified here: *early childhood and family*; *schooling*; and, *professional educator.*

### 5.1.1  Generation One: Children of the 1959 Exodus

Eight interviewees were from the first generation of Tibetans who were educated as children after the 1959 exodus. They were born between 1950 and 1959, prior to or during their parents' escape from Tibet. They are: Choedak, Dawa, Dhundop, Jigme, Lhakpa, Tenpa, Thubten, and Wangdu (Appendix 2, Table 4). The trajectories of their lives as participants in community trace processes of development and change of the larger "enduring struggle" (Holland and Lave, 2000). Personal experiences of these interviewees are reflective of larger community processes. This subsection, focusing on personal histories, includes interview data from six of the generation one interviewees. The interviewees whose stories are not represented in this subsection, Lhakpa and Dhundop, both indicated that they were more interested in discussing current community issues and plans for the future, rather than their own personal histories. Lhakpa spoke at length about education practices and change, and Dhundop was particularly concerned about the current plight of Tibetans in Nepal. Their perspectives are presented in section 5.3.

Generation one interviewee's "figured world" (Holland et al, 1998) of *early childhood and family* appears to be characterized by loss, dislocation, relocation, and dependence on services of the TGIE (Tibetan Government-in-exile) for basic survival. Their transition into the figured world of *schooling* introduced stability, anchoring to community, and cultural change. Generation one interviewees entered the figured world of *professional educator* with deference to the wishes of TGIE authorities, and feelings of duty to support the on-going community

struggle. Authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 2000) of Buddhism, introduced in section 3.1.4, figures prominently in the interviewees' processes of making sense of and responding to their personal experiences of loss and survival, and their philosophical approach to their professional positions within the Tibetan education system.

**Early Childhood and Family: Loss, poverty, dislocation and relocation**

The apparent intensity of many of the generation one interviewee's emotional attachment and deference to the TGIE's institutionalized authority, appears to surpass that of interviewees in all other generational groups in this study. For part or all of their early childhood, all generation one interviewees were dependent on TGIE services for survival, including rescue from makeshift roadside camps, medical rehabilitation, and food and shelter in refugee camps. Rather than identifying with their village communities, as their parents and grandparents had, generation one interviewees authored and internalized new forms of nationalism (Gellner, 1983), centred on emotional attachment to the TGIE as a provider of parent-like care and education.

From 1959 onward, loss of home, family members, ancestral means of livelihood, and country shaped the circumstances of the lives of all generation one interviewees, and the lives of all Tibetans they knew. Although lived experience of personal loss is a central theme for every interviewee in generation one, Wangdu is the only interviewee old enough to vividly recall his life in Tibet prior to the arrival of the Chinese, and details of the escape. His narrative provides a snapshot of the early years of diaspora as children experienced them.

The overall content and tenor of his story is similar to published historical accounts of the era, and the early personal histories described by other interviewees of generation one. His is a typical tale of the 1959 exodus. Wangdu's community's experience of loss of control over education and social life anticipates issues explored in depth later, in section 5.3, where Freire's (2000) notions of power and pedagogy are reflected in Tibetan authority's insistence on retaining control of the education of Tibetan children in exile.

Wangdu was 9 years old in 1959 when the Chinese authorities came to his town in a remote farming region of Tibet near the Nepal border. The first socially disruptive change that he recalls affecting him personally was the closing of the local community-run school, when all the small Tibetan run schools in the region were amalgamated into one large school run by the Chinese government. That year, the Chinese authorities imposed numerous other changes to community governance that his family experienced as unendurable intrusions on their way of life. The oppositional nature of social and power relations served to entrench the boundaries of "otherness" (Holland and Lave, 2000) between Wangdu's community and the Chinese.

In the winter of 1959 Wangdu and his extended family escaped across the border into Nepal, leaving the only home, community, and way of life, they had ever known. They camped with a cluster of refugees in northern Nepal, geographically positioned near the Tibetan border so that they could return home easily when it was safe to do so. They expected that the Chinese army would not stay long in Tibet, and they wanted to go home. Their early struggle in exile was

for bare survival. Geographically they had not ventured far, and psychologically they had not relinquished hope of imminent return to their home and village community. The early seeds of diasporic consciousness are revealed in their emotional attachment to homeland, and their desire to return.

Wangdu's family attempted to scrape together a living as field labourers in the high mountains of Nepal, but conditions were harsh. They experienced extreme poverty, hunger, and illness. His father, elder brother, younger siblings, and some other relatives died within the first two years, as did many others in their refugee cluster. Those of his family who survived remained in the border camp for a total of four years, when the TGIE facilitated their transport to better serviced refugee camps in India where their long term care and resettlement was supported. Their geographic move further from their homeland, across another state border into India, reflects their diminishing hope for a speedy return to Tibet, and shifts in their dialogic processes. After suffering tremendous personal losses, and four years in hiatus at the border, they submitted to the authority of the TGIE representatives who wanted them to move, deep into the unknown geographies, cultures, and economies of India. Previously self-reliant farmers, Wangdu's family were, for the first time, dependent on Tibetan government authorities for their basic survival.

Reflecting Buddhist philosophical understandings of "impermanence", and an aspect of diasporic consciousness that Clifford (1994) describes as "making the best of a bad situation", Wangdu brushed aside questions about the challenges of transience and uncertainty in early years of exile. His experience

seemed the norm for Tibetans in that chaotic time, and he had no power to control it: "A lot of changing. But that's the situation". Rather than lingering in discussion on his loss, grief, and disappointment, Wangdu echoed Buddhist discourse, and repeatedly expressed his gratitude for the kindness of those who had ensured his survival by caring for him and providing him education (his parents, teachers, and representatives of the TGIE). In his world, the most influential and powerful authoritative discourse was transmitted through the words and actions of those who kept him alive. Their struggles in support of him and other children set the stage to advantage a future that would position him as personally empowered through education. Now, as an adult reflecting on his earlier self and imagining other futures that might have been if he had not received help, his commitment to the TGIE and the community it represents remains steadfast.

Choedak was 4 or 5 years old when his family fled Tibet. He recalls experiences similar to Wangdu's, including rescue at the hands of the TGIE, community-wide shock and disorientation, and adults' deferential submission to the TGIE's authority. His matter-of-fact description of his experience is typical of interviewees in generation one: "We were taken care of in Dharamsala - the small transit school in Kangra. In '63 or '64 any refugee that came was dumped there and we didn't really know what was going on". Like Wangdu, he attributes his survival and that of others like him to the Tibetan administration and aid organizations that provided support:

Because there were orphans and semi-orphans, and there were parents who could not look after their children. Forget education, they couldn't even support them on a day-to-day basis…. We had a huge family, but it was just my mother with five children, and I was the eldest. It went one year, two year like that. There were some difficult years but maybe I was too young to really understand.

Choedak understands that there was mass confusion, and with thousands of refugees to care for, the TGIE staff were doing the best they could:

A group of us from Transit School [refugee camp] were picked up and sent [to boarding school], but I don't think the parents knew. We were just picked up by size-wise, age-wise, and we were put into a truck and taken to whatever places had space for us.

After his placement in school, and throughout much of his childhood, Choedak's mother was absent. In Tibet, she had been relatively well educated, and could read, write, and play musical instruments, but life in India was very difficult for her. She struggled to cope, physically and emotionally: "Most of the time I didn't know where she was. She was roaming like a gypsy, doing road work, some petty road-side business". Like Wangdu, Choedak's experience of rescue and care through the offices of the TGIE authored the institution as the supreme authoritative voice in his world. No other government appeared to care for him, nor could his own mother. Boundaries defining "family" were drawn as "caring community", rather than solely through bloodlines.

Poverty and hardship also took their toll on Thubten's family, and, like all other interviewees of generation one, he attributes his survival to the TGIE. Both his parents died in 1959, soon after their escape. Echoing the Buddhist philosophical approach to "suffering" and impermanence (introduced in section 3.1.4), that appears to sustain all generation one interviewees, Thubten does not languish in self-pity. Rather, he characterizes himself as having been fortunate for the help he received, and for the timing of Tibet's crisis in the trajectory of his life:

> Actually, my generation was the first who were picked up from the road camps by His Holiness and his officials, and collected and put in the nursery and other schools that were set up with the help of the Indian government…. And actually when you reflect back on the situation we came at the right time. At the age of 4 or 5. Fantastic time to start school.

Jigme was born somewhere along the escape route in 1959 and lived with his parents through his early childhood. His parents joined other Tibetans in Indian road construction, and Jigme lived with them in poverty until he was 7 years old. His father died in the camp, and his mother was unable to cope. She turned him over to the care of a Tibetan school year-round: "I remember that my mother told me 'you and your younger sister are offered to the Dalai Lama', because they [she] couldn't manage". This experience triggered a shift in Jigme's emotional attachment, and notions of which authoritative discourse matters. Like Choedak, internalized boundaries Jigme established to define "family" placed the TGIE, personified by the Dalai Lama, more centrally than his biological family.

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In later years, when Jigme returned home to live with his mother, he habitually went to school earlier in the morning than necessary. When his mother asked him to spend more time at home, he responded impatiently:

> I got very angry and I said, "I was offered to the Dalai Lama. Now you don't have any right". So, these are the feelings that I still have. Actually, I understand that she don't have anything to feed me or give me, that's why she gave me away. Then I feel like I am working for the Dalai Lama and she has no right.

Jigme's childhood process of internalizing the discourses and practices of a family unable to care for him, and Tibetan authorities who facilitated his care, contributed to the authoring of his adult identity as a willing and dutiful civil servant, passionate in his devotion to the TGIE.

Although multiple experiences of loss launched every generation one life story, and they reflected on their sadness in relation to loss, none of the interviewees expressed bitterness or resentment in reference to their overall situation. Reflecting Buddhist values of appreciation of the kindness of others (Dalai Lama, 1996; Dalai Lama, 2008), each description of personal loss was followed by an expression of gratitude toward individuals and organizations that provided the care and support that kept them alive, and provided them knowledge and skills required for self-sufficiency as adults. Although a few interviewees referred to Western donors and volunteers with gratitude, and expressed appreciation of the support provided by Indian people and government, they believe that the lifesaving support received from outsiders in

those early years was a direct result of the TGIE's efforts to secure aid. In this way, the authoritative discourse of the TGIE reigns most powerful, with the Dalai Lama as the symbol and personification of profoundly compassionate leadership. Their connection to TGIE's as the authoritative discourse to most strongly attend to was authored and deeply internalized in early childhood.

Within the intensity and trauma of the refugee crisis of the early 1960s, *schooling*, discussed in the next sub-section, appears to have provided generation one interviewees with locales for physical and emotional anchoring, where community connections were established, individual and community identities were negotiated, and where struggles within cultural change occurred.

**Schooling: Community Anchor and Cultural Change**

Before 1959 the Tibetan government did not provided secular schooling, and the populace did not demand it. Yet, in exile, schooling was structured as a central and vital component of the care services provided by the TGIE. Practical realities associated with the refugee crisis necessitated reinventions of the nature and purpose of dialogic exchange between Tibetan government authorities and the populace, and reinventions of individual identities in relation to community (Dudley, 2002). In the 1960s, the generation one interviewees were displaced children. Within a few years of their escape from Tibet, all had been placed in boarding schools, either by TGIE officials who collected orphans and semi-orphans from the refugee camps and roadsides, or by parents who were too destitute to care for them. The generation one interviewees describe their entry into the figured world of schooling as just one of many transitions in their

turbulent childhoods, but it ultimately led them to some forms of physical and community stability.

Schools were havens where food, shelter, and medical care were provided, and where identities were negotiated. Physical transience continued for some who were shuffled from school to school (e.g. by the time he graduated from high school, Wangdu had attended seven different schools in Tibet, Nepal, and India), but in exile the TGIE coordinated the moves, and served as symbolic centre and anchor. Some of the generation one interviewees attended private Indian or Christian boarding schools, because at that time there were not enough Tibetan schools to accommodate all, but they lived at Tibetan schools during their holidays, and deferred to Tibetan authorities when they needed help. Those who attended Tibetan schools lived there year round, cared for by Tibetan staff in their boarding facilities, but for the first decade almost all teachers and school administrators were Indian, other than the Tibetan language teachers. None of the interviewees recall parents having had a say in the choice of school. It was a chaotic time, when authorities were struggling to care for thousands of children. They went where they were sent, without question. All referred to Tibetan school as their "home".

The widespread community acceptance of the importance of secular (i.e. non-monastic) schooling that developed over through the 1960s represents a significant cultural change in diaspora, although initially schooling was a matter of survival and deference to TGIE authority rather than a philosophically reasoned choice. Before their escape from Tibet, the families of the interviewees did not

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value secular schooling for either social or economic status. Wangdu attended school in Tibet, but had he been physically healthy, schooling would not have been his parents' choice for him. Childhood illness left him too weak to earn his livelihood as a farmer, and his parents worried about his future:

> I had polio at the age of maybe 3, so I was weak a little bit because of that. So because of that my parents thought that maybe it's better if I do some learning and then maybe be a clerk or something like that. So that's why I got that chance…. Most parents didn't think of their children doing some office work, but in my case because of my polio it happened that way.

Schooling facilitated by the TGIE provided safety, care, community connections, and purposeful activity for children within an overall context of disorientation, loss, and grief. In Wangdu's case, after his refugee cluster had languished for two years in an impoverished camp in Nepal where hunger, illness, and death had been constant themes, two teachers sent by the TGIE arrived. For their remaining two years in the camp, Wangdu and the other children learned Tibetan, English, and math, encouraged, supported, and facilitated by the TGIE. In exile, the TGIE attempted to provide education for all, a service never before within the Tibetan government's purview. The nature of the Tibetan government's dialogue with the populace had changed, as had the people's response, negotiating strategic adjustments to the new conditions of diaspora.

Complexities and tensions in local practice in the early authoring of the community struggle in exile are revealed in Tenpa's childhood experience of being "pushed and pulled" by various authoritative discourses, and by his internal dialogic struggles to negotiate his personal identity in relation to family and community. While still a child in Tibetan boarding school, without his parents' knowledge, and against the advice of other Tibetan adults, Tenpa took vows to become a Buddhist monk. Adults worried that he was too young to fully understand this important decision, and that the vocation, although highly respected in traditional Tibetan society, could not sustain him materially in their diasporic context. The voices of adults in authority who tried to dissuade him held little sway for Tenpa. In keeping with Holland and Lave's (2000) emphasis on the importance of cultural genres in self-authoring, his decision was based on his enjoyment and emotional attachment to the cultural practices, symbols, and rituals that he saw monks performing at religious festivals and within community.

> I surprised my mom and dad! She was shocked! But just
> only cut my hair and I went to school dressed normal. And
> during the Lord Buddha's party - religious festivals then they
> gave me the monks' dress and we had to go to the temple
> and get some bread, cake – two or three pieces. I really liked
> Lord Buddha's festivals! I was so small – always thinking
> and running! This is really funny story for me. Usually there
> are many rules and regulations. Before we become monk we
> have to learn what you should think, what you should do.
> Me, I don't know.

A second instance of tension for Tenpa occurred in the early 1970s when he moved from boarding school to his parents' new home on a settlement. A decision had to be made as to whether he would continue his studies at the secondary level or leave school to work with his father:

> My father don't want to send me to school. My father wants me to help to him. Because he's doing sweater business. Then my mom, she's a little bit - good thinking - and she thinks making money is ok, but for her son's future, she don't want to take me home [from school]. My mother gave me very good support.

His mother's position prevailed, a decision that would ultimately result in a relatively economically secure future for him as a teacher, although at the time they could not have been sure of this outcome. Tenpa's struggles in "local contentious practice" throughout his childhood placed him alternately between and within various authoritative discourses, each pointing him toward different futures. These variously included discourses connecting him to community and cultural history, linking him to his family's struggle for his and their unknown future, and school authorities' discourses and academic contexts that were outside his parents experiential realm, pulling him into new figured worlds and knowledge systems disconnected from family.

Generation one interviewees and their peers were amongst the first Tibetans subject to social and cultural change associated with schooling in exile, positioning them centrally as actors in new forms of "contentious local practice". To a greater extent than other generational groups, generation one interviewees

appear to have struggled to make sense of the multiple discourses and the dramatic cultural change that was propelled in school settings. They were pioneers in Tibetan society, often at the forefront in negotiating meaning between Tibetan traditional discourse, the discourse of Indian and other non-Tibetan teachers and administrators, and academic content that introduced them to new ideas and pulled them in unknown cultural directions. Tibetan authorities facilitated the process of ensuring that the youth were placed in schools, but were not always able to provide support to youth in making sense of their experiences.

As children, while studying the Indian government's English medium curriculum, the interviewees were immersed within, and struggling with, cultural genres (Holland and Lave, 2000) and discourses that were new to most Tibetans. Tibetan authorities encouraged schooling, but the children had to negotiate the new cultural terrain themselves, like Tenpa, often in tension with authoritative discourses (Bakhtin, 1981) of their family, community, and cultural history. Choedak spoke of his frustration and confusion when struggling to make sense of knowledge systems that no Tibetan adult in his life seemed to have ever imagined:

> Especially a few subjects. History, geography, science.
> When it was taught I would be blank for many days.
> Whereas my [Indian] colleagues would understand in a few
> minutes or a few hours, and I would sit with them hours
> trying to recall and ask them. That has something to do with
> for many generations we have never had this formal
> education. We lacked that. For example, people say the

world is round, but then our people said, "What? How is
that?" But then we learned through a lot difficulties. It was
very challenging.

The authoritative discourses of school texts and teachers were not accepted
easily, nor comfortably internalized. In order to succeed in school, the
interviewees describe negotiating the boundaries, tensions, and the discord
between Tibetan community discourse and that of the school authorities. They
struggled to create their own practices, authoring identity configurations that
would connect them to their cultural and religious community while also
supporting their academic success in school. This tension was a point of
personal struggle for Choedak in his effort to negotiate and author new practices,
cultural landscapes, genres, and boundaries (Holland and Lave, 2000) that were
radically different from elders of his community, but, he hoped, would still author
him as a Tibetan "insider".

Tensions came into focus for Choedak when trying to structure a figured
world within Tibetan community, while also positioned as student in a Christian
boarding school. In the Christian school he identified as Tibetan, in a diasporic
positioning of difference. Yet, his internalization of various school discourses
shifted and complicated his identity. His academic education empowered him in
the world, but isolated him from Tibetan community:

When I look back I think I missed a lot of things but I learned
a lot of things too. When I say I learned a lot meant I could
readjust with any people. I could understand any religion and
I could respect any religion. That's an advantage. But the

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disadvantage is that I grew all through my childhood in an English medium school where Tibetan is not even spoken anywhere. So when coming back to the Tibetan community then there was a problem.

While living at Tibetan boarding school during holidays he was immersed in social worlds where his awareness of his growing difference from other Tibetans germinated, and his attention focused on building his Tibetan community connections, particularly through language. Multiple identity configurations were implicated in his feeling of having drifted into the social margins of Tibetan community life. He generated boundary definition and internalization processes whereby he more consciously differentiated himself from "socially marked others" at Christian school.

Others' discourses "pushed and pulled" Choedak throughout his childhood, including that of his Canadian sponsor who encouraged him to stay with Tibetans and work in support of the community. Her advice impacted him deeply: "even though I didn't have any career planning in my mind, whatever this lady was telling me I would just take it". Choedak obeyed the advice of authorities, whether Tibetan, Christian, or his Canadian mother figure, and followed their rules in his lived practice, but deeply personal internalization (Bakhtin, 1981) and self-authoring (Holland and Lave, 2000) was another matter. Choedak describes a gradual and fragmented process of internalization and layering of the various dialogues. At first, he was simply struggling for his individual survival. Gradually he began to refer to the larger Tibetan diasporic struggle as his own.

Thubten attended an Indian private school on a charitable scholarship, although, like Choedak, he always returned to Tibetan boarding school to live during holidays. In the Indian school, living and learning with cultural and socio-economic "others", Thubten developed a sharply defined diasporic identity as "different": "Having gone to a school where a lot of the rich Indian students studied – they had to pay a lot of money to go to a school like that – and then school being a kind of a privileged school where they had fathers and mothers". Thubten's sense of belonging was connected to the Tibetan school community of orphans, semi-orphans, and destitute children, rather than the world of "privilege" he associated with having parents. His attachment to Tibetan worlds was deeply anchored through his volunteer service tutoring other children: "Every holiday I went back to [Tibetan school] – that was my home. The three months holiday I had – I was teaching all the time. I was a teacher at the age of 12". Through dialogic relations with the other children he tutored, his personal identity in relation to community was authored as compassionate leader and caregiver.

The generation one interviewees who had been most deeply immersed in the social and cultural worlds of "others" in Indian and Christian schools articulated most specifically their internalized sense of "otherness" as distinct from non-Tibetans, but also felt entangled tensions (Clifford, 1994) most sharply in their "otherness" in comparison to Tibetans who were more consistently embedded in Tibetan social worlds. In their cases, sources of "thickening" of identity and struggle were becoming more evident, and diasporic consciousness more sharply and self-consciously defined. They describe themselves as self-

aware gatekeepers of the various discourses, creating their own practices that authored them at "home" at Tibetan school.

Whether in Tibetan, Indian, or Christian schools, generation one interviewees described understanding that their educational and career paths were substantially, if not completely, directed and supported by the TGIE. The highest community authorities placed them in schools, and they went obediently. Schooling and care decisions made by TGIE authorities positioned the interviewees in ways that would determine the directions and potential opportunities for their personal futures, and for the future of the national struggle. Dawa, who completed all his schooling as a boarder at a Christian school in India, knows little of his early childhood. He was born, "most probably somewhere between India, Nepal and Tibet", and although he was not an orphan, his parents lived in Nepal and he had little contact with them. Although he describes himself as having been brought up by Westerners in school, he directs his gratitude to the TGIE and Tibetan community: "I think basically, it's the personal principle people keep. And principle says it's important you know from where you have received your education, from where you have received the benefits, to reach the position where you are, and then return the service".

**Professional Educator: Duty, and a Purposeful Life**

Generation one interviewees were amongst the first Tibetans to complete their schooling in India and return to Tibetan schools as teachers. They do not characterize their entrance into the figured world of teaching as a choice, but neither were they forced. When Tibetan authorities appealed to them to teach,

they claim to have done so without resistance, echoing the deference to authority they had witnessed in adults when they were small children being shuffled between refugee camps, road crews, and schools. Their initial reasons for teaching included TGIE authorities' expectations of them, duty to community in gratitude for care they had received, financial necessity, and lack of other career options. School had been a safe haven for them in childhood, and teaching meant returning to the only stable home they had known. They also describe themselves as performing their Buddhist values of compassion through service to others.

Thubten's initial entry into teaching was in seeking refuge. As an orphan, after finishing high school he went to live and volunteer at a Tibetan boarding school. Throughout his college years he returned to the school for his holidays, and later secured a teaching job there. He worked in service of others, but understood that the benefit was mutual:

> It was good for me too because I had nowhere to go, so it was a good place to come back to.... I loved it. I did all sorts of things – teaching the children games, plays, dramas. I was good in all those things. So whatever I knew I just taught them.

Choedak began teaching after finishing high school, encouraged by a school authority to put the immediate needs of the community ahead of his personal ambition. He complied, perceiving the process as a natural path for him as a member of a community, and participant in the group struggle:

I was ok in my English, ok in my math, and then the people who were running the Tibetan [school] in early years, Tibetan lady, she said "rather than continuing your studies, you teach English". I never thought I'd be teacher, but I became teacher out of this situation. … That was the only option we had. Any Tibetan who could speak English became a teacher – no training – then I knew I could not just leave that because people expected me to do that.

Choedak explained that inherent within the duty of teachers are forms of personal sacrifice, but from a Buddhist perspective this sacrifice is not a burden. Rather, it is honourable to work for the benefit of others. He referenced his own experience of personal loss in childhood, and community-wide hardship, evoking the image of the Dalai Lama as compassionate saviour of all Tibetans, and a model to follow. Choedak describes his life in service to community as, on one level, a simple expression of gratitude: "But then one man, His Holiness, who has given so much for the Tibetans, and we have trusted him, we gave him support through all his activities. And this is one little thing that I can do". Characterized this way, work in service to Tibetans is an active practice of spiritual devotion.

When describing his work as his deeply internalized mission and duty to community, Choedak emphasizes his refugee status. His passion is palpable, and his determination in the struggle seemingly unshakable:

We must not forget that we are refugees. That we are stateless people. What is our fight? What is our cause? Our intention was never that we'd go to the next country to make our life. We must restart what we lost in Tibet. So, this is, I want to tell you as a Tibetan, I am not a politician, but this is

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very strong in me. … As long as we remain as refugees I will

serve. I don't know how long it will take, maybe 200 years,

but I must. If you don't lose your identity you are Tibetan

wherever you live. So I go with this thinking.

The community struggle is embedded within his personal and professional

identity, and reflected in his focus on the emancipation of the Tibetan nation.

Choedak's embodied diasporic consciousness is revealed in his mythologizing of

homeland, hope for return, crisis language of unity, and consciously emphatic

refusal to establish emotional attachments to his country of residence. Choedak

highlighted the "individualistic foundation" and voluntary nature of diasporic

attachments (Chandler, 2001), indicating that he had opportunities to move to

Western countries, but had chosen to stay in Asia working in direct service of the

next generation of youth. Identification of "true self within collective association"

and emphasis on his identification as a refugee reflects a political positioning that

is essential to the endurance of the struggle for emancipation. Wherever he lives,

if it is not Tibet, it cannot be called his true "home".

Tenpa is the only interviewee of generation one to say that he had

considered other career options after college. He had hoped to follow the path of

a research scholar, but instead went where TGIE authorities felt he was most

needed: "They had no Tibetan language teachers and they were facing a lot of

problems. So that's why they posted me as teacher, and my aims changed

automatically". Like others, he views his deference to the TGIE as spiritual

practice, and devotes himself to teaching with religious dedication, although

initially he was unsure of his ability. When he began teaching he appealed to

higher powers for support: "Before, first time, 4 o'clock I got up in the morning and I went to [Temple] and I prayed to God 'please don't waste my time in school. At least I can do and give a little bit contribution for the students' ". Tenpa's childhood struggles to become a monk and to continue his studies had been hard fought negotiations in "dynamic tension" between self and others (Holland and Lave, 2000). As an adult, his most contentious struggle was internal, in his effort to embody within his personal and professional practices the ideals of Buddhism and the TGIE's institutionalized mission. Lived tension in local practice came to the fore in his dialogic relations with students, and reflexive negotiations associated with their responses to his authority.

