POLITICAL ACTIVISM AMONG SECOND GENERATION TIBETANS IN
THE 21ST CENTURY: THE CONSTRUCTION AND NEGOTIATION OF
IDENTITY IN TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL SPACES

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Political Activism among second generation Tibetans in the 21st century: The construction
and negotiation of identity in transnational social spaces

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ABSTRACT

While the majority of the studies have looked at transnational political activism among the first generation, it is clear that the experiences of the second generation is limited to a significant degree, especially in regards to the experiences of second generation Tibetan youth. Consequently, by drawing on the experiences of second generation Tibetan youth who attended the 'March 10 political demonstration' in Toronto, this study explores transnationalism and identity construction among the second generation within transnational social spaces. The findings of this study of six second generation Tibetan youths show that the second generation is highly selective in its transnational practices, as their level of participation is dependent on other commitment and responsibilities they may have in their personal lives. With regards to their identity, the findings indicate that they held both Tibetan and Canadian identities as they held hybrid, fluid, and situational identities that was based on having loyalties to both Canada and Tibet. Ultimately, this study reveals that the second generation are constantly negotiating their fluid and hybrid identities, as they are receiving different opposing ideas and information flows that allows them to connect with both their homeland in Tibet and Canada.

Key words: Transnationalism; transnational social spaces; second generation; identity

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Chapter One

Introduction

In today's global world, immigrants are able to maintain contacts across national borders in increasingly sophisticated ways. As a result, the turn of the millennium has led to a significant increase in studies that apply a transnational framework. With the increasing migration of people across borders, it has also created personal and institutional networks that connect people and institutions across geography and time (Goldring & Krishamurti, 2007). However, in the 21st century, scholars have begun to focus more on the social, political, and cultural dimensions of these transnational links (Faist, 2000; Louie, 2006). For instance, studies on political transnationalism have looked at the migrants' political ties and practices of their country of emigration which includes long-distance lobbying, participation in demonstrations, etc (Faist, 2000; Fouron & Glick Schiller, 2002). Therefore, in addition to the economic aspects of transnationalism, the issue of political and cultural transnationalism has also emerged as a growing topic in the academic sphere. Clearly, we can no longer perceive migrants as people who break ties with their homeland upon arrival to the host society. As a result, due to the emerging literature on transnationalism among both the first and second generation, we must recognize that migrants are individuals who are able to maintain multiple ties, multiple identities, loyalties, and forms of belonging (Goldring & Krishnamurti, 2007).

On March 10, 1959, the Tibetan people reasserted their independence in the capital of Tibet, Lhasa, through a spontaneous uprising against the Chinese government, which the latter crushed by military force. This date is highly significant for all Tibetans living in the diaspora since it marks the day when more than sixty thousand Tibetans, including women and children, surrounded the capital city of Tibet to protect the Dalai Lama from being taken away by the red

Army of Communist China. However, ever since the initial Tibetan uprising of 1959, it has marked a shift in attitude among Tibetans, particularly among Tibetan youths who continue to remember that fateful event as the day the Tibetan people were forced out of their own homeland. Consequently, every year on March 10, Tibetan youths living in major cities around the world, including Toronto, New York, and London, engage in demonstrations, stopping traffic flows, chanting slogans of Free Tibet, etc. These second generation Tibetan youths in Toronto are able to capitalize on their individual rights as citizens of a democratic Canadian state, while simultaneously engaging in transnational political activism to influence activities in the homeland (Hori et al., 2010). As a result, by taking these demonstrations to the street, public spaces in the Greater Toronto Area become hot spots for these protests, which range from planned demonstrations, to spontaneous and unstructured mobilizations.

The migration of Tibetans out of Tibet occurred in three waves. Firstly, from 1959 to the end of the 1970's, over 80,000 Tibetans fled Tibet with most settling in neighbouring India (Logan & Murdie, 2014). The second wave of Tibetan migration began in the 1980's and lasted until the 1990's during a period of Chinese liberalization that allowed more movement within and out of the country (Yeh, 2007). Lastly, the third wave which started from the mid 1990's to the present is characterized by a decline in migration from Tibet. During this current wave of migration, most of the migrants moving from Tibet are either monks or nuns, while the majority of migration during this period has been from the Tibetan settlements outside Tibet to Western countries, including countries such as Canada and the US. The United Nations pleaded with the Canadian government during the 1960s to accept Tibetan refugees, but the Canadian government refused. However, in 1971, Canada established a Tibetan Refugee Program as a result, 228 Tibetan refugees were admitted from India and Nepal (McLellan, 1999). As noted previously, it

wasn't until the early 2000 that significant amount of Tibetans arrived as refugee claimants prompted by increasing insecurity in Tibet, India and Nepal. The earlier refugees settled in eleven municipalities in four Canadian provinces which included Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec (McLellan, 1999). Although the Dalai Lama requested that the Canadian government create communities of no less than 100 people with at least one monk, Tibetans were spread across the country, often with fewer than two families in one location (McLellan, 1999). Since the early Tibetan migrants were one of the first non-European refugee groups to arrive in Canada, they received minimal state assistance and support from the government for language and job training (Given, 1998). In addition, these Tibetan migrants were mostly alienated from interacting with the host society as many of them were unable to speak English, were unfamiliar with Canadian customs, etc (Given, 1998). However, despite these struggles, Tibetans continued to adapt to the Canadian lifestyle while still preserving their language and culture.

