



Between Desire and Duty On Tibetan Identity and its Effects on Second-Generation Tibetans

This article examines the life of second-generation Tibetans in India and Switzerland. Descendants of Tibetan refugees often feel a responsibility to get politically involved for Tibet or to maintain Tibetan values and cultural traditions. This article focuses on their relationship with their Tibetan origins and raises the question of how, and under what circumstances, the construction and articulation of a so-called Tibetan identity within the diaspora influences the identification of second-generation Tibetans with their Tibetan origins and the Tibetan people in general.

KEYWORDS: Tibetan identity—second generation—diaspora—Switzerland—India—Dalai Lama—Tibet

SINCE THE occupation of Tibet by the People's Republic of China in the 1950s, the flight into exile of the fourteenth Dalai Lama in 1959, and the subsequent exodus of many thousands of Tibetans ever since, the Tibetan community has been discussed in numerous studies and publications, such as those included in the bibliography of this article. The majority of these publications address the difficulties the refugees experienced during their escape out of Tibet as well as the complications surrounding their settlement in bordering nations such as India, Nepal, and Bhutan. Moreover, their lives in exile have been of considerable concern. Few studies, however, have cast an eye on the children of these displaced people—that is, those born in exile (for example, BRAUEN and KANTOWSKY 1982; GYALTAG 1990; MORIN 2005). Though most of them have not seen their parents' homeland with their own eyes or only know it from storytellings, novels, and movies, many of them have become engaged politically with Tibet and call themselves Buddhists. Some of them even refuse to consider a non-Tibetan marriage.

Based on the above observations, the main issue addressed here thus deals with the relationship of second-generation Tibetans to their Tibetan origins, followed by further questions pertaining to the multiple meanings of the socialization process in which Tibetans born in exile find themselves. It also examines their ambiguous connections to the Dalai Lama and Tibetan cultural traditions such as language and Buddhism. The result of the research undertaken for this article suggests not only that Tibetan traditions such as language skills (or the lack thereof) have a significant impact on the subjects of the study in terms of building a feeling of commonality or connectedness with the Tibetan community at large, but also that a strong Tibetan self-understanding may exist independently of a feeling of commonality and connectedness toward the Tibetan community. In fact, what makes a Tibetan in the eyes of the Tibetan diaspora is constituted by a variety of things not limited to linguistic competence or religious affiliation. At the same time, a few respondents opposed the stereotypical image of what constitutes a typical Tibetan because they felt that definitions generally tend to cause exclusions.

First, a brief introduction to the methods and theories used during research will be provided. This will be followed by a discussion of important aspects of Tibetan culture in the diaspora, such as the significance of the Tibetan language, perceptions of Tibetan identity within and outside of the Tibetan community, the

influence of sponsorship programs in India that are based on identification with Tibetan origins and culture, the importance of marriage, political engagement, and whether it is important to be Buddhist or not. Lastly, the role of the Dalai Lama in the eyes of the research subjects is also explored.

METHODS USED

To gather information about the association of second-generation Tibetans with their parent's home country, interviews with Tibetans in Switzerland and India provided valuable insights. The interviews were supplemented with data acquired from experts who were involved with the Tibetan diasporic community while the research was being conducted. The research took place between 2008 and 2010. For this study, forty biographical narrative interviews were recorded with second-generation Tibetans. Here, I define the "second generation" as the offspring of migrants who fled Tibet after 1959 and were born either in Switzerland or India.¹ In addition to the biographical interviews, twenty-eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with experts in the field, which consisted of people who have special knowledge of the second generation, either because they are somehow engaged with the Tibetan community or because they have studied them in an academic context.² Participant observation took place in India and Switzerland in order to gain contextual insight on the collected data. The research in Switzerland was carried out in the course of the NFP-58 program (Religionsgemeinschaften, Staat und Gesellschaft [Religions, State and Society]) of the Swiss National Science Foundation for the project: *Buddhistische Identität im Wandel: Eine Untersuchung der zweiten und dritten Generation tibetischer Migrantinnen und Migranten in der Schweiz* (Buddhist identity in change: An investigation of second and third generation Tibetan migrants in Switzerland) under the guidance of Jens Schlieter.³ Switzerland was chosen in the course of the above-mentioned NFP-58 project because it houses the largest Tibetan community in Europe. It was one of the first countries outside of Asia that granted asylum to Tibetan refugees after 1959. India was chosen as an additional country in which to do further research because it was home to the first Tibetan refugees, the Dalai Lama, and the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. It is also home to the biggest Tibetan community in exile, comprised of more than 100,000 individuals of Tibetan origin. This study does not seek to compare Tibetans who have been born in India with those who have been born in Switzerland due to similarities or differences that obfuscate useful comparison. In short, despite the fact that they are all Tibetan exiles, they are not homogenous groups and therefore cannot be compared.

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Studying biographies of migrant descendants suggests the need to apply a concept of identity to contextualize the collected data. The use of the term "identity," however, bears a number of problems, which has led to criticism

by numerous scholars (for example, WODAK 1998). The research described in this article draws on the theory of BRUBAKER and COOPER (2000) who agree that the term “identity” has lost its meaning. For them, it either needs to mean too much or nothing at all. Instead, they suggest the use of three alternative thematic groups that will be used in the following analysis to contextualize the collected research data (BRUBAKER and COOPER 2000, I, 14–21):

1. Identification and categorization
2. Self-understanding and social location
3. Commonality, connectedness, and groupness

This article will use the term “identity” only in the context of what is widely known as “Tibetan identity,” a mostly emic expression used by some experts and second-generation Tibetans within an academic context. It is used only to define or mention what they or others within the diaspora claim to be “Tibetan.” Nevertheless, it is not within the scope of this article to try to answer the loaded question of how the respondents define Tibetan identity. It will not, therefore, describe the origin, historical background, or temporary construction of the term, since this has been discussed sufficiently by numerous Tibetologists, anthropologists, and sociologists in the past.⁴ The focus of this work is rather on the reception of Tibetan identity in exile and discourses around Tibetan identity within the Tibetan community, for these factors influence the lives of the respondents and their various relationships with Tibet and its people.

THE MEANING OF TIBETAN LANGUAGE SKILLS

For most second-generation respondents, Tibetan language skills form a large part of a Tibetan’s self-understanding. These skills are also perceived to be an important instrument to build up a feeling of commonality and connectedness with other Tibetans in the diaspora, as among, for example, the so-called “new-comers” living in Switzerland.⁵

The respondents in India spoke fluent Tibetan and regarded the Tibetan language as being a natural part of their Tibetan self-understanding (BRUBAKER and COOPER 2000, 17–19). Tibetans born in Switzerland, however, demonstrate a different notion. Their ability to write, read, and speak Tibetan is closely linked to the milieu in which they were socialized initially and in which they were raised (for example, Pestalozzi children’s village, with parents with a foster background, or Tibetan families).⁶ The Tibetans interviewed who were raised within a Tibetan family, the whole family having arrived via the Swiss Red Cross, mostly spoke Tibetan fluently, whereas, not surprisingly, respondents whose parents had been raised at least partly in a foster family generally had very limited Tibetan language skills or none at all.