All generation one interviewees experienced profound personal loss, rescue by the TGIE, and complex negotiations of multiple dialogues and boundary definitions (Holland and Lave, 2000) associated with schooling, Tibetan community, and life in India and Nepal. Their internalized diasporic consciousness (Frykman, 2001) is connected to their feelings of duty to serve Tibetan community as teachers, although Buddhist ethics are also significantly implicated. As Dawa explains, teaching represents a return of service, a joyful duty, and an enactment of compassion (Dalai Lama, 2008). He is confident that, as Buddhist discourse suggests, true happiness is generated through helping others: "So I think we are more satisfied than the ones who are economically more secure". The generation one interviewees are proud of their contribution to the TGIE's efforts to transmit important beliefs, ideals, and practices to younger generations. Now, at the tail end of their careers, they appear at ease in the

belief that they have led purposeful lives working in the service of their students, and their nation.

### 5.1.2  Generation Two: Camp Children

The four interviewees in generation two (Appendix 2, Table 5, Nyima, Sengye, Pasang, and Ngawang) were born between 1960 and 1967 in refugee or road construction camps in India or Nepal. Chronologically they were born soon after generation one, yet the living circumstances of their families and communities were more materially stable, and TGIE institutionalized support systems were somewhat more established and functional. They entered school just a few years after generation one, yet their circumstances and internalization of discourses appear to differ in important ways that impact their approach to their work as teachers.

The generation two interviewees' figured world of *early childhood and family* is marked by poverty, but with greater physical stability and connection to family than generation one experienced. The personal losses they directly experienced were not as severe as generation one interviewees, and their devotion to the TGIE not as strongly stated. Interviewees depicted their figured world of *schooling* differently for day scholars and boarders, with day scholars identifying more strongly with family than school. A distinct change for generation two interviewees in comparison to generation one interviewees is their approach to the figured world of *professional educator*. All the generation two interviewees chose to teach for personal reasons, rather than feeling compelled by TGIE authorities or internalized senses of duty.

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Theoretical themes associated with diasporic consciousness appear prominent earlier in their lives than for generation one interviewees, and the external, authoritative discourses (Bakhtin, 1981) they attended to appears to include voices of family to a greater degree. During their childhood, the reality of extended exile was taking hold throughout the Tibetan diaspora and themes of enduring struggle became more prominent. Authoritative discourse of Buddhism is dominant, but that of the TGIE shifted to a less central position. Their discourses reflect greater senses of personal autonomy, and much less material dependence on the TGIE.

**Early Childhood and Family: Struggle in Poverty**

Generation two interviewees were born into families already settled in exile, although they were not yet materially or emotionally stable or secure. Like most Tibetans at that time, they were struggling to survive. Nonetheless, a shift in diasporic experience is reflected in Sengye's case, indicating that dependence on the TGIE had given way to greater degrees of financial stability and autonomy for some families. Sengye was born in a remote mountain village in Nepal where his family settled with a small cluster of other refugees after escaping Tibet. They were not wealthy, but they managed to subsist. The extreme poverty and high mortality rates of the early years had eased. Due to lack of opportunities for schooling in his village, when Sengye was 11 years old his family chose to send him to a Tibetan boarding school in India. Sengye was not able to see his family for many years, yet he remained strongly emotionally attached to them:

I stayed there for about 5 or 6 years not knowing my parents
how they are.  There was no writing letters and all these
things. After years … my father is coming, and I was excited.
That was the first time I knew my parents were still alive.
And then my father told me all about the family how they
were. Very – like - reborn. Very good opportunity for us.

The emergence of a more nuanced "diasporic consciousness" is evidenced in Sengye's family choosing to enrol him in a Tibetan school rather than a Nepali school closer to home, or not send him to school at all (as would have been in the norm in pre-1959 Tibet, and in rural Nepal when they were living there). Political and financial factors may have limited Sengye's access to Nepali schools, but he understood his family's choice as having been motivated by their desire that he identify as a Tibetan national and connect with the "imagined" Tibetan community beyond their village locale. They were not materially dependent on the TGIE for basic survival, but looked to its offices, representatives, and discourse, for authoritative guidance and symbolic anchoring in the imagined national collective. In their case, physical survival may not have depended on their identification as Tibetan, yet they opted to remain attached nonetheless.

Nyima, born three years after his parents' escape from Tibet, describes his experience of family poverty more vividly than the other three of this generation. They had settled in an Indian town, but struggled to survive. He recalls attending a day-care facility, hunger, and being selected by TGIE officials for admission to a boarding school one week's journey from his family: "Just like

peasants. Going to school without food. But then after, from Dharamsala some official people came and selected those who were very needy, like me, in the 1960s. I was just 4 years old". Although his experience of poverty and loss was not as extreme as generation one interviewees, his discourse reflects greater awareness of his poverty and its effect of differentiating him from others in India. His poverty established him as "different", but so did his access to an administrative authority capable of helping. Indians of the same socio-economic status are not likely to have had access to a support system such as the one the TGIE offered to destitute Tibetans. In this way, his diasporic difference and his family's nationalistic identification as Tibetan may have saved his life.

From the age of 4 or 5 Nyima lived at the Tibetan school year round and rarely saw his parents. He regrets his lack of relationship with family, yet constructing his family circumstance as the norm authors him as an insider and participant within the collective struggle:

> They all just arrived in India from Tibet. So many problems.
> Economical. So that is why they gave all the responsibilities
> to the Tibetan community.… All the parents at that time were
> doing the same thing. Dropping the kids at school and then
> they start their own business. Then the parents feel a bit at
> ease starting their own business. Then when the children
> grow and get bigger, they show a small photo of the kid
> when they were small and they say, "I am your parent, this is
> you". All this happened to me.  My parents didn't take care
> from class one to class nine. To speak the truth I didn't know
> what's the love of a mother to a child.

Multiple entangled tensions of Nyima's early childhood included feeling different from "socially marked others" in India, material dependence on TGIE, parents enmeshed in their personal struggles for material survival, regret at the loss of family relationships, and trepidation about the hardship associated with life in the world outside school. Within this array of tensions, school provided a physically and socially safe locale of stability and security. In this way, Nyima did not equate living in poverty with being socially marginal.

Ngawang's experience of his family's struggle to stay together is illustrative of the larger community's transition from the conditions of refugee crisis to protracted exile, and attempts to make the best of diasporic community life, despite the challenges. Ngawang was born less than one year after his parents' escape from Tibet. His father passed away in the mid-1960s, leaving his mother in a desperate situation trying to care for 12 children. A relative took him to a Tibetan boarding school several days journey away, but his mother could not bear the emotional pain of separation from her youngest child. Within one year she brought him home and enrolled him in a Tibetan day school. She struggled to make ends meet, but with the support of local community she managed to keep her family physically together. His mother's choice to place him in a Tibetan rather than Indian school reflects her diasporic attachment (Anthias, 1998), yet her successful effort to keep him at home despite material hardship helped author family as Ngawang's most salient figured world, and his mother's as his most important authoritative voice.

Like Ngawang, family figured most prominently for Pasang. Pasang's childhood was more stable than the others, and he did not dwell on the story in conversation. By the time he was born, his family was relatively comfortably settled compared to other Tibetans he knew. His identification as Tibetan is connected to his family identity.

In childhood, generation two interviewees identified themselves as "different" from their Indian or Nepali neighbours, thus embodying aspects of diasporic consciousness early in life. In a shift from the apparently unquestioning submission to TGIE discourse that characterized generation one interviewee's childhoods, generation two interviewee's families were more involved in direct acts of agency (Holland et al, 1998), exercising personal autonomy in decision making processes that shaped their futures as individuals. The TGIE's authority was still respected as symbolic community anchor, but not with the same intensity as for generation one interviewees.

**Schooling: Connecting with Community and Family**

Unlike the generation one interviewees who were scattered amongst Tibetan, Indian, and Christian schools, all generation two interviewees attended Tibetan schools. By the late 1960s and 1970s when they were school age, enough schools had been established by TGIE to accommodate them, and their parents chose to send them to Tibetan rather than Indian or Nepali schools. Tibetans of generation one's era were finishing school and returning to teach, changing the dynamics of the schools that had previously been staffed primarily by Indian teachers. The interviewees' processes of enactment of identity in

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connection to family and community, and the intensity of their emotional attachment to TGIE's authority, differ between boarders (Nyima and Sengye) and day scholars (Pasang and Ngawang).

Sengye and Nyima's boarding school experience connected them to imagined community through participation in cultural forms and discourse, and to a larger Tibetan face-to-face community than they would have experienced at their family homes. Sengye perceived schooling as a rite of passage that initiated him into adulthood. He recalls his excitement when, as an 11 year old, he was admitted to boarding school: "first time I'd been away from my parents. I felt like I was getting something. Becoming a man. Very happy to go with those other students". Sengye did not emotionally disassociate from family when he was at school, rather he longed for them. But, school was the location where he established and enacted degrees of personal autonomy within the larger community. In keeping with Buddhist frameworks in which personal autonomy takes place within contexts of communal and global interdependence, Sengye does not view his connection to family as distinct from his schooling or membership in the larger Tibetan imagined community. Rather, he feels that it was his responsibility to immerse himself in Tibetan schooling as duty to family, community, and self. His family wanted him to go to Tibetan school in order to connect with Tibetan community and cultural discourse, and he agreed enthusiastically:

> Main reason is involving the Tibetan government objectives
> – main reason is that as Tibetans our duty is to not mix with
> other nationalities .… [The Tibetan government is] bearing

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all these expenses [of running Tibetan schools] because to save our identities.

For Nyima, school provided relative material comfort and stability, and an important place for negotiating his personal identity in relation to the "imagined" Tibetan nation. As a small child at home he was more connected to Indian social networks than Tibetan. He spoke Tibetan at home, but his neighbours and play friends were all Indian. He feels that his identity as Tibetan was authored while in boarding school, through processes of internalizing the authoritative discourses in which he was immersed, and engaging in academic and cultural learning within community. His identity as a member of imagined community connected by national culture (Hall, 1996) was authored around Tibetan cultural symbols and discourses, including spoken and written language: "There I was like Tibetan boy studying together with Tibetan students. There we used to write on that board. Tibetan. You know, handwriting". Nyima referred to the traditional method of teaching and learning penmanship, whereby sawdust is spread over a wooden plank and a sharpened stick is used to write letters by scraping away the dust. Language connected Nyima to imagined community, and the tangible, tactile, medium through which language was taught constituted a dialogic form that he internalized as uniquely Tibetan. The act of participation in learning this cultural form marked him as an "insider" within the Tibetan collective. In class 2, Nyima was moved to a larger school: "Then really schooling started: abcd's, ka kha ga na's [first 4 letters of Tibetan alphabet]. And we had very nice teachers. Tibetan teachers teaching English, teaching Tibetan. I really remember those childhood days".

Pasang and Ngawang lived with their families longer than Sengye and Nyima. At the elementary level they attended day school rather than boarding. Neither Pasang nor Ngawang emphasised the importance of schooling to their processes of personal identity construction and connection to with community. For them, the figured world of schooling was important as a path toward a career and economic self-sufficiency, but they did not refer to social or cultural currency of schooling to the same extent as Sengye and Nyima. They both described family as their most salient relationship, and home community as the important locale for their personal identity construction.

**Professional Educator: Choosing to Teach**

The generation two interviewees made personal choices in relation to post-secondary education and career. The range of options available to them may have been narrow, but the notion of having had any choice at all represents a shift in diasporic conditions. Generation two interviewees were less dependent on the TGIE for material survival, thus felt more in control of their personal life choices. In making career decisions, they considered factors such as personal satisfaction and fulfilment, employment opportunities, and quality of life for themselves and their family. None felt pressured or compelled by TGIE authorities to teach, but family encouraged them to serve Tibetan society. Ultimately, each had different reasons for becoming teachers and constructed their identities as educators differently.

Sengye describes his decision to teach as motivated by feelings of gratitude to the TGIE, as well as a form of nationalistic attachment encouraged by his family:

> One thing is the Tibetan government give me as one of my second parents. Because I got the opportunity to learn to read and write and learn English and Tibetan and Hindi – all these things. So I should serve my country.

In Sengye's case, discourse of Tibetan authorities echoes that of his family, urging him to carry on the national struggle. All authoritative voices appear to have directed him the same way, and he complied, internalizing their discourses as his own.

For Nyima, school represents a place of material safety and security, and a community where he feels at home. When he enrolled in a B.Ed. program he was seeking to extend this ease and enjoyment to his career: "some of my friends we were planning our future what to do. And I thought, teachers job, easiest to get. And then another reason was, we thought teachers have a very happy life. Easy life. So we thought 'oh that's nice'".

In relation to the larger Tibetan struggle, Pasang's discourse was less emotional than most other interviewees, yet his attachment to the cultural community figured into his motivation for teaching nonetheless. He had not initially planned to be a teacher, and tried other things, but then he returned to college to complete a degree. It was relatively easy for him to secure a teaching job, and he enjoys it, but he describes the decision as one of convenience rather

than a passion for the work. Nevertheless, politics of diasporic positioning and boundary definition associated with language and cultural symbols are evident in his desire to raise his children within a community where transmission of Tibetan knowledge systems and cultural symbols takes place: "I have two small kids, and I want to be with them and to work at a Tibetan school. To learn the language and that". For him, teaching is simply a good job, which offers benefits for his family. He seeks to maintain attachment and connection to community for himself and his family, but without the intensity or connotations of duty in the mission that some other interviewees expressed.

Ngawang was attracted to teaching because the nature of the work matches Buddhist ethical and spiritual ideals of service that he internalized through dialogic practice within family and home community. He cites his mother as an influential model who embeds her spiritual beliefs within her lived practice and dialogic relations with others. He seeks to apply Buddhist principles in all aspects of his life, just as his mother does. He teaches English, although for him the academic subject is immaterial. Teaching of any sort is his spiritual calling: "My vocation is teaching – and according to Buddhist view this is one of the best professions – you will not become rich in this life but your next life will be good because of what you have taught the children". Teaching Tibetan children, thus contributing to the community struggle (Holland and Lave, 2000), is an added incentive but not his core motivation:

> My interest was teaching [not necessarily in Tibetan school],
> but I did think that if I could teach in a Tibetan school I get
> more satisfaction, to teach my own Tibetan children.

> Because I went to a Tibetan school, and if I teach at a
> Tibetan school I'll have a chance to give back.

The diasporic struggle drew him back to community and framed his mission broadly as serving the national cause, but Ngawang believes that in any context, refugee or not, his life mission would have been connected to teaching. He sees himself as a teacher who happens to be a refugee, rather than a refugee who teaches within the struggle. He believes he has chosen diasporic attachment and the embedding of his individual identity with the struggle, creating his own form of belonging.

The generation two interviewees approach teaching first as a matter of personal interest and a means of making a living, followed in importance by their attachment and commitment to the Tibetan struggle. In contrast to the conditions when generation one interviewees entered the profession, when they decided upon their careers generation two interviewees do not appear to have thought that they were desperately needed by the Tibetan administration. By the time they were qualified to teach, schools were already relatively well staffed with Tibetan teachers. Generation one interviewee's passionate sense of missionary duty is not evident with generation two interviewees. Generation one interviewees could not imagine physical survival without Tibetan schools, whereas generation two interviewees did imagine other possibilities. Nonetheless, they chose to return to Tibetan schools to teach, and to Tibetan communities to live, identifying as cultural "insiders" and seeking to raise their children within the Tibetan community.

### 5.1.3  Generation Three:  Settlement Generation

The thirteen generation three interviewees (Appendix 2,

**Table 6) were** born in India between 1972 and 1981, when, for the first time since 1959, the majority of Tibetans in diaspora had physical locations in which they could take root and settle into regular routines (Appendix 2,

Table 6). Born into the struggle one to two decades after its genesis, generation three interviewees illuminate the increasing diversity of diasporic experience over time, and increasing complexity and tension within individuals' processes of establishing personal identities and making sense of their positions in the larger group struggle.

Eleven of the thirteen were born in formal Tibetan settlements that had been established in the late 1960s and early 1970s. One of the interviewees was raised in an Indian town within a scattered community of Tibetans, and one was orphaned at a young age and lived at a boarding school year round. The range of socio-economic conditions amongst individuals and families was wider than in previous generations, as was the range of school settings and post-secondary education and career opportunities. Greater overall economic stability had been achieved in diaspora, and TGIE infrastructure was established to address the needs of the populace, but physical survival was still a struggle for many individuals and families.

Interviewees' responses are grouped here according to the type of school they attended: *Settlement School (CTSA)*; *Boarding School*; *Wards*; *Scattered Community School*; and, *Non-Tibetan School*. Their school context is related to family situation and socio-economic status, and appears to be connected to processes of internalizing various authoritative discourses. Figured worlds of *early childhood, family, and schooling* and *professional educator* appear to differ in nuance within each school context, illuminating the increasingly diverse

historically and socio-economically situated social tensions and processes of establishing emotional attachment to community.

Interviewees who are *Settlement School (CTSA)* graduates appear to have had relatively comfortable community and family lives, but some were discontented with the quality of instruction and guidance they received at school. They view teaching as a patriotic duty.

Parents of interviewees who were *Boarding School* graduates' had chosen to pay tuition fees to send them to schools they considered more reputable than the CTSA schools on the settlements, that they could have attended free of charge. After graduation, these interviewees chose to move home to be near their parents. While working as teachers they experienced internal transformations that convinced them of the importance of the work.

The perceptions of the interviewees who were *Wards,* destitute children who felt they had been rescued by the TGIE, are reminiscent of generation one interviewees. They appear to approach teaching as a spiritual practice and a source of personal fulfilment.

The interviewee who was a *Scattered Community School* graduate looks to her teaching practice as an opportunity to re-author her personal identity as more closely connected to Tibet.

The interviewee who attended a *Non-Tibetan School* appears self-conscious about her deficiencies in cultural knowledge. She sought work as a

teacher in a Tibetan school to author herself more centrally as an "insider", and to position herself as a learner within community.

Generation three interviewee's representations of their diasporic attachment tend to be intense and self-conscious, and their struggles to establish boundaries appear fluid and fraught with anxiety. The uncertain future and their senses of personal and professional responsibility in the community struggle appear to weigh more heavily on the emotions of generation three interviewees in comparison to interviewees of other generations. They appear sensitive and self-conscious about the various discourses and dialogues whose meanings they negotiate, and they struggle to partition dialogues they consider "non-Tibetan" to less privileged internalized locations where they are taken less seriously. At the same time, they appear to struggle to negotiate diasporic positions for political and social emancipation for their community in relation to the world.

## Settlement School: Central Tibetan Schools Association (CTSA)

Four of the thirteen interviewees of this generation (Karma, Yangchen, Ugyen, and Pema) spent their entire childhood living with parents and siblings in their home settlements, and attended CTSA (rather than Autonomous) day school there. Dekyi also attended settlement CTSA schools, although after primary school she boarded at a CTSA school in a different settlement. Dekyi shares some concerns specific to CTSA schools, while other perspectives appear more strongly associated with boarders who are separated from parents most of the year. Dekyi's responses are included in this sub-section for her

thoughts on quality of the instructional program, and the next subsection

(Boarding School) for issues connected with living away from home.

For the interviewees who are CTSA school graduates, the figured world of *early childhood, family, and schooling* appears to include close relationships with family, and concerns about the quality of education they received. They frame their figured world of *professional educator* as their patriotic duty in service of the nation and the struggle.

## Early Childhood, Family, and Schooling: Privileging Tibetan Discourse

With intact families, and a geographically fixed community base, these interviewees' lives followed the village model that was hoped for by Tibetan authorities when the settlements were originally established. With enough food, basic housing, education, and medical care available on the settlement, they were better off than their parents had been in the first decade of exile. They did not have excess material wealth, but they were not hungry. Nonetheless, these interviewees expressed greater regret and disappointment in the education they received than those who attended Tibetan Autonomous schools. Family appears to have been the most salient influence that informed their career and other life choices.

Dekyi's school experience was positive overall, but her Indian teachers bore the brunt of her complaints. The majority of her teachers were Tibetan, but in class 11 and 12 more were Indian. At that point, she noticed a difference:

> Indian teacher unfortunately, some were very good, some
> just time pass [waste time].… But Tibetans do more than

school teaching. They also organize the Tibetan functions
and encouraging us about the Tibetan issues and our
culture, and also prayers and give us speech. They did more
than Indian teachers. Indian teachers just impart knowledge
during the school time.

Dekyi's concerns reflect her values regarding the kind of learning that matters,
and the kind of dialogue she is willing to attend to seriously. Cultural learning and
religious values that are the purview of "insiders", and that author her "in" as
deeply embedded in the cultural, historical, and political discourse of the
diasporic imagined community, are far more important to her than academic
learning. Echoing others in generation three, and the Buddhist discourse that
community authorities have told her is "hers", the forms of teaching and learning
that Dekyi identifies as most important belong to social and cultural realms to
which only Tibetans have access:

> The main thing is that with Tibetan identity, which includes
> our language, culture, religion, all these things – it will help
> us develop inner peace. The way we think – as Tibetan  - the
> relationship between parents and children, teachers and
> students – like that – the way they think – it's quite important
> – the relationship between neighbours – understanding each
> other's problems.

This structuring of learning priorities helps entrench boundaries that maintain the
positions of Indians, Westerners, and all others as "outsiders" whose cultural
discourse is attended to for its utility in the mundane world, but resisted on

emotional levels. Relationships with outsiders are generally friendly, but important boundaries remain.

The central complaint of this group of interviewees was that the CTSA system was not as specifically positioned to address Tibetan needs as Autonomous schools, coupled with interviewees' assumption that Tibetan teachers "naturally" cared more for Tibetan children than did Indian teachers. Therefore, Tibetans teachers are, with a few exceptions, presumed to be more effective for Tibetan children than Indian or other teachers can be. Some fluidity in boundary definition allows caring non-Tibetans some degrees of access into the margins of community, but not full membership. Their discourse is scrutinized, and internalized only as necessary for the utility of exam success.

**Professional Educator: Patriotic Duty**

The interviewees who are CTSA school graduates tend to describe their figured world of educator in terms of patriotic duty and service to community, embedding discourse of the Tibetan struggle within their personal and professional identities. Their verbal expressions of diasporic attachment and commitment to the struggle are emphatic and emotionally stated. As Yangchen explains, "I am Tibetan. I want to serve Tibetan community….Because of the Tibetan government. Giving back – we have to be of service".

Parents of these interviewees could provide little specific career guidance because as farmers, road workers, and sweater sellers, none had experience with the professional or cultural worlds that their children's academic education was designed to prepare them for. Nonetheless, parents echoed the discourse of

the TGIE authorities, imploring their children to study well as a patriotic duty, emotionally commit to the struggle, and then work in support of the nation. Ugyen's choice was to teach Tibetan language:

> Actually, both my father and mother advised me to study well, and you have to serve our Tibetan government, serve society, for preservation of Tibetan culture. They both advised me that I have the responsibility to look after the young people. So whatever was possible I studied and then I wanted to be a teacher. To give what I have, and what we have, and what we were. I want people to know.

Politics of positioning and a self-conscious, strategic, approach to diasporic identity are reflected in the interviewees' insistence on teaching in Tibetan rather than Indian schools. When asked whether she would ever want to teach in an Indian school, Pema's response was quick, and her internalized boundaries sharply expressed:

> Never thought of that! Not only me. I think most of the Tibetans. We feel like it's our duty. Our own conscience we feel we should work for Tibet people. We have studied in our own school and for the same reason we have to teach in our own school.

Pema believes that as a teacher she can help facilitate the empowerment of individuals within community, and motivate them to act in service of Tibetan society in their turn, contributing to the generation, and regeneration of the struggle: "I chose it because I thought it was a good job in the sense that it's a

good service to our nation. Of course a doctor is a good service too but it's more of a personal kind. Teaching I thought is for broader sense".

From a Buddhist perspective, Pema anticipates that her career will bring her deeply internalized personal satisfaction: "I will have deep contentment. That I have done a good job. Not for myself but for my country. This will be enough for me". The discourse of the broader community positively reinforces Pema's position in a place of social privilege, recognized for her service to the nation: "the people – from the restaurant owner to everyone – they will have very high respect for us as teacher. When I say I'm a teacher they say 'Oh you're doing so much for your country'. It's very nice".

## Boarding School: Family and Personal Choice

Dekyi, Dolma, and Wangmo's families live on settlements, but they attended boarding school away from home nonetheless. In Dolma and Wangmo's cases, their figured worlds of *early childhood, family, and schooling* involve family's choice and financial support in sending them to schools they believed provided higher quality education than the settlement school. Dekyi and Dolma reluctantly entered the figured world of *professional educator.* It led them to author new identity configurations in their positions of authority and responsibility in the diasporic struggle. They are committed to the struggle, but worry about their capacity to lead.

### Early Childhood, Family, and Schooling: Family Choice

Dolma and Wangmo's families opted to enrol them in Autonomous Tibetan schools, paying tuition fees directly. Their immediate families experienced

financial challenges, but relatives were able to fund their schooling. As a result, they were able to take somewhat more direct control of their educational paths than most other Tibetan families. Diasporic attachment is evident in the decision to send the children to Tibetan rather than Indian schools, and strategic positioning privileging some discourses over others, are evident in the choice to avoid the Indian government run CTSA settlement schools they could have attended free of charge.

Although they appreciate the transmission of culture, values, and ideals from their parents and school authorities, these interviewees complain that discourses that they believe might have supported their transition into college and career were absent. They spent a few months each year with their parents, who had no experience with the discourses of academia or professional careers in diaspora, and school authorities didn't (or couldn't) provide specific guidance. When Dekyi completed school, she did not have a sense of what might come next: "we just go through the exam and completed and didn't have much thinking about career or anything. We lack guidance from our parents or the institution". These interviewees appear to believe that transmission of Tibetan culture and the ideals of the political struggle were facilitated at school, but dialogues and mechanisms to support a smooth transition into their adult careers were lacking. They respond to institutional authoritative discourse with caution, appearing somewhat sceptical of the institutions' power to help them.

All interviewees in this group claimed to want to live with or near their parents after college. Their desire to return home may be related to gender roles,

although other female interviewees of generation three lived far from family in the locations where they found work. Dekyi, Dolma, and Wangmo all describe their motivation to move home after many years away at boarding school as personal desire, rather than family or community expectations.

**Professional Educator: Going home – personal transformation**

Identity as a process of becoming, and the fluidity of identity, are evident in Dekyi's experience as a young adult. After completing college she moved home to her settlement because her father was ill and she wanted to help. She had not previously had any intention of teaching, but took a job at the nearby school purely for personal convenience. Through engagement in dialogic processes of teaching and responding to students, she felt valued and appreciated, and began to value herself in her work:

> Now I think it's a very noble job I've been doing. Because here I not only get to teach but also developed an understanding of students. I've also learned lots more. The relationship, cooperation, social lives of Tibetans. So there is lots from this school I have gained.

Dialogic processes and reflexivity in practice connected her more strongly to Tibetan community, reflecting Taubman's (1993) notion of the process by which the "communal register" functions in activating identity within community.