Clearly, the migration of Tibetan immigrants and refugees from a society where they were unable to exercise their political rights, to a place where freedom of expression and equality is encouraged, had significant impact on their transnational activities. Similar to other contemporary diasporas, the Tibetan diaspora in Canada has not only created linkages between the diasporic community and the former homeland, but has also established networks and successful businesses in the host society (Hori, Harding & Soucy, 2010). For instance, despite the settlement challenges faced by Tibetan refugees, Tibetans have invested heavily in Canada, and they exhibit an attitude of permanency through their employment, education, fluency in English and French, and establishment of Tibetan cultural organizations (Given 1998; McLellan 1999). However, at the same time, Tibetans in North American cities are also trying to preserve their culture, language and religion through cultural programs, community newspapers, social

media groups, etc (Given, 1998). In reference to the 2006 census data, MacPherson, Bentz & Ghoso (2008) indicate that there are 3,475 Tibetans living in Toronto and approximately 3,000 in New York City. In many ways, this forced migration reflects the ongoing struggle of Tibetans within the diaspora to achieve self-determination, recognition of basic human rights, religious autonomy, and a national Tibetan identity. Thus, the exiled Tibetan community are overt in their political efforts to establish a new Tibetan anchored identity for the younger second generation.

In the 21st century, vague but vivid images of Tibet's past can be found in songs, articles, Tibetan documentaries, etc (Yeh & Lama, 2006). Clearly, the individual Tibetan youth might not be aware that many of the images were born in the fifties and sixties, and that these images gave rise to a new Tibetan nationalism. Depicting the early years of exile, these images are closely tied to the political ideas promoted by Tibetan youths in the present day. In describing the political mindset of young Tibetan youth in the 21st century, it is clear that it can only be understood in the context of the history of the Tibetan community in exile. Especially in exile and diaspora, it is the youth organizations that keep the entirety of the culture connected across all distances. Thus, the fascination with a lost homeland seems to be increasing among Tibetan youths living throughout the diaspora, as their vision for the nation-state is primarily based on a collective return to Tibet (Sinha, 2012). Therefore, this exploratory research concerns itself with the transnational identities of second generation Tibetan youths in Toronto, as they engage in the creative process of identity construction as individuals and as a collective.

Research Problem

While the transnational practices of first generation Tibetan immigrants have been thoroughly researched within academia, it is only recently that researchers have shifted their focus to understanding the transnational practices of the younger second generation (Levitt &

Walters, 2002). In addition, although there is a growing interest in second generation transnationalism in the US, the current research in Canada is still limited to mainly exploring issues such as Canadian immigrants' adaptation as measured by educational achievement and occupation achievement, health status and poverty levels (Reitz & Somerville, 2004). However, due to the engagement of second generation youth in transnational social spaces, there has been a shift from economic to social-political transnationalism since they no longer need to connect with their homeland through remittances or physical movement (Salih, 2002). Clearly, these studies fail to acknowledge that there are various forms of transnationalism that may be relevant to second generation youth since they are exposed to transnational social spaces where there are no remittances, visitations or engagement in political participation in the home country. Although the literature on transnationalism and identity is significant, it is important to note that a second generation Tibetan youth constructs identity much differently than the first generation, as second generation youths have never physically been to the homeland. For all these reasons, this study will examine identity construction within transnational social spaces among the second generation. Therefore, the second generation experiences transnationalism and identity construction much differently from the first generation, and this study will examine identity construction among second generation Tibetan youths (Smith, 2002).

Research Objectives/Questions

However, rather than considering transnational practices in the traditional sense of sending remittances or frequent visits, the paper will consider transnational political activism among the second generation by placing it within a framework of transnational social spaces. The study applies a transnational social lens on the yearly political demonstrations that is observed on the 10th of March, as this yearly event commemorates the 1959 Tibetan uprising against the presence of the People's Republic of China in Tibet. Thus, undertaken by research on

second generation Tibetans in Toronto, the study posits that their engagement in this transnational activity represents a form of transnationalism, since transnationalism can be experienced both at a literal and symbolic level, which includes "imagined" returns to the homeland through cultural rediscovery (Espiritu & Tran, 2001). Transnational social fields and spaces are important concepts to use to analyze political activism among the second generation, as these spaces describe the relationships between individuals, social networks and organizations, through which ideas and movements are exchanged across national borders (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004). In this regard, I find it appropriate to refer to the political demonstrations of second generation Tibetans as a basis for the analysis of transnationalism. Regardless of the rate of frequency of transnationalism that is linked to particular crises in the homeland, I argue that young second generation Tibetans partake in political demonstrations in the host country to raise awareness of the injustices that are occurring in their former homeland, and subsequently, protest for a return to their homeland. Moreover, as described by Guarnizo, this type of engagement within transnational social spaces by the second generation can also be perceived as "expanded transnationalism," which refers to the activities that occur occasionally, such as demonstrations held by the second generation in response to various crises in the homeland (Levitt, 2001; Levitt & Waters; 2002). As a result, I consider this to be an act of transnationalism within a transnational social space.

In different stages of their lives, the second generation act in various transnational connections received within transnational social spaces, especially for those youth whose parents maintain a link to the homeland and relay information relating to the homeland. This paper will explore transnational social spaces in which second generation Tibetan youths engage with transnational activities that tie them to their homeland. Consequently, it will consider both national and transnational social spaces in which the younger second generation engage in

political activism. Since there are different motivations to engage in transnational political activism, this study will also explore the reasons participants give for their engagement in transnational practice.

In order to examine the significance of transnational social fields in constructing transnational identities, the paper aims to demonstrate this at two levels. Firstly, it explores whether second generation Tibetans have multiple identities; that is, one might feel Tibetan, yet at the same time, also feel Canadian. Secondly, the study explores the "levels of allegiance" among second generation Tibetan youths, in order to determine whether they feel a sense of loyalty to Tibet, Canada, or both. Thus, the study explores how each of the two levels of identity expression is being utilized by second generation migrants in the process of identity formation (Ho, 1995). Consequently, the implication is that the second generation negotiates identities within a transnational social space that include flows from their parents' country of origin and country of settlement (Somerville, 2008). Furthermore, for the second generation, their identity expressions demonstrate the transnational connections that help make them possible. Thus, these identity expressions are fluid and ever-changing, as they evolve based on the location of the migrants, their social networks, and the make-up of these social networks with regards to nationality, ethnicity, and background (Somerville, 2008).