This study suggests that Tibetan language skills are crucial to the experience of feeling a sense of connectedness with the diaspora. Respondents who grew up in Switzerland mentioned exclusion as a consequence of their lack of language



FIGURE 1. A school class in the Tibetan Children's Village, Dharamsala. All photos by Tina Lauer.

knowledge. Some of them reported that they had experienced discrimination as a direct result. Choeying (IntCH 18), for example, reported that she faced exclusion when she first visited a Tibetan school at the age of ten.⁷

Articulated characteristics of a Tibetan identity can lead to exclusion within the diaspora and sometimes results in categorization into “Tibetan” and “Non-Tibetan.” Respondents like Lobsang spoke out clearly against such categorization, saying: “I can’t say now. The Tibetan who doesn’t speak Tibetan have lost their Tibetan identity.”⁸ But the image of how an “ideal” Tibetan acts, lives, dresses, and behaves still exists in the minds of mostly older Tibetans in the diaspora, and this image, however stereotypical, still influences the lives of second-generation Tibetans to a certain extent. Some of them rebel against the image of a “perfect” Tibetan, while others attempt to emulate it.

RECEPTIONS OF TIBETANS IN EXILE AND THE “SPONSORSHIP BUBBLE”

Not only do Tibetans have images of how a Tibetan should act and behave, but there also exists a certain image of a “real Tibetan” in the collective mind of the majority Swiss population. Most of the respondents in Switzerland described how positively they are perceived whenever they mention their Tibetan origins in front of Swiss people. They feel a positive reification in contrast to the *Secondos*, those with non-Tibetan origins in Switzerland.⁹ They blame this dynamic on the stereotypical image of the peaceful Buddhist Tibetans with their godlike leader the Dalai Lama:



FIGURE 2. Tibetans at the Tibetans Children's Village Thangka School in Patlikuhl.

Choeying: [W]hen mentioning my name, often they come across Tibet and then always say: “Ah, Tibetans, they are so cute and lovely and good and nice” and ... “Oh, the Dalai Lama” and then I always think: “Hello, I am still there! I am a human being, a person—independent!” ... the people always have the feeling that we are so holy. I don't know, such is the hype with Buddhism and somehow the Dalai Lama and ... everyone associates us with him somehow. But we are just human beings ... with mistakes and ... fears and dreams and ... partly we are nice, partly we are angry too ... so weird. Partly one gets extreme sympathy, just because one is Tibetan.... It even feels uncomfortable to me.¹⁰

Respondents like Choeying fight against such categorization (BRUBAKER and COOPER 2000, 14–17) and dislike the hyper-positive image perpetuated by romantic non-Tibetans.¹¹ On the other hand, such positive perceptions worked well for the first Tibetan arrivals in Switzerland since it made their integration easier. The Tibetan community in Switzerland is quite small, numbering only around four thousand individuals.¹² Due to its small size, their success in the host country has depended, and still depends to a large degree, on the goodwill of their Swiss patrons.

While Tibetans in Switzerland have integrated themselves well into Swiss society, the situation for the first Tibetans in India has differed a great deal. From the difficult beginning of life in exile, Tibetans in India built up their own settlements to be enclave-like and separated themselves from Indian society more than just geographically. The financial advantages of Tibetans compared to the majority of

the Indian population led to tensions between the two ethnic groups (PENNY-DIMRI 1994, 290). These tensions were also witnessed during the course of this research or mentioned in some of the interviews.¹³ There are various reasons for these advantages, and one of them lies in the overwhelming financial aid of foreign donors. Since the first Tibetans after 1959 sought refuge in the neighboring countries of Tibet, Westerners were deeply concerned about the destiny of those Tibetans living in exile. They also felt attracted to them by their charismatic spiritual leader (see also PENNY-DIMRI 1994, 293). Since then, religious and financial connections to Western organizations and private individuals have strongly influenced the social and cultural life of Tibetans in India (PROST 2006, 237–41).

Some of the respondents in India gratefully mentioned their donors in the course of their interviews. Thondup (IntIND 4), Rinchen (IntIND 6), Tashi Nyima (IntIND 16), and Tashi (IntIND 21) explained that they fully depended or still depend on the financial aid of foreign sponsors to fulfill their education, to help them achieve their ambitions, or even to live their lives. Additional participant observation showed that life for Tibetans in India, especially over the last twenty years, has become much easier and more comfortable. Monasteries and settlements profited tremendously from mostly Western Buddhists and their financial aid. Some Tibetan settlements in India today look like prosperous model villages built for tourists. As a fellow traveler to Bylakuppe in southern India once said to me, “It looks like Buddhineyland.”¹⁴ Despite the generosity of sponsorship, the disadvantages can be witnessed not only in the tense relations between Tibetans and their Indian hosts but most of all in a rather dependent Tibetan youth. A number of the respondents, after finishing their education, focused completely on finding new donors instead of exploring other ways to make a living. Even though the sponsorship system is very common, it is linked to a number of official and unofficial demands. For example, foreign donors expect a promise “to preserve Tibetan culture and identity.” There is a specific vocabulary used by Western sponsors or related to Tibetan schools in India to refer to the terms of financial engagement.¹⁵ Good grades in school are also normally a necessary requirement to maintain foreign sponsorship.

The financial dependence thus led to some second-generation Tibetans using their Tibetan origins as a survival strategy. The research showed that the sponsorship system, together with all of the expectations foreign donors might hold of their sponsored child, led to an intensified awareness by the second generation respondents of their Tibetan origins. Occasionally, this awareness was a key factor in building up stronger relations with Tibet or even led to a stronger identification with the plight of the homeland. For some, it led to a deeper Tibetan self-understanding (BRUBAKER and COOPER 2000, 14–19).

Sometimes sponsorship by Western donors is followed by a glorification of the West. Tibetans born and raised in India grow up with the wish to leave the country in order to either be able to live in Tibet or to find a better job in a Western country like Switzerland, Canada, or the United States some day.¹⁶ The first Tibetans who arrived in Switzerland at the beginning of the 1960s, for example, described the country

with the word “heaven.”¹⁷ This image still remains in the minds of many Tibetans in India (see Rinchen, *IntIND* 6, 00:46:41). In order to give just one member of the family the possibility of reaching this “western heaven,” their relatives take on huge debts, hoping their investments will sooner or later pay off for the entire family.¹⁸ The migration of Tibetans to Western countries has grown so rapidly that there is already a lack of young qualified workers in Tibetan settlements in India.¹⁹

A number of the respondents remained unimpressed by the myths of the perfect life in the imagined western paradise and decided not to go there, even if they were to get the chance to do so in the future (see Thubten, *IntIND* 22, 00:40:08). Nevertheless many of the respondents wished to leave India and find a better life somewhere else. The wish to immigrate is also linked to the fact that Tibetans in India have not really integrated into the host culture. Most of the respondents spend their entire lives in one of the large Tibetan settlements mentioned above. Though some of the respondents spoke some Hindi, Tamil, or another Indian language, loved Bollywood movies and music, or kept loose contact with Indians, all of them clearly only identified with Tibet and their Tibetan origins. In addition, only a few Tibetans in India claim Indian citizenship, even though life with a refugee certificate is considered quite difficult.²⁰ The refusal to get deeper in touch with the host society also becomes apparent when observing the Tibetan education system in India, which is strongly influenced by the Tibetanization program of the Tibetan Government-in Exile.²¹

MARRY A TIBETAN OR A NON-TIBETAN?