Dolma's notion of her professional positioning in relation to community is more fraught than other's expressed. She did not want to teach, but felt that it was the only viable career option available to her. After graduating from school she appealed to the TGIE for a scholarship because her family could not afford to

pay college fees. She accepted admission into a B.Ed. program because it was the only scholarship available at the time. Despite her lack of enthusiasm for the profession, Dolma was resolute that if she must teach, it must be in a Tibetan school. Her expressions of nationalism, attachment to diasporic community, boundary definition processes, and her efforts to convince her students of the importance of the struggle, echo the authoritative discourse of her elders:

> I speak Tibetan, I am Tibetan, and I must teach our own children. Because right now we teachers are the makers of our mission. Because when I teach in Tibetan society, whether I'm getting low or high salary it doesn't matter.... And whenever I teach in class I think of His Holiness. I think what I am getting from him. Because we are in exile. And with children also I am very frank. I tell them, "We are in exile, we don't have our own land, so we must study very hard. Whatever we are teaching if you don't listen you will regret later on". Especially for Tibetan children.

Dolma's attachment to the national struggle and symbols such as the Dalai Lama are evident in her verbal representations of the community struggle, but tension is also revealed in her effort to embody and put into practice some forms of caring that she feels duty bound to master and model for the next generation of Tibetan youth. The weight of responsibility for ensuring intergenerational transmission of ideals and values is a difficult burden for Dolma. She fears that she is not capable of doing the important work of a teacher:

> Sometimes I feel as though I've chosen the wrong one because I don't have that much patience. I feel so aggressive, and I try to control myself as much as I can, but

sometimes I can't control that. So then I feel lonely. I start feeling I've chosen the wrong way.… Otherwise I feel teacher's job is the best one because we, through teaching, not only we get money but also we are making the child in good shape. If we are teaching nicely, with full enthusiasm. But if we are teaching just to time pass then that is very wrong. So sometimes my mind goes two ways. Sometimes I think good. Whatever God has given me ok. I don't have other options at that time [when I finished college].

Unlike Dekyi and Dolma, Wangmo had planned to teach, expecting that her career would bring her important personal benefits associated with Buddhist discourse: "Inner satisfaction. That means that I have done something for children, whether it is useful or not, inner satisfaction that at least I educated them". The importance of performing diasporic consciousness and attachment through service to Tibetan society was instilled in Wangmo from an early age: "My father always used to tell me that you have to do whatever kind of work you can to serve your society … whatever – you have to do something for our Tibetan society". The message echoed in school, and in community-wide discourse, assured Wangmo that working in service to community is the route to a happy life. The Tibetan struggle and Buddhism were intertwined, and service in support of Tibetan society equated with service to self.

**Wards: Destitute children**

Although overall conditions for Tibetans in diaspora had improved since generation one and two interviewees were children, the families of four interviewees of generation three were still struggling for basic survival (Sonam,

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Rigzin, Tsering, and Chimi). In each of their cases the TGIE intervened, declaring

the children "Wards" (equivalent to "Wards of the State"). They were provided

education, food, clothing, shelter, and care at Autonomous Tibetan boarding

schools. Sonam, an orphan, was fully cared for at the school year round. Rigzin,

Tsering, and Chimi returned to their family homes on settlements during holidays.

For these children, the figured world of *early childhood, family, and schooling*

includes loss and poverty, with schooling as a refuge from poverty. These

interviewees describe their figured world of *professional educator* as a quest for

personal and spiritual fulfilment.

**Early Childhood, Family, and Schooling: Refuge from Poverty, Initiation into Community**

Sonam was sent to boarding school as a Ward at age five because her

parents were destitute. They both passed away when she was eight. She credits

the school with supporting her fully, and expresses sentiments of gratitude

reminiscent of generation one interviewees' discourse:

> Whatever I am now is all because of this school. I was a
> boarder. My parents couldn't manage and they were quite
> poor. At that time many Tibetans were poor. I was brought
> up by the school, so that gives me a sense of commitment,
> satisfying commitment, to always come back home. This
> school is my home.

Although her personal struggle with loss and hardship is not the same as

generation one interviewees, her identification of the school as "home" echoes

their discourse. Her family situation was more difficult than other interviewees of

generation three, yet, like the most destitute interviewees of generations one and

two, she emphasised that her situation was not unusual. This construction echoes community authoritative discourse authoring the most economically marginalized into the social centre, and emphasizing appreciation for what one has, rather than dwelling in grief for what one has lost.

Chimi was declared a Ward at the age of 10, after her father died. She emphasises the importance of boarding school in providing her understandings necessary to identify as Tibetan, despite never having been to Tibet. She approached the act of internalizing community discourse enthusiastically, beginning with participation in cultural practices at school that connected her to community social life and history. Gradually, over years of dialogic reflexivity in community practice, she internalized and developed more nuanced and philosophical understandings of the discourses. At the most personal and individualistic level, she views the school as having provided her face-to-face community, and a Buddhist spiritual path that she treasures. She believes that participation within community, and with cultural symbols and genres, is how her authoring of self within community began. She eagerly seeks to internalize the discourse of school authorities, who she trusts as caregivers:

> I can recite the prayers, know most of the festivals, and I can
> do most of the things that are done during the festivals – and
> if we are in the Tibetan community you become sort of
> controlled by the community – so you sort of have to follow
> the main thing. After some time – when you mature – you
> can know the main things and you can go – you can know
> the importance of being that. Basically, we are brought up
> here with the grounding that we should have compassion,

and education to be a good human being. Education is a
means and not an end – the end is good human. That's
really formally instilled in us in many ways.

Echoing all other Wards, Tsering frames her identity around appreciation,
rather than her experience of loss. She values positive examples of lived practice
as more profoundly authoritative than academic discourse found in school
textbooks. Her mother's emotional and spiritual resilience within conditions of
hardship represents the most powerful authoritative discourse in Tsering's life:

My mom was from a remote part of U-Tsang [central Tibet] -
nomad. Not educated. But I feel very much inspired by my
mother. You know she lost her husband at a young age. 32
or something. And with 4 children, and without anything at
home, she made her living by herself. I learned so many
things from her. She is my source of inspiration.

Tsering emotionally connects to the Tibetan struggle by incorporating her
mother's experience into her own personal history. Her understanding of her
mother's struggle became embedded within her own embodied struggle to
support others in the community.

These interviewees identify as survivors. They are proud of their personal
strength, and the resilience of their community. The authoritative discourse of the
elders who suffered and survived appears to have special resonance for them.

**Professional Educator: Seeking Fulfilment**

When Chimi completed her education and considered career options, her
family supported her decision to teach. Chimi views her work as an expression of

appreciation, and a form of repayment for the care and education she received: "without scholarship I can't do anything". Expanding the lens to include her family's perspective, a discourse that matters greatly to her, the notion of duty encompasses for her a broad mission of spiritual service to community. Her family referred to Buddhist values and principles, including the belief that caring for and guiding others is a form of spiritual practice:

> My brother he had strong background knowledge, so he used to advise me that I should take a teaching job. He said that if you teach then at least 15 students will know, they will be sort of enlightened, but if you work in an office you won't have that impact. So it's sort of practicing compassion.

The various components of her motivation to teach reflect the combined, and interrelated, authoritative discourses of school, family, community, and Buddhism, all of which depict teaching as a noble and personally affirming mission.

Tsering's process of authoring her personal, adult identity does not appear as smooth as Chimi's, but it ultimately reflects a similar spiritual quest. She initially attended to her high school guidance counsellors' advice as parental authority, accepting admission to the college program that he suggested. Her deference to his discourse diminished as the first year of college dragged on, and she struggled through an academic program that she did not value or enjoy. She dropped out due to disinterest and disillusionment. She then took a job at a Tibetan private school where the enthusiastic response of the children and the appreciation she received from the community gave her a sense of purpose and

belonging. After a few years she returned to her home settlement in India, but with no job prospects there, her mother worried that she would stagnate: "she advised me not to spoil my life like that. She told me to do something. She advised like this. She encouraged me a lot". When Tsering received news that she had been admitted to a Tibetan teacher-training program she was overjoyed: "I felt very happy, and I thought I got new chance at life". Tsering's dialogic struggles with Tibetan authorities, and within herself, pushed and pulled until she negotiated a position within her community, on terms that she feels she had a substantial role in constructing, and where she finds meaning and a sense of purpose.

Like others of this group, Sonam is seeking personal spiritual fulfilment though her practice as a teacher. She understands that teaching is dialogical in multiple ways, and that profound personal transformation can be facilitated:

> The teacher's job is something very remarkable I think – as the years go by I think there is so much enhancement of your information…. As the time goes I hope that there is so much a successful feeling that you are really helping develop the personalities of the students. Or making a better person, and also yourself – looking at your weaknesses all the time and trying to rectify them, and as time goes I hope students improve – as well as we improve. It would really be a meaningful life.

Sonam's desire to guide children in their personal growth, and her commitment to the collective struggle are intertwined with and inseparable from her personal identity:

It's not about our own life, and being very lavish, and very

nice comfortable life. It's about Tibet. That's why I'm here.

For Tibet. Try to free Tibet and also encourage them to

perfect qualities, and fight for the cause.

The authoritative discourse of family, school, TGIE, and Buddhism seem to have prompted these interviewees to the common goal of service to the struggle, through service to children. In the dialogic practice embedded within their professional lives, all feel that their personal emotional and spiritual needs are being met. Their work as teachers provides them inspiration, spiritual fulfilment, and inner satisfaction. In contrast to generation one, they feel that they were able to make personal choices to teach, and that the choice was for their own emotional and spiritual benefit as well as for the benefit of community.

## Scattered Community School: Multiple Worlds

The final two interviewees of generation three, Lhamo (scattered community) and Dolkar (non-Tibetan school graduate, described in the next subsection), provide an important contrast to those previously discussed. Both feel that their childhood processes of cultural "becoming" were deficient, and that they are on the cultural margins of Tibetan diasporic community. While teaching, both are consciously trying to author themselves more centrally as insiders.

Lhamo was born and raised in the Indian town where her grandparents settled in the 1960s, and is the only generation three interviewee schooled in a scattered community of Tibetans. Her multiple figured worlds in *childhood* included her home and family, Tibetan day school, and the Indian town where

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she lived. Her figured world of *professional educator* connects her to Tibet emotionally and culturally in ways that she previously felt deprived.

**Early Childhood, Family, and Schooling: Multiple Worlds**

Lhamo identifies as a Tibetan national and a devout Buddhist, although she felt only partially immersed in Tibetan social worlds throughout her childhood. She attended the same Tibetan day school that her parents had attended, and at home her grandmother was the uncontested head of the family until she passed away in the 1980s, but all her neighbours and friends outside school were Indian. Amongst the array of verbal, textual, cultural and symbolic discourses associated with her various childhood worlds, her mother's was the authoritative discourse that she attended to most seriously, with unquestioning trust and eagerness. Lhamo is the only interviewee whose parents completed their schooling in exile, and the only one to experience parental pressure toward a specific career path rather than a more general appeal to work in service of Tibetans. She acknowledges that she pursued her mother's dream:

> I am totally influenced by my mother. Due to some personal problems she had to resign her job. And she, her dream is to make me a teacher, make me like her. I'm trying my best.

Later, as an adult teaching and living in a Tibetan boarding school, she felt her difference from other Tibetans. There, she became self-conscious of aspects of her identity that she describes as Indian, and felt deficient as a Tibetan: "I don't know about Tibetan because most of my neighbours were Indian. And in my family, though we have lots of conversations about things in Tibetan language,

but my all peer group are Indian". Despite her and her family's efforts to strategically resist other discourses by sending her to Tibetan school and honouring the discourse of family matriarchs, as an adult her internalized cultural hybridity feels an uncomfortable fit.

**Professional Educator: Connecting to Tibet**

Although Lhamo joked that Buddhist spiritual devotion compelled her to submit dutifully to her mother's wishes, she also feels that she and her mother share character traits and deeply held values that led her to trust, internalize, and act on her mother's discourse. Lhamo now shares her mother's passion for teaching. She frames her commitment as both patriotic duty and Buddhist practice: "To teach Tibetans, in Tibetan school. Lots of reasons. Being Tibetan, it's her [mother's] and my dream. This teaching job, you get great satisfaction. Teaching our own brothers and sisters".

Lhamo was particularly motivated to teach at a school for new arrivals from Tibet. Previously, Tibet had existed for her in distant mythologized form through stories transmitted by her grandmother, other elders, her parents who had escaped as small children, and through media such as books and videos. Lhamo sought deeper personal connections, and cherishes the lived connection to "true" Tibet that her students provide her. Through her work she encounters the struggle, and connects to the social geography of Tibet, in more deeply personal ways than she had ever experienced before:

> It was my first time I saw new arrival Tibetans. They are
> totally different from Tibetans in India. Their way of talking,

eating. I got to know how they talk, how they look, their
nature. And I was much impressed to see the true Tibetan.
We were very much influenced by Indians.

Lhamo's physical juxtapositioning and dialogic practices with new arrival

Tibetans provide her insights into Tibet, and into herself. Teaching provides her a

physical locale and social landscape where she authors and practices her adult

identity as more deeply and directly connected to Tibet than her previous

diasporic identity had been.

## Non-Tibetan School: Authoring her way home

Dolkar regrets that she attended a non-Tibetan school. Economically she

is now better positioned than her siblings who struggle to make a living as

sweater sellers, and she possesses skills and knowledge that more comfortably

connect her to the larger world (e.g. English language), yet she seeks Tibetan

cultural inclusion. Dolkar's *early childhood, family and schooling* established her

as a Tibetan patriot who is self-conscious and insecure in her ability to represent

herself to the world. As a *professional educator* she is consciously reauthoring

her way "home" through immersion in Tibetan society.

### Early Childhood, Family, and Schooling: Patriot with shaky boundaries

Patriotic nationalism is embedded in Dolkar's personal history through her

family and settlement community's connection to the early, dramatic battle for the

Tibetan nation. Her parents were farmers in Eastern Tibet when the Chinese

People's Liberation Army (PLA) entered their region around 1950. Dolkar's father

joined the Tibetan armed resistance forces known as Chu Shi Gang Druk (Four

Rivers, Six Ranges), legendary amongst Tibetans as heroes who fought bravely against the PLA. Chu Shi Gang Druk's efforts ultimately failed, and members suffered harsh reprisals. Their only hope for survival was escape. Dolkar's parents left Tibet in the mid-1950s, prior to the mass exodus that followed the Dalai Lama's 1959 escape. When refugee settlements were set up in South India in the early 1970s, Dolkar's parents moved there with several hundred families from the same region of Tibet.

Dolkar was born on the settlement, but her mother passed away when she was a child. All her siblings left school to work as seasonal sweater sellers, but they encouraged Dolkar in her education when she was awarded a charitable scholarship to a private boarding school. Her academic education is strong, but schooling took her away from her face-to-face Tibetan community, and into other cultural genres. Echoing Anderson's (1991) emphasis on language in the shaping of nationhood and authoring of imagined community, Dolkar's greatest disappointment is her lack of Tibetan language fluency:

> I have missed very important thing in my life. I have not been
> taught Tibetan language. So even now I feel it's difficult in
> Tibetan, writing, and speaking also. So at that time I was
> quite nervous and shy. I wish I could have joined in Tibetan
> school.

Dolkar could converse in Tibetan, but she could not read or write, and was not well versed in historical details or political analysis. She felt at home with her family on her settlement, but diasporic self-consciousness and sense of loss were drawn to the surface in college, when she was called upon by others to

explain her background. She was normally socially comfortable with her Indian

friends, but the diasporic difference that she embodies in her physical

appearance and family history is a boundary that she treasures. In college, she

did not want to be identified as Indian, yet she grieved the source and cause of

her difference, and struggled to find her Tibetan voice to articulate her identity as

a participant in the collective struggle:

> When I was in college then my Indian friends – we used to
> be very happy – but sometimes they would ask me, "Who
> are you and where are you from? Where is your country?"
> They are asking like this. And then I really feel – tears are
> coming up from my eyes thinking that oh I don't have my
> own country – Chinese have stolen – occupied our country.
> So that gave me some emotion. I don't have country of my
> own.… When I came here [to teach at the Tibetan school] I
> didn't find that feeling in the Tibetan children. All are Tibetan
> and all teachers are Tibetan. They don't get this pain to
> think.

Dolkar's sense of dislocation and grief, feeling neither Indian nor fully developed

in her Tibetan-ness, led her to believe in the vital importance of a deeply

internalized national identity and connection to community through skills,

knowledge and genres, in addition to her emotional and family historical

connection.

### Professional Educator: Re-authoring Tibetan-ness

Dolkar didn't have a particular career in mind, but ended up in a B.Ed.

program after tagging along with some college friends and submitting an

application with them. Her father encouraged her to be of service to Tibetan community, but was not specific as to the form of service: "[he] always advised me to work in Tibetan society. He used to say 'we are refugees – we have to do more than other'". The combined motivation of seeking personal transformation through immersion in Tibetan social and cultural forms, and her desire to be of service to her nation, motivated her to accept a teaching job in a remote and underserviced Tibetan boarding school. She hopes that she is contributing to the struggle by helping others avoid her current predicament:

> I think it's important just because you're Tibetan. And being Tibetan you have to know each thing about it – way of thinking, history of Tibet, way of living. So being a Tibetan you have to know all the things…. I lacked Tibetan understanding so I faced problems. Sometimes I could not speak Tibetan so I thought I should learn – I felt that in my mind. The feelings came very strongly.

Dolkar teaches English, but in her spare time she studies Tibetan language. She understands the importance of language as a boundary differentiating insiders from others, and she wants to author herself more fully "in".

### 5.1.4 New Arrivals

The four new arrival interviewees (Appendix 2, Table 7, Youdon, Phurbu, Dorjee, and Migmar) represent a second wave of diaspora, who escaped from Tibet from the late 1970s onwards. They bring important alternate perspectives to the larger community's diasporic discourses. Their personal histories, struggles, and perspectives differ in significant ways from those whose families

escaped in the 1950s and 60s. They do not have direct experience of the early years of diasporic struggle, but do have experience of life in Tibet under Chinese government rule, including dialogues, and lack of dialogue, specific to that context. These new arrivals were born in Tibet when many forms of cultural learning and expression were restricted by the Chinese government. These interviewees are age peers to those of generation three, but have significantly different personal lived experiences and processes of dialoguing with the enduring national struggle. In contrast to many of the generation three interviewee's self-conscious struggles to internalize, embody, and publicly represent their Tibetan-ness, the new arrival interviewees appear at ease with their internalized cultural and national affiliations.

Three of this group were smuggled out of Tibet as children (Youdon, Phurbu, and Dorjee), and one escaped as an adult (Migmar). Figured worlds appear to be experienced and interpreted differently by those who escaped as children in comparison to the adult escapee, therefore they are analysed separately.

**Child Escapees: Chosen children**

Youdon, Dorjee, and Phurbu were born in different regions of Tibet and have no relationship to each other, yet their family's motivations and decision making processes for sending them to India are remarkably similar. They are described here as "Chosen Children" because each was the only child in their family sent to India for schooling. Their figured world of *childhood, family, and schooling* is marked by their parents' hopes for their future, and sacrifice in

sending them away. Schooling placed these interviewees in social and cultural contexts dislocated from family, yet it felt to them like duty to family. Their figured world of *professional educator* is characterized by their mission to support other Tibetans in their individual and group struggles, and their desire for personal fulfilment in their work.

Unlike the era when generation one interviewees were displaced, destitute children, by the time the new arrivals entered school the TGIE's material infrastructure, professional expertise, and systems for providing care at the schools, were already well established. The new arrivals' need for material care was similar to the Wards of generation three, yet new arrival's physical dislocation from family, and political obstacles to reunion, introduced different emotional considerations.

**Childhood, Family and Schooling: Hope, Sacrifice, and Duty**

The parental discourses recalled by Youdon, Phurbu, and Dorjee are laden with hope in the power of education to author them a better life. The decision made by parents to send their children to India was literally one of life or death. They did not have legal permission to leave Tibet, and the journey involved up to one month walking across the Himalayas, dodging Chinese and Nepali border patrols and risking death due to exposure to cold. Parents prayed that they would see their children again, but they could not be certain that a reunion would ever be possible. At the time of the interviews two decades or more had passed since their escape. Only Dorjee had seen his family in the interim, on a brief visit after he completed college. If political conditions do not

change, none expect to see their families again. Nonetheless, they refer to family discourse as the authoritative voice they most significantly internalized, authoring their sense of duty to study well and attend to the authority of the TGIE.

In the late 1970s Youdon was one of the first children of her generation to be smuggled out of Tibet for education. She was 10 years old when a relative of her mother's planned an escape to India, and the family agreed that he should take her with him: "So while he was escaping he took me, so that I, being the eldest child in the family, I could get a good education. So they were excited to send me". Most of her schoolmates were born in India and had attended school since the age of 5. She and the others from Tibet received special care and attention from school authorities: "So we were the beginners – very small group. We were called brothers and sisters. But since we were overage at that time the teachers would spend more time with us try to make us learn more and I think that helped us catch up with our own age". Youdon hinted at the pain of separation from her family, but quickly redirected conversation to expressions of appreciation for the supportive family-like learning environment at school:

> Actually I enjoyed my time very much, because I was
> learning something, and every day I had to say something
> new that I learned, and I was always excited to go to class.
> Because the teachers were with just three of us. Since three
> of us were there together I didn't feel that lonely, but missed
> my family a lot. And at [boarding school] home we have lots
> of students to play with.

Rather than feeling marginalized as "new arrival", or abandoned by family who arranged for her transit to India, she emphasises what she has gained in exile, rather than her losses.

Dorjee's identity restructuring was more difficult. He was 12 years old when his family decided to send him to India, although he feels that he took part in making the decision. Tension in the transition to his new life in India and in negotiating the multiple discourses began with his father's insistence that he leave Tibet, and his mother's reluctance to let him go:

> In the early 80s my uncle was in Nepal. He knew of the school here [in India] run by His Holiness and he also saw the difficult condition we were having there [in Tibet]. So he saw me as the right child to bring. Because others were too old to go to school and others were too small to go to school so he thought I was the best. And he explained and my father was also anxious to send, and I was also somewhat curious. I wanted to see other world. So out of curiosity, out of encouragement from father and uncle I made the decision. My mother on the other hand she doesn't want me to leave. She wants me to stay.

Dorjee's physical connection to family, community, and local traditions of his home village was severed abruptly. To conform with local practices and school rules in India, community and school authorities cut his hair and dressed him in a school uniform. The change in physical appearance made him look like others in the school, but he felt lost and alone. Along with the removal of material

representations of his identity, he was forced into a painful personal identity

reconstruction and re-authoring process.

> I had ponytail hair, and earring, and fur coat. They all were
> taken. They shaved me, and then all my clothes back to
> Nepal. All were taken…. Oh my hair – it was cut twice –
> once at Pathankot [a town en route to Dharamsala] at
> Tibetan hotel. He cut short. He said, "There's no boy having
> hair like this one in Dharamsala. Not proper to go like that."
> And he cut it short. Then was the second phase – shaved….
> It was very sad. Sad and lonely you know. I came from Tibet
> from Western side. Different dialect. Our own. It was Tibetan
> language but different dialect. It was unusual the language
> used here. Very fast. And everyone was new. I was
> changed. And then food we eat really strange. Daal [Indian
> lentil soup] I'd never seen, and hair first time having short,
> and you never get Tsampa [staple Tibetan food] like that
> here. We had some tea in a plastic mug. I had to put up with
> this. I remember the smell of the tea with this smell of plastic.
> We used to have in a hotel or Chinese café, but we never
> use to use this plastic. Very smell.  You lose your appetite.

Although Dorjee was welcomed as Tibetan in the school, he felt like a cultural

"other". Cultural forms that he had previously internalized as "his" were not

represented materially or in social practice in the Tibetan school in India. As Hall

(1996) reminds us, "national culture" cannot erase the differences of its'

members. In this case, the differences were not simply individual. The Lhasa

dialect (Central Tibet) spoken and taught at school forms a boundary marking

Tibetans from other regions as different. Differences in cultural practice and

personal history authored new arrivals such as Dorjee with a new form of diasporic consciousness generated within the pre-existing diaspora.

Dorjee's diasporic longing attachment to homeland persisted throughout his schooling. He is the only interviewee to have risked arrest by returning to visit Tibet. After completing school and college successfully, he went to Tibet without a travel permit and made his way to his village. He was briefly detained by police, and released after interrogation. His family were shocked to see him: "that was a surprise. Suddenly I came. They were so happy. Crying. Only one was not crying. That was my sister. She was not born at the time [that I left Tibet] so we never had interaction. Happy". His trip was cut short when he realized that he was in imminent danger:

> I visited Lhasa. Then there was news that a few of my schoolmates, also from Tibet, also came to Tibet by walk over the Himalayas. I went by walk, so they came by walk. When they were about to reach the police came and arrested them and they were put in the prison. For ten days. And one of my mothers [aunt] also heard that, and so a family member came and asked that I be careful. And then I suddenly left Tibet. Danger. My photos were also there. That I was in Tibet – so it was very dangerous. So when we received the news in the morning, that very night I left. I went straight to Delhi to seek further study. The scholarship office was there.

For the second time, Dorjee turned to the Tibetan authorities in India for refuge and security. This time it was his adult decision, although he had few

alternatives. Institutional discourse and practice of Chinese government authorities marginalized him in Tibet, whereas TGIE authorities welcomed him in.

Phurbu's family are farmers in a remote, rural area of Tibet. He is the only member of his extended family in exile, and the only one to have attended school. Separation from family is difficult, but he has internalized his family's discourse and feels compelled to act on their dream:

> My parents they feel that education is very important for their kids. Although they really love – you know they don't want to send their kids far away... For me, I came when I was seven and now I'm thirty-two. It's like horrible, but they sacrificed everything for the sake of education. I think they are very brave, you know.

When speaking of their personal histories, all three interviewees emphasised the importance of their emotional connection to family they had been separated from since early childhood. Entangled tensions associated with diaspora are close to the surface with these interviewees, who have lived memories of homeland, and loved ones who remain there. Although they have lived in India for most of their lives, they refer to Tibet definitively as their home. They continued to live and work within Tibetan diasporic society in India, and identify with the group struggle, but the most salient group identity for them is extended family and village community in Tibet.

**Professional Educator: Personal fulfilment**

These interviewees did well in school and were granted scholarships to attend college. In return, authorities expected that they would work in service of

the TGIE for three years. Reminiscent of generation one interviewees, none of these new arrivals originally imagined teaching the career they would pursue, yet all three returned to school to teach as a fulfilment of their service duty, and continued teaching long after their contractual obligation was complete. They stayed because they enjoy the work. They describe feeling useful and fulfilled.