In order to explore the transnational behaviours of second generation Tibetan youth after their involvement in the demonstration, the study explores the extent and prevalence of transnational practices in their everyday life. In order to explore the issues surrounding transnational identity among second generation Tibetan youths in Toronto, I hope to answer these questions:

- What are the factors that motivate them to be politically involved in demonstrations/protests?

- How did their participation in political demonstrations within a transnational social space shape/affect their identity? How are these identities negotiated? How have their identities changed after engaging in this yearly political event?

- While there is a yearly engagement in transnational political activism on March 10, in what ways do they currently express transnationalism in their daily lives?

Structure of the paper

This research paper begins by reviewing the theoretical concept of transnationalism and the relevant theoretical concepts related to transnationalism. Therefore, the literature review defines transnationalism, discusses second generation transnationalism and examines concepts that are relevant to identity constructions, particularly identity construction among second generation youth. The following chapter will briefly summarize the context of immigration and settlement experiences of Tibetans in North America, with a specific focus on the transnational activities of Tibetan youth in Canada. The fourth chapter provides the methodological structure of the study, the rationale for selecting a qualitative approach, and the characteristics of the sample and data collection methods. The fifth chapter will discuss the findings on transnational behaviours among the second generation and identity construction within transnational spaces. Lastly, the final chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of the main findings.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter reviews the theoretical framework of transnationalism, and the different types of transnationalism found in the literature. Since the study explores the transnational practices of Tibetan youth as a form of transnationalism, it will subsequently focus on the literature on transnationalism among second generation youths, as well as discussing the derivative concepts including transnational social spaces and social fields. The final section of this chapter will then discuss the existing literature on identity construction and transnational identities.

The concept of Transnationalism

Although there are numerous definitions of transnationalism within the literature, transnationalism is commonly used to describe people who feel that they belong to more than one society and thus, navigate their lives within transnational social spaces (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004). Originating from the field of migration studies, the transnational perspective has helped create a better understanding of a wide range of social phenomena that occur across borders. It is utilized in the field of migration studies (Glick-Schiller et al., 1992), and it is used today by various disciplines that cover issues such as identity, social and economic remittances, religion, citizenship and politics. As a theoretical perspective, the concept of transnationalism was created not only to improve the understanding of the processes experienced by migrants and their social networks but to create an analytical framework that was able to encompass the paradoxes of "globalization" (Eriksen, 2007). The Tibetan community in Toronto can be viewed as a transnational community, as it is a "social space" based on transnational networks that connects the home country and the country of residence, fostering the participation of the second generation in the life of the two national spaces (Kastoryano, 2000). Thus, transmigrants sustain

multiple relationships across borders, and their particular situation can be fully defined neither within their country of residence, nor within their home country, as it can only be defined within the social sphere formed in between (Kastoryano, 2000). In addition, a transnational community is structured by political action in both countries as it circulates ideas, behaviours, identities and other elements comprising its social capital (Kastoryano, 2000). Subsequently, it is important to note the relationship between transnationalism and identity since the identity of second generation youths are no longer strictly or narrowly territorialised, nor are they included in spaces delineated by borders or spaces that are culturally homogeneous (Kastoryano, 2000).

Previous studies on transnationalism have generalized the notion that transnationalism implies the physical movement of people, as the term 'transmigrants' emerged, emphasizing a relationship between migrancy and transnationalism (Harney & Baldassar, 2007). Moreover, research on immigration has emphasized majority-minority relationships, local communities, and host societies (Faist, 2000). However, this ignores the fact that transnationalism also includes the movement of ideas, money, etc. Especially within contemporary society, migration is no longer viewed as a "one-way movement" from a sender to a receiving nation. Salih (2002) identified four main features to the emergence of a new type of migrants: "the possibility of having multiple identities and multiple localities thanks to new technologies of travel and information, the globalization of kinship and network ties, the extraordinary growth of remittances and finally, and as a result, the disintegration of boundaries between host and home societies (p. 52).

For a second generation youth who might not have visited or lived in their parents' homeland, they can engage in other forms of transnational activities that are not limited to physical mobility. Portes (1999) acknowledges transnational activities as "those that take place on a recurrent basis across national borders and that require a regular and significant

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commitment of time by participants (p. 464)". In addition, there are three types of

transnationalism which include economic, political, and social. Levitt (2004) points out that

some immigrants will establish roots in the country of settlement, sustain strong ties with the

homeland, and even belong to religious and political movements that extend across borders.

More importantly, these allegiances are not opposed or detrimental to one another due to the

changing nature of the nation-state (Levitt, 2004).

In describing the nation state in this era of globalization, Glick Schiller et al. (1992) state

that "in contrast to the past when nation-states were defined in terms of people sharing a

common culture within a bounded territory, this new conception of nation-state includes, those

who live physically dispersed within the boundaries of many other states, but who remain

socially, politically, culturally and often economically part of the nation-state of their ancestors

(p.8)." Indeed, according to Levitt (2004) in the 21st century, there will be an increasing number

of people who feel that they belong to more than one society. Therefore, academics have come to

view this type of belonging in the diaspora and migration literature as "transnational migration"

or "transmigrants." According to Glick Schiller et al. (1992), transmigrants are individuals who

"take actions, make decisions, and feel concerns within a field of social relations that link

together their country of origin and their country or countries of settlement (p .8)." As a result,

transnational migrants live different aspects of their lives in more than one context.

In order to study transnational practices as a theoretical concept, it is beneficial to

consider the work of Smith and Guarnizo (1998) who provide a typology of transnationalism

which includes transnationalism from *above* and from *below*. For instance, transnationalism from

above refers to activities led by multinationals and this includes transnational capital, global

media, etc. On the other hand, transnationalism from below refers to activities led by individuals

and groups who operate within the transnational social space (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998). However, scholars have come to recognize that some migrants and their descendants remain strongly influenced by their continuing ties to their homeland or by social networkers that stretch across national borders (Schiler, Basch & Stanton, 1992). Therefore, with regard to this paper's analysis of the practice of political activism among second generation Tibetan youths, transnationalism can subsequently be seen as occurring from below as the study focuses on their transnational practices that relates to their nation-state in social, cultural, and political terms.