The refusal not to integrate into the host society becomes most obvious when asking a Tibetan in India if they would marry an Indian.²² Marrying a non-Tibetan was out of the question for all of the respondents born in India. The search for a partner among young Tibetans in India is not only based on a refusal not to marry an Indian but also influenced by endogamous marriage expectations of most Tibetan parents. Expectations regarding Tibetan marriage are more and more reduced in the sense that second-generation Tibetans might face concerns coming from their parents, but they are still accepted in the community if they choose not to follow the norms.

Almost all of the respondents in India pointed out that they were only interested in marrying a Tibetan partner, and that choosing a non-Tibetan spouse was completely out of the question.²³ The majority that held this view justified their decision to favor a Tibetan partner with the view that marrying a Tibetan meant the preservation of hereditary culture and identity. One must take into account, though, that the Tibetanization program being enforced in Tibetan schools in India, as well as the expectations from the Dalai Lama on Tibetans to maintain their ethnicity, causes social pressure that influences the endogamous ambitions of the respondents.²⁴ Dechen reported that her parents would have never allowed her to marry a non-Tibetan; later she wants her children to do the same. She stated that this was so “because, once we go back to Tibet, then all Tibetans should be

fully Tibetan” (IntIND 10, no recording). It is remarkable that even Tsephel, who grew up in India far away from any Tibetan settlement and attended an Adventist school, only wishes to marry a Tibetan partner (IntIND 29, 01:32:38).

Other reasons to marry Tibetans are those of “convenience” and commonalities concerning ethnic and cultural origin.²⁵ Although most of the respondents in India preferred a Tibetan partner, the region in Tibet their parents lived before they fled into exile (Amdo, Ü-Tsang, or Kham) was not important to them, neither for choosing a spouse nor for any other reasons.²⁶ Most of them were not even able to recall which Tibetan region their parents actually came from.²⁷ This could be explained because second-generation Tibetans born and raised in India identify much more with the Tibetan nation constructed since 1959 than with their ancestors.

A few respondents in India stated they kept their relationships secret. Drolma Lhamo’s parents (IntIND 25), for example, did not allow her to even date a Tibetan boy because they wished to arrange her marriage themselves. Drolma Lhamo smiled and played down her fate when I asked her how she felt about this arrangement. She answered that if the marriage did not work out she could always blame her parents.²⁸

Only two of the second-generation Tibetans in India I interviewed expressed no concern with marrying a non-Tibetan spouse. One of them was Thubten, who feels a strong self-understanding of being “Tibetan” in the sense defined by BRUBAKER and COOPER (2000). But he still maintains weak commonalities with the Tibetan community, due to his contrasting opinions concerning the position held by the Tibetan Government-in-Exile and the Dalai Lama’s stance on the controversial Shugden affair.²⁹ This example shows the linkage of endogamous aspirations to an existing commonality and group feeling within the Tibetan diaspora (BRUBAKER and COOPER 2000, 19–21).

Contrary to second-generation Tibetans in India, the research showed that for second-generation Tibetans in Switzerland, choosing a Tibetan spouse or partner is only an option rather than a duty, and for some of the respondents it was not even considered. Most of them emphasized that their parents still encouraged them to marry a Tibetan. Whereas in India the preservation of Tibetan culture through endogamous marriage plays an important role, second-generation Tibetans in Switzerland choose their partners mostly apart from political, ethnic, or cultural concerns. Of the respondents, only one Swiss-Tibetan, Lhamo, restricted her partnership to a Tibetan in the hope of finding someone with the same mentality, values, and religious beliefs (IntCH 6, 01:11:34).

For most respondents in Switzerland, the reasons not to restrict their partnership search to only those of Tibetan origin derives from the fact that the number of Tibetans living in Switzerland is relatively small. Tibetans raised within this little community have known each other since they were young. They therefore conduct sibling-like relationships amongst one other, and marriage would thus seem peculiarly odd under such circumstances. These findings regarding marriage widely differ from the results of an earlier study by BRAUEN and KANTOWSKY (1982), who came to the conclusion that the young Tibetans being researched



FIGURE 3. A house in Dharamsala.

would choose a Tibetan spouse with similar socialization backgrounds (SANDER 1982, 145).

Privacy protection was another reason mentioned by second-generation Tibetans in Switzerland for not choosing a Tibetan partner. Consider the words of Tsultrim:

Then when, for example ... you get into a fight, and the mothers recognize that, for example, then it is maybe just like that ... for example they discuss while they cook together.... Then they have fun talking about it and whisper. That is difficult.... it means they sometimes know exactly what you are doing.... Therefore I already told myself for sometime, I don't want to have anything to do with Tibetans.³⁰

At the same time, some of the respondents understood the advantages of a Tibetan-Tibetan relationship quite well. Rinchen thought of possible commonalities in a partnership like that. However, he still pointed out that for him, an overall understanding between two partners is more important than a similar “cultural background,” an opinion he shared with most of the respondents in Switzerland. As he said, “[I]f it feels right between two people, culture doesn't even play a role anymore.”³¹

Commonalities and group feelings still appear to be of some importance among Tibetans born and raised in Switzerland as well. Although none of the respondents took advantage of this idea, others went to look for a Tibetan partner in India in the course of the study.³² An arranged marriage was not an acceptable option for any of



FIGURE 4. First European Tibetan Parliament in Zürich.

the respondents in Switzerland. Social pressure to marry endogamously is certainly a factor, but it does not necessarily lead young Tibetans to act according to the expectations of the community. Two of the respondents, however, mentioned that they keep or have kept their relationship with a non-Tibetan partner secret from their parents.³³ They felt a strong obligation towards their parents and therefore sought to fulfill their expectations in order to preserve their Tibetan culture and identity.

VISUAL DIFFERENCES CAUSING EXCLUSION

Debates on Tibetan identity arise very often in the context of bicultural partnerships and marriages. Since the Dalai Lama proclaimed that such cross partnerships should be avoided, the Tibetan community in exile seeks to follow the wish of their leader, especially the elderly Tibetans living in India.³⁴ Due to the Dalai Lama's reasoning, so-called half-Tibetans³⁵ and their parents sometimes face discrimination and are forced to deal with definitions of Tibetan identity as a result. Drolma, who gave birth to a child fathered by her Swiss partner, explains as follows:

What makes up the Tibetan identity? ... I can't really answer that, because I think, that is a question I ask myself everyday again and again. It is also changing ... when I gave birth to my daughter, that was surely the first time that I really had to start dealing with that ... because I knew: this child has got both in her. And I had to say: what can I pass on and what not? And today I sometimes think: I have ... not always been aware, you know, of what it means ... also I hope that there is something good in it for her, but I'm aware that I didn't do her a favor.... But ... through that, that I didn't marry a Tibetan and took another way, I always had ... the feeling ..., that I'm not a fully-fledged Tibetan.³⁶

Her words are an example of the repeatedly witnessed discursive negotiation of “Tibetanness” within the diaspora. In fact, Drolma suffers from a lack of self-understanding as a Tibetan, since she does not feel fully accepted as a Tibetan by the community at large.