Youdon initially agreed to a short teaching contract of just one year, but she had been teaching 10 years when the interview took place. After college she was sent to teach at a school that serves young adults new arrivals from Tibet. At the time the school had recently, and hastily, been set up to accommodate an influx of new arrivals. Facilities were very poor and living conditions difficult, but Youdon felt satisfaction in living a purposeful life of service, and developed emotional attachment to the students. She feels that she has a special affinity for new arrivals because she shares their lived history:

> They were so enthusiastic about learning. Especially English. It is a thrill to learn English, and so I stayed. At the beginning it was quite difficult here. It was completely different at that time. There were few buildings, and classes were held outside, and when it rained so hard, and we also don't have good waterproof rooms to stay in like this, and it was so muddy and it was so isolated. We couldn't even get fresh vegetables at that time. So at the beginning we felt that as soon as one year finishes we will move away from here. But we started liking the job and we got attached with these students, and then I ultimately decided that this is the job for me. … Because the satisfaction is the greatest thing. … They are overage. I prefer teaching here than going to

another school … because I feel more attached to these students. I think they need me.

Phurbu views his duty to school authority as equivalent to his duty to family:

> I felt because I was brought up, and you know [school] is my family, not only like school, you know. They just cared everything from my childhood until I was at this age. So I always feel that [school] is my home. I still feel. So I have to go to [school] to work something, because they have done a lot to me you know.

## Adult New Arrival: Seeking Refuge

Migmar escaped from Tibet as an adult, choosing exile on his own volition. In his case, the political intensity and complexity of the Tibetan struggle comes into direct focus. In Tibet he protested against Chinese government policies, served time in prison, survived torture, and feared re-arrest after his release. He fled to India to save his life. His dedication and commitment to working as an educator in exile is directly informed and motivated by his lived experience in occupied Tibet. His family's spiritual and philosophical beliefs are reflected in Migmar's life choices, including his resistance to the Chinese government's policies and practices and in his approach to his work as a teacher in exile.

Migmar was born, raised, and schooled in Tibet. His figured world of *childhood, family and schooling* is characterized by his close connection to family, their value for education, and his personal quest for connection to his cultural and spiritual heritage, to the point of open defiance against the Chinese

government. Migmar chose to escape to India, expecting that the alternative was arrest and torture and possibly death. His figured world of *professional educator* is where he actively practices his deeply internalized identity associated with his mission to serve his nation.

**Childhood, Family and Schooling: Struggle for identity in Tibet**

Migmar was born in the mid-1960s to parents he describes as peasant farmers. He attended primary school in his village, and then a relative took him to Lhasa for further schooling. Migmar understood from family discourse that education was important to them. Despite his family's efforts to keep him in school, in the early 1980s when the Chinese government relaxed some restrictions to religious practice, Migmar quit high school, took vows to become a Buddhist monk, and joined a monastic college. His decision, and the family tension it generated, involved more than simply a youth negotiating his personal identity and exercising individual autonomy. Throughout his childhood his parents' behaviour, values, and cultural practices emphasized the Buddhist discourse and Tibetan cultural history that he internalized and identified as his own (Bakhtin, 1981). His parents wanted him to stay in school, but understood his desire to become a monk. They urged him to be sincere in his efforts:

> It was not like I opposed my parents. I actually discussed with them about my interest and asked for their permission for me to join the monastery, and they supported my decision.… They said even if I don't become famous and highly learned in Buddhist teachings, I should be a good, sincere monk. They said they personally want me to

continue my studies at school, yet they respected my

decision more than their wish.

Migmar felt that he exercised personal agency within the parameters of his

parents' lived values and discourses, and with support of the community that

mattered to him. In contrast, Chinese government authoritative discourse placed

him and his culture in the political and economic margins of power. Migmar

engaged with the community and with practices in which he felt validated, valued,

and at home, socially, intellectually, and spiritually. As Gladney's (1994) findings

suggest, Migmar's choice constitutes an act of agency and resistance in

response to political oppression, although he describes his actions as initially

rooted in embracing Tibetan discourse, rather than a conscious act of

oppositional defiance against Chinese government authority. At the time, he

believed that he was acting within Chinese law.

In the monastery, Migmar achieved success and recognition for his

scholastic aptitude. After several years of study of Tibetan philosophy and

history, and immersion in the physical environment of the ancient monastery,

Migmar and some other young monks felt motivated to engage in direct activism

in opposition to the Chinese government:

During the course of this education I always observed all the

ruins that surrounded the monastery. The ruins of statues

and other aspects of the monastery made me realize that we

did not have genuine religious freedom as claimed by China.

This developed in me and others interest and passion for

nationalistic feelings.

He and about 20 other monks participated in a public protest against Chinese government policies and practices. They were arrested, tortured, and spent several months in prison. After their release from prison they were expelled from the monastery, but the Tibetan leaders assured them that they were loved, and wanted: "The elder monks actually said that it was like the monastery losing a limb when we were thrown from the monastery. The monastery didn't have any choice. It was orders from the Chinese authorities". He feared re-arrest, and wanted to continue his studies, so he decided to escape to India.

Authoritative discourse of family, community members, Tibetan history as documented in ancient religious texts, and verbal discourse of monastic authorities, all served to support and reinforce Migmar's internalized positive self-image within his identity as Tibetan, and as a monastic scholar. In contrast, Chinese government discourses marginalized him socially and politically, further strengthening and more deeply internalizing his relationship to the Tibetan struggle for emancipation. Migmar's internalized national and cultural identification boundaries are so deeply entrenched that in Tibet he literally risked his life for the right to expression, cultural practice, and representation. His anxiety over the on-going political struggle compelled him to shift his aims from personal study, to teaching others.

**Professional Educator: Activism in exile**

When Migmar left school to join the monastery he had intended to live the life of a Buddhist scholar. When he reached safety in exile his process of making sense of his experiences of oppression, resistance, imprisonment, persecution,

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and loss, led him through a process of identity reconfiguration. In India, the authoritative discourse of the Dalai Lama and others in the community supported his emotional need to be active in community rather than engage in the relatively more individual and insular practice of monastic philosophical study. He and his friends from Tibet decided to work directly in community service, supporting Tibetans:

> We were determined to practically serve the Tibetan community and make some concrete contribution to the society, having become politically aware and active after our experiences under Chinese rule in Tibet. My thinking and awareness of issues had changed … my thinking was like this right from the beginning when I came into exile.… Then one time, at a public teaching by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, he said that the number of monks and nuns serving the community as teachers and health workers has decreased tremendously and that it is very important for the monastic community to serve the society at large in different capacities.… I decided to join the training to become a Tibetan language teacher.

He teaches Tibetan language and religion to Tibetan children who were born and raised in exile.

## 5.1.5  Summary

In all generations, Taubman's (1993) "communal register" aptly describes the processes by which individual and group identities appear to be constructed, and co-constructed. Although each individual and generation appears to address

and embody their identities in individual, historically, socio-economically, and politically situated ways, some threads appear to weave through all generational groups. Salient markers of identity that appear to persist over time include diasporic consciousness (Anthias, 1998; Frykman, 2001) anchored to a shared mythology of historical imagined homeland (Anderson, 1991; Clifford, 1994; Cohen, 1996; Safran, 1991), personal and family histories of trauma and hardship, and emotional attachment to the group "enduring struggle" (Holland and Lave, 2000). Philosophical and ethical approaches that connect them as community are associated with Buddhism (Dalai Lama, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2003, 2008; Thurman, 1997; Rinpoche, 1992) and with the Dalai Lama as a symbol and personification of authoritative discourse associated with pure "goodness" (Craig, 1997).

Individual identities are struggled for and constructed in relation to group diasporic consciousness and the enduring struggle. The historically situated nature of the struggle is revealed in the shifts in emphasis over the generations. Personal and group struggles for physical survival in exile emerge most strongly for generation one interviewees, and appear to ease somewhat for generation two. For generation three interviewees, anxieties regarding basic physical survival do not appear as pressing, but their struggles for personal identity within community are more self-consciously represented and appear more personally contentious, fraught with worry over assimilation. Tensions are revealed in their negotiations between creation of a national identity, and their belief that they have personal agency. Individuals in generations one and three who at times

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believed themselves to be drifting too far into cultural hybridity took proactive steps to author themselves more centrally within the Tibetan collective, particularly in relation to language, Buddhist values, and emotional attachment to the struggle. New arrival interviewees appear at ease with their personal identities and nationalistic attachments. Their struggles centre on establishing new identity configurations and community connections in exile, through which they forge purposeful lives.

In generation one interviewee's childhoods, diasporic boundaries appear to have been defined by childhood poverty, in addition to differences established through language, religion, and culture. In later generations, when economic challenges were less extreme, interviewees drew upon their political circumstances to entrench their diasporic identities and emotional commitment to the group struggle. These diasporic identities, framed within Buddhist philosophical approaches, are shaped such that individuals appear to seek meaning and purpose for their lives within their personal struggles to support group goals. These interviewees describe their hope that teaching in Tibetan schools would bring them feelings of personal, spiritual satisfaction for having contributed, and that the larger community would appreciate their efforts. Multiple forms of dialogic reflexivity in local practice appear to positively affirm membership, and appeal to individuals who seek to author themselves as "insiders", and internalize boundaries that will sustain the ideals of the group struggle within individuals.

The next section, 5.2, *Global Flows and Geopolitics*, explores interviewees' experiences of globalization and change. Creativity and negotiation within community is part of "identity in practice", and relations with the larger world are significant factors contributing to the complexity. Further, 5.2 anticipates notions of power and pedagogy within changing global contexts that are explored in section 5.3, *Education for Identity and Empowerment*.

## 5.2  Global Flows and Geopolitics

This section explores the interviewees' perceptions and analyses of their circumstances vis-à-vis globalization and change, and geopolitical factors that may propel or constrain them in their quests for particular futures. The theoretical framework presented in section 3.2 is utilized in exploring perspectives held by each generational group on *globalization (5.2.1)*, *social and cultural production and change (5.2.2)*, and *boundary definition (5.2.3),* in relation to the group struggle and the interviewees' historically situated positions within it. *Globalization (5.2.1)* focuses on experiences and perspectives within supraterritoriality (Scholte, 2000) and with global flows (Appadurai, 1996; Giddens, 1995). Subsection *5.2.2, social and cultural production and change*, focuses on the interviewees' perspectives on societal changes that they believe are associated with globalization processes (Croucher, 2004; Holland and Lave, 2000). Finally, *boundary definition (5.2.3),* explores the interviewees notions of socially constructed limits to acceptable change, and their struggles to maintain those boundaries.

Thubten's (generation one) summary reveals the multifaceted nature of individual and community struggles with survival and change. Almost in one breath, and with a sense of urgency, he articulated the central issues:

> Trying to maintain our identity as a Tibetan in a world that is in flux, and a world in which we are fast disappearing as a people – and the very idea and the very concept of Tibet and Tibetan-ness is fast vanishing due to interference from China to a large extent, and the world ignorantly accepting of what the Chinese are saying, and then secondly since we escaped from Tibet people are scattered like beans. It's very hard to maintain identity like that. Because we are full of pressures of trying to live a life, and importance of maintaining our identity, our culture, our way of life become kind of blurred in the face of trying to make a living. And so there's a real danger there.

Thubten draws into focus complexities in relation to globalization, social and cultural production and change, and boundary definition. It involves negotiating supraterritorial processes, politics, and socially constructed boundaries that differentiate "insiders" from "outsiders". These issues and related factors are explored in the subsections that follow.

## 5.2.1  Globalization

Although a small number of Tibetan individuals had connected with the world outside Tibet prior to 1959, through means such as travel, study in India, or meeting foreign visitors to Tibet, the vast majority, including the families of all interviewees in this study, were traditional farmers, nomads, or merchants who

had little or no direct contact with the outside world. Foreign invasion forced change within Tibet, and the 1959 exodus and global interactions propelled the dramatic political, material, and social changes Tibetan diasporic society has undergone since then.

Prior to escape, Thubten's parents' lives as rural farmers were structurally and culturally similar to every known ancestor for hundreds of years before them. They had never seen a motorized vehicle, used electricity, or spoken a language other than Tibetan. Yet in India in 2005, Thubten and I spoke together comfortably in his administrative office complete with computer and cell phone, while he took a break from fielding e-mail correspondence from Tibetans and others all over the world. His daily work is conducted in English and Tibetan and he enjoys speaking Hindi when immersed in the flow of life in the local Indian market town. He is at peace in the temple lighting traditional ritual butter lamps, and shifts easily into discussing global political affairs with foreign academics and diplomats. He has, in one lifetime, traversed and negotiated the "space-time compression" that propelled his community through all three of Scholte's (2000) phases of globalization, seemingly in one leap.

Not all Tibetan individuals negotiated changes associated with globalization with the apparent fluidity of Thubten, yet all experienced social, cultural, material and political changes that required various forms of response and adaptation. This subsection explores perspectives and responses to globalization, highlighting variations that appear from generation to generation. In their effort to make sense of their current circumstances and construct a more

politically empowered future for their community, *generation one* interviewees

tend to reflect critically on Tibet's social and political past, whereas, *generation*

*two* interviewees appear to concern themselves more intensely with societal

problems of the "here and now". *Generation three* interviewees are frequent

users of communications media to connect with and learn about the world, thus

appearing in some ways to be the most "globalized" group represented in this

study, although they also appear to be the most fearful of assimilation and most

self-consciously assertive in publicly representing their national identity and

patriotism. In contrast, *new arrival* interviewees appear to view globalization

primarily as a source of hope in forwarding the struggle for social and political

emancipation of Tibetans in Tibet.

**Generation One: Making sense of the past to prepare for the future**

As the eldest interviewees, generation one interviewees have personal

memories of their community's struggle to adjust after the abrupt transition from

traditional ways of life in Tibet to their relatively more modern and globalized

contexts in diaspora. They appear to be proud of the spiritual accomplishments

of their ancestors and of the resilience of Tibetans in the face of hardship, but

regret Tibet's pre-invasion historical practice of standing on the sidelines of

global change. Interviewees express criticism of Tibet's practice of political and

social isolation through the time periods that Scholte (2000) defines as Phases

One and Two of globalization, blaming past leadership processes for their

nation's political naiveté and vulnerability to military invasion. Thubten refers to

Tibet's historical errors to emphasise his point that community leaders must now

take responsibility for connecting with global networks, and actively participate in global flow and change processes:

> That failure of learning to cope with change …. Same thing happened in Tibetan situation before the Chinese came – we never changed – refused to adapt – then when we wanted help from the rest of the world, the rest of the world didn't even know that we were in a problem.

Thubten posits that pre-invasion Tibet's apparent material homeostasis reflects an absence of inducements for change at that time, because the flow of life was comfortable, and appeared to most people to be relatively stable:

> In Tibet it was true – two hands could feed one mouth. In Tibet the idea of modern education was non-existent because there was no need. For the simple reason that people lived in their own villages for life, and if you were a nomad you were a nomad for life, and your children would also be nomads. It was a self-sustaining lifestyle that you lived. If you were a farmer you were a farmer, and generation to generation it continued.

Thubten has never personally experienced the stability he believes characterized his ancestors' lives. Echoing Holland et al.'s (1998) notion that groups create cultural forms as a means of gaining control, he cautions that in the current circumstance of rapid change and uncertain futures, pragmatic and proactive response to globalization and change is a necessity for his community's material, cultural, and political survival.

Tenpa contends that Tibet's apparent refusal to engage with the world constituted a foolish avoidance of the reality of the interrelatedness of the global, local, and personal, and is a direct cause of Tibet's political vulnerability:

> The main thing is we lost our freedom. Why Tibetan people they lost their freedom? Why? Because Tibetan peoples are stupid. They don't have modern education. This is real I think – the main reason. Of course there are great Tibetans – great scholars – these are for religion purpose. But they don't have modern education… So I think this is weak – this is the main thing to get a modern education for Tibetans. So after that then all the Tibetan people can get free and get happiness.

Most of the generation one interviewees appear primarily concerned with establishing grounding in a clear philosophical framework, rather than worrying over the modalities of globalization processes such as those articulated within Appadurai's (1996) "scapes". They brushed aside questions regarding the mechanics of how globalization takes place, focusing instead on the personal and community struggle to internalize and practice core Buddhist values and humanitarian principles within individuals.

**Generation Two: Survival in the here and now**

The generation two interviewees appear to position themselves in the pragmatic middle ground between the philosophers of generation one and the nationalistic activists of generation three. They were raised in material poverty, but with greater stability than generation one interviewees, and less than

generation three. They describe looking to globalization processes as tools that can be utilized to address current challenges of daily life, and prepare their students for the uncertain future. They express their worry that Tibetans who remain attached to symbolic traditions and rituals may be failing to establish practical mechanisms to ensure their community's material survival in the modern world.

Ngawang fears that the community will become entrenched in perpetual dependence on others for material aid, and may suffer long-term negative social consequences as a result, "Because if we depend too much on others then we will lose our sense of what we can do". Generation two interviewees are anxious to propel their community into material self-sufficiency as quickly as possible, and hope to achieve balance in their dual, potentially conflicting, priorities in the Tibetan struggle: the absolute necessity of global outreach in the quest for material and political emancipation; and, the prevention of cultural assimilation of their community into the larger world. Ngawang explains the dilemma:

> For Tibetan it's important to preserve your own culture,
> language. But right now Tibet is not independent country, so
> even if you have very good knowledge of Tibetan, job market
> might not be there. So I wonder if we should do things more
> practical rather – for modern times. Of course Tibetans
> should be good at Tibetan, but all the emphasis should not
> be there.… So, in terms of job market I think there should
> also be other options – it's very important.

The interviewees explain that they seek to avoid assimilation, but they are also pragmatic when weighing the advantages and disadvantages of

globalization, global flows and scapes, and the adaptations and reinterpretations

of "Tibetan-ness" that they believe are necessary to facilitate communication and

engagement with the world. For example, the notion of Tibetans moving to

Western countries is contentious for many interviewees who fear assimilation,

but Ngawang is supportive of strategic forms of change:

> I think this is change for good – what I'm saying is years ago
> education was not accessible to everyone, but now
> education is available to every child, and they get so many
> ideas, and this is good. I think modernization is good. What I
> think is – if people want to go to the United States or Canada
> or anywhere I think they should be allowed because as I say,
> the situation in Nepal is difficult – why should we suffer?

As politically and materially disenfranchised people, Ngawang believes that

Tibetans do not currently have the luxury of true choice, so they must wisely use

the opportunities that are available to them, however limited the choices are. He

is a devout Buddhist who values and practices traditional forms of spiritual

contemplation, and claims that under different political circumstances he would

have chosen a life of spiritual study and practice. But, currently, survival in the

globalized world is his primary concern, for himself, his family, and his students:

Philosophical ideals articulated through Tibetan authoritative discourse

(Department of Education [1], 2004; Rinpoche, 1996) appear to feel to the

generation two interviewees to be far removed from the challenges that they and

their students contend with on a day-to-day basis in lived, local practice.

Generation two interviewees describe seeking to motivate students and buoy

their hopes for the future by helping them feel competent and purposeful in the world at large.

**Generation Three: Know the world, without "becoming" the world**

      Generation three interviewees, raised in relative safety and material security in comparison to other generations, appear variously at ease and anxiety ridden regarding globalization and change. They describe most aspects of globalization as tools they can use toward positive change in the emancipation struggle, although they appear to worry more than other generations about assimilation. In some ways they appear to support the advancement of modernization and globalization through using communications media regularly in their personal lives and teaching practices to connect with geographically distanced friends and family, and to learn and teach about current issues within Tibet and in the rest of the world, but they also advise a cautious approach.

      Generation three interviewees describe feeling responsible for transmitting both global and Tibetan cultural knowledge to their students and their children, yet they also appear to believe that they must provide their students strategies for negotiating emotional attachments, and prioritize the diasporic national struggle over their enthusiasm with connecting to the outside world. As Dekyi explains;

> We help them realize the positive and negative impacts of
> globalization – it has both – and I think if we go forward with
> globalization we may develop in the physical but I don't think
> we'll develop inner peace. So help them to realize or to know

what are the positive and negative impacts. If we go to
backwards globalization we may not achieve much but we
may become self-realized. Mental peace. That's the most
important. The physical, material, won't help in life.
Understand the balance. If they know the balance they may
take positive steps in the future.

Unlike the interviewees in other generational groups, generation three
interviewees specifically articulate the strategic nature of engaging in some
scapes freely, and approaching some scapes with caution. Flows reflective of
Appadurai's (1996) mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes
are viewed positively by generation three interviewees. They appear confident
that these scapes pose little serious threat to community affiliations, and their use
can be managed, self-regulated, and put to strategic use. They describe
supporting and encouraging their students' interest in learning about the outside
world. Pema describes changes in teaching methods, developed in response to
students' interests, that she hopes will serve to support student empowerment in
the world:

In school in previous times the teacher just came, and gave
lecture, and that's it. But now the students expect more –
they want to know – they want to go to computer and check
internet and get more information. They want more
contemporary way of teaching rather than traditional way.
They prefer that.

The movement of people (ethnoscapes) is the supraterritorial process that
most generation three interviewees describe as potentially dangerous. Moves

between Tibet, Nepal, India, and Bhutan, often requiring days or weeks of travel, are not characterized by the interviewees as moves away from community, but physical ventures to the Western world are viewed as more contentious because "the West" is both materially alluring, and culturally risky. Rigzin echoes the view expressed by most generation three interviewees, that in "the West" assimilation is difficult to prevent, despite concerted effort to maintain traditional affiliations:

> Main thing – if they go to Western countries they are going to be influenced by Western cultures. They are going to change their dress – they are trying to act like Westerners. But in reality we cannot change our faces and our complexion remain as a Tibetan. The main thing is that the inner remain as Tibetan. That is very important.… We try to take on those traditional ideas but sometimes we have to change our mind according to the global change.

**New Arrivals: Reaching out to the world to help Tibet**

New arrival interviewees' views and approaches to global change and globalization appear to differ in important ways in comparison to interviewees in the other generational groups. They and their families within Tibet experienced very different challenges and political pressures in comparison to those in India and Nepal, and for many decades had virtually no access to the outside world through media or other means. Restrictions imposed by the Chinese government constrained individual and community agency, and was the reason for these interviewees' escape and their on-going separation from family. The lack of global flows to or from Tibet, and the constraints imposed by a nation state, are their central concerns.

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When they escaped from Tibet, these interviewees lost physical contact with the homes, families, and the face-to-face communities of their childhood. Communications media provide them little (if any) access to their families, because financial constraints and Chinese government controls on flows of information limited their families' access. Reterritorialization processes appear to be fragmented for them, connecting them through communications media to imagined global communities, yet constraints imposed by a nation state continue to restrict their access to the geographic locale and social community they identify as homeland. In Phurbu's case:

> It is very difficult. My village is very remote. There is no
> phone connection. Only like – I can send a letter by hand.
> Sometimes [it gets through], but it's not 100%. The best
> thing is if there's someone going to my village – then I have
> full confidence it's getting there.

Phurbu works in a school that serves young adults who escaped from Tibet. Like Phurbu, the new arrival students who come from farming villages and nomad camps (rather than urban areas) cannot easily communicate with their family in their homeland, but he encourages them to connect with global ideas in new ways:

> For example when they are in Tibet, they don't have a phone
> facility. The only thing is writing. So now we are providing
> internet facilities, phone, and of course we always ask them
> to watch BBC, read newspapers. These are major things
> where they can expand their knowledge and collect a lot of
> ideas from all over. And not only that we are also sometime

inviting some very good resource persons based on human
rights and democracy, from outside in the world – other
countries people – and they can express their own things.
That way they are getting a lot of things. For our school it's
really important – expanding their knowledge.

The new arrival interviewees describe turning to communications media to
forward global connections and understandings. They use supraterritorial flows
toward expanding their students' experience with the world, seeking to gain
degrees of control and agency in the group struggle. They encourage global
outreach in the quest for change, although they appear to construct their
professional mission differently depending on the background of the students
they teach.

Youdon and Phurbu describe seeking to engage their new arrival students
with dialogues they hope will counteract the "brainwashing" they believe their
students were subjected to by Chinese authorities in Tibet. Youdon believes that
her students come to India seeking the forms of change they believe democratic
freedoms might enable, "mostly they say just for the freedom that they have here.
And they hope that they will have a better life in India. Their life there is hard –
without freedom".  Phurbu focuses on connecting his young adult new arrival
students with the rest of the world, and introducing ideals of democracy and
human rights.

The youths here they don't have much knowledge – because
they are all from remote – the majority they can't read and
write at all. Even their own language. And then of course one
really main thing they are already brainwashed by the

Chinese people, so I have to explain a lot of things. Like for example inviting religious person, having workshop on human rights, democracy, about the culture, about religion, about conditions of exile government activities – so many things I have to do. … Our aim is, of course like, first just to bring what they have taught in China – whatever they have brainwashed – we have to just turn it other side…. Because in Tibet most people they don't know anything about the world or our own conditions…. Slowly of course they can contact to other people, they can read magazines, newspapers and only then they can get some ideas and they are believing what we have said.

## 5.2.2  Social and Cultural Production and Change

In this subsection, processes in which global relations are implicated in dialogic processes within local practice are explored. The interviewees' struggles for and within change seem to illuminate personal and group struggles to position themselves and their community for the hoped-for future. Interviewees in all generational groups appear to accept that change is inevitable, and seek agency within the process, yet they emphasise different challenges and opportunities as most important to their development as a diasporic community.

*Generation one* interviewees describe having a long term, global outlook, advocating strategic approaches to managing social and material change, while (ideally) maintaining within their community deeply internalized core traditional values. They appear to believe that the multidirectional nature of global change has facilitated Tibetans' positive contribution to the world. *Generation two* interviewees' concerns tend to focus more intently on the local situations in which

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they are currently living. They appear to feel that there is an urgent need to change local material living conditions in India and Nepal, worrying that current youth will lose hope, and lose heart, if their circumstances do not improve soon. Unlike generation two, *generation three* interviewees do not appear to be concerned about diminishing hope. They appear encouraged by the heightened self-confidence that they see in current youth in comparison to previous generations, yet they struggle to negotiate the tension between encouraging their students toward personal empowerment in the world, and transmission of traditional cultural and community values. In what appears to be a mediating role, the positioning of *new arrivals* focuses on their attempts to reverse negative social changes they believe have taken place under Chinese government occupation of Tibet, and on their advocacy for strategic change in exile.

**Generation One: Manage change to change the world**

Interviewees of generation one tend to describe material and personal change as management tasks, for which agency should be utilized in proactive and strategic ways that serve to ensure, rather than threaten, community survival. They appear to frame schooling as a patriotic duty that serves national interests, and engagement with the modern supraterritorial world as a means of individual and group empowerment. Rather than taking an insular perspective within community, their notion of "change" extends to visions of the positive influence they believe Tibetans can have on the rest of the world.