Transnational Social Spaces

According to Pries (2001), transnational social spaces are patterns of 'social practices, artifacts and symbol systems that span different geographic spaces in at least two nation-states without constituting a new "deterritorialised" nation-state' (p.18). Transnational social spaces as a concept emphasizes identities, practices, relationships and institutions that originate from transnational practices (Faist, 2000). More importantly, the concept of transnational spaces helps put in context the spaces occupied by transnational individuals, while implying that those spaces also include the homeland or 'cultural hearth' (Voigt-Graf, 2004: 29). Transnational social spaces is a relevant notion for the second generation, particularly among second generation Tibetan youth, because being in Tibet is highly unrealistic due to the volatile political climate imposed by the Chinese government that has contributed to the generation of exiles, refugees, and others (Nolin, 2006). Thus, Tibetan immigrants must occupy transnational social spaces constructed in diasporic spaces. Moreover, advances in technological communication have decreased the cost of bridging lost distance geographical distances and allowed the second generation to maintain close contacts with their homeland (Faist, 2000). As a result, research on migration has changed significantly as it no longer assumes that immigrants will live within one society, conforming to one set of cultural norms, within the national borders of the receiving

countries.

Levitt and Glick-Schiller (2004) emphasize the need to consider the extent to which the second generation is reared in a transnational social field, and they refer to sets of multiple interconnected networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are exchanged, and transformed. More importantly, Levitt & Glick Schiller (2004) differentiate between 'ways of being' and 'ways of belonging.' For them ways of being refer to material transnational practices and social relations in which individuals engage; whereas 'ways of belonging' signal a connection to a homeland through memory, nostalgia or imagination (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004). Consequently, this indicates that a desire to identify with a particular group or homeland without having material ties to the homeland may inform transnational practices (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004, p.1010). In addition, individuals can engage in transnational ways of being in their social relations and everyday practices. For instance, second generation youths can engage in political activism that is connected to their nation-state of origin, while simultaneously becoming part of the workforce and contributing to the economy of the host country (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2001). However, it is important to distinguish that only those individuals who highlight the transnational elements of their identity can express transnational ways of belonging. In a similar fashion to this notion of 'ways of being and belonging', Wolf (1997) argues that Filipino second generation youth are engaged in what she refers to as "transnational struggles" at the emotional level. Wolf (1997) found that the children of immigrants do in fact maintain ties to their parents' homeland and their own homeland. As a result, immigrant Filipino parents are seen to be more actively engaged in maintaining relationships with the Philippines than their children, but the second generation also do maintain these ties which lie "at the level of emotions, ideologies and conflicting cultural codes" (Wolf, 1997, p. 458).

Levitt and Glick- Schiller (2004) further refine transnational social fields to represent them as ''a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices and resources are unequally exchanged, organized and transformed'' and which connect across, rather than within national borders (p. 1009). Moreover, it is important to recognize that transnational social spaces are regulated by immigration policies of nation states, the structural nature of labour demand, the needs of individual economies, and the ways which civil society organizations operate both nationally and transnationally (Levitt and Glick-Schiller, 2004). As a conceptual framework, transnational social fields can be utilized for the investigation of the larger social, economic and political processes through which immigrants are able to embed and respond to more than one society (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2002). Therefore, this conceptualization of transnational fields facilitates an analysis of the processes by which the second generation are able to sustain ties to their nation-state, while at the same time engaging in activities of the host country.

Second Generation and Transnationalism

In many ways, the debate over the relevance of transnationalism to the second generation revolves around competing views about the level of involvement that constitutes one to be "transnational" (Eriksen, 2007). For instance, some argue that transnationalism spreads across generations since later generations often live within a transnational social field (Fouron & Glick Schiller, 2002). This includes marrying someone from the same ethnic group, participating in organizations of ethnic signature, feeling a sense of belonging to more than one nation or identifying beyond national boundaries (Fouron & Glick Schiller, 2002). In contrast, other scholars have argued that due to the predominance of more local influences in the host society, transnationalism is more likely to decline rapidly among second generation (Alba & Nee, 2003; Portes et al., 2009).

There are scholars who argue that transnationalism may be important for the first generation, but not for the second generation. Portes (2001) defends this position by arguing that transnational activities are a "one-generation phenomenon," but the involvement of the immigrant generation can have resilient effects on the second generation (p.190). However, despite lower levels of transnationalism among the second generation, research on the second generation emphasized that in each ethnic group, there is a minority for whom transnational ties play a "regular, sustained, integral role in their lives (Kasinitz et al., 2002, p.119)." As a result, although there are many scholars with competing views on the applicability of transnationalism to the second generation, it is clear that there still isn't much consensus on this issue since it is only recently that academics have begun to study the prevalence of transnationalism among the second generation.

Haikkola (2011) examined the transnational practices among second generation children and youth in Finland and explored the implications of their transnational networks. By conducting interviews, she found that that transnational practices were guided by family social bonds and visiting their nation-state of origin encouraged the development of new relationships and interest in the home country (Haikkola, 2011). In addition, her findings also showed that some respondents admitted to engaging in involuntary forms of transnationalism, as they were influenced by the constant flow of information about their country's political affairs into their homes (Haikkola 2011). Haikoola (2011) also noted that many of the respondents felt that they were more or less forced to engage in transnational activities relating to their country of origin due to the constant flow of information about their nation-state.

The majority of the research on younger second generation youth reveal that they are more likely to involve themselves in social and cultural forms of transnationalism, rather than political and economic forms of transnationalism (Lauer & Wong, 2010). However, at the same

time, some individuals may also act within a transnational social field and engage in demonstrations and campaigns to influence the policy of the host country, etc (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004). Likewise, Somerville (2008) posits that the level of transnational engagement among the second generation may increase and decrease according to life-cycle stages or as a result of particular incidents or crises. Moreover, Levitt & Walters (2002) note that transnational practices among the second generation may be selective as they argue that the second generation may not visit their home country on a regular basis and their commitments fluctuate at different stages of their lives. Subsequently, the transnational practices of the second generation are fluid and not static, as their participation in these activities depend on the demands on factors such as work, family and school (Levitt, 2002).