According to the definition of the TGSL (Tibetan community in Switzerland and Liechtenstein), Tibetans who marry non-Tibetans, as well as the children of such unions, are still called Tibetan.³⁷ Nevertheless, some members of the Tibetan diaspora in Switzerland do not really integrate the Tibetans with only one Tibetan parent into the community.³⁸ Choeying, a so-called half-Tibetan, believes that she is “different” from other Tibetans and therefore suffers from alien feelings regarding the Tibetan community. She noted that getting in touch with some Tibetans is not easy for her because a lot of them have difficulties in accepting her origins (IntCH 18, 00:25:10). When the preservation of Tibetan ethnicity is brought up in public, Tibetans with only one Tibetan parent often feel excluded. As she says in the following:

[I]t was really blatant, how many older Tibetans somehow stood up right in front and said: “Yes, no, we have to preserve our race” and there I somehow thought, “Eh, what?!” And that was really wicked.... I mean, sure, each of us liked the thought too ... how it is, if you are together with a Tibetan, how it is, if you are together with a Swiss ... will the relationship be able to survive that? This consistent commitment for Tibet and also this society, can somebody ever really feel integrated and feel comfortable within this society, which yes, is not really open for other people...? Yes, I mean me, myself, I even have problems with it sometimes, that I’m not a complete Tibetan. How should a [non-Tibetan] partner feel then?³⁹

It is clear that Choeying feels offended by expressions such as the loaded phrase “preservation of the Tibetan race.” Her self-understanding (see BRUBAKER and COOPER 2000, 17–19) as a Tibetan seems to be fragile when she says “[...] I even have problems with it sometimes, that I’m not a full Tibetan.”

Deeper inquiry revealed that, especially when she was a child, she was not able to identify clearly with being Tibetan Swiss. Swiss society considers her to be a foreigner because her visual appearance does not fit the image of a “typically” Swiss person.⁴⁰ On the other hand, the Tibetan community perceives her as being Swiss because she lacks Tibetan language skills and grew up outside of the Tibetan community: “Somehow I never really knew where I belonged or what to do with those roots.”⁴¹ It is rather interesting that later in her life Choeying went to India to get to know her Tibetan relatives and to learn Tibetan. After coming back home she became involved with political movements for Tibet. Was it a feeling of duty or a desire to be more accepted within the Tibetan community that made her get involved with aspects of the Tibetan cultural diaspora? Even the research conducted for this article could not answer this question fully. It should be noted that Choeying started to have more Tibetan friends and less problems in being accepted by the community once she started getting politically engaged with the Tibetan cause.

The research as a whole suggested that visual markers of difference based on ethnic characteristics often constituted what makes a Tibetan a Tibetan. As was apparent, these characteristics influenced Tibetan self-understanding and conditioned the way people in the diaspora connected with their Tibetan origins (BRUBAKER and COOPER 2000, 19–21). The research in India did not uncover any reported discrimination caused by visual differences.⁴² One possible reason for the lack of this particular discrimination is the fact that so-called half-Tibetans in India are still rare; another reason might be that Tibetans do not differ widely in appearance from the surrounding Indian population (SEELE-NYIMA 2001, 87).

WHEN TIBETANS MEET TIBETANS

As suggested earlier, respondents in Switzerland repeatedly mentioned Tibetan identity in the interviews and sometimes even articulated certain associated characteristics. Most of the respondents, however, refused to define Tibetan identity or explain what in their eyes constitutes a Tibetan because they were afraid that they might exclude others by positing even a tentative definition.⁴³

Tibetans with one Tibetan and one non-Tibetan parent often lacked a feeling of identification with their Tibetan origins when they were children, like Choeying (IntCH 18). She further explained that in India, for the first time in her life, she felt like being a Tibetan, although it took a while until she was accepted as one of them there too. Like her other half-Tibetan respondents, following a trip to India led to them identifying much more with their Tibetan origins than before (see also Pasang IntCH 10, 01:03:21).

Respondents with only one Tibetan parent were not the only ones attracted by a trip to India, Nepal, or even Tibet after their adolescence. More than half of all the respondents born and raised in Switzerland reported to have undertaken such a formative trip.⁴⁴ The question of what constitutes a Tibetan identity thus becomes relevant again when second-generation Tibetans from Switzerland meet with Tibetans living in India, Nepal, or Tibet. Tibetans living in India, for example, often consider Tibetans born and raised in Switzerland as Westerners, for they categorize them as not belonging to the “group” of the “real Tibetans.” Tara stated that “Tibetans living in India have the feeling they are better, more authentic Tibetans than Tibetans born in Switzerland. We are the Westernized Tibetans.”⁴⁵

Drolma had similar experiences. She spoke about her suffering at being categorized by Tibetans as being Japanese while travelling through Nepal to visit her relatives, mostly because she did not wear a *chupa* (*phyu pa*) dress, and she carried a camera with her. Drolma never regretted taking the trip but felt that it made her realize that she identifies much more with the Swiss than with the Tibetans. She felt alienated from her Tibetan origins in general and acknowledged that she felt deeply rooted within Switzerland. Drolma expressed her belief that the place you grow up in plays a much larger role than the country your parents come from:

[L]ooking back I am happy that I was able to go there, because it brought me closer to the home of my father and my mother. But there is a consciousness: for what I have experienced I also know now that I am not like that.⁴⁶

Drolma's interview shows certain expectations articulated within the diaspora of how a "real" Tibetan should dress. It also bears witness to Drolma's self-designated social location (according to BRUBAKER and COOPER 2000) as a Swiss-Tibetan. She clings to certain formative ways of living that are Swiss in origin, not Tibetan. It was obvious when interviewing Puntsok that those social locations and categorizations were strong, and he mentioned that his categorization as a "Westerner," with all the stereotypes associated with that label, affected him emotionally. He thus tried hard to correct his misconceptions as much as possible when he stated the following:

I had the feeling to revise the image of the West a little bit ... they just have those fixed prejudices ... and one realizes again there: yes, I am not the Tibetan they are there ... but ... after all they are Tibetans as well that live in India ... when they go to Tibet, they aren't considered as being Tibetans in Tibet either. So they are simply Tibetans in India and we are Tibetans in Switzerland and so there are two different realities and yes ... the Tibetans in Tibet: that again is another reality.⁴⁷

Puntsok added though that a certain connection exists between Tibetans all over the world, as they all share the same fate.⁴⁸

Trips undertaken to India, Nepal, or Tibet had a strong impact on all of the respondents. The majority of them experienced a clearer self-understanding of what it means to be Tibetan after returning home from such a journey. Pilgrimages to South Asia allowed them to imagine more commonalities with the Tibetan community at large. Just like Choeying, many of them spoke about having become politically active for Tibet after their return to Europe.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT FOR TIBET

Tibetans born in exile grow up with the conviction of being the descendants of refugees wrongfully dispelled from their home country, but at the same time they are being reminded continuously to live their "Tibetanness." One way to assert Tibetanness is to steadily confirm a sense of transnational identity through political engagement, as HESS suggests (2009, 76). Clearly, political activism is important among second-generation Tibetans in India as well as in Switzerland. In the course of the research, political engagement was mentioned repeatedly as being constitutive of a Tibetan identity. Interviewed experts who have studied Tibetan exilic culture for some time have noted that this is true of those Tibetans born in Switzerland.⁴⁹ Some respondents in India explained that political activism for Tibet is especially important to them. People like Tenzin (IntIND 3), who believes it belongs to his Tibetanness, feels political engagement is relevant to preserve Tibetan culture (IntIND 3, 00:20:05).