Generation one interviewees remain attached to identity constructions that differentiate the Tibetan "us" from the global "them" but they appear to

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understand that dialogism is multidirectional and non-linear, and that local and global are interrelated. Rather than characterizing Tibetan-ness in isolation from others, interviewees express hope that deeply engaging in global interactions will facilitate dialogue and exchange of ideas between Tibetans and others, ideally benefitting all. Within a global space that extends beyond Tibet and India, Thubten cites examples to demonstrate that supraterritorial flows of ideas have already helped move the Tibetan struggle forward socially and politically. His analysis points to the altered nature of global social space due to supraterritorial flows that have created new possibilities for representation and potential for greater depth of mutual understanding. He describes his belief that Tibetans are shifting from positions of global social marginalization to a more empowered position in which their voices are respected.

> The question of globalization, interaction – it's always there and is coming more and more. Especially now, because starting from the '70s, '80s, '90s, what has happen is that now the world outside is slowly recognizing that Tibetan civilization is wonderful. And before in the '60s, '70s, we were kind of [viewed as] a quaint civilization, because someone would look at and explore and sort of laugh at us. But now it's not like that. The culture has changed [in the rest of the world]. Now they are learning and exploring – studying with tremendous recognition and respect. There are kind of two stages – two kinds of people – who come into contact with our Tibetan community. Initially they are people who are wanting to sort of see what it's like, out of curiosity. But now that curiosity stage is gone and the recognition stage has come.

When Thubten explained the rationale behind his thinking, his bearing was self-confident, as though presenting self-evident truths. He is certain that through interaction, others in the world will eventually understand and appreciate the important and valuable contribution Tibetans bring to global discourse and human values:

> Realizing that everything that moves is seeking happiness on its own. It has its own right to that. And that makes us refrain from so many things that might harm others. And I think that's a wonderful culture. And that is something that's worth keeping. And worth cherishing as custodians of this culture, and worth sharing to other people who want to understand. That is why we say Tibetan identity needs to be preserved, because we have something to offer….That is why we are struggling. Otherwise if our culture is barbaric – if it's something not worth studying and meditating on – then why should we keep it? If our culture was very superficial, if it was destructive, self-centred, and doesn't have the good qualities it should have – then the need to keep Tibetan identity alive doesn't make sense to me. But now it makes sense to me because we have a culture that really is wonderful. We should keep it.

Thubten is confident that through their persistent effort, and by publicly representing their commitment to their traditional values and to the struggle, their influence will gradually be felt, and the rest of the world will change. Tibetans will eventually be welcome and recognized at the global table as equal and respected participants, rather than as marginalized and disenfranchised minorities. Thubten, and other generation one interviewees appear to believe that

Tibetans have, since 1959, been quietly and gradually changing the world, rather than the world changing them in deeply important ways.

Generation one interviewees who attended Indian or Christian rather than Tibetan schools in childhood articulated most vividly the complex fusions they associate with change and constructions of local positionings. As children, they were in direct daily dialogue with ideas, lives, practices, and cultural worlds of others, often in tension with the authoritative discourse of their home community. In childhood they struggled to internalize various discourses and negotiate different forms of belonging and not belonging at each locale. Now, as a result of their childhood experience, they describe themselves as skilled practitioners of improvisation and managed change. For example, Choedak appreciates the Christians who ran the school he attended as a child, although he feels that he effectively controlled the content and degree of his internalization of Christian values, beliefs, and social practices:

> I learned a great deal from Christians. I didn't become a Christian. I picked up many good things, social activities. I cannot say they only taught me abcd, but I grew with them, and many of the good points I still have today. I know I gained from them.

He appears to believe that his embodied cultural hybridity was constructed through his own processes of inner gate-keeping and agency, strategically internalizing only those Christian values and practices that he views as consistent with Buddhist discourse (for example, charitable care for others).

Generation one interviewees tend to advocate embracing and pursuing change strategically, while retaining degrees of control and agency over how changes take place. Yet, complexities are evident in the apparent difficulty the Tibetan populace faces making sense of the authoritative discourse of the Dalai Lama and implementing his ideals within their lived practices. Thubten places responsibility squarely on the shoulders of Tibetan community leaders, including educators such as himself, who he feels have failed in their efforts to understand, internalize, and implement the Dalai Lama's vision.

> Sometimes I feel that Tibetans in general – particularly in offices and such – we don't have the adequate skills to put into action the vision that His Holiness puts to us. He's way ahead of us. He's so visionary and we're unable to cope with that, and some people give up I think. We just can't catch up with him, and that's a big problem for us. Because he's really in a rush to change and really improve every aspect of Tibetan community life. And we don't seem to be flexible and energetic enough to try this and experiment with that – and sometimes we get bogged down.

Thubten's view on local and global change reflects Buddhist notions of impermanence, and his personal history as a refugee. He sees change as inevitable, and asserts that failure to acknowledge and respond to change proactively will result in problems for individuals and community: "We can't wish it away. That's my statement. We just can't wish it away".

**Generation Two: Strategic struggle and pragmatic change**

Generation two interviewees appear to advocate strategic reprioritization and renegotiation of definitions of Tibetan cultural "essence", for practical reasons of material survival. They state that if some traditional practices are no longer useful or viable, change and adaptation are perfectly appropriate. Tibetan language and spiritual values are characterized as un-expendable, yet the situation becomes fraught and contested when changes that may be necessary for material survival, such as moves to Western countries, appear connected to changes in values, behaviour, and physical separation from linguistic communities.

Generation two interviewees all stated their belief that Tibetans who move to Western countries do so solely due to financial or political concerns, rather than a desire for the cultural changes that the West is likely to bring. They claim to empathize with individuals who choose to move, but worry that in their quest for material gain they may neglect their cultural practices. Some boarders in the school where Nyima teaches have parents in Western countries. Some are in the midst of immigration bureaucracy, awaiting their immigration visas and family reunification, and others have been sent back to India to attend Tibetan school while their parents work in the West, struggling for economic self-sufficiency. Nyima attributes problematic classroom behaviour of some of those children to a degradation of cultural values, which he associates with their parents' moves to the West. In these cases, he feels that schools struggle in their mission, without sufficient parental support:

Some of our parents – they are lost in the world of fantasy themselves. Their children are going to get influenced. For example many Tibetan parents, they are just lost in the West. In America. And the students are left here. So in that way, if we don't create that atmosphere from the family level, and then from the school level, it's going to be very disappointing consequence for us – if we lose our identity.

This view emphasises the individualist and voluntary nature of diasporic attachment, the social construction of belonging as elective, and a new responsibility in the hands of teachers, struggling to connect their students to "Tibetan-ness" while youth may be distracted, thinking about their eventual move to the West. When generations one and two interviewees were children, maintaining diasporic consciousness and emotional attachment appears to have felt like a matter of physical survival to many, but for those of their students who expect to eventually leave Tibetan communities in India or Nepal, new inducements may be required to sustain their emotional connections to Tibetan society as their imagined local community.

**Generation Three: Individual empowerment and community connections**

Many generation three interviewees claim to believe that increased literacy rates, greater access to information and ideas through communications media, and implementation of child-centred instructional strategies in schools have contributed to the development of youth who are more self-confident and empowered in the world than previous generations. At the same time, most generation three interviewees appear to oscillate between expressions of hope

and determination, and fear of assimilation. They appear pleased that youth are empowered in the world, yet concerned that physical moves away from Tibetan society will take cultural change too far, impinging upon boundaries that they consider non-negotiable. More strongly than any other generational group, interviewees in generation three state that childhood is a vitally important time for the construction of identities in relation to community, and the internalization of deep emotional attachments to nation and to the group struggle. To this end, they appear certain that immersion within Tibetan society throughout childhood is a vital necessity.

Each of the generation three interviewees experienced separation from community for some years, typically in college, and they express with certainty that they know the risk of assimilation first-hand. As Chimi explains:

> When you are in a colony you can learn a lot. Exchange customs and practices. Then – it's very important I feel. Because soon after 12th [class] the students they go out into Indian society. And there they – in colleges for further studies are in English. So they have to – there a lot of dilution takes place.

The interviewees drew examples from their personal histories of immersion, or lack of immersion, to illustrate the importance of face-to-face community. They do not appear to fear the introduction of foreign texts, academic studies, or communications media to the children's lives, but many appear anxiety ridden regarding physically removing children from geographically situated community locales.

In contrast to most other interviewees in generation three, Rigzin appears to support parents who decide to move to Western countries, although he emphasizes the importance of children's intense cultural learning within community as preparation for the move. He describes his understanding that moving to the West is often a practical necessity for individuals, and that the maintenance of enduring emotional attachment to Tibetan identity is a matter of individual choice and individual responsibility. He hopes that Tibetans will retain their values, but believes that those values can be legitimately expressed in a variety of ways. When justifying his position, a controversial one amongst many of his peers, he invoked the name and authoritative discourse of the Dalai Lama for support:

> Whatever the language they are speaking isn't very
> important, but it's their inner quality remains the same as
> Tibetan that is more important. Because as His Holiness is
> saying we can take examples of good things from Western
> side – take good things.

The more common view amongst generation three interviewees echoes Karma's concern that increased economic prosperity appears to be associated with a lack of internalization of important cultural values and behaviours such as respect and appreciation. Although average income levels are higher than previous generations in exile, the majority of Tibetans in India and Nepal make relatively small incomes in relation to the cost of living (for example, a teacher's salary is in the order of magnitude of $100 per month). But, Karma teaches in a school where some of the more prosperous Tibetan families send their children,

paying school fees equivalent to several hundred dollars per year rather than

relying on charitable sponsorship. He believes that children who have had

materially easier lives (such as his students who were raised in exile rather than

Tibet) are more difficult to teach:

> My point of view – child who come from Tibet are more
> dedicated than exile students. I think [exile] parents gave
> much money to their child, so the child thinks "I'm ok". When
> they went to summer vacation whatever they demand their
> parents gave them, so they think everything and everyone
> will give – so they think school's not that much important.

**New Arrivals: Strategic change in diaspora**

New arrival interviewees appear to attempt to reverse negative social

changes that they believe stem from attacks on Tibetan values within Chinese

occupied Tibet, and they attempt to strategically mediate changes in exile to

advance the group struggle. When new arrival interviewees speak of their work

with new arrival students, Gladney's (1995) notion of resistance appears strongly

evident. Phurbu appears to believe that the Chinese government is directly

responsible for destructive attitudes and behaviours of some of his young adult

new arrival students, and that it is his responsibly to guide them to deconstruct

their prior understandings and re-author themselves in "Tibetan" ways:

> These people they have a lot of things which is not in our
> head…. But they are saying that in Lhasa there are so many
> discos, so many prostitutes – this is one kind of idea the
> Chinese are promoting in youths – just completely destroyed
> our ideology, our traditional religions. For that we have to

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again challenge them. So we teach here our religion, our culture, and about our main human qualities.

New arrivals interviewees describe direct knowledge of social and cultural change that has already occurred in Tibet and in exile, and appear to believe that further change is inevitable. Migmar points to challenges they face as small minority populations in their host countries: "For example, after graduating high school, they have to enter Indian university. So, I counsel my students never to lose Tibetan culture, but in reality the circumstances don't allow them to keep up 100% of their culture".

Rather than attempting to prevent change, the new arrival interviewees describe their efforts to strategically manage change. Regarding Tibetan schooling and immersion in cultural community in childhood, Dorjee has a ready answer for parents who confer with him on the issue. Echoing the "two wing" approach (Department of Education [1], 2004), he counsels them to make the most of both worlds:

> There are many Tibetans who are moving [to the West], and sometimes they also try to get advice from us – to have my advice, my opinion – whether to send children to States or here [to Tibetan school]. I said it's too early to send children. At least let [them go] to school and all here, and then he can continue his college education there [in the West], but he must have something like Tibetan here.

Similarly, Migmar implores his exile-born students to emotionally prize Tibetan language more than their connection with the world, and to view modern knowledge systems as important primarily for their practical utility:

> When I advise my students I tell them that since they are Tibetans, the first thing they must do is hold on to their Tibetan language. Then they must study important subjects – of course, English is important because it's the medium of instruction and main mode of communication in the modern world.

### 5.2.3 Boundary Definition

Boundary definition processes, in part, appear to reflect struggles to establish the parameters and limits of socially acceptable change. Interviewees in all generations describe these tensions in local practice as fraught with complexity as participants attempt to implement and support material change while also struggling to internalize and transmit core Buddhist values and nationalistic attachments from one generation to the next.

Nuances of boundaries and "belonging" (Brah, 2007) appear to have shifted over the generations. In the early years of diaspora when refugees turned to the TGIE for basic survival needs, Croucher's (2004) notion that political states under siege construct membership in that state as a refuge from global turbulence appears to have been more obviously relevant. However, now that the phase of wide-scale refugee crisis and desperate material impoverishment has passed, the forms of material support, structuring, and belonging, that younger

Tibetans appear to be seeking are not necessarily administratively possible for the TGIE to provide; ties of allegiance are consequently less secure.

*Generation one* interviewees' boundary definition processes appear to centre on their sense of duty to establish social and material conditions necessary for people to internalize Buddhist values, and to identify those values and social practices as uniquely "Tibetan". Although *generation two* interviewees appear eager for material change, and appear more concerned about the current material survival crisis than the spiritual survival concerns that seem pressing for generation one, they also emphasise the importance of Tibetan language and the nationalistic struggle. *Generation three* interviewees appear to most emphatically emphasise the importance of childhood immersion in face-to-face community in order to prevent eventual assimilation into global societies. They tend to emphasize the politically strategic nature of belonging and emotional attachment. *New arrival* interviewees appear self-confident in their cultural and national identities, identifying language as the most centrally important boundary marker because it provides a vehicle for transmission of all cultural ideas and values.

**Generation One: "Tibetan-ness" as a spiritual duty**

Although they appear to embrace material change with ease, generation one interviewees tend to characterize the embodiment and transmission of traditional values as an important duty to their nation, and to the world. Drawing attention to issues of cultural authenticity and boundary markers that indicate belonging, Choedak explains that nationalistic social and cultural boundaries must be maintained: "A true good Tibetan who keeps his identity, who knows his

language, who knows his religion, who knows his culture, traditions, that is a good Tibetan. Otherwise, having Tibetan name doesn't mean anything".

Jigme also specifies boundaries marking essential Tibetan-ness in terms of deeply held ethical and moral codes, and thinking processes that he believes cannot be internalized in the same ways by outsiders, or superficially appropriated by others:

> Our culture is the kindness, good heart. These are the real culture. Tomorrow, if you practice to dance, you can dance Tibetan dance better than me. And you have a dollar, you can buy better costume. But these things are not our culture. Our culture is to examine ourselves. To look into ourselves. That's the core. So being a Tibetan, I should have these things. I have not borrowed it from some others.

Regarding the notion of duty, Wangdu reminds us that the loss of homeland, on-going political constraints within Tibet, nationalistic identity, and the desire of Tibetans to retain their culture and return to a self-governed Tibet, are at the heart of it all. He emphasises that Tibetans felt forced by their political circumstances into global outreach, and their responsiveness and willingness to work with and within globalization processes are necessary reflexive responses to the national crisis. Tibetans must live as refugees, therefore they must adapt to the situation they are in. The schools are a vital part of the strategic adaptation process:

> Tibetans in Tibet aren't able to preserve their culture. Otherwise in earlier time it was different – but now the Chinese are there – so now it is responsibility for us to

maintain our culture. We have that unique culture. We as

Tibetan – different identity. In that sense I think we need to

keep Tibetans together in private school. Education, to keep

identity, and teach as Buddhist also.

The politics of positioning is evident in Wangdu's framing of global identities as a

survival imperative. He sees schools as important locales where youth's

individual identities are negotiated within community, and boundaries are socially

constructed with the "imagined" Tibetan global community (in Tibet and diaspora)

positioned as the salient symbolic "local" to which individuals are asked to attach

their histories and identities.

While embracing material change and degrees of identity fluidity (Holland

et al, 1998), generation one interviewees appear to cling to cultural and spiritual

values as nationalistic identity boundaries that they describe as firmly

entrenched.

**Generation Two: Language and political struggle**

Despite their overall focus on material practicality and political

pragmatism, generation two interviewees specify socially constructed markers of

Tibetan cultural authenticity that they hope youth will embody as boundaries that

define their community membership. Tension in processes of boundary definition

and negotiation of change are apparent in generation two interviewee's

impatience with Tibetans who appeared to resist change, and their questioning of

the cultural authenticity of those who seem to have failed to internalize "essential"

cultural attributes such as mastery of the Tibetan language.

Ngawang's notions of boundaries are representative of other interviewees in generation two. Language serves as the most salient ticket "in" for people identified by Ngawang as authentic culturally embodied Tibetans, and as a boundary marking socially marginalized "others": "when we talk about identity, for me the main thing is the language itself. If there is a Tibetan who isn't able to speak Tibetan then he is not a Tibetan".

Ngawang advocates strategic construction of cultural and social boundaries because the Tibetan political struggle can be maintained only if cultural identity and nationalistic attachment are embodied within Tibetan people:

> If you don't have your own identity then what's the use of calling yourself Tibetan? So identity is something that makes distinct from others. Because we used to have a country and we want to go back to Tibet, and if we lose our identity what's the use of going back to Tibet? If we don't have our own culture and language then Tibet is just a piece of land. It's the people who keep all this intact.

Ngawang has never seen the "piece of land" he refers to as the homeland to which his national identity and his mission as an educator are attached. In this imagining of the physical and social geographies that symbolize national community, Scholte's (2000) notion of "reterritorialization" is salient.

## Generation Three: Tibetan identity and struggle co-defined

Generation three interviewees' constructions of Tibetan cultural identity tend to centre on activism in the enduring national struggle. Echoing a perspective shared by most generation three interviewees, Lhamo responded

with shock when asked why it is important to maintain Tibetan identity. To her it is a simple, indisputable, fact of being: "That's a very strange question! … We will lost our whole identity. And we will be like a dinosaur. Like – 'oh this is Tibetan they looked like this'. Trapped in museum exhibition and all.… I can't have that!". She describes the importance of the work of cultural transmission as a duty, in the strongest terms: "Otherwise we Tibetans may forget our own culture – we may be sinking into the huge population in India. Just disappear. And it's our foremost duty to preserve our own culture". Similarly, Chimi characterizes the personal and community struggle with a tone nearing desperate determination:

> To prove ourselves, to respect our forefathers, and to be a
> part of world culture. We should not be vanished. It should
> not be just killed with a strike to prove in a wrong sense that
> it's under Chinese control. Because if Tibetan culture is lost
> it's terrible – if someone is worried about global family.

Most interviewees in generation three appeared to struggle to find words to explain "Tibetan-ness", but they were more resolute and emphatic than interviewees in other generations in defining themselves as patriotic nationalists. For them, "Tibetan identity" and "national struggle" appear to be co-defined. Their use of crisis language (Matus and McCarthy, 2003) in representing their attachment to community, and their differentiation of museum-style cultural preservation from lived identity, deeply embodied within vibrant, empowered individuals, reflects their emotionally intensity when representing the political nature of identity and belonging.

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Sonam's description of the risks, rights, and responsibilities Tibetans in exile face emphasises diasporic notions of difference, and identity as resistance. Echoing community wide authoritative discourse, her confidence in the justness of the Tibetan cause anchors her in the struggle:

> We are refugees here. And we know the conditions inside Tibet are very bad, and there are so many abroad who think that they should preserve their identity – which is really a fundamental right. If we don't preserve the identity and culture who will? We know that we are already a minority in our own land…. It's about basic human rights. If we don't hold our identity then what about the generations to come?

Most generation three interviewees appear to be conscious of the voluntary nature of diasporic identities, and struggle to construct teaching strategies that will convince their students to "elect" to belong. They prize their ability to interact in the world with cultural fluidity, while also defending the notion that deeply embodied emotional attachment to "Tibetan-ness" is a non-negotiable marker of authenticity. More self-conscious than interviewees in other generations in their personal struggles to internalize and publicly represent their personal identity in connection to their nationalistic attachments, generation three interviewees repeatedly articulate their belief in the importance of the "us/them" paradigm and differentiating themselves from "others".

**New Arrivals: Language - the root of identity**

In contrast to generation three interviewee's emphatic public declarations of their Tibetan-ness, new arrival interviewee's calm understating of their

personal processes of internalizing their national identity appears to reflect their deeply embodied confidence in their identities as "insiders". They appear to feel that they have no need to publicly prove or convince others of where their personal emotional attachments are rooted. Instead, they appear to tend to focus their energies on working toward ensuring that Tibetans in exile maintain Tibetan language as the anchor to their nationalistic attachment, and that they culturally and politically differentiate themselves from Chinese.

Reminiscent of Anderson's (1991) work connecting the origins of "imagined communities" to language, Migmar believes that language is the crucial central pillar of national identity, because important cultural and value-laden ideas and philosophical understandings are encoded within text and within verbally transmitted discourse. Other new arrival interviewees expressed the same sentiment, although Migmar articulated the ideas in greatest depth:

> Tibetan language is one of the important languages of the world. It is one of the complete languages of the world, a language that can also translate or explicate the Buddhist teachings. It is a unique language, from the fact that Buddhism started in India but Indian languages cannot explicate all of the Buddhist teachings. This in itself makes Tibetan language unique and important.… It may seem that I am being biased to the Tibetan language because I am a Tibetan. However, I am not saying this only because I am a Tibetan. I am also speaking generally, from a broader perspective, how the Tibetan language, through its capability to translate the Dharma [Buddhist doctrine] could benefit the humanity in general.

Migmar refers to global responsibility as a materially and philosophically important justification for the endurance of the Tibetan struggle, suggesting a mechanism for "glocalization" (Robertson, 1995) that strategically privileges Tibetan language (local) as a vital component of the global whole. Through this rationale, Tibetans who learn and maintain their culture are important in the world. Through their efforts to embody their culture they are not acting selfishly or as isolationists, rather, as Buddhist values suggest they should, they are engaged in a loving act of care for universal "others". Constructed this way, as a valuable social commodity on a global scale, electing to identify and "belong" as a Tibetan caries multiple forms of social and spiritual currency. Moreover, as Migmar contends, the existence of diverse languages and nations is vitally important to the structuring of a complete and healthy global society: "Generally, the more languages there are in this world, the richer the world is. Therefore, Tibetan language is precious to the world".

### 5.2.4  Summary

The construction of globalization as an opportunity to be utilized rather than a threat to be feared, and taking personal responsibility for responding strategically and constructively to global change, appear to be notions that anchor interviewees of all generations to lives of consciously enacted agency and activism of various forms. Generation one interviewees' philosophically critical reflections on past practice in pre-invasion Tibetan society lend credibility to their argument in favour of strategic societal change. Interviewees in subsequent generations appear to have internalized approaches that are

characteristic of generation one interviewees, describing the utilization of globalization processes as potentially positive, although each generation appears to tend to embody and enact community discourses in ways that reflect specific histories and emotional attachments characteristic of the different generational groups.

The generation two interviewees were raised in poverty, but were neither as materially and socially dependent on the TGIE as generation one interviewees, nor did they have the variety of opportunities for support that generation three interviewees had. They appear more concerned than interviewees of other generations that Tibetan diasporic society is currently caught in a cycle of material dependence on others; thus, in their work with students they describe seeking to utilize globalization processes to facilitate material, economic, self-sufficiency. Generation three interviewees appear less concerned about material survival than generation two interviewees, but more concerned about culture and community survival. They were raised from childhood with more access to global "others" than the other generations represented in this study, primarily through communications media. They appear most fearful of assimilation, and most strongly committed to the notion that global outreach must be engaged in strategically, including keeping children close to cultural "home" in Tibetan schools for as long as possible. Notions of strategic utilization of supraterritorial processes (Scholte, 2000) appear again with new arrival interviewees, but with a more specifically articulated focus than appeared in interviews with people of other generations. New arrival interviewees appear to

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understand that knowledge (and the strategic use of it) is the form of power they need in order to engage effectively in their national struggle. Thus, they describe encouraging their students to seek to learn about Tibet and about the world, in order to more effectively advocate for Tibet.

Indications of the strategic nature of change and identity, and politics of positioning, permeate the interviewees' discourse on social and cultural production and change. Interviewees of all generations appear to view Tibetan schooling as vital to maintaining agency while managing societal change, and supporting continuity of core "Tibetan" values and attachments. Generation one interviewees, with lived childhood experience of dramatic and abrupt changes and immersion in other cultural worlds, appear most consciously aware of their personal processes of choosing and self-regulating the internalization of discourses. They appear confident that they are able to do so in a skilful manner. Generation two interviewees appear to struggle more than generation one interviewees in making sense of how to support their students processes of learning to negotiate and balance physical and cultural survival. Complexities and tensions in the struggle to embody multi-faceted versions of "Tibetan-ness" while living as active global citizens are drawn into sharper definition with generation three interviewees. They appear conscious of the voluntary nature of diasporic identity and hope that their students will opt "in", yet they also describe encouraging their students to be confident and active in the world. They appear to view immersion within Tibetan schools throughout childhood as the best solution to the challenge of constructing deeply embodied and emotionally rooted

local attachments within youth who are also globally active. New arrival interviewees describe advocating the notion that Tibetans should strategically utilize the global resources available to them in the effort to forward their political struggle.

Interviewees of all generations appear to weave Buddhism, language, and attachment to community and the political cause into their notions of boundaries that mark "insiders" to "Tibetan-ness", and exclude "outsiders", although different generations tend to emphasise different markers as being most vital and central. People who practice similar forms of religious and spiritual practice, and share the same written language, originate in regions that span the Himalayas, across current geopolitical state borders. For example, many linguist, religious, and cultural traditions are shared by Bhutanese, Ladakhis, Sikkimese, and groups in Nepal such as Sherpas, but attachment to specific geographical territories differentiates these groups from one another. For those who identify as Tibetan, the current conflict with China introduces a sharply defined political dimension to boundary definition processes, identifying as their homeland geographical territory that is now under Chinese government control.

Generation one interviewees appear to view the embodiment of core Buddhist values as a responsibility to self, and a duty to community. Activism in support of the community struggle appears to be, for them, a spiritual practice of compassion. Generation two interviewees appear to cling to language as the cultural identity marker most vital to the continuity of community, thus of the political struggle. As they describe it, without "Tibetan-ness" there is no such

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thing as "Tibet", therefore they describe feeling duty-bound to embody their

national identity, and transmit it to upcoming generations, most specifically

through language. Generation three interviewees do not appear to distinguish

"Tibetan-ness" as separate from the political struggle. Their self-identification as

Tibetan appears to be a form of political activism, as does their work as teachers

caring for Tibetan children. In comparison to interviewees of other generations,

they appear to have had more opportunities to "opt out" of Tibetan-ness (for

example, Lhamo and Dolkar, who were raised less immersed in Tibetan society

than others), yet, they chose to "opt in", conscious of their personal challenges to

avoid assimilation into host country society. New arrival interviewees appear to

have no self-doubt regarding their own personal identities and connection to

Tibetan-ness. They describe language as the central pillar of community, and

proof of their nationhood. They appear to view their mission in exile as a duty to

work in support of the development of Tibetan-ness in exile society, and of the

development of global activists who support the struggle for the political

emancipation of their homeland.