Transnational identities

Contemporary debates surrounding identity in multicultural societies have tended to increasingly utilize notions of hybridity and complexity in their discussions (Anisef et al., 2004; Hall, 1992; Gilroy, 1993). Hall (1992) suggested that identity is created in the interaction between self and society, as it is constructed and modified in an ongoing dialogue with the complex identities offered by the outside world (p.276). Thus, identification should be viewed as a construction, and a process that is never completed. As a result, identities are highly fragmented and multiply across different discourses, practices and positions (Hall, 1992). In applying this fluid concept of identity to the Tibetan case, it can be assumed that that the identity among the second generation is fluid.

Woodward (1997) asserts that migration is producing both plural identities and contested ones in a process that is filled with inequalities and uneven development; and, in some ways, these new identities can be viewed as "unsettled" and "unsettling (p.144)." In addition, identity is formed through conscious and unconscious processes over time, rather than being innate within

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an individual upon birth (Hall, 1992, p. 287). As a result, identity can be viewed as always being "incomplete, in the process, and being formed." Since political activism among second generation Tibetans is a significant component of their transnational activity, it is important to acknowledge the role of transnational social fields in shaping identity processes. According to Somerville (2008), identities emerge and are modified, based on cross-border flows. second generation, their identity expressions demonstrate the transnational connections that help make them possible. Thus, these identity expressions are fluid and ever-changing, as they evolve based on the location of the migrants, their social networks, and the make-up of these social networks with regards to nationality, ethnicity, and background (Somerville, 2008).

Gilroy (1993) argued that diasporic identities are not positioned in one "home" and there is more than one source for such identities. Moreover, Hall (1992) and Gilroy (1993) have challenged the view of identity as originating and being embedded within a shared collective history. Both Hall (1992) and Gilroy (1993) use the concepts of diaspora and hybridity, through which essentialism and its political demands are challenged by a view of identity that expresses notions of fluidity and hybridity, and suggest that identity is constructed in specific historical situations. Hybridity refers to the juxtaposition of different cultures that create hybrid identities due to the experience of displacement and transnational practices that are influenced by the host and home countries (Hall, 1998). Thus, the contemporary strategies of identity construction have created a type of hybridity that is promoted by the emergence of diasporic subjects for whom the "physical spaces or location" of the host society represent transnational social spaces (Osborne, 2006). Ho (1995) contends that individuals raised in multiethnic environments may develop multicultural or hybrid identities. In addition, Phinney (1999) suggests, similar to situational ethnicity, hybridized cultures are created as a result of constant socialization and transfer of information from individuals of diverse cultures.

In challenging these notions of identity as fragmented and contingent, Venturino (1997) argues that it undervalues the Tibetan people's claim to an essential identity based on their goal to reclaim their geographical homeland. For instance, Venturino (1997) states that "when the Dalai Lama speaks for Tibetan independence, he is unequivocal in his appeal to an essential Tibetan identity based on a necessarily Tibetan spirit and a 'birthright' springing from the physical homeland" (p.99). Since the Tibetan population have been forced into exile, Venturino (1997) asserts that there is agency in claims of essentialism as he notes that "Tibetean claims to an essential identity, while demonstrably imaginary, constructed, and teleologial, are no less essential in that they serve as foundation claims that operate politically, socially, and for many, spiritually" (p.108). [1] While Tibetans do in-fact accept the existence of cultural transformation and historical change, transnationalism is instead absorbed into essentialist identity claims (Venturino, 1997, p.99). In addition, while identity among second generation youths may be theorized as "imaginary," it must be noted that the "Tibetan national imagination" is in and of itself a means to a particular political goal (Venturino, 1997, p.103). Thus, for second generation Tibetan youth, global hybridity does not represent the end of the diasporic identity, as it has now become a means to recover the homeland (Venturino, 1997, p.110).

Clearly, transnational lives and the attachment to both Tibet and Canada affect the processes of identification of second generation Tibetan Canadians. Therefore, a construct such as "hybridity" is important as it refers to "the "ways in which identities are formed anew in the process of meetings occurring through travels and movement" (Schulz & Hammer, 2003, p. 13). The forms of identity construction in diasporic communities have become a symbol for the "hybridization" of identity (Hall, 1992). Consequently, if "transnational" is intended to mean activities and linkages that are cross-border, then "hybridity" in contemporary literature has

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[1] This is different from the post-colonial concept of "strategic essentialism" which is a conscious political tactic.

come to refer to the ways in which processes of identification are affected by transnational

activities such as return visits to the homeland to maintain social and cultural ties with the

homeland. Schulz and Hammer (2003) confirm this view as they suggested that maintaining

social interaction means actual journeys to visit family, friends and members of same ethnic

group in other parts of the world, and mainly in the country of origin.

In terms of the host society, second-generation Canadians are generally exposed to two

cultural frameworks simultaneously. For instance, this can include deciphering Western values

through social circles and media, while at the same time, the values from their own culture are

passed on from parents, siblings, and the immigrant community (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009).

Consequently, the second generation are faced with the challenge of negotiating these two

competing cultures that try to influence their personal identity (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009). Some

studies deny this claim as they emphasize that being bicultural does not always have to end in

conflict (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009). This concept of biculturalism has become well documented

in relation to the literature on identity construction. According to Jambunathan, Burts and Pierce

(2000), biculturalism refers to the "ability of a person to function effectively in more than one

culture and also to switch roles back and forth as the situation changes" (p. 396). Consequently,

based on social and political needs, individuals are able to move back and forth between the two

cultures as they please. Moreover, as previously noted by Hall (1992), identities among the

second generation are more fluid, and thus, they are selective in defining ethnic characteristics

from social spaces in which they operate, such as families, workplace, and social networks.