Still, political activism among respondents in India varied immensely in method and intensity. Some got involved within Tibetan organizations like the Tibetan

Women's Association (TWA), the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), or Students for a Free Tibet India (SFT India) by working part- or full-time in one of the offices. Some even worked as volunteers. Others spoke about regular participation in protest marches and political rallies for Tibet.⁵⁰ It was apparent, however, that the majority of them only join the demonstrations once a year during the mandatory 10 March demonstrations, since such political commitment is expected from young Tibetans by the government-in-exile and the community.⁵¹

Surprisingly, second-generation Tibetans in Switzerland seem to have developed a much stronger desire to get politically involved for Tibet than the majority of those born and raised in India. More than half of the respondents in Switzerland were politically engaged within one of the Tibetan organizations located there. Most of them were involved with the Verein Tibeter Jugend in Europa (Tibetan Youth Association in Europe, VTJE).⁵² Some of them were even part of the VTJE governing board.⁵³ Like Sangmo (IntCH 3, 01:12:19), a lot of the respondents even wished to extend the present political actions of the VTJE to the limits of legal nonviolent action, just as it is done by the Students for a Free Tibet (SFT). One of the reasons for the Swiss political motivation is that respondents in Switzerland see political commitment as a vehicle for identifying with their Tibetan origins, something that comes rather naturally to most of the Tibetans born, raised, and socialized within a Tibetan settlement and/or a Tibetan school in India.

Another point worthy of note is that the recurring feeling of commonality with the Tibetan community through political activism among Tibetans in Switzerland can be blurred by a feeling of liability or duty to engage for Tibet. This has led to at least one of the respondents in Switzerland to retreat for a while from her political commitment for Tibet; in fact, it even made her move to another town as a consequence of continuous harassment by the Tibetan community to return to her role as a political activist (see Drolma, IntCH 8, 00:31:17).

THE DALAI LAMA: A "GOD" OR A "ROLE MODEL"?

In the context of political activism for Tibet the Dalai Lama was mentioned often during my research. Not only was he a factor for identification with Tibet for many of the respondents, but he was also mentioned when political discussions concerning *rangwang* versus *rangzen*⁵⁴ were brought up in the interviews or when respondents expressed their opinions about democratization and secularization processes within the Tibetan diaspora.⁵⁵ These topics made the second-generation Tibetans who were interviewed deal with whether or not it is right to criticize the Dalai Lama.

Criticism of the Dalai Lama is a contentious issue within the diaspora and generally divides the older and younger generations into two fronts.⁵⁶ Contrary to the younger generation who have been born in countries mostly driven by ideas of freedom of expression, elderly Tibetans in the diaspora still consider the Dalai Lama to be infallible. They therefore interpret any criticism of him as an insult to the entire Tibetan cause.

Sometimes such disagreements between the generations lead to parents not allowing their children to become members of the VTJE because the organization does not follow the political course of the Dalai Lama. Many of the elderly thus consider it to be an offence toward their spiritual and former political leader. Young Tibetans like Methog mostly do not think in the same way as her elders. She pointed out that her criticism of the Dalai Lama's political course does not conflict with the respect she holds for him (IntCH14, 00:45:33). Although most of the respondents in Switzerland find it important to be able to express criticism toward the Dalai Lama, they consider him to be part of what they call "Tibetan-ness" or "Tibetan identity." "The Dalai Lama is Tibet, you can really say that."⁵⁷

Tibetans in the diaspora born and raised mainly in Tibet are for the most part deeply rooted in their Buddhist beliefs. They consider criticism of their spiritual leader to be unacceptable, nearing blasphemy. To most of them he personifies a sort of guru who a believer is supposed to follow without any doubts or questions.⁵⁸ To the contrary, few of the second-generation Tibetans in Switzerland who were interviewed follow Buddhism as much as their parents do. That is part of the reason why they do not consider the Dalai Lama to be a guru in the spiritual or political sense, someone they may not criticize.⁵⁹ However, the Dalai Lama takes on a major role in the lives of most of the respondents in Switzerland, for they consider him to be a human being who is allowed to make mistakes. At the same time they deeply admire him.⁶⁰ They refer to him as "fascinating"⁶¹ and consider him a "role model."⁶² Some of the subjects of this study compared him with Nelson Mandela or Mahatma Gandhi in terms of his role as a peacemaker.⁶³

While the political meaning of the Dalai Lama is of major significance for many of the second-generation Tibetans in Switzerland, the research showed that respondents in India mostly admire him as being the incarnation of the bodhisattva of compassion, effectively a god.⁶⁴ Only a few respondents in India stated that they do not perceive the Dalai Lama as a god or a spiritual power; nevertheless, they still admire him for his political achievements.⁶⁵ It was evident, therefore, that the spiritual role of the Dalai Lama takes on a much greater importance for second-generation Tibetans in India than it does for Tibetans born and raised in Switzerland. Despite his increased importance among the Tibetans in India, even there some of the respondents dared to criticize the Dalai Lama just as they would other Tibetans holding political office.

The Dalai Lama forms an integrative element of second-generation Tibetans' relation to their Tibetan origins, which is what connects them to the Tibetan community at large. For most of the respondents, the Dalai Lama serves as an instrument to build up feelings of commonality and connectedness, a conduit for connecting Tibet with the Tibetan diaspora. It is worth noting that this opinion is not shared by respondents in India and Switzerland who experienced exclusion by the Tibetan community for worshipping Dorje Shugden, a controversial figure who has caused some divide within the Tibetan diasporic community in the past two decades.⁶⁶ Those respondents, as well as others, criticized the Dalai Lama for his attitude and his policy concerning Dorje Shugden.⁶⁷

A former monk living in India, although not worshipping Dorje Shugden himself, was expelled from his monastery for maintaining friendships with its followers. According to his explanations in broken English, neutral positions toward the Shugden issue are not welcome within the community:

I don't agree with the exile, [but] at the same time I'm not a worshipper. So I have a right to say: "Look, this is..." but they don't want that person to exist. Even you should be worship[ping] or either you should [not] be ... exiles idea[s]. So this ... for me is very narrow minded, I find.

Since he faces discrimination by the Tibetan community for maintaining friendships with Shugden worshippers, his feeling of commonality and connectedness with the community suffered. "For the moment I'm not interested in the exile government ... it will not change that fast. It's gonna take time." Still, the interview clearly demonstrated that he identified greatly with his Tibetan origins. "I'm Tibetan," he said, "they can never make out that I'm not Tibetan."

This respondent demonstrates that, for some, identifying with their Tibetan origins and the Tibetan nation, as well as a strong Tibetan self-understanding, may exist independently from a feeling of belonging to a Tibetan community. In fact, this idea is one of the key results of the study because it proves that identification with one's Tibetan origins is not necessarily linked with a deep feeling of what BRUBAKER and COOPER term "groupness," a commonality or connectedness with others of the same ethnolinguistic origin (2000, 14–21).

DOES A TIBETAN NEED TO BE BUDDHIST?