The following, and final, section of data analysis, *5.3, Education for

Identity and Empowerment*, explores interviewees' perceptions of identity

construction through Tibetan schooling, and schooling for empowerment and

emancipation. The philosophical and practical approaches interviewees bring to

their work appear, in part, informed by and reflective of the issues raised

throughout this section*, 5.2, Global Flows and Geopolitics.* In all generations

interviewees describe their mission as educators in direct relation to the struggle

to maintain diasporic community affiliations in exile, and the group struggle for emancipation of their homeland from political occupation and oppression.

## 5.3  Education for Identity and Empowerment

This final section of data analysis presents the interviewees' responses to questions regarding Tibetan education, and the processes they employ in their work as educators. Specifics that appear to differentiate the generational groups and particulars associated with teaching in Nepal are explored through the lens of the theoretical framework presented in section 3.3. Interviewees' perceptions of their professional mission appear to reflect their historically situated identities (5.1) and their understandings of the contemporary local and global realties that affect their lives and potential futures (5.2).

All interviewees in all generations appear to equate their work as educators with a form of activism in the struggle in support of Tibet and Tibetans. During the interviews, those who mentioned their teaching subject area or grade level specialization did so as a mere incidental detail, rather than a vital aspect of their work. All referred to themselves primarily as caregivers, and as activists in the community struggle. Whether they were teaching Tibetan language, science, geography, English, or political science, if they chose to speak about their subject area in the interview, is was to illustrate its connection to the Tibetan struggle. Similarly, whether teaching exile-born children or new arrivals, in India or Nepal, interviewees described adjusting their pedagogical approach to address the needs of their particular students with consideration of the local historical, social, political, and socio-economic complexities that impact their students' lives.

These educators appear to encompass within their professional practice their personal and community histories, local and global interactions and political relations, and hoped-for imagined futures for their community. Interviewees describe framing their mission as educators in light of three potential futures for their community, each requiring the development of different skills, understandings, and identity positions in the youth. First, the ideal, hoped for future that they referenced is return to Tibet, politically governed by Tibetans who are fluent in their language and culture (Department of Education [1], 2004). Second, in a compromise position, they described their envisioning of the possibility of a culturally autonomous Tibet within China's political control. Finally, the interviewees indicated that they realize that they must prepare for the possibility of indefinite exile and ongoing diasporic struggle. In their position as educators, they appear to struggle to reconcile their philosophical ideals and historical subjectivities with the material, political, and social realities of their diasporic life.

The first subsection, *educating for identity (5.3.1)*, explores the interviewees' philosophical and practical approaches to identity and community building. *Power and pedagogy* (5.3.2) addresses the educators' perspectives on their mission to support their students' empowerment in the world as individuals, and the community struggle for voice and recognition globally, and for the political emancipation of Tibet. References to *local pedagogy* are woven throughout.

### 5.3.1  Educating for Identity

This section focuses on interviewees' perspectives on the role of Tibetan schools in their society and their personal responsibility as educators in supporting the struggle to build and sustain community in diaspora. Theoretical lenses through which interviewees responses are analysed include Wenger's (1998) notion of "communities of practice", Taubman's (1993) perspectives on the relationship between individual identity construction and community interactions, and Pinar's (2006) view that individual identities and community affiliations can be reflexively co-constructed within academic contexts.

*Generation one* interviewees tend to focus on the importance of the educators themselves internalizing and modelling Buddhist philosophical ideals and values. The emphasis of *generation two* interviewees' discourse appears to shift from the philosophical to its application in their immediate lived reality, including focusing on building caring relationships between students and teachers. *Generation three* interviewee's responses tend to vary in emphasis amongst those who teach at schools catering primarily to exile-born students, and those who teach at schools for new arrivals. More emphatically than other generations they tend to emphasise the importance of exile-born students' childhood immersion in Tibetan social and academic worlds. Those generation three interviewees who teach new arrival students tended in their discourse to turn the mirror on themselves, describing ways that their relationships with new arrival students bring them emotionally closer to "true Tibet" than they had felt while growing up in exile. *New arrival* interviewees appear to construct their

professional mission differently when working with exile-born vs new arrival students, tending to focus on helping exile-born youth embody "Tibetan-ness", and on propelling new arrival students' re-authoring of personal identities from marginalized minorities under Chinese government rule to self-empowered Tibetan nationals and global citizens. Interviewees based in *Nepal* bring a stark political reality to the fore, emphasising the obstacles they face in their efforts to construct Tibetan "communities of practice" (Wenger, 1998) within the political constraints and material insecurity of Nepal.

## Generation One: Embodying Buddhist values

Generation one interviewees' appear to frame their views of identity and its relationship to education within Buddhist values that they describe as forming the foundation on which personal and societal development is based. Their discourse on education tends to centre around the notion that "the good life" consists of the quest for enlightenment through active practice in service of others, and that schools can be locales where people's innate "goodness" can be activated through community interactions, including through participation in academic study while immersed in community.

Thubten attributes the relatively peaceful social climate in Tibetan schools to socially constructed processes. He describes a flow in social life and educational processes that facilitates the embodiment of social understandings, rather than forced superficial obedience to a set of rules and directives from distanced legislative authorities:

It is because of the way the religion is structured, and the way we live our lives here, within the community, there is so much sharing, so much give and take, so much understanding that we are here together. So without having to explicitly expound these issues there is a tendency to understand why we are here and there is a tendency to live [well] together.

Jigme explains the rationale behind Tibetan "authoritative discourse" (Bakhtin, 1981) stating that although academic achievement and career success are practically useful in a material sense, they are not sources of long-term social success and personal happiness:

Today, we have a civil engineer, no problem, but this civil engineer must have Tibetan values. So this is the real aim. The main. The shortest path is to make the student as a socially adjustable, and he's happy, he's contented. If you go a little further, this child is happy, contented and contributing person of his family. Now from family, we go to community. To the Tibetan community. Then from the Tibetan community, we go further. To the Tibetan nation. To the world community. Like this.

Jigme imagines education policy and pedagogical practices constructed to support dialogic reflexivity whereby (ideally) individuals identify as members of the community, without erasing their individuality.

Thubten's description reflects Taubman's (1993) notions of identity activation, and a "communities of practice" paradigm enacted dialogically through participation in local social practices and cultural genres, as well as through

participation in academic processes within community. He describes processes in which the construction of self within community takes place over time, as individuals gradually become participants:

> Tibetan philosophy rubs off on the individuals within the community. Really rubs off. You get this sort of feeling when you go to a monastery. You feel it powerful there. You get this feeling if you live in a Tibetan settlement that it's very conducive to having a close network there. That is one reason. That is something I can't describe in a very explicit manner but it's something that just is. And then secondly of course we try to deliberately create programs whereby our children learn values of cherishing others. We have prayer sessions, religious teaching sessions, values education programs, we have various teachers courses – constantly.… And the whole Tibetan community social programs that we have – gatherings in evenings, prayer sessions in mornings, all these programs give an education – the very participation itself makes you think.

Thubten compares Tibetan educational processes with practices he has observed in Western settings, where the lack of fluidity in pedagogical approach appears to him as a constraint that limits the development of deeply internalized personal identities that connect people to community practices:

> It's kind of funny because, like in the West for example, the whole education scenario is very sharp, it's very focused, it's very managed. Kind of managed very well. There is always a question of code, and processes, and the strategies, the tactics, the procedures. Everyone is very conscious of that. Whereas in the Tibetan world it is not that. We don't seem to

work like that. We seem to kind of work whereby there is a
kind of flow in the community, and in that flow of the
community, individuals in the community take that benefit.

It appears from Thubten's description that "Tibetan" values and approaches to life, including responsiveness to individual needs, are embedded within pedagogy and educational practices, in ways that he believes are effective in creating social and emotional conditions for individuals to internalize and personalize community authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 1981). Yet, Thubten acknowledges that attempts of Tibetan leaders and education authorities (such as himself) to transmit important values, beliefs, and understandings to students are not always successful, or do not always produce immediate results identifiable in children's behaviour. Contemporary forms of globalization and supraterritorial flow appear to Thubten to have introduced new challenges. The number and complexity of discourses that youth must negotiate in their daily lives contributes to the challenges educators face when attempting to transmit values and ideals to their students.

Of course sometimes it doesn't work. Especially nowadays
with young people – they feel Buddhist philosophy is too
deep – too much of a torment of the mind. So it's better to
say "God" and forget about it. Our philosophy places so
much responsibility on the individual. So much responsibility.
The teachings make you think so much if you're really
serious about it. Constantly. The teachings talk in terms of
being mindful of so many things. Mindful of the body, mindful
of your feelings, mindful of your thoughts, mindful of your
surroundings, of the environment – and everything has its

own repercussions. Everything has its own cause and effect. Everything makes a difference…. That way if you think deeply you realize you just can't be careless anymore. That is why many people find it's too difficult.

Thubten is confident that the embodiment of Buddhist spiritual ideals supports rather than hinders quests for personal identity and empowerment, but he worries that building such confidence in the youth is a more challenging matter.

## Generation Two: Focus on relationships

Generation two interviewees' pedagogical focus appears oriented in ways that address the philosophical concern raised by Thubten of generation one, regarding challenges authorities face in their efforts to effectively engage their students in dialogic processes. Generation two interviewees appear to empathize with students who are distracted with worry over job availability and material survival, seeking to provide practical support that will ease their students' minds, thus reducing their distraction from the group struggle. Generation two interviewees appear adamant in the belief that teachers are centrally important to propelling practice forward, and that their behaviour rather than words is the most powerful form of authoritative discourse. As Nyima explains: "if a real teacher is there – he can motivate that child and change the child…. No one can replace a human teacher". If youth appear to be wavering in their understanding and practice of "Tibetan" values, adults should first look to themselves and consider the messages they are communicating through their actions. This view seems to remind teachers that their actions in addition to words constitute authoritative

discourse to the students. Ngawang explains, "Adults themselves should be models. Before they tell others they should do [it] themselves".

The generation two interviewees appear to tend to draw attention to the importance of blurry boundaries between school, family, and the larger imagined community, indicating that all three are integral to reflexive dialogic processes of negotiating meanings, and are implicated in building communities of practice that connect school to family to community, to the world. They describe community wide authoritative discourse as serving to (ideally) support smooth transitions from family, to school, to community life, and draw individuals who might otherwise be deemed marginal into the centre (the poor, orphaned, and semi-orphaned).

**Generation Three: Identity as national duty**

Generation three interviewees spoke about identity processes and their pedagogical approach with students at greater length, in greater detail, and with more trepidation about the future, than interviewees in other generational groups. For that reason, this generation three subsection is longer than other generational groups. Generation three interviewees are relatively young classroom teachers, and appear to feel more heavily than do the interviewees of other generations, the weight of their responsibility for intergenerational transmission of Tibetan identities. They appear to believe that the fate of the future of Tibet rests with them, the teachers of the next generation. They state more emphatically than any other group of interviewees that Tibetan schooling and immersion in face-to-face Tibetan communities are vital to ensuring the

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political survival of their nation. Born, raised, and schooled in exile, they also appear more anxious than other interviewees about the potential for failure of dialogic efforts to perpetuate the struggle. They appear to believe that participation in "Tibetan" social and cultural practices is their duty in the national struggle, and that their emotional attachment to Tibetan identities is connected to the personal happiness of individuals.

Sonam's analysis of her identity construction processes frames schools as vital to establishing and transmitting important socially constructed boundaries through non-specific (to her) reflexive dialogical processes associated with schooling and participation in community:

> Whatever I am now – whatever qualities are there – it was
> instructed by the teachers, the school, and modelled – and
> all the students of my age who are in different organizations
> – community organizations, Tibetan organizations – we
> know what our identity is and what should be our goal…. So
> I think indirectly the school helps them independently making
> decisions about their life, but at the same time knowing who
> they are and what should be their commitments to the
> Tibetan cause.

In what appears to be a pedagogy for enculturation into a Buddhist worldview, boundaries Ugyen says are taught within academic contexts include behaviours and values that he hopes will support youth's participation within the rhythms of community life, and mark them as "insiders": "polite way of speaking and behaving, thinking about others not just self – caring for all sentient beings. These are very well taught in Tibetan curriculum".

The generation three interviewees claim to feel confident that they can balance the dialogues of other knowledge systems and Tibetan values in their own lives, but they do not appear to have the same confidence in their students. They appear nagged by doubts in the face of uncertain futures. Tsering seems to take her responsibility seriously, but she is worried:

> The students they are in India and we are struggling in India but our children are more attracted by Indian and Western cultures, and sometimes we forget what we are waiting and what we have to do. I think all the teachers must remind the children very frequently about our condition. That way we can preserve our culture. Otherwise I'm afraid we will lose our identity. It may happen. But I think we all Tibetans should take responsibility. It's not the responsibility of His Holiness only.

Within the current supraterritorial era, Ugyen does not appear confident that smooth transitions from family, to school, to adult life outside Tibetan face-to-face community, are possible: "even though children are taught Tibetan ways in the classroom it is not always easy to practice outside the classroom".

Although most generation three interviewees seem to believe that youth are ultimately personally responsible for embodying their national identities and commitment to the struggle, they appear to feel that it is their duty as adults in authority to take the lead responsibility for setting the direction and emphasis of discourse, modelling and articulating the importance of intertwining personal identity with national struggle. Lhamo sharply defines boundaries of Tibetan diasporic consciousness (Anthias, 1998) that she feels must be reinforced

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through constant verbal reminders. If her students appear to waver, she calls their cultural authenticity into question, appealing to the discourse of her elders for support:

> Then I must say they are not pure Tibetan. For Tibetan, our foremost duty, when I was small, my parents, and even my teachers they all, not just to me but whole classroom, "Just remember that you are refugee here. You have 'R' engraved on your forehead so you must not forget it. Foremost duty to get back our own country". Though we are very happy here – but still we need identity.

Sonam seems to understand that "true" Tibetan-ness is configured within elastic boundaries, and that fluidity is a matter of survival. Echoing Holland et al.'s (1998) notion of "figured worlds", she describes identities as fluid and negotiated in adaptations to different local contexts. Individuals embody various identities, to which they are entitled, and activate them differently depending on context. She characterizes this dynamic as a natural and expected condition of being human and engaging dialogically with others, although it constitutes a challenge in the non-linear dynamic of change and transmission of various discourses:

> I think there are certain times that you are really Tibetan at school, and there are other times that you are independent and can do whatever you like. It is the [official] policy to build up the identity and culture, but it is the individuals' right whether they follow or not. So you really can't predict the life of anyone – in a moment it can change. So what happens is,

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in the school itself, is that it's Tibetan all the way. They know
they are Tibetan.

Dolkar appears to understand the implications of the multidirectional
nature of dialogism, noting that in order for transmission to take place in the way
authorities hope, the recipient of authoritative discourse must be willing to accept
and internalize the discourse. According to Dolkar, non-authoritarian caring
relationships are fundamentally important to establishing her authority in relations
with students. She assumes that Tibetan teachers possess innate senses of
caring for Tibetans that establish them in the minds of children as "insider"
authorities whose voices matter and will be readily accepted and internalized:

> I was in Indian school so teachers are Indian. So whatever
> they say will not be that much effective. But this is a Tibetan
> school so whatever we say will be effective for the students.
> Because we are Tibetan and we give lots of advice. We
> really try to help the children.

Students' personal histories and their motivation appear to generation
three interviewees to be importantly linked, and are connected to the success, or
lack of success, of dialogic transmission of authoritative discourse. Chimi
currently teaches children who were born in India. She often finds their response
to school authorities disappointing: "Here the student don't know the hardship".
Whereas, new arrivals from Tibet:

> they know the hardship. They have come from Tibet – they
> have crossed the border – on foot most of them. They know
> the life there. They are in environment of traditional culture. It

makes them feel grateful to teacher, grateful to those
opportunities – they are mature.

Having been born and raised in exile, far from the imagined geography that they have been told is their homeland, the generation three interviewees who work with new arrival youth describe their relationships with their students as helping them to identify more centrally as culturally embodied Tibetans. Mutuality and reflexivity of dialogic processes are highlighted in these interviewees' descriptions of their work with new arrival students. They appear to feel that they utilize dialogic exchange strategically to propel their own transformations as well as supporting their students. School authorities attempt to engage new arrival students in dialogues that will facilitate their transition to life in exile, and reciprocal dialogues between students and teachers seem to generate in the teachers more deeply internalized diasporic emotional attachments to homeland, and feelings of having personal connections to the people of "true" Tibet.

Throughout her life Tsering appears to have selectively internalized discourses that connected her with survivors of hardship. She dismisses as unimportant the advice of her high school guidance counsellor, despite the fact that he is Tibetan and represented TGIE's institutionalized authority. She also dismisses much of what she was taught in her year at an Indian college. But, she embraces the words and practices of her widowed mother and her new arrival students as the "authoritative discourse" most valuable to her. Tsering credits her new arrival students with connecting her to the national struggle such that she feels more directly and profoundly a participant:

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This is a difficult condition. It motivates me to work more for my country. Sometimes I feel like teaching is a very difficult job, but when I look at the situation – the current condition – I feel like I'm a part of this country – I should contribute my energy, and I get encouraged. So I am part of the situation – trying to solve some of the issues.

In addition to connecting them more closely to emotional homeland, and to the national struggle, some generation three interviewees appear to view teaching new arrival students as an opportunity to practice Buddhist compassion, thus connecting them more deeply to another layer of "Tibetan-ness" that matters to them.

Giving my leisure time. And helping them whenever I have free time, giving them tuition and encouragement. A lot of encouragement. It's very important. And we should be patient, and very polite. If I try to be harsh and impatient they will be discouraged and they will fear. And when there is fear in them – in fear I feel a child will never learn…. In one class I have 3 students who are nomads…. they were never exposed to modern world, and they came here like in darkness, so it's very difficult for them. Some other students had the opportunity to learn and learned Chinese language, so learning English by knowing another language is easier…. But those three students – they don't know [written] Tibetan – they have been looking after sheep. When they came here they don't know how to hold a pen. Other students, when I say "abcd" they know abcd. These students, it takes months.

Compassion as pedagogical practice is evidenced in Tsering's belief that

creating caring relationships founded on trust is a necessary precursor to

creating a social and emotional environment in which learning can take place.

**New Arrivals: Tibetanizing the exile-born and globalizing new arrivals**

In contrast to their age-peers amongst the generation three interviewees,

the new arrival interviewees' discourse seems to centre entirely on proactive

strategies, rather than worry over potential failure. They acknowledge that the

dialogic transmission of Tibetan cultural knowledge in exile is necessarily

fragmented, yet they do not appear to be discouraged. Migmar credits TGIE

authorities with extraordinary foresight for creating the school system in the early

days of exile: "That is why our younger generation of Tibetans do know and can

talk - more or less - about Tibetan religion and culture, and history".

The new arrival interviewees appear to pragmatically analyze and assess

their students' personal histories and individual learning needs, then attempt to

address and strengthen perceived deficiencies. They appear to view children

born in exile as deprived of deeply emotional connections to Tibetan culture, and

new arrival students as lacking confidence and skills necessary for them to

participate as global citizens.

As a teacher of Tibetan language to children who were born in exile,

Migmar describes feeling that he is contributing to a vital process of cultural

transmission. His pedagogical approach draws substantially from the traditional

mentorship model he experienced in his monastic training, emphasising

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responsiveness to individual differences and relationship building within learning communities.

> Beginning of every year, and regularly, I rededicate myself to work hard for their education. With such dedication/motivation, when I face with student problems, I don't feel any sort of "baggage in my heart". Additionally, I think of creating something that my students would feel they learnt something concrete.… Buddhism teaches how a teacher and a student should behave and what kind of relationship they must have. So, essentially, I spend about a month studying and experimenting about how I should be teaching. Then, after a month, I start my actual teaching. Depending on the needs, strengths, weaknesses of each student.

Dorjee seems to try to strategically mediate the obstacles to transmission that he believes are introduced by supraterritoriality by persuading students to focus intensely on embodying "Tibetan" identities while living within face-to-face community in school locales, treating that time as precious. By internalizing Tibetan identities in childhood, he believes that students will be motivated as activists in the struggle, wherever they live.

> Wherever they may be they must be a Tibetan. Their identity should not be lost.… When they go at certain stage they have their Tibetan-ness but at the same time they acquire many knowledge [in the West]. They have opportunities there. They become very contributing member. They can serve society.… In a way they become better than here.

The new arrival interviewees describe using different pedagogical approaches with "new arrival" students, believing that they arrive from Tibet already embodying identities as disempowered, marginalized, ethnic minorities. Whereas some generation three interviewees describe propelling their own identity transformations through their interactions with new arrival students, interviewees who are new arrivals themselves describe concentrating their efforts on the transformation of their students.

Youdon is sensitive to the emotional complexities that she associates with the students' experience of political oppression in Tibet. She notes that students who escape as youths rather than as young children may hold ideas and mind-sets that constitute obstacles to dialogue, thus obstacles to learning. Rather than attempting to dismantle those ideas through criticism, she describes a pedagogical process that begins with introducing caring interactions:

> What our religion teaches – more compassion.… It's making some of the students to understand what we are saying. Because some students are so stubborn they do not want to change their ideas.... I think to be very sincere and then they start to know – they start to trust – when they start trusting you it's easier.

With her strategy of engaging her students with discourses that positively affirm Tibetan-ness, Youdon hopes to disrupt their pre-established identity frameworks and initiate important re-authoring processes, and opening to new possibilities:

> Until now they have been brought up with different ideas that they are Chinese. So I think it's much more important

responsibility that we tell them that we are separate.
Because at the beginning when the child is small it's easier
for them to teach, but up until now they didn't get taught – so
it's important one…. Most of them they say they come to get
education…. And mostly they say just for the freedom that
they have come here. And they hope that they will have a
better life in India. Their life there is hard – without freedom.

Pedagogical processes that these interviewees describe appear structured to introduce the new arrival students to moral codes and behavioural conduct deemed "correct" in Tibetan diasporic authoritative discourse, gradually initiating them as participants in diasporic communities of practice. After Phurbu earns the trust of his students and encourages them to believe in their own strength and capabilities, he directs them to participate in local democratic processes and in the global mission that he believes is the responsibility of all Tibetans:

Just giving some education like reading/writing, just
practicing some English language, and then knowing a bit
about the world, is not the aim that we have…. His Holiness
the Dalai Lama always thinks about world peace. So, it's not
only one person … we all have to work and go with him - we
always create a kind of atmosphere so that they are also
thinking much on world peace, and world community and so
on.

In this way, he hopes that students embed within their personal identities senses of belonging to local and global communities and practices. Individuals are constructed as part of the whole, and vice versa.

**Nepal: Struggle for identity within political constraints**

In stark contrast to interviewee discourse associated with Tibetan schooling in India, Nepal-based interviewees (Choedak, Dawa, Dhundop, Ngawang, Nyima, Sengye, and Tenpa) express little hope for positive futures in their current locales. The nation state's power to constrain personal freedoms, cultural practice, and flows of information and dialogues (Croucher, 2004) is described as the central challenge for Nepal-based interviewees. Political constraints in Nepal have constituted a challenge to survival for Tibetans since 1959. The civil war that began in the mid-1990s added stress to an already fraught situation. The war has since ended, but the overall situation in Nepal remains tense, and the marginalization of Tibetans has worsened due to pressure by the Chinese government on the Nepali government (International Campaign for Tibet, 2009).

Interviewees based in Nepal describe feeling less free than those in India to implement pedagogical practices designed to provide a "Tibetan" foundation to the student's socially constructed identities. For example, Dawa explains that he is not able to replicate the annual school festival run at many Tibetan schools in India, titled "Tibet My Country", in which students present projects on Tibetan topics, "because of the political situation [in Nepal] that is not possible". School authorities attempt to introduce instruction in "Tibetan" values and knowledge systems to the school environment by scheduling religious instruction and cultural activities outside the official school hours stipulated by the Nepali government. Nonetheless, dialogic processes facilitated through formal academic

study within community have substantial Nepali influence due to rigidly enforced adherence to Nepali government curriculum.

Tibetan authoritative discourse asserts as a truism that the most important factor in the social development of children is the teacher (Department of Education [1], 2004). Nyima is worried that in Nepal-based schools there are too few Tibetan teachers and too many Nepali, negatively affecting the transmission of knowledge and activation of identities that he believes would connect students to community, and to the group struggle:

> Largely it depends upon the teachers, how far we can influence their minds, change their life. For example at some Tibetan schools in India they are very much influenced by the teachers. Always come back to serve their own community. Whereas here, many teachers are not Tibetan teachers. Local Nepali teachers. Since they only teach the courses and show the practical of life, become and engineer, become a scientist, like that, then they try to look for that scope only.

All the interviewees who are currently based in Nepal were educated in India, and express appreciation for the Indian government's support of Tibetan education. In contrast, they express resentment and frustration with the government of Nepal, due to the obstacles they feel are designed to limit their community dialogues, and marginalize them politically. For example, in Nepal there is no officially recognized Tibetan language curriculum with government exams or completion certificates. The Tibetan schools offer Tibetan language classes, but teachers understand that students must focus their attention more

intensely on the courses with government exams necessary for school graduation. Although Nepal is an ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse country, Tenpa believes that the Nepali government has an agenda of trying to force a single national identity on all people, regardless of their own cultural heritage: "[In Nepali schools] they are not teaching Tibetan language. This is a problem. All the teachers are Nepali. They are teaching Nepali very strong. They are teaching their religion, their way of life, everything. Big problem".

Due to constraints imposed by the state, the Nepal-based interviewees claim to feel limited in their efforts to engage students in culturally affirming discourses that might serve to ensure enduring community attachments and generation of new community members. The lack of public, positively affirming dialogues, and the prevalence of marginalizing policies and practices from government authorities, appears to contribute to the interviewees' fear that erasure of important cultural forms, values, and attachments may occur. The Nepal-based interviewees point to the lack of official recognition and acknowledgement of Tibetan refugees, and Nepal's political conflict, as the most worrying obstacles they face. They appear to agonize over their lack of power to address the root of the problem, located in political spheres to which they have no access, and no influence. Interviewees in Nepal appear to feel that they are working diligently to support the children in their care, but they worry desperately for the long-term future of the children. Their responsibility as caregivers for children and for the broader community appears to weigh heavily on their shoulders, as does their frustration due to feeling disempowered to act.