Therefore, a bicultural identity can feel like a stable mix of information from both cultures, or it

may feel like two separate cultural identities that one has to switch between in response to the

environment or situation.

Postmodern perspectives acknowledge that an individual's identity is constantly altered and modified through the continuous interaction between self and society (Hall, 1992). Consequently, individuals assume different identities according to the situation. However, ethnicity can also be situational (Sodhi, 2008). For instance, Rosenthal (1987) summarizes her sentiments about situational ethnicity as she notes that ethnic individuals adopt a variety of strategies for dealing with their dual cultural environment. For some, the primary ethnic group serves as the most potent identification. Others adopt a more assimilatory position or view themselves as members of two cultural worlds, switching identification according to the situation (p.178). Therefore, situational ethnicity provides the second generation the ability to select and forego various cultural values and traditions from both cultures (Sodhi, 2008).

By examining the experiences of second generation South Asians in the U.S, Purkayastha (2005) noted that the children of affluent South Asian migrants choose bicultural identities by forging their lives through encounters in India and America (pg. 59). Moreover, the findings showed that the intersection of global and local forces lead South Asian Americans to select a hyphenated identity label; to use transnational family networks to help mitigate structural constraints; to negotiate ethnic boundaries through transnational networks; and to develop a transnational form of racialized identities (Purkayastha, 2005). In this study, I will put into context the ways in which second generation Tibetan Canadian navigate within a transnational society. In so doing, my emphasis is placed on how identities are constructed and expressed through political activism by second generation Tibetan-Canadians.

This chapter provided a review of the theoretical framework on transnationalism, second generation transnationalism, and identity construction. By applying these theoretical concepts to the experience of the second generation youth, we are able to better understand how transnationalism is relevant to the second generation, as well as understanding the role of

transnational social fields in shaping identity constructions. The following chapter will

summarize the transnational Tibetan Canadian youth movement and also describe the role of

religion and memory in shaping the transnational identities of Tibetan youths.

Chapter 3

Transitioning the Tibetan youth political movement into the 21st century

The aim of this chapter is to put into context the nationalistic struggle of second generation Tibetan youths who engage with transnationalism and the type of transnational opportunities they engage in. The first section will then discuss the literature on Tibetan youths and the influence of Buddhism in reinforcing a "national dual Tibetan identity which is based on both the "physical homeland of Tibet and the physical human body of the 14th Dalai Lama." The final section of this chapter will examine the influence of 'collective memories' in shaping the transnational Tibetan youth movement, as thousands of young Tibetans throughout the diaspora have never been to the homeland. Thus, their imagining of the 'nation-state' is significant in maintaining their transnational practices in the 21st century.

Nationalistic struggle for Tibetan youths

A key feature of an effective nationalistic struggle for self-determination relies on confronting the issues both from inside the contested territory and outside it by the diaspora in exile. For example, the Sikh, Tamil, and Kurdish diasporas had been successful in keeping the nationalist agenda alive by coordinating with the political forces inside their countries. However, in most cases, Tibetans have preferred a kind of 'brain-drain nationalism' which encourages those committed activists who are associated with symbols of Tibetan nationalism to flee Tibet (Sinha, 2012, p.6). With regards to the Tibetan youth movement, this has been detrimental to the growth of a Tibetan national movement since the Tibetan diasporic nationalism can only grow in tandem with the political forces within Tibet (Sinha, 2012). Arguing from the opposite perspective, Anand (2003) makes a much more compelling argument about the Tibetan nationalistic struggle as he argues that in the Tibetan case, nationalism is clearly a product of the process of the diaspora. For instance, Anand (2003) argues that exile itself was responsible for

the formation of a recognizable 'modern' Tibetan national consciousness. For majority of Tibetan youths living in the diaspora, the most influential forums where their political identities are formed are youth organizations such as the 'Tibetan Youth Congress' which was formed in October 7, 1970 by four Tibetan youths who felt the need to use their newly-acquired knowledge for the future of Tibet and the Tibetan people (Sinha, 2012). Although they were in a state of exile, it is clear that these Tibetan youth leaders had the opportunity to seek higher education and other political opportunities in countries such as India and Nepal. These four Tibetans, Tenzin Geyche, Lodi Gyary, Tenzing Tethony and Sonam Topgey collaborated to create a representative youth organization by recruiting delegates from Tibetan settlements in India, Nepal, and Bhutan (Sinha, 2012). This organization has grown rapidly and today, the Tibetan Youth Congress has representatives from every corner of the world and it has been instrumental in shaping this Tibetan youth movement of the 21st century. As a result, youth led organizations such as the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) have created a new platform where Tibetan youth can rise and challenge China's illegal presence in Tibet through transnational activities such as political activism.

In the 1990s, the influence of youth led organizations declined since many of the former youth activists had reached adulthood, entered into private life, or had assumed other roles within the Tibetan community in exile (Sinha, 2012). Secondly, within this youth movement, there was additional conflict due to the different Tibetan cultures that emerged in exile. For instance, on one side of the debate, there were Tibetan youths who were integrated into a Western society and wanted to bring their experiences into the Tibetan political movement. Consequently, these Tibetan youths led with an action-oriented view of politics as they believed in immediately seeking complete independence of Tibet from China. On the other side of the debate, there were a growing number of Tibetan youth who, like the majority of the exiles, represented a

conservative worldview in of Tibetan youths which Tibetan nationalism and traditional Tibetan

values were key components (Sinha, 2012). Therefore, for Tibetan exiles, the major changes

which they experienced in the mainstream Tibetan community during the 1990's allowed them

to see themselves as 'true Tibetans,' as opposed to the western-assimilated Tibetans who

associated the Tibetan nationalistic struggle solely with gaining independence from China

(Sinha, 2012) .