During the course of the research some experts mentioned Buddhism as being an essential part of so-called Tibetan identity. To some of the respondents in Switzerland, Buddhism played a defining role in their identification with their Tibetan origins and their perception of Tibetanness (for example, Choeying, IntCH 18, 00:17:10), but as mentioned earlier, it does not take up a large part of the exiles' lives. Many generally consider it to be more of a philosophical aid to cope with their everyday lives. It is thus not surprising that most of the Swiss-Tibetans interviewed do not practice Buddhism,⁶⁸ whereas most respondents in India ritually practice Buddhism, since it has been taught to them as being part of Tibetan culture from the very first day at Tibetan school in India.⁶⁹

It is notable that even for those second-generation Tibetans in India who do not practice Buddhist rituals, Buddhism retains a major role in everyday life. All of them follow Buddhist values such as nonviolence or compassion.⁷⁰ Tsephel, who grew up far away from any Tibetan settlement in India, then went away to an Adventist school, explained:

[B]y birth I'm a Buddhist.... I see something good about a Buddhist religion ... the school is Adventist school, eh we go there for education, we don't go there for like eh to learn Christianity ... but it's imposed on you.... You have to learn

about Christianity. Like every morning first period you have to go to the church, we have to pray ... as a Tibetan at home we don't practice the Christian religion so it was just eh in the school. (IntIND 29, 00:37:33)

This is one example of many that ties the importance of being Buddhist and practicing Buddhism to being of Tibetan origin for second-generation Tibetans born and raised in India. Tibetans in Switzerland that grew up outside of the Tibetan community, and therefore do not maintain strong links to Buddhism, do not place as much value upon its practice. In fact, all Tibetans interviewed in India called themselves Buddhists. Most of them claimed it to be an important part of what has been labeled "Tibetanness." On the other hand, Buddhism as a linking factor was less common among respondents in Switzerland.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrate how the articulation of a so-called Tibetan identity within the diaspora, or of how a Tibetan is supposed to act or behave, influence the lives of second-generation Tibetans in both positive and negative ways. They are torn between desire and duty, as indicated in the title of this article. Periodically, a sincere feeling of duty to commit to the preservation of Tibetan culture, which is driven by political fervor to keep the exilic community alive, results in the opposite. Some Tibetans in exile ironically turn away from their hereditary society to pursue their own individualistic dreams. Identification with a self-understanding of one's origins are sometimes independent from perceived feelings of commonalities or connectedness with other Tibetans.

Though certain characteristics and commonalities can be assigned to define second-generation Tibetans living in Switzerland or second-generation Tibetans living in India, one can never simply conclude that there are purely Swiss-Tibetans and Indo-Tibetans. Such neat categories simply do not apply when one considers all of the different socialization patterns involved in studying Tibetan transnational culture. Different social affiliations, kinship connections, and ethnolinguistic identifications, filtered through generations of stereotypes, lead to a complicated conclusion. My study resulted in a completely heterogeneous set of results that can only conclude with the caveat that a myriad of socialization processes must be taken into account when determining what is or is not Tibetan. Nevertheless, with that in mind, there is one link that in one way or another binds the multiple identities of Tibetans together; namely, a desire for a country that all Tibetans wish to be able to visit free of foreign powers one day.⁷¹

I am Tibetan.
 But I am not from Tibet.
 Never been there.
 Yet I dream
 of dying there. (TSUNDUE 2002, 13)

NOTES

1. The author is aware that the definition of people as belonging to “the second generation” is problematic. It therefore needs to be added that this is only a methodological definition as to how to localize the research group. For more details on how and why second-generation Tibetans for the study were defined, see LAUER (2013). The respondents’ real names are confidential. For this article, therefore, acronyms are used to conceal the identity of those who participated in my work. Individuals are cited as follows: IntCH for respondents in Switzerland and IntIND for respondents in India, followed by the interview classification number and the time of the recording. The author possesses all interview data.

2. Expert witnesses are cited as Exp-Int. Name (Year). Interviews were conducted with monks from Switzerland and India, for example, as well as with the heads of SFT India (Students for a Free Tibet India), VTJE Switzerland (Tibetan Youth Association in Europe), TYC (Tibetan Youth Congress), TWA (Tibetan Women’s Association), GSTF (Gesellschaft Schweizerisch-Tibetische Freundschaft), and TGSL (Tibetan community in Switzerland and Liechtenstein). Scholars such as Martin Brauen, Thierry Dodin, and the former Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, Professor Samdhong Rinpoche, were also consulted.

3. Up to April 2008, Marietta Kind and Karma Lobsang carried out the participant observation in Switzerland. They also conducted four of the expert interviews. Marietta Kind and the author conducted all the other ethnography and expert interviews, including the biographical narrative interviews with the second-generation Tibetans in Switzerland. The research in India was conducted by the author between October 2009 and January 2010 in Indian towns and Tibetan settlements throughout northern and southern India in the course of doctoral research (LAUER 2013). Acknowledgements go to Jens Schlieter, Marietta Kind, Karma Lobsang, Karénina Kollmar-Paulenz, and Frank Korom.

4. See, for example, KIEGER 1991; KIEGER, ed., 2002; SHAKYA 1993; KOLAS 1996; KOROM 1997a; 1997b; ANAND 2000; PILTZ 2006; WANGDI 2008; and HESS 2009.

5. From an interview with Puntsok (IntCH 16, 01:29:40).

6. The first Tibetans in Switzerland arrived at the beginning of the 1960s in three groups. They came either as foster children, being brought up with Swiss foster parents, as foster children being brought up in the Pestalozzi children’s village in Trogen, or with family and family groups that were settled in special asylum homes organized by the Verein Tibeterheimstätten and the Swiss Red Cross (see also BRAUEN and KANTOWSKY 1982).

7. The Tibetan community runs a number of schools where mostly former Tibetan monks teach language and Buddhist scripture along with the basic facts about Buddhism. Sometimes training in Tibetan musical instruments and dancing are also included in the curriculum. The Tibetan schools are being operated by the TGSL; see <http://www.tibetswiss.ch/tibeterschulen.html> (accessed 8 February 2013).

8. All translations are by the author, unless otherwise stated. The original German of critical passages throughout the text is given in the notes to provide the reader with added data for future analysis. *Ich kann jetzt nicht sagen. Der Tibeter, der nicht Tibetisch spricht, oder so, der hat die tibetische Identität verloren.* Lobsang (IntCH 12, 00:59:41).

9. *Secondo* is a common expression used for second-generation migrants in Switzerland.

10. [W]enn ich meinen Namen erwähne, oft kommen sie dann auf Tibet und dann immer so. “Ah, Tibeter, die sind ja so süß und lieb und nett,” und [...] “Ach, der Dalai Lama,” und dann denk ich immer, “Hallo, ich bin auch noch da! Ich bin ein Mensch, eine Person – eigenständig!” [...] die Leute haben immer alle das Gefühl, wir wären so heilig. Ich weiss nicht, das ist einfach so ein Hype mit dem Buddhismus und irgendwie der Dalai Lama halt und... alle assoziieren uns irgendwie mit ihm. Aber wir sind auch nur Menschen [...] mit Fehlern und [...] Ängsten und Träumen und [...] zum Teil sind wir nett, zum Teil sind wir wütend... schon komisch. Zum Teil

hat man extreme Sympathien, einfach nur, weil man Tibeter ist. [...] ist mir gar ein bisschen unbehaglich. Choeying (IntCH 18, 00:39:46).

11. For a detailed and deeper investigation of the reception of Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhism in Switzerland, see FUNK (2011).

12. Exp-Int. K. Pangring, the former president of the TGSL (2009).

13. For example, Lobsang (IntIND 7, 00:48:15), Dechen (IntIND 10, without time designation), Thubten (IntIND 22, 00:31:18), Dechen Drolma (IntIND 24, without time designation), and Drolma Lhamo (IntIND 25, without time designation), Tsephel (IntIND 29, 00:32:43). More information on the tensions mentioned can be found in LAUER (2013).

14. Some of the Tibetan settlements in India are quite poor, for example in Arunachal Pradesh and other regions in eastern India, such as Orissa.