### 5.3.2  Power and Pedagogy

All interviewees appear to perceive themselves as contributing to the Tibetan enduring social and political struggle in various ways, personally and professionally, drawing into focus Freire's (2000) notions of *power and pedagogy.* Interviewees of all generations describe working to encourage their students to struggle for the political emancipation of their homeland, and for personal and community empowerment in diaspora, although their specific emphasis differs in nuance.

*Generation one* interviewees most clearly articulate the belief that individuals must internalize and embody "Tibetan" identities as the root that anchors them in their activism, and in their personal and community struggles. Whereas generation one interviewees emphasize the importance of internal, personal processes as prerequisite to external activism, *generation two* interviewees appear to encourage their students toward public expressions and representations of their struggle, seeking to claim their power through voice, and develop self-confidence through engaging in active practice. Reflecting on their positions as educators, *generation three* interviewees describe their personal struggles and senses of nationalistic duty activated within their efforts to transmit the group struggle to the next generation. *New arrival* interviewees' pedagogical approaches appear to privilege the construction of activist identities within their students. Conversely, *Nepal*-based interviewees describe struggling within political constraints that feel to them as barriers to their efforts to implement Tibetan curriculum and pedagogy. For example, they do not feel free to

interweave language and religious instruction within the overall curriculum, and they are restricted from encouraging student's participation in explorations of political history, or activism that might support the personal empowerment of their students in their efforts to forward the group emancipation struggle.

**Generation One: Empowering individuals to support the collective**

Generation one interviewees appear to frame the "two wing" education program as supporting the construction of Tibetan identities and the personal empowerment of students. As Lhakpa points out, skilful and strategic negotiation of global process and local boundaries is a critically important matter of physical, cultural, and political survival:

> Because the Tibetans in exile will be living here – unless and until this negotiation process [with the Chinese government] has a valid answer, the Tibetans in exile will remain in exile. And so they will live in India, or in Canada or anywhere – and they have to adapt and adjust to that country's economic and political requirements…. If we think there has been a weakening of the Tibetan cultural aspects then let's beef it up, but don't say that this is the only thing that's important. We don't have that luxury anymore…. So in this context, unless we are versatile, knowing our culture, plus knowing what we need to know to live in society, unless we have that, then we lose out.

Echoing Freire's (2000) method of supporting the authoring of self-empowered activists, Lhakpa explains that education processes should honour traditional

values and cultural practices, while simultaneously supporting individual and

group efforts for empowerment in the world:

> If you have a Tibetan who knows his culture, and is versatile
> in his own subject of specialization, he can sit across any
> table and talk with anybody in the world with equal authority.
> And more so because of his language and lots of things – in
> fact he can contribute more!

After personal empowerment through education has been achieved,

generation one interviewees describe imploring younger generations to use the

power they gained through education to work in support of group goals. Choedak

draws upon the discourse of the highest Tibetan moral authority to compel his

teaching staff to use their personal power as professional educators, attending

seriously to their responsibility of intergenerational transmission of the group

struggle. He describes as duty the task of imparting values and skills such that

the next generation is empowered as activists who can move change forward:

> I also repeat something else His Holiness says about young
> Tibetans, "These are the Tibetans who will carry the flag of
> Tibet, the future leaders and politicians. But we the people
> who are taking responsibility today need to understand the
> qualities of the people who will take over after". Not only
> youth, but the kind of education we have today…. You
> cannot say "Oh you young people, you are the future seeds
> of Tibet, future leaders". Then, I always say, what kind of
> leaders? It will depend on the kind of quality of education we
> are providing to them. Only then we can say, yes, we will
> have a good society in a few years. Failing to understand
> this is shirking responsibility.

The generation one interviewees appear to be aware of lived tensions in contentious local practice, whereby some individuals experience difficulty negotiating balance between the "two wings" of contemporary diasporic life. Yet, they do not appear to feel discouraged. A striking difference between generation one interviewees and later generations was their lack of interest in engaging in extensive discussions about problems, challenges, or obstacles they face in their work, or that they perceive in Tibetan society more broadly. They did not brush the topic aside, but rather acknowledged the challenges and quickly moved on to discussing proactive strategies for improvement and problem solving. They appear to be pragmatic and strategic in their positioning, embodying dynamic tensions of the struggle, and representing themselves as philosophical activists.

**Generation Two: Claiming power through voice**

All the generation two interviewees are currently classroom teachers who interact with students on a daily basis. They appear to endorse an emancipatory education approach whereby in order to develop self-confidence, the oppressed must act within the struggle for liberation and reclaim their right to speak. For example, behaviour Nyima describes as "shyness" has traditionally been deemed a socially appropriate form of deferential respect. Yet, in the current political context he views "shyness" as a limitation and liability: "By nature Tibetan students are very quiet, so we have to make them active.… We always tell them the two greatest obstacles are shy and fear. Don't fear, don't shy". He consciously models personal empowerment within the context of his personal and professional life, and is proud of students who appear more self-confident

and self-assured than he was as a child. Nyima envisions teachers such as himself as agents facilitating social change by modelling personal freedom within community contexts, including modelling dialogically negotiated compromise:

> It's that I think it's my birth-right to express my own views as a human. So I think it's my right to express my ideas but not to criticize anyone else. But if the criticism is in a healthy manner it's ok. Giving my own views and opinions and expressing my own ideas I take it as my right. And this no one can deny!

Sengye also focuses on encouraging his students to participate in public representations and activism in the national struggle, claiming their right to speak. He works to support the development of youth who possess the necessary knowledge and skills to articulate their nation's concerns and advocate on behalf of the struggle on the global stage.

> Historically all the – any point – we are not part of China. We are free country. So Tibetan young in exile – if they are qualified they can show this in a good way – without fighting. Fighting we cannot do. We have to fight with education side…. So if they know that this is our culture then when they grow up they will say "this is our culture" so when they grow up they will say "I am Tibetan. This is how I have to be – I have to live my culture".

As an emancipatory approach to education suggests, Sengye hopes to create the conditions for his students, through study, to know and name "the oppressor", and take action toward social and political emancipation.

Generation two interviewees' discourse and demeanour demonstrate a sense of urgency in implementing social change. Their concern is connected to their belief that youths' senses of hope for the future are diminishing. Pasang believes that in order to motivate youth to participate in school and society they need to believe that there are achievable goals worth working toward. In the current condition of economic and political uncertainty, his confidence is thin:

> It's very difficult to motivate the students when they have a
> lot of other actors and environments - influences and things
> affecting their behaviour.  So many students with BAs and
> they're not able to get jobs. This is a major challenge our
> society is facing. If we have good employment opportunities
> then probably we could have a better education system – the
> students would be more motivated.

**Generation Three: Transmission of struggle as national duty**

Whereas generation one interviewees tend to focus on individual internalization processes, and generation two interviewees emphasises appears to be toward encouraging self-expression and courage in public representations, generation three interviewees drew attention to their own feelings of responsibility as activists in the Tibetan struggle. The sense of duty to step outside one's personal comfort zone and engage in important dialogues as an activist appears to propel Tsering to act more assertively than she might have if her nation were not in a state of crisis. She identifies as a part of the enduring struggle and vows to pass the struggle to the next generation:

Myself I don't really like being involved in politics – but at this stage of loss of independence – we have to have knowledge of politics of our own country – it's very, very important. Not only to us, but to all societies – we should impart the knowledge to the youngsters and they will impart to the next generation…. So I feel the responsibility of all the teachers – to explain the real situation.

Wangmo expresses no doubt as to where power to forward the struggle resides, and advises her students strongly, **"it's only by getting a good education that you can serve your nation, fulfil your aim"**. Education in general is described as empowering, and Lhamo explains that contemporary methods of "child centred" instruction support student empowerment more profoundly, "This type of teaching – they try to come up with all the point of view. In this way they can take their decisions. They have freedom to take their own decisions. They don't have to depend on others". Dolkar believes that the new approach also helps contribute to building deeply caring relationships within school communities: "With child centred the children are coming out with their ideas – so they can build confidence in themselves. It's much better. And teacher and student have good interaction – we know each other".

Generation three interviewees' notions of education as empowerment appear to include the struggle to balance discourses of cultural survival, material survival, and political struggle. Many expressed their worry that DoE policy initiatives place too much emphasis on Tibetan language, potentially weakening their students' English language skills, thus disadvantaging their community both materially and politically. Dolma is concerned both as a teacher and a mother: "I

don't mean that I'm not respecting Tibetan language, but I'm being realistic about the future. I got so many problems when I went to University. Because of my weak English. I don't want my child to face such problems".

Despite the complexities of negotiating traditional discourses within globalized contexts of on-going struggle for material and political survival, core Buddhist values appear to be understood by the interviewees as the foundation of their ultimate power. Chimi advises her students that Buddhist approaches will contribute to their personal empowerment and resilience:

> Those who are really brought up in Tibetan community they have more inner peace. They can usually cope with difficult situations – in our tradition we are taught, if something happens it's because of previous Karma. We are educated from the point of view of compassion and Karma – that makes – reaction quite different – as Tibetan.

In this view, their personal and communal power is rooted not in their external actions, but in their internal reactions to external events that may feel beyond their control.

## New Arrivals: Educating activists

Education that encourages activism of a variety of forms appears to be a central concern of new arrival interviewees, whether teaching exile-born or new arrival students. Echoing Freire (2000), they express a belief that global awareness and active participation in the larger world will contribute to developing in students personally internalized senses of empowerment. To this

end, and drawing on his personal experience, Migmar is a strong supporter of empowering individuals through education in the "two wings":

> So, this is what I advise my students: practice Tibetan language as number one priority, and then study science and math to bring our Tibetan nation up to speed with the rest of the world. Tibetan language is useful only in our community. Outside of our community, it's important to know English and the sciences. It's like having both the wings. As for me, since I know only Tibetan language, I have only one wing. Therefore, I'd be foolish if I tell my students to study only Tibetan and nothing else. I don't do that.

Despite the interviewees' stated belief in the power of education, they reference the Buddhist notion that true empowerment is deeply internal within individuals. Reflective of his own childhood struggles to come to terms with separation from family, and echoing Buddhist notions that individual empowerment rests not in controlling factors outside oneself, but in internalized responses to external situations that may feel beyond their personal control (Rinpoche, 1992), Dorjee reminds his students of the inevitability of change. He appears confident that the surest way to avoid the emotional anxiety associated with change is to expect the unexpected. Rather than fearing the world and shirking from it, he encourages his students to reach out and know the world: "After all, they're living in that world, there's no escape. They must enjoy this bit of chaos. If not in Tibet then they must enjoy here. We cannot stop that".

Interviewees describe encouraging their students to express their voices in global contexts and take action to represent their struggle, although they

appear to view new arrival students as requiring special attention. Phurbu

believes that profound internal renegotiations of identity are required in order for

his young adult new arrival students to feel empowered in the world. He

expresses a sense of urgency in imparting global understandings to his adult

students, many of whom had been nomads and farmers in Tibet, but he believes

that before they can understand and act effectively in the world they need to

deconstruct dialogues they internalized while growing up in Tibet:

> Until now they have totally different – like Communism you
> know – and then all the sudden when they come here and
> we are telling them totally different – like Democracy and so
> many things – and it doesn't go with them – so they are just
> confused.… Slowly of course they can contact to other
> people, they can read magazines, newspapers and only then
> they can get some ideas and they are believing what we
> have said.

Phurbu seeks to support his students in the transformation of their experience of

the political world by engaging them with a plethora of global discourses, strongly

privileging discourses of democracy and human rights. It is an attempt to propel

them to deconstruct and re-author their understandings of their own histories and

current circumstances, positioning them to engage in the struggle for a different

future.

**Nepal: Struggle for hope**

Nepal's civil conflict introduced specific challenges and stresses to the

lives and work of Tibetan educators there. The salience of "hope" (Freire, 2000)

as a motivating and unifying symbol emerges starkly in this context, where hope appears thin. In the context of the civil war, Choedak's professional mission became a struggle to ensure physical survival. Visitors to his school saw a vibrant campus full of active students, but the locked gates and security guards around the perimeter were evidence of pervasive tensions and fears:

> These have put us in much more pressure and tension, not only in our work but in our thinking. Two days before I had police here telling me to be careful because the Maoists are after the private schools. And one school, just 2 miles away from us, they threw a bomb there. It's the situation. I cannot run away from that. But it's very frustrating. I'm growing much older than previous years. And I stay here [at the school] 24 hours. I cannot go out. That's how it has to be. You have to be fully dedicated, or not – not like half-baked bread.

Choedak chose to stay in Nepal rather than take his family to safer ground in India, yet he appears to approach the task of encouraging individual and community activism with caution. He could not, in good conscience, encourage his students to publicly express their voices in action toward emancipation, when their physical safety was at issue.

At the local community level, the Nepal-based interviewees appear to be concerned about the apparent lack of attention to education by parents, but understand that external obstacles beyond their control may feel overwhelming, and many parents appear to have given up hope for change. They were simply trying to survive within challenging political constraints. Dawa explains:

The main reason is about the conflict situation [civil war]. Other than that we have legal problems which our students have to deal with. For example up until now when the student reaches 16 years age they don't get the RC [Registration Certificate] in Nepal. But in India they get…. Students who want to go for further studies in India, we have to smuggle them in over the border…. Once they reach India they again won't get papers…. Another problem – let's say they go for further education in Nepal. Then finally when they go for a job there is the problem of no identity – without Nepali citizenship they won't get job in most offices. At best they might get job in the small Tibetan community, but other than that almost impossible. It's very hard to encourage them. That's one of the reasons the parents are very reluctant to educate their children. They say "what's the point of spending too much on education when at the end there's nothing"…. With the obstacles it's also difficult to convince parents to cooperate.

The interviewees themselves appear to be struggling to muster hope, yet feel duty bound to encourage and buoy the broader community. They appear emotionally torn, fearing that their talk of future opportunities is full of empty promises. Dhondup spoke repeatedly of his frustration and sadness when considering the future of the children under his care. The civil conflict was just one piece of a much deeper systemic problem: "The biggest problem is the lack of opportunity when students reach adulthood. It's hard for adults to encourage them with hope for the future". Although Dhundop seemed tired and dejected with the state of affairs in Nepal, he did not give up, and strongly emphasized the

necessity of maintaining Tibetan schools as the only thin thread of hope that exists:

> Dealing with Nepali government offices is difficult. There is a lot of discrimination – assuming that all Tibetans are rich and they are demanding bribes from all – there is virtually no support. If we didn't have Tibetan schools in Nepal what would have happened to Tibetans in Nepal? Tibetans wouldn't get admission to good schools, because of discrimination and they have no money. No entry into government schools because of lack of citizenship.

Ngawang shares the India based interviewees' view that adults shoulder responsibility for transmission of values and ethics of their culture and the struggle to future generations, but his sadness and frustration with the situation in Nepal are palpable. He seems to desperately want to be a living model of passion for learning and zest for life, but he struggles to muster an authentic tone when using encouraging words with his students:

> I don't know what I can do. My advice for them is, we are refugees. What I'm telling them, "it's ok, you have to earn your keep".… There are so many who just get married and stay at home doing nothing, because we don't have much scope.… It's very hard to encourage them to do well, because even if they do well what can they do?… So some parents think it's useless to send them to school, and why not send them to a jewellery shop at a young age? I can't blame them.

When comparing Tibetan schooling in India with Nepal, Dawa points out differences in student motivation that he attributes in part to restrictive Nepali government policies and limitations to freedom of expression. In the contentious political context he is afraid to encourage students to "reclaim the right to speak" (Freire, 2000):

> You'll find that the students in India – they are very conscious about the [Tibetan] cause. But here, not so much. Very recently in one of our magazines there was a write-up by one of our students about the need to work hard for freedom and so on, and it got into the hands of a few of the locals and we almost had a [legal] case on it, so I mean – small things – but it's significant. From our side we had to do something to calm it down. It's difficult because we want our students to express in their own way, but even that is difficult to encourage.

These political realities and constraints undermine teachers' motivation. When Tenpa receives news from India about exciting changes and innovative developments in Tibetan education, there and in other countries, he describes a feeling like salt in a wound. He is pleased that these innovations are possible somewhere in the world, but his frustration and sense of futility in Nepal is heightened.

Despite an overwhelmingly heavyhearted feeling within the Nepal context, and interviewees' struggles within contentious political constraints to create local practices that facilitate community building and emancipatory struggles in hope, they appear to continue to act strategically in their personal and professional

struggles. Returning to the notion of identity processes characteristic of diasporic consciousness, some interviewees appearing to "make the best of a bad situation", found positive elements to focus their attention on. For example, although Dawa feels that amongst Tibetans in Nepal understanding of the importance of education is not as strong as in India, the civil war may have propelled a social shift that he hopes will have positive long-term ramifications, after Nepal regains peace:

> A few years back when we had a lot of tourists and it was more peaceful, we had a lot of girls drop out [of school]. Because they wanted to go sell souvenirs and such for their parents. But these days since there are no tourists the dropout rate for the girls has dropped immensely…. On the one hand I'm sad that the parents are suffering economically, but for the girls and the children I think it's a blessing in disguise in the long run.

This construction of a hopeful outcome within an otherwise seemingly hopeless situation appears to buoy Dawa with energy in his work. In the Nepal context in particular, Dawa characterizes global flows, change, and migration to other countries, as physical survival necessities: "Many of our graduates are here without work. And by trying to stop them going abroad we are doing them no good". He does not agonize over issues of cultural survival or assimilation, because in his teaching context, physical survival is the more pressing priority.

### 5.3.3  Summary

Facilitating the social construction of "Tibetan-ness" in students appears to be a primary goal of all interviewees. They connect their individual identities to community affiliations as mutually reflexive and intertwined positions that also inform their approach to emancipatory pedagogy (Freire, 2000). The "two wing" approach to education is depicted as an empowerment strategy necessary to ensure the cultural and economic survival of individuals and community in current supraterritorial contexts, and for the advancement of the multifaceted enduring group struggle. The notion that individual identities and group struggle are interrelated and mutually constituted is prevalent in the discourse of interviewees of all generations and contexts, yet differences in pedagogical approach and philosophical emphasis appear to reflect interviewees' personal histories and the various social and political contexts in which they work.

Generation one interviewees' commitment to the notion that Buddhist values must structure the core and form the foundation of personal identities of Tibetans draws their pedagogical focus to individuals' processes of internalizing Tibetan authoritative discourse. They appear to envision individual identities shaped within a spiritual and communal frame of reference that they hope will serve as the emotional "home" for individuals throughout their lives, and will position individuals with motivation and skills to support the Tibetan struggle, engage with global societies and economies, and negotiate boundaries between various local and global "figured worlds".

Generation two interviewees tend to focus less on philosophical discourse and more on concerns that their students' personal insecurity is a barrier to internalization of dialogues. They appear to believe that by providing students with knowledge, skills, and opportunities for social and economic empowerment in global supraterritorial contexts, students' fears for the future will ease and they will experience the emotional security necessary to focus their attention on community practices, rather than distraction in worry over their individual futures. Echoing Freire's (2000) pedagogy encouraging "the oppressed" to claim the right to speak, generation two interviewees appear to believe that individuals' internalized senses of empowerment and self-confidence are strengthened, deepened, and further developed through active dialogic practice.

Generation three interviewees' discourse on education includes expressions of their personal nationalistic mission as educators, and expressions of their apparent fear of failure in the struggle for community cohesion. They struggle in the negotiation of priorities and boundaries in relation to the "two wings" of education. They appear to believe that although Tibetan knowledge is necessary for personal inner strength and happiness, currently, "modern knowledge" is their most powerful weapon in the struggle for personal and community empowerment in the world. As generation one interviewee's discourse suggests they should, they appear to attempt to use their personal power as educators to forward the group struggle, although they understand that their professional positions as teachers do not necessarily equate to "authority" in the minds of students. Rather, they must establish relationships with students

based on trust and care, in order for their discourse to be internalized by students as authoritative.

New arrival interviewees appear to be at ease with the notion that they are working within and mediating societal changes that have already taken place, and are ongoing. They seem to understand that processes of intergenerational transmission of "Tibetan-ness" are fragmented within their current political and global context, thus they focus their energies strategically on the transmission of knowledge and values they deem to be core to "Tibetan-ness", and to the political struggle. New arrival interviewees refer to their own personal histories as evidence of the power and necessity of "two wings" for individual and group empowerment. Their Tibetan "wing" appears to provide them personal inner strength and resilience, and the modern "wing" provides them strategies and skills useful for gaining social, economic, and political power in the world. They describe their pedagogical practices that include discourses that positively affirm Tibetan-ness, ideally support their students' identity configurations as self-confident nationalists and global citizens.

The Nepal context is a poignant counterexample to India, providing a glimpse of potential effects on individuals and communities when political forces restrict the discourses of "the oppressed". India based interviewees focused their discourse almost exclusively on their internal struggles and personal motivations, rather than political constraints associated with the host government, whereas in Nepal the obstacles interviewees were most troubled by are external to them, and politically institutionalized. Superficially, in a material sense, the schools and

communities in Nepal appear similar to those in India. However, local political struggles appear to have taken a severe emotional toll on the interviewees. Nepal based interviewees' frustration and anger, and their diminishing hope for the future in Nepal, serve to remind us of Freire's (2000) notion that preventing others from engaging in inquiry constitutes an act of violence. Most interviewees in India engage in proactive discourse, considering various options and directions for potential futures for their society, and express hope that encouraging students toward personal empowerment and group activism will lead to positive social and political change. Conversely, Nepal based interviewees describe focusing their energies on supporting their students' individual struggles for material survival as their most pressing priority. They tread cautiously around the notion of reclaiming the right to speak because, fearing reprisals from the state, they expect that public activism in Nepal would likely bring more harm than good to their students. Their struggle to encourage their students with hope for the future appears to be made more challenging because the interviewees themselves lack hope.

The following chapter, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS, draws connections between the three interrelated themes theoretical threads and data analysis in the Tibetan case. Implications for education in other refugee and diasporic contexts are addressed.

# 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Each of the three bodies of literature that collectively frame the theoretical lens for this study are important to the case, because each addresses different issues and processes that appear to feel pressing and vital to participants in the Tibetan diaspora's enduring struggle. Coordinating and interweaving the three theoretical frameworks helps to reveal and make sense of mutually influential processes that occur at their intersections, enriching our understanding of complexities of social practice within each framework, how they are interrelated with each other, and ways in which they may be mutually constituted.

Questions of the construction of *identity and belonging* (*subsection 6.1*) are central concerns for Tibetan diasporic authorities, who hope that individuals will connect and interweave their personal identities with community affiliations and allegiances. Authorities and many in the Tibetan populace appear to understand that current *globalization* (*subsection 6.2*) processes cannot be avoided, and thus must be acknowledged and addressed. Globalization is implicated in individual and local change processes, potentially serving to impinge upon or subvert authorities' efforts to support the construction of community affiliations in individuals. Alternatively, Tibetan educators appear to understand that, for example, globalization processes can be utilized to support the generation and maintenance of connections and connectedness amongst

widely geographically dispersed individuals who perceive themselves as community members.

In the case of the Tibetan diasporic struggle, locally envisioned and constructed forms of *emancipatory education* (*subsection 6.3*) appear to be utilized strategically toward supporting the youth in their processes of making sense of their connections to self, Tibetan community, and the world. Educators appear to be positioned, and to position themselves, as agents supporting their student's development as individuals within community, and as activists in the larger community struggle. This study illuminates ways in which education processes are intertwined with and influential in identity and community as well as global processes, and reveals how educators might attempt to construct education as a social space where processes associated with the construction of individual identities and community affiliation are mediated in relation to global processes.

This case of identity and education processes in a diasporic enduring struggle may provide insights useful for governments that receive refugees or other diasporic groups, or for other cases of communities struggling to structure education processes oriented toward a common vision and purpose. Recommendations are articulated in *subsection 6.4*.

This study documents how Tibetan educators appear to make sense of their historically situated identities and their positions within the enduring diasporic struggle. Their understandings reveal how identity, global flows, and political processes are interrelated and mutually reflexive. Many Tibetans working

to build community in diaspora, and struggling to privilege some futures over others, utilize education strategically to empower individuals and communities and to mediate the effects of those global processes that marginalize them.

Interviewees' efforts to forward intergenerational transmission of nationalistic attachments and cultural understandings, and struggles with socio-economic and political change, demonstrate agency and educators' concern for their own and their students' identities. The local and global aspects of the enduring struggles influence and inform each other, and impact the structuring of the struggles and local practices. The psychological and symbolic "local" (Savage et al., 2005) that interviewees reference as their "imagined community" (Anderson, 1991) centrally locates Tibetans engaged in practice within the enduring global struggle.

The constellation of individual and community dialogues within contentious local practices includes individuals' personal struggles for identity and belonging, as well as negotiations of individual and community boundaries. While the group struggle is in process and in progress, individual identities are authored and reconfigured, in turn effecting change and reconfiguration of the larger community struggle. Emotional attachments to the Tibetan diasporic group struggle appear to have endured over time and across generations, but the nature of the struggle as it is lived and embodied in individuals appears fluid and dynamic, shifting in form and emphasis in different historical and political situations as illustrated respectively in the four groups whose narratives are central to this research.

## 6.1 Identity and Belonging

Diasporic tensions of loss and hope appear most dramatic in generation one. Their early childhoods appear to have been characterized by the emotional shock of dislocation from homeland, with a more refined and complex diasporic consciousness emerging when they were in school. Their personal processes of "becoming" appear to have involved complex dialogic negotiations and improvised forms of Tibetan-ness that incorporate modern knowledge systems, Buddhist ideology emphasizing gratitude and compassion, Tibetan language, allegiance to the TGIE, and feelings of duty to commit their effort, energy, and emotions to the Tibetan group struggle.

As children they struggled to negotiate academic and social worlds of school, while also struggling for "belonging". They appear to have attached their understanding of "belonging" to the people, community, and administrative system that provided them care when they were in most desperate need. As orphans, refugees, and destitute children, at Tibetan schools and boarding facilities they felt normal, needed, acknowledged, appreciated, and important. As adults, their compliance with the wishes of Tibetan authorities who implored them to work in support of community as teachers appears to have been, in part, connected to their notions of belonging. This includes their understanding of the importance of expressions of gratitude, verbally and through their actions, and the embodiment of Buddhist ideals of compassion, put into practice through community service. In this way, they appear to frame their professional duty as civil servants, as a spiritual practice.

Generation two interviewees, less materially dependent on the TGIE than generation one but more so than generation three, appear to take pragmatic positions in establishing their personal and professional identities. Socially and emotionally they identify with Tibetan community, while keeping their concerns regarding material survival centrally in focus. Their personal and professional attachments as adults appear to reflect their childhood experience, where dialogues include family to a greater extent than generation one. Theirs could be considered a *pragmatic diasporic nationalism*, representing a shift from generation one interviewee's apparently more philosophical approach.