Since the invasion of Tibet by China in 1959, Tibetan leaders and community members

have been involved in an ongoing struggle to deal with issues of resettlement and reconstruction

of the Tibetan society in Tibet (Anand, 2003). However, in many cases, what appears to be a

local resurgence of diasporic identity formation in the host society is part of a cultural politics

that is playing out over a much larger geographical scale. For instance, MacDonald (2006)

describes the ways in which the political opportunity structures in Baltistan, Pakistan has allowed

an oppositional Tibetan cultural politics to emerge, which is facilitated by transnational

exchanges of people and information. Moreover, the place of Baltistan in a simultaneous

globalization of Tibetan politics is evident in the Tibetan diaspora's concern over the threatened

erosion of the Balti script and their desire to aid the introduction of a Tibetan script (MacDonald,

2006, p.214). Clearly, the networks shaping the production of 'Tibetanness' in Baltistan intersect

with pre-existing international networks that are based on supporting Tibetan ethnicity.

Consequently, the region of Baltistan is an example of a transnational mobilization that shows

how representational strategies such as images of Tibetan-ness, can be appropriated, reworked

and redeployed by Tibetan youths in localized cultural identity projects in different sites..

In contrast to life inside Tibet where there is no guarantee of any basic human rights for

Tibetans, second generation Tibetan youths in Canada can freely express their Tibetan cultural-

political identity in the host society. For many of the Tibetan youths living through the diaspora

they have had little to no direct experience with their homeland (Anand, 2003). Thus, this presents unique challenges for young Tibetan youths who are involved in the task of cultural continuity, reconstruction, and formation of "Tibetan" identities in their respective host societies.

Transnational opportunities for Tibetan youths in North America

The majority of the literature of transnationalism among Tibetans in North America, particularly among second generation Tibetan youth, has studied their transnational experiences in the US (Yeh & Lama, 2006, Yeh, 2007). Due to its increasing association with a progressive politics of resistance and human rights, studies on Tibetans living in the US have focused primarily on the transnational Tibet Movement which includes the coalitions, organizations, and strategies used by the Tibetan community to assert a Tibetan political presence in the international arena (Yeh & Lama, 2006). However, considering the close proximity between Canada and the US, it is important to frame the Tibetan youth movement by examining both Canada and the US. This political movement is led by networks such as the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) which is a worldwide organisation composed of Tibetan youths seeking the restoration of complete independence for all of Tibet (Yeh & Lama, 2006, p.810). In addition, this political youth movement is also encouraged by other Tibetan organizations such as "International Tibet Support Network" which helps coordinate campaigns among the more than 300 Tibet support groups which have been founded in over fifty countries since the late 1980's (Yeh & Lama, 2006). As a result, each year on March 10, known to Tibetans as the Tibetan National Uprising Day, thousands of young Tibetan youths take to the streets and demonstrate outside the Chinese consulate and the parliament building in several Canadian and American cities such as Toronto, Vancouver, Chicago, and New York (Hori et al., 2010).

Clearly, these Tibetan organizations not only reflect the political concerns of Tibetans in the United States and Canada, but also prioritize keeping traditions and memories alive by

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organizing and promoting various events that connect young Tibetans to the homeland. In addition, these organizations work to change the living conditions of Tibetans inside Tibet by denouncing abuses and restrictions (Hori et al., 2010). As a result, with a total membership of over 100,00 people, these Tibetan organizations, led mostly by young and innovative second generation Tibetan youths are found not only in Europe and North America, but also in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the former Soviet Republics (Yeh & Lama, 2006). Thus, by establishing ethnic networks of social, cultural and economic capital in Canada, the Tibetan community is simultaneously sustaining and reproducing a politicized identity of Tibetan nationalism, and developing transnational social fields that provide transnational opportunities for the second generation. For example, in 2007, the Tibetan community in Toronto financed the purchase of an old factory in Etobicoke to establish The Tibetan Canadian Cultural Centre (TCCC), which also houses the Canadian Tibetan Association of Ontario (CTAO). As a result, the CTAO regularly hosts cultural and religious events that not only promote solidarity among the Tibetan community, but also advocates maintaining transnational ties to the former homeland (Given, 1998). Through their engagement in organizations such as the Tibetan Youth Congress, it is clear that Tibetan youths in Canada are able to engage in cultural activities that not only highlight their Tibetan identity, but also exhibit their Canadian identity in their daily lives (Yeh & Lama, 2007). Consequently, these mobilizations represent the existence of transnational social fields as second generation Tibetan youths navigate simultaneously in more than one space that go beyond one geographic border.

Transnational Political Activism among second generation Tibetan youth

Political transnational ties must be considered as phenomena that have emerged in relation to both the migrants' societies of departure and settlement, particularly among the younger second generation who to an extent, are familiar with both contexts. Despite the debate

over the extent of involvement of second generation in transnational activities, it is clear that

political transnational ties are not simply a first-generation phenomenon, as the second

generation may also be involved in the politics of their homelands (Fouron & Glick Schiller,

2002). For the second generation, transnational political involvement may be motivated by

various types of causes. In the Tibetan case, the second generation mainly consists of those born

outside the former homeland of Tibet such as in Canada, and subsequently, they are indirectly

affected through the state of being in exile (Yeh, 2007). However, due to the existence of

transnational linkages of first generation Tibetans to Tibet, there are opportunities to reproduce

information about the former homeland in transnational social spaces through different

transnational actors such as family members who maintain relationships with Tibetans in Tibet.

Fouron & Schiller (2001) insist on reconceptualising the conception of diasporas as transnational

social field where people are thought to be engaged in more than one society. In this way, the

population is simultaneously invested socially, economically, and politically in more than one

space (Fouron & Schiller, 2001, p. 172). Consequently, any assumptions regarding social

institutions, family, citizenship, and nation-state should be re-examined within this transnational

social field context.

On March 10, 1959, tens of thousands of Tibetans marched in the streets of Lhasa,

Tibet's capital, rising up against China's illegal invasion and occupation of their homeland.