15. Rinchen (IntIND 6, 00:17:36), for example, was one of the respondents concentrating only on how to find a new sponsor after finishing high school. For information on Tibetan schools in India and how second-generation Tibetans grow up there, see LAUER (2013).

16. For example, Tenzin (IntIND 3, 01:18:16), Nyima (IntIND 9, 00:36:03), or Dechen Drolma (IntIND 24, no recording).

17. This is according to Thubten (IntIND 22, 00:44:32).

18. That is, by receiving money from the family members they sent to a Western country; see Rinchen (IntIND 6, 00:43:29).

19. Exp-Int. T. Samdup (2009); Choeying (IntIND 1, 00:48:48).

20. Tibetans in India have only temporary residence permits limited to one year. Their registration certificate (RC) needs to be renewed each year. “Newcomers” who arrived after 1994 were (and will not be) given the RC; only a few Tibetans apply for Indian citizenship. For more information, see HESS (2009, 85–89).

21. “Tibetanisation is a unique educational practice pioneered by the TCV [Tibetan Children’s Village] in 1985. [...] It focuses on developing a relevant and meaningful education based on Tibetan cultural heritage, values, and language” (TCV 2000, 18). For more information, see LAUER (2013).

22. Drolma (IntIND 24); see also PALAKSHAPPA (1978, 97).

23. Gyamtso (IntIND 2, 00:35:59), Thondup (IntIND 4, 00:17:48), Yangchen (IntIND 5, 00:30:40), Rinchen (IntIND 6, 00:49:29), Monlam (IntIND 11, 00:09:07), Loten (IntIND 15, no recording), Tashi Nyima (IntIND 16, no recording), and Tsephel (IntIND 29, 01:26:47).

24. For example, Exp-Int. T. Choeying (2009), president of SFT India, who is a second-generation Tibetan.

25. For example, Yangchen (IntIND 5, 00:30:40) and Gyamtso (IntIND 2, 00:35:59); see also Exp-Int. T. Choeying (2009).

26. Exp-Int. T. Samdup, representative of the Dalai Lama for Northern Europe (2009).

27. For example, Nyima (IntIND 9) and Drolma Tenzin (IntIND 20).

28. This was the only reported case of a possible arranged marriage among second-generation Tibetans in India. “Arranged” marriages here refers to suggestions for a potential spouse made by the parents or relatives, and not forced marriages.

29. “I’m Tibetan. They [the Tibetan Government-in-Exile] can never say that I’m not Tibetan” (IntIND 22, 00:25:32). The Dorje-Shugden affair is a controversial debate within the Tibetan buddhist world regarding whether one should follow and promote Dorje Shugden or not. Dorje Shugden (or Dolgyal) is claimed by its followers to be one of several protectors of the Gelug-school.

30. *Dann wenn du zum Beispiel [...] einen Streit hast, und das bekommen dann die Mütter zum Beispiel mit, dann wird es vielleicht einfach so, [...] zum Beispiel beim Kochen halt diskutiert. [...] Dann wird lustig darüber geredet, dann wird getuschelt. Das ist mühsam. [...] Das heisst, die wissen zum Teil genau was du machst. [...] Da habe ich mir eine Zeitlang schon gesagt, ich will nichts mit den Tibetern zu tun haben.* Tsultrim (IntCH 15, 01:39:07).

31. *[W]enn es stimmt zwischen den Personen, spielt die Kultur ja sowieso keine Rolle mehr.* Rinchen (IntCH 7, 01:33:55). For example, Tsering (IntCH 4, 00:37:00), Kunchog (IntCH 13, 02:09:14), and Tenzin (IntCH 21, 00:22:52).

32. See Exp-Int. T. Dahortsang (2009), former president of the VTJE. Other experts aside from Tendon Dahortsang as well as respondents of the second generation mentioned the search for a Tibetan partner in India. Some of the respondents even said that they had already received suggestions of possible partners living in India; see also Exp-Int. S. Joss, member of the Red Cross Switzerland (2009), and Exp-Int. T. Chokchampa, former co-president of the VTJE (2008). These interviews were conducted by Marietta Kind and Karma Lobsang. See also Drolma (IntCH 8, 02:47:35), Methog (IntCH 14, 01:09:47), Tsultrim (IntCH 15, 00:21:00), Puntsok (IntCH 16), and Jigme (IntCH 17, 00:42:28).

33. The pseudonyms of the respondents are not mentioned to conceal their identity.

34. From an informal interview with T. Tsering (AMI), McLeod Ganj/Dharamsala (2009).

35. This is an emic expression for Tibetans with one Tibetan parent and one non-Tibetan parent.

36. *[W]as macht die tibetische Identität aus? [...] Das kann ich dir eigentlich nicht wirklich beantworten, weil ich glaube, das ist eine Frage, die ich mir tagtäglich immer wieder neu stelle. Also es ändert sich auch. [...] als ich meine Tochter gekriegt habe, ist es sicher das erste Mal gewesen, das ich mich wirklich damit auseinandersetzen musste, [...] weil ich ja wusste: das Kind hat beides in sich. Und dann musste ich ja sagen: was kann ich von mir weitergeben und was nicht? Und heute denke ich manchmal: ich bin mir [...] nicht bewusst gewesen, weisst du, was das bedeutet. [...] also ich hoffe es, dass es für sie etwas Gutes daraus gibt, aber ich bin mir dessen bewusst, dass ich ihr keinen Gefallen getan habe. [...] Aber [...] durch das, dass ich nicht einen Tibeter geheiratet habe und einen anderen Weg gegangen bin, da habe ich natürlich immer [...] das Gefühl [...], ich bin keine vollwertige Tibeterin.* Drolma (IntCH 8, 02:40:16).

37. At least one of the grandparents or parents should be from Tibet, according to Exp-Int. K. Pangring (2009).

38. Exp-Int. D. Emchi (2008), former president of the TFOS.

39. *[E]s war schon ganz krass, wie viele ältere Tibeter da irgendwie vorne gestanden sind und gesagt haben, „Ja, nein, wir müssen unsere Rasse bewahren“ und da hab ich wirklich irgendwie „Äh, Tschuldigung?! [...]“ Also das war schon ganz krass. [...] ich meine, klar: jeder von uns mochte natürlich den Gedanken auch: [...] wie ist es, wenn ich mit einem Tibeter zusammen bin, wie ist es, wenn ich mit einem Schweizer zusammen bin ähm... wird das die Beziehung aushalten können? Dieses ewige Engagement für Tibet und auch diese Gesellschaft: kann sich jemand wirklich integrieren und wohlfühlen in dieser Gesellschaft, wo ja eigentlich nicht wirklich offen ist für andere Menschen...? Ja, ich meine ich selbst hab ja manchmal schon ein Problem damit, dass ich nicht ein ganzer Tibeter bin – wie soll sich dann ein [nicht tibetischer] Partner fühlen? Choeying (IntCH 18, 00:31:28).*

40. I refrain clearly from characterizations of what “typically Swiss” is. To define what is considered to be Swiss is beyond the scope of this study.

41. *[I]ch hab da immer irgendwie ja nicht richtig gewusst, wo ich hingehöre, oder was ich mit diesen Wurzeln anfangen soll.* Choeying (IntCH 18, 00:23:30).

42. Only once was differing body size and less visible body hair (in contrast to Indians) among Tibetans mentioned in this context; see Tsephel, IntIND 29, 01:18:48.