Generation three interviewees understand from the discourse of their elders that past experience of hardship is an important marker of Tibetan authenticity, yet even as refugees they personally experienced less hardship than interviewees of other generations that are represented in this study. They appear to attempt, through intellectual and emotional connection to community, to internalize histories that they have not directly experienced. Generation three interviewees' parents and teachers have told them that as refugees they are more aware of hardship and suffering than those global others who have not experienced similar loss, thus they have greater responsibility to act as global justice activists. In childhood they were encouraged Tibetan authorities to take the view that their nation's struggle places them in a privileged social space with deeply internalized understandings of human suffering (a vital insight in Buddhist practice). Thus, they are encouraged to believe that they can interact with the

world as legitimate authorities on hardship, suffering, and survival, and as models of embodied compassion.

The generation three interviewees appear to be emotionally attached to the positioning authorities would like them to take up, yet also appear self-conscious and insecure about their own authenticity as "Tibetan". They emphatically express their belief in the importance of building and maintaining vibrant cultural and community connections, and appear more likely than interviewees of other generations to express regret for ways in which they perceive their own upbringing and schooling to have been culturally deficient. They describe their fear of assimilation into majority cultures, yet they appear to believe that they are able to successfully embody both Tibetan and global identities. Those interviewees who were raised and schooled in locales most distant from Tibetan cultural community took proactive steps as adults to position themselves such that they would be immersed in Tibetan social and linguistic worlds, thus attempting to re-author themselves as more fully "Tibetan".

Unlike their age peers amongst generation three interviewees, new arrival interviewees do not appear to feel the need to verbally or symbolically remind themselves of the importance of the Tibetan struggle. As adults they do not appear to believe that their material survival depends on their connection to the TGIE and its offices, but their sense of fulfilment in life is attached to feeling purposeful within community, and within the struggle for survival and for political emancipation of their homeland. Their internalized dialogues appear to connect

them to their lived histories in Chinese government occupied Tibet, family in their homeland, and to the diasporic struggle.

Consistent with Buddhist notions of interdependence and Bakhtin's (1981) intertwining of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses, interviewees from all four generational groups do not appear to imagine the possibility of fully independent selves. They know that their identities are "configurations of self and other", and they utilize agency to selectively privilege the discourses they attend to most seriously and figure into their notions of belonging. These educators appear to seek to model values and practices they associate with "Tibetan-ness", and encourage other individuals to elect to belong within community. They appear to do this by selectively internalizing, prioritizing, or rejecting aspects of other systems of understanding that they dialogue with as they go about their lives. A salient theme that recurred in the discourse of every generation of interviewees, and that appeared to motivate teachers to remain in the profession, is the quest for a symbolic place of emotional belonging that includes feeling purposeful and needed within community.

## 6.2  Globalization

Globalization is often perceived as a threat to nationalist and community identities and attachments, and yet in the Tibetan case, engagement with global processes is viewed by authorities as vital to the success of important aspects of their individual and group struggles. The potential opportunities associated with globalization are emphasised by community leaders, educators, education policy, and within school curriculum, while they also stress the importance of

strategically negotiated boundary definition processes that safeguard community identities and attachments to an emotionally centred symbolic local. Analytical in their consideration of potential threats and benefits of global flows, diasporic Tibetans devise strategic responses that they appear to view as appropriate to their historically and politically situated positions. Education is centrally utilized to support continuity of community attachments, position community members for individual empowerment in global socio-economic contexts, and to propel local change that they hope will advantage a future in which their community is differently positioned globally.

Rather than constructing boundaries as isolationist or aggressive, a compelling inducement for Tibetans to author themselves as community members who embody "Tibetan-ness" is the characterization of Tibetan knowledge systems and nationalistic attachments as sources of richness that contribute to the global cultural landscape in positive ways. This construction of Tibetan global identities points to a form of reterritorialization in which Tibetan people, ideals, and their embodied, imagined community belong everywhere, rather than belonging nowhere, as their legal status as "stateless" implies. In this way, identification as a refugee is reframed to be a socially and culturally important global citizen.

Affirming people's need to feel that they belong and are needed, useful, and appreciated within community, appears to have supported the construction and endurance of community and struggle, without stimulating within individuals violence or aggression toward others. Positive affirmations appear to connect

students to community, and positive recognition of their service to community encourages educators to be diligent in their mission. Educators' sense of belonging to larger imagined local and global collectives appears to be reinforced through Tibetan authoritative discourses that privilege the social status of teachers as performers of Buddhist acts of compassion in the service of others, and as centrally important figures ensuring the endurance of the struggle for community and emancipation. According to the Basic Education Policy for Tibetans (Department of Education [1], 2004):

> The future of any society rests on the quality of education provided, and the quality of education in turn depends on the quality of the teachers. Thus, teachers being the most important persons in society, great effort shall be made to recruit persons of highest character and learning to the profession. (p. 10)

Further to this, Chapter 11.10 of the BEP states that teachers are "leaders of people and nation building" (Department of Education [1], 2004, p. 11), and thus should be provided working and living conditions that will support them in their ability to carry out their mission.

Generation one interviewees appear to take a philosophical approach, apparently confident that encouraging embodiment of Buddhist ideals within youth is the best strategy for empowering individuals for personal self-sufficiency and strength to work in support of community. For them, it seems that modernity and globalization do not necessarily conflict with traditional ideology, but interviewees worry about the introduction of modern distractions that may impede traditional internalization processes. Generation two interviewees appear to focus their concerns on the problem of distractions they associate with their students'

fears regarding material survival, whereas generation three interviewees appear more self-conscious of their own embodied cultural hybridity. They appear more worried about the possibility of assimilation than interviewees of other generational groups, and consciously struggle to be strategic and pragmatic in their utilization of "scapes" in their various figured worlds. In contrast, new arrival interviewees appear unselfconscious in their personal identities, and strategic in their use of globalization processes for personal empowerment and for activism in the struggle for the political emancipation of Tibet.

Another important layer of contemporary Tibetan nationalist sentiment that emerged in interviews appears as resistance and opposition in response to the attempts of the Government of China to represent Tibetans as a Chinese minority ethnic group within the Chinese state apparatus, rather than as a distinct nation. Tibetans living within Tibet are involved in face-to-face interactions with the Chinese government's processes, but those in diaspora also experience the pressures, albeit in a different form through media, interactions with Chinese people outside China, personal memories, and through stories carried with Tibetans who escape Tibet.

The Tibetan case is instructive as an example of a refugee community that appears to have strategically utilized their culture genres and reflexive dialogic processes toward community building and forwarding their emancipation struggle. In addition, community processes are structured to, ideally, encourage and facilitate participation in global networks in ways that will benefit Tibetans as well as global others.

## 6.3 Emancipatory Education

The interviewees' characterizations of their professional mission as educators appear to reflect forms of emancipatory pedagogy developed in specific cultural, political, and historical circumstances. Their approaches appear intended to support a model of enduring struggle in which community boundaries are established without denigrating others. Boundaries (Holland and Lave, 2000) that differentiate "insiders" from "outsiders" are socially constructed and continually negotiated and renegotiated to support the endurance of the community struggle, without creating an isolationist society. Tibetan educators' discourses and practices appear structured to affirm hope within community, in ways that may be instructive for educators in other contexts. The BEP (Department of Education [1], 2004) adds a new authoritative discourse to the evolving dialogue.

The BEP and other community discourses (informal and formal) affirm and interweave local and global dialogues in ways that appear to make sense of the past and present condition as refugees, and appear to support Tibetans in defining themselves as survivors rather than victims. Individually and in communal discourse, they appear to see and refer to themselves as members of global society and as important participants in local and global struggles for a different future. Despite political, economic, and social contexts that could author them as marginal, through consistent messaging at all levels of community discourse, internalized through education processes, diasporic Tibetans appear

to have constructed an image of themselves as important to the world, and thus, worth saving.

Since "the way we define thinking exerts a profound impact on the nature of our schools, the role that teachers play in the world, and the shape that society will ultimately take" (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1996, p. 174), philosophies, processes, and mechanisms employed by Tibetan educators appear, in part, reflective of Tibetan cultural views on human nature and learning. For example, the "consciousness" referred to by some Western scholars, that they hope to explore, come to terms with, and unshackle (Greene, 1996) may not be the same "consciousness" as it is understood within Tibetan authoritative discourse, substantially rooted in Buddhist philosophical understandings and spiritual paradigms. Thus, approaches to education that may be perceived or constructed as emancipatory within Tibetan diasporic contexts, may appear to differ substantially from emancipatory processes employed in other regions. Buddhist pedagogical approaches appear to be reflected in the interviewee's understandings of the education, and of their own and their students' deeply internalized inner-selves. Buddhist views appear connected to the motivation with which interviewees approach their interactions with others and with their environment. Spiritual emancipation may be connected to, but is not the same as, social and political emancipation.

Various pedagogical practices and approaches in Tibetan schools may appear to work at cross purposes, simultaneously aimed toward building within the youth identities that will sustain them as individuals in the world (personal

autonomy) connected to group imaginings (implying relinquishing degrees of

personal autonomy), as well as encouraging youth to seek political emancipation

for their nation (community empowerment). As with other communities globally,

personal, social, and political power struggles exist at local levels of Tibetan

society, including between and amongst various religious sects and groups, and

contestations between and amongst individuals and groups that self-identify as

Tibetan are as prevalent as in any other society. But, in the discourse of the

interviewees and other official community discourse, it is in relations external to

the boundaries of "Tibetan-ness", specifically regarding relations with China, that

attention towards political emancipatory action, and emancipatory pedagogy,

appears most strongly directed.

Identity issues are central to the nature and form of emancipatory

pedagogy that appears to have taken shape in Tibetan diasporic contexts, and

identity is depicted by interviewees and in other community discourse as

essential to the national struggle. Identities connect us with the past and present,

and, as pointed out by Holland and Lave (2000), the *quest* for identity points to

hoped-for futures:

> It may be useful to consider day-to-day struggles over community
> identities as in part staking claims into the future. If people fight with
> and over versions of history (recent anthropology gives rich
> testimony to this), they are also fighting *for* particular versions of the
> future. (p. 27)

Tibetan authorities and educators appear to be striving to support the

construction in youth of multifaceted identities that connect them to the future

they are struggling for. Core "Tibetan" values are depicted as essential, and are

connected to shared communal histories and attachments to homeland. The identity configurations that appear to be promoted by Tibetan authorities, including the interviewees in this study, all of whom are educators and thus hold professional positions of authority in community, appear fluid and constructed in the hope that individuals will be empowered to adapt to the world around them, and enact agency within it. In this vision, "Tibetan-ness" appears to include the ability to reach outward as activists who are responsive to global change, and are engaged in processes of production geared toward their nation's emancipation from political oppression in Tibet, and from material dependence on others in diaspora.

Disparate views on the BEP (Department of Education [1], 2004) within and between interviewees of different generations (such as, differing perspectives on whether Tibetan language immersion programs should be implemented) appear connected to tensions within and between struggles for cultural survival and community cohesion, material and social empowerment in a global sense, and political emancipation of their homeland. These tensions return us to consideration of personal and generational histories, and the futures they each struggle for and imagine as attainable.

Generation one interviewees' spiritual and philosophical approaches to life, learning, and community relations, appear to structure the foundations that anchor them. They acknowledge that globalization has introduced important new complexities and distractions that individuals in the diaspora must negotiate, but they treat these as superficial and mechanical rather than deeply substantive

challenges. Generation two interviewee's apparently greater worry over material obstacles seems to reflect their personal experience in childhood, and their belief that material security is a necessary precursor to the creation of mental and emotional conditions necessary to support their students' learning. Encouraging their students toward individual empowerment and agency appears to be important to generation two interviewees, echoing their personal experiences of having chosen career paths, rather than entering the teaching profession in response to appeals from the TGIE.

Generation three interviewees' personal histories are varied, as are their perspectives on education. In childhood, generation three interviewees lived in conditions of greater material security than other generations, yet they also appear to have experienced stronger feelings of personal, emotional, insecurity regarding cultural hybridity and assimilation. Diasporic tensions and anxiety in the struggle to define and negotiate boundaries appear most pronounced with generation three interviewees, as does assertiveness in verbal and symbolic expressions of nationalism. They describe their mission as educators in direct relation to the group struggle for political emancipation. Positive recognition from students and community members appears to help fuel their motivation in their work as educators, but they appear more easily shaken than interviewees of other generations when recognition feels lacking. Although Indian run CTSA schools do not pose the same threats to identity that Tibetans in Nepal experience, they are nevertheless described by some generation three interviewees as less effective in transmitting important cultural and academic

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content. Tibetan-ness is constructed as a desirable, privileged, social position, and so interviewees who attended schools they deem to be less Tibetan (e.g. non-Tibetan schools and CTSA schools) appear to feel socially and academically disadvantaged.

New arrival interviewees' self-confidence as embodied Tibetans appears evident in their apparent lack of concern over issues of hybridity, and in their deeply emotionally held commitment to the Tibetan struggle. They claim to seek personal fulfilment though their work as teachers, and view their mission as educators as equivalent to activism in the group struggle. Their response to the BEP (Department of Education [1], 2004) seems both philosophical and pragmatic. They support the "two wing" approach as spiritually and personally empowering within community, while also positioning educators to provide their students with skills necessary for outreach and activism in the world.

In contrast to India-based interviewees, those in Nepal describe feeling marginalized and disempowered within their host country. Due to Nepali government restrictions they feel that they cannot place Tibet-focused curriculum centrally in their teaching practice, thus they also appear to feel on the margins within their own professional community of Tibetan diasporic educators, the majority of whom work and reside in India. Nepal provides an instructive counterexample, where many Tibetans appear to feel more socially, politically, and economically marginalized than those in India.

In India, where Tibetan authoritative discourse on education has been more substantially respected and supported by the host government,

interviewees tend to point to individual responsibility and personal motivation as the key to forwarding individual and group struggles, rather than emphasising externally imposed barriers and obstacles they face in their work. In contrast, in Nepal, where agency and public dialogue are restricted by the state, interviewees refer to barriers they associate with the host government's policies. Relations between diasporic members and host country government and society in Nepal appear strained, and frustration, anxiety, lack of hope, and resentment, are evident amongst the Tibetan interviewees. Government policies in Nepal appear to have neither empowered Tibetans within their communities, nor assimilated them into Nepali society. Interviewees there appear to be seeking ways to facilitate their students leaving Nepal, rather contributing to host country society. They describe feeling unwelcome and unwanted there.

## 6.4  Recommendations

This research provides compelling evidence to encourage countries and municipalities receiving refugees and other diasporic communities to work with those communities in responsive ways. It appears that results can be mutually beneficial when the diasporic communities are afforded agency in the development of education processes, whereby the minority culture is viewed by host country government and society as an important contributor to the majority population's society, and the minority community is encouraged to view itself as useful, important, and relevant.

In many municipalities and educational settings systemic change toward more substantive community inclusion, and an increasing openness and

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willingness on the part of authorities to be differently responsive to diverse

communities, has been a work in progress for decades. For example, in

countries such as Canada, community outreach programs are already in place in

public schools, and there are separate schools are run by Aboriginal

communities, or by religiously affiliated groups (e.g. Catholic Schools, and

Khalsa Schools). More substantially involving minority communities in program

development, education leadership, and processes of change implementation,

may further strengthen and deepen programs and practices that support positive

constructions and affirmations of minority identities that include senses of

belonging to society more broadly.

Rather than perceiving social and cultural boundaries as aggressive or

defensive, they can be viewed as important factors in creating healthy, culturally

rich, diverse societies. Boundaries are important for supporting people's

emotional need for belonging, and can be constructed and responded to in ways

that do not invoke destructive forms of conflict. Croucher's (2004) suggestion that

negotiations of new forms of belonging are part of the world in flux is relevant

here. By constructing in youth national and cultural identities such that "Tibetan-

ness" is embodied as *belonging <u>to</u> the world* in socially important ways, rather

than separate from the world, or as subjugated and down trodden victims,

Tibetan people are offered compelling reasons to elect to belong to their local

community, as well as participating within and working in support of global

societies. They do not need to choose between Tibetan-ness, legal citizenship of

host countries, and global citizenship. Mutually supportive identity configurations can be structured to embody them all.

The TGIE's approach to policy development and implementation is also instructive. The BEP (Department of Education [1], 2004) represents an attempt on the part of Tibetan authorities to, through use of a central policy, more formally mediate social changes they believe have occurred within current contexts of diaspora and globalization. It is a pedagogical response to concerns that intergenerational transmission of knowledge and values may be fragmented or ineffective. As explained in the introduction to the final draft of the policy (Chapter I):

> The Article 17 (2) of the Charter for Tibetans in Exile, under the *Directive Principles* mentions that "Towards enhancing the imparting of education, an ideal education policy, meeting the real basic need of Tibet shall be formulated." So far, as no such education policy has been formulated, it is felt need of the time to review the situation of education of Tibetans in exile and resolve upon a basic education policy that is more suited to the current needs of the Tibetans in exile and which may also serve as basis for an education policy when Tibet becomes self-governing in the future. (Department of Education [1], 2004)

The TGIE engaged the wider community in the development of the policy through focus groups, conferences, and widely advertised invitations to the public to critique earlier drafts, and submit recommendations. Implementation processes are flexible, and adaptable to diverse needs and priorities of various locales.

The policy is framed as a philosophical ideal to strive for, and an articulation of an idealized common vision, but authorities have not attempted to impose a one-size-fits-all implementation framework. As is revealed in the

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interview data, Tibetan diasporic educators appear to understand that their students' diverse histories and current situations position them with a different learning needs that must be addressed in diverse ways. For example, they describe a variety of forms of care new arrival students seem to need in order to support their orientation and adjustment to diasporic life, in part determined by their age when they arrived in exile. In other situations, educators appear to believe that those students who are likely to move to Western countries need focused grounding in Tibetan language and culture before moving away from community locales in Asia. And, in Nepal, Tibetan policies and curriculum cannot be officially implemented at all. The BEP and the implementation strategy are framed to be responsive to this diversity. Aspects can be adapted, partially implemented, or not implemented at all, as educators deem appropriate at each locale, and according to their students' needs.

In this case, a central vision in the form of official policy was constructed in a way that anticipates and strives to accommodate diversity of voices, learning needs, constraints, and opportunities amongst multiple educators, students, and specific community locales. Factors that appear to be implicated in the willingness of educators and community members to accept the policy, and that appear likely to support its long-term viability, include the participatory process by which it was developed, and its framing as an idealized vision grounded in philosophies and values that reflect important cultural traditions and authoritative discourse. Flexibility in implementation allows for locally appropriate adaptations and agency. The policy constitutes a form of authoritative discourse that

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demands attention and response, but is not an authoritarian directive to be

blindly obeyed. In this way, multiple voices and forms of diversity in diaspora are

attended to as integral and vital components of the collective, and multiple forms

and processes are deemed legitimate in working toward common goals. Diversity

within community is supported as members participate in the collective in their

various ways.

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# APPENDICES

# Appendix 1: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The following interview protocol was used as a guide and starting point for conversation in interviews with Tibetan education officials, teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum developers. It was followed by a more open discussion of the interviewees' views and experiences in relation to education, identity, community, and change.

### Personal Background

1. Where and when were you born?
2. Describe your family history.
3. Describe your educational background (e.g. countries, institutions)
4. Describe your work history.
5. How and why did you enter the field of education professionally? What was your motivation for entering this field?
6. What is your current job/involvement in the field of education?
7. What training did you receive for your current job/role?
8. What responsibilities does this job/role involve?

### Tibetan Education

1. What are the goals of the Tibetan education system?
2. How are these goals achieved: in schools? in teacher training settings? in the community at large?
3. What aspects of the Tibetan education do you think are most important?
4. How are these aspects implemented?
5. What are your goals as an educator?
6. How do you address those goals: in your work? in your life?

7. What do you see as obstacles or challenges to meeting the goals of education? (personal/institutional/administrative/in terms of government regulations)

8. How are those challenges addressed: in the education system? by you personally?

9. To what extent is the maintenance of Tibetan identity an important part of the education of Tibetan youth?

10. What strategies are utilised to promote/develop Tibetan identities in youth: in the schools? in the community at large?

11. What curriculum and/or processes are in place in the schools that aid in adaptation and survival in exile?

12. In what ways do you see "global change" impacting the Tibetan exile community (the youth in particular)?

13. How can/does the education system address issues of change?

14. What do you envision for the future of Tibetan education: What current issues still need to be addressed? What societal and/or global changes to you anticipate, and how might they be addressed in the education system?

15. Compare your own education at various levels (primary, elementary, secondary) to your practice in providing education for students currently in programs and for coming generations.

# Appendix 2: TABLES – Interviewee Lists

The following tables provide background on interviewees. Twenty-two of the interviewees work at 13 sites in India, and seven interviewees work at 6 sites in Nepal. To ensure the anonymity of the interviewees, worksites are numbered but not named.

**Table 3: Interviewees**

| Pseudonym | Gender | Generation | Worksite | Country | Occupation |
|-----------|--------|------------|----------|---------|------------|
| Chimi | Female | Three | 1: school | India | Teacher |
| Choedak | Male | One | 14: school | Nepal | School Director |
| Dawa | Male | One | 15: school | Nepal | Principal |
| Dekyi | Female | Three | 2: school | India | Teacher |
| Dhundop | Male | One | 19: admin office | Nepal | Administrator |
| Dolkar | Female | Three | 3: school | India | Teacher |
| Dolma | Female | Three | 9: school | India | Teacher |
| Dorjee | Male | New Arrival | 1: school | India | Teacher |
| Jigme | Male | One | 11: admin office | India | Administrator |
| Karma | Male | Three | 4: school | India | Teacher |
| Lhakpa | Male | One | 12: admin office | India | Administrator |
| Lhamo | Female | Three | 2: school | India | Teacher |
| Migmar | Male | New Arrival | 5: school | India | Teacher |
| Ngawang | male | Two | 16: school | Nepal | Teacher |
| Nyima | male | Two | 14: school | Nepal | Headmaster |
| Pasang | male | Two | 7: school | India | Teacher |
| Pema | female | Three | 7: school | India | Teacher |
| Phurbu | male | New Arrival | 10: school | India | Principal |
| Rigzen | male | Three | 8: school | India | Teacher |
| Sengye | male | Two | 17: school | Nepal | Headmaster |
| Sonam | female | Three | 1: school | India | Teacher |
| Tenpa | male | One | 18: school | Nepal | Headmaster |
| Thubten | male | One | 13: admin office | India | Administrator |
| Tsering | female | Three | 6: school | India | Teacher |
| Ugyen | male | Three | 4: school | India | Teacher |
| Wangdu | male | One | 4: school | India | Teacher |
| Wangmo | female | Three | 9: school | India | Teacher |
| Yangchen | female | Three | 8: school | India | Teacher |
| Youdon | female | New Arrival | 6: school | India | Teacher |

## Table 4: Generation One

| Pseudo-nym (all are male) | Birth year | Birth place | Family background in Tibet | Schooling in exile | Degree | Family in Exile |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Choedak | Late 1950s | Tibet | business | Autonomous School, Christian School | | Semi-orphan, mother in road labour and petty business |
| Dawa | 1957 | Tibet | nomad | Christian Missionary School | BA, BEd | --- |
| Dhundop | Early 1950s | Tibet | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jigme | 1959 | Nepal border area | Nomad | Tibetan boarding school | BA | Road labour |
| Lhakpa | 1954 | Tibet | --- | CST Boarding School | BA, MA, BEd | --- |
| Tenpa | 1958 | Tibet | Farming, Business | Autonomous School, Settlement School | BA, BEd | Road labour, moved to settlement in early 1970s |
| Thubten | 1955 | Tibet | farming | Autonomous School, Indian Private school | BA, MA | Deceased (orphaned) |
| Wangdu | 1950 | Tibet | Farming | Tibet, camp school, Autonomous School, Indian Private School | BA | Road labour |

## Table 5: Generation Two

| Pseudo-nym (all are male) | Birth year | Birth-place | Family background | Schooling | Degree | Family in Exile |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ngawang | 1960 | NE India | Business | Tibetan day school | BA, MA, BEd | Road labour |
| Nyima | 1962 | NE India | Farmers | Autonomous school | BA, Bed | Business |
| Pasang | 1965 | NW India | Nomadic herders | Autonomous day school (elem), boarding school (sec) | B.Comm. | - |
| Sengye | 1967 | Northern Nepal | Business and farmer | Autonomous boarding school | Secondary school | Farmer |

## Table 6: Generation Three

| Pseudonym (M = male, F = female) | Birth year | Birth place | Family background | Schooling | Degree | Family in Exile |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chimi (F) | 1976 | Settlement Central India | Farmers | Autonomous school (ward) | BA, MA, BEd | Settlement |
| Dekyi (F) | 1975 | Settlement NW India | Nomad | Settlement boarding school | BA, BEd | Settlement |
| Dolkar (F) | 1972 | Settlement South India | Farmer, resistance army | Indian boarding school | BA, BEd | Settlement |
| Dolma (F) | 1980 | Settlement South India | Farmer | Autonomous school | BA | Settlement |
| Karma (M) | 1972 | Settlement South India | Farmers | Settlement day school | MA | Settlement |
| Lhamo (F) | 1977 | Scattered community – NW India | Farmers | Scattered community school | BA, BEd | Business |
| Pema (F) | 1981 | Settlement South India | Farmers | Settlement day school | BA, BEd | Settlement |
| Rigzen (M) | 1974 | Settlement South India | Farmers | Autonomous school | BA, MA, BEd | Sweater selling |
| Sonam (F) | 1980 | Scattered community NW India | | Autonomous school (ward) | BA, MA | Deceased |
| Tsering (F) | 1975 | Settlement Central India | Nomads | Autonomous school (ward) | TCV teacher training | Settlement |
| Ugyen (M) | 1975 | Settlement South India | Farmers | Settlement day school | BA, MA, BEd | Settlement |
| Wangmo (F) | 1973 | Settlement Central India | Farmers | Boarding school | BA | Settlement |
| Yangchen (F) | 1973 | Settlement South India | Farmers | Settlement day school | BA, MA, BEd | Settlement |

## Table 7: New Arrivals

| Pseudonym (M = male, F = female) | Birth year | Birth place | Family background | Schooling | Degree | Age at escape from Tibet |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Migmar (M) | 1966 | Central Tibet | Farmers | Elementary school in Tibet, monastic religious studies | Tibetan language teacher | 25 years |
| Phurbu (M) | 1973 | Central Tibet | Farmers | Autonomous school (ward) | BA, MA, BEd | 7 years |
| Dorjee (M) | 1974 | Western Tibet | Farmers | Autonomous school (ward) | BA, BEd | 12 years |
| Youdon (F) | 1969 | Southern Tibet | Farmers | Autonomous school (ward) | BA, BEd | 10 years |