Subsequently, second generation Tibetan youths continue this tradition every year on March 10,

as they take to the streets around the world to participate in political demonstrations. Although

the second generation do engage in transnational political activities, the degree of their

involvement in transnational politics is still debated (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004). Similarly,

building on to this reconceptualization of the Tibetan diaspora as transnational social fields, it is

clear that that the term diaspora should be expanded beyond actual transnational activities that

include activities such as home visits and remittances to include 'imagined' returns to homelands through cultural rediscovery, sentimental longings, etc (Espiritu & Tran, 2001). Consequently, in relation to the second generation, Levitt (2004) posits that the second generation are indeed transnational as they are also exposed to cross-border flows that span two nation states. As a result, whilst being integrated into Canadian society, second generation youths can continue to be active on the issues regarding their homeland as they can enact different aspects of their lives across borders (Levitt, 2002). Particularly relevant among second generation Tibetan youths, this idea of transnationalism on a symbolic level is highly prevalent as many have never been to their 'homeland' (Espiritu & Tran, 2001, p. 369). Therefore, through increased exposure to transnational social fields, the identity of the second generation is fluid, as they can traverse through multiple identities at different times, and during different situations.

Tibetan youth and religion

While this paper explores the transnational political identities of second generation Tibetan youths, many scholars have instead emphasized the importance of "religious identity" over other aspects in shaping their transnational activities (McLellan, 2002; Dorjee & Giles, 2005). Growing up in Canadian society, the second generation experience, construct and negotiate identities while being constantly exposed to transnational social spaces in which identities can be altered based on cross-border flows of information (Brittan, 2009). However, according to Dorjee & Giles (2005), Tibetans construct their identity primarily through Buddhist narratives of their land, origins of their race, language, and ritual practices (p.19). Therefore, a Tibetan Buddhist narrative indicates that 'Tibet' is not simply a geographical area, but a divine environment (Dorjee & Giles, 2005). However, with specific implications for assimilation in the host society, Tibetans are more likely to use their religious identification as 'Buddhist' to resist assimilation into the host society, as maintaining a 'pure Tibetan identity' means resisting a dual

identity (Van Deer, 1995). However, although Tibetan Buddhism has always been depicted as a "religion" in the Western sense, it has come to be viewed in a different sense among Tibetan youths, as it has become a guiding tool in achieving various political goals. Consequently, for Tibetan youths, a Buddhist identity has enforced a deeper loyalty towards the Tibetan nationalistic struggle and has subsequently encouraged more transnational activities such as political activism.

Youth involvement in discussions of religion, culture and identity is vitally important for building connections and surviving in diasporic and exiled experiences. McLellan (2002) posits that any type of 'tradition' is a social construction, rather than being something that is a fixed and static reality. For instance, although Tibetan Buddhists and Western practitioners of Buddhism share the same places of worship in Western cities, they often restrain from intermingling since Tibetan ethnicity is strained between the option of integration to Western society and preservation of traditional customs (McLellan, 2002). With regards to the Tibetan community in Toronto, McLellan (2002) emphasizes that while the Tibetan community is considered one of the smallest Buddhist communities in Toronto, the Tibetan people do maintain a strong sense of ethnic and religious identity (p.74). Thus, for McMellan (2002), the Tibetan identity in Western society is tied to their strong sense of religious attachment to Buddhism. For Kolas (1996), as the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama of Tibet, "the Dalai Lama is the only unquestioned leader of the Tibetan people, as he not only provides continuity to the history of Tibet, but epitomises the community of Tibetans itself (p.57). Consequently, in contextualizing the nationalist experiences among Tibetan youths, it is important to emphasize that for many young Tibetans living in exile, "a true Tibet" lies not in a territorial homeland, but in a body of religious and cultural practices that has travelled with the Dalai Lama into exile. Similarly, in her work on Tibetan migrants to western countries, Hess (2009) notes that "Tibetans themselves tend to be a little less grandiose,

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but suggest that Tibetan culture, particularly Buddhism might have something to offer others (p. 57). However, in order for this to work, one must equate nation with culture, which she argues is in fact the case for many Tibetans who feel this way.

Similarly, for Dreyfus (2005), 'Tibetan nationalism is not a unified discourse, but a site of contention, where conflicting visions compete for the allegiance of Tibetans (p.14). For instance, the current situation is characterized by the mutual interference of at least two incommensurable nationalisms, in which one is territorial, that is, grounded in the physical land of Tibet. On the other hand, the second mode of nationalism locates the 'true body of Tibet' in the spiritual body of the Dalai Lama (Falcone & Wangchuk, 2008, p. 179). Clearly, for many Tibetan youths, the Tibetan nation is embodied in "culture rather than territory," since the spiritual leader of Tibet, the Dalai Lama, is still in exile. Therefore, considering the Dalai Lama's centrality to cultural nationalism in particular, it is important to note the Dalai Lama's wide influence on the Tibetan youth movement, as he has come to symbolize the religious-cultural versions of Tibetan nationalism.

Van Deer Veer (1995) supports this idea of the significance of the Buddhist identity and he terms this process the "ethnicization of religion" by which he refers to the notion that a religious identity has become an identity marker among diasporic youths, such as in the case of Tibetan youths (p.8). Thus, in order to create social boundaries between themselves and the culture of the host societies, Tibetan youth adopt a Buddhist religious identity and it becomes an important feature in shaping how Tibetan youths frame themselves in support of the political cause. However, while scholars have asserted the influence of religion in the construction of Tibetan youth identity, Smith (1996) notes that the resurgence of traditional Tibetan culture during the 1980s symbolized not only one's faith adherence to Buddhism, but more importantly, it symbolized their loyalty to Tibetan national identity. For instance, while self-immolation

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protests, both inside and outside of Tibet are led mainly by monks, the demonstrations are viewed by most Tibetan youth as political movements against the Chinese government, rather than as a purely religious act. Consequently, Smith (1997) argues that a significant number of 'non-Buddhist