43. For example, see Tsultrim (IntCH 15, 01:13:14).

44. For example, Gyamtso (IntCH 1), Tara (IntCH 2), Sangmo (IntCH 3), Tashi (IntCH 5), Rinchen (IntCH 7), Drolma (IntCH 8), Yangchen (IntCH 9), Pasang (IntCH 10), Lob-sang (IntCH 12), Kunchog (IntCH 13), Tsultrim (IntCH 15), Puntsok (IntCH 16), Choeying (IntCH 18), Thubten (IntCH 19), Tenzin (IntCH 21). Nine of the respondents reported having visited Tibet and seven visited Nepal (one went to neither).

45. *Tibeter, die in Indien leben, haben das Gefühl, sie seien bessere, echtere Tibeter als Tibeter, die in der Schweiz geboren sind. Wir sind die verwestlichten Tibeter.* Tara (IntCH 2, 00:52:42).

46. *[R]ückwirkend bin ich natürlich froh, konnte ich gehen, weil das hat mich der Heimat von meinem Vater und meiner Mutter näher gebracht. Aber das Bewusstsein: durch ich das gesehen habe, weiss ich auch, dass ich nicht so bin.* Drolma (IntCH 8, 01:46:19).

47. *[I]ch hatte wie das Gefühl, ich muss denen das Bild vom Westen ein bisschen revidieren [...] die haben einfach so fixe Vorurteile [...] und dort merk ich dann halt schon wieder: ja, ich bin nicht der Tibeter, die sie dort sind, [...] aber [...] sie sind schlussendlich auch Tibeter, die in Indien... – wenn sie in Tibet sind, werden sie auch nicht als Tibeter in Tibet wahrgenommen. Also sie sind einfach Tibeter in Indien und wir sind Tibeter in der Schweiz und so sind das halt zwei verschiedene Realitäten und ja... die Tibeter in Tibet: das ist nochmals ne andere Realität.* Puntsok (IntCH 16, 01:38:09).

48. IntCH 16, 01:50:29.

49. Exp-Int. T. Dahortsang (2009) and T. Chokchampa (2008).

50. For example, Gyamtso (IntIND 2, 00:40:06), Tenzin (IntIND 3), Thondup (IntIND 4, 00:08:17), Yangchen (IntIND 5, 00:09:20), Rinchen (IntIND 6, 00:35:49), Dechen (IntIND 10, no recording), Monlam (IntIND 11, 00:08:01), Loten (IntIND 15, no recording), Yangzom (IntIND 18, 00:30:18), Lobsang Jigme (IntIND 19 00:26:12), Drolma Tenzin (IntIND 20, 00:26:12), Tashi (IntIND 21, 00:58:26), and Drolma Lhamo (IntIND 25, no recording).

51. See, for example, Monlam (IntIND 11, 00:08:01), Lobsang Jigme (IntIND 19, 00:26:12), Drolma Tenzin (IntIND 20, 00:26:12), and Tashi (IntIND 21, 00:58:26). The website of ICT: http://savetibet.de/fileadmin/user_upload/content/Kultur_und_Gesellschaft/Antrittsrede_Dr._Lobsang_Sangay.pdf (accessed 5 September 2011). The 10 March protests are held every year all around the world by exiled Tibetans as a reminder of the violent suppression of a Tibetan protest by Chinese authorities on 10 March 1959.

52. The following correspondents were actively engaged in one of the political organizations for Tibet: Tara (IntCH 2, 00:22:02), Sangmo (IntCH 3, 01:12:19), Drolma (IntCH 8, 00:31:17), Pasang (IntCH 10, 01:26:57), Lobsang (IntCH 12, 00:15:57), Kunchog (IntCH 13, 01:04:16), Methog (IntCH 14, 00:30:32), Tsultrim (IntCH 15, 00:02:04), Puntsok (IntCH 16, 00:54:36), Jigme (IntCH 17, 00:12:43), Choeying (IntCH 18, 00:12:55), Thubten (IntCH 19, 00:15:43), Dekey (IntCH 20, 00:06:24), and Tenzin (IntCH 21, 00:16:42).

It needs to be mentioned that a few of the respondents consciously decided not to engage themselves politically for Tibet. The reasons for this vary individually and are therefore too numerous to mention in the course of this article. For a detailed description, see KIND and LAUER (2014).

53. For security reasons the pseudonym of the person is not mentioned.

54. *Rangwang* (freedom) stands for the political claim of a Tibet fully independent from China or another country. *Rangzen* (independence) stands for the political course of the Dalai Lama and the government-in-exile since 1987 for autonomy. It is also known as the “middle way.” For more information on the political facets of the terms, see KOLLMAR-PAULENZ 2006, 175. For a detailed look at the second-generation Tibetans’ opinions toward the two courses of action, see SCHLIETER et al. (2014) and LAUER (2013). The editorial board

of *The Tibetan Political Review* adds *rangkyong* (autonomy) in a recent article published online; see *The Tibetan Political Review* (2014).

55. Until March 2011 when the new prime minister of the government-in-exile (Tbt. *Kalon Tripa*) was elected, the position had always been held by a monk. Until then the Dalai Lama was at the same time the spiritual and political leader of the Tibetan people (until he gave up his political office to be just a spiritual figure within the community from March 2011). Still, there exists no party system within the government-in-exile. Respondents, especially in Switzerland but also those in India, explained that they found it important to support a stronger democratization and secularization process for the Tibetan diaspora; see SCHLIETER et al. (2014) and LAUER (2013).

56. Exp-Int. K. Pangring (2009).

57. *Der Dalai Lama ist Tibet, also das kann man schon sagen*. Exp-Int. T. Dahortsang (2009).

58. Informal interview with T. Tsering (face to face), Dharamsala, December 2009.

59. See also Tenzin (IntCH 21, 00:46:08) and Tenzin (IntIND 3, 01:03:55) as well as Exp-Int. T. Dodin, president of TibetInfoNet (2009).

60. Tsultrim (IntCH 15, 01:43:51).

61. Choeying (IntCH 18, 00:42:18).

62. Tsultrim (IntCH 15, 01:43:51).

63. Choeying (IntCH 18, 00:42:18).

64. See for example Yangchen (IntIND 5, 00:24:50), Dechen (IntIND 10, no recording), Drolma (IntIND 14, no recording), Lobsang Jigme (IntIND 19, 00:31:03), Dechen Drolma (IntIND 24, no recording), and Drolma Lhamo (IntIND 25, no recording).

65. See Tenzin (IntIND 3, 00:55:22).

66. To protect the identities of the respondents mentioned in this context even pseudonyms will not be mentioned.

67. See KIND and LAUER (2014). For a deeper inquiry into the historical background of the Shugden issue, see DREYFUS (1998) and KOLLMAR-PAULENZ (2009 and n.d.).

68. For a detailed presentation of second-generation Tibetans in Switzerland relation to Buddhism, see SCHLIETER et al. (2014).

69. Exp-Int. K. Namgyal, who is responsible for sponsorship and fundraising at the Tibetan Homes Foundation (2009); see also Thondup (IntIND 4, 00:11:35) and Rinchen (IntIND 6, 00:49:29).

70. For example Gyamtso (IntIND 2, 00:18:36), Dechen (IntIND 10, no recording), and Dechen Drolma (IntIND 24, no recording). One more person, though, mentioned that she did not consider herself to be Buddhist or to believe in "something special" (Nyima, IntIND 9, 00:13:20).

71. For a more detailed discussion of the research results and the study in general, see LAUER (2013).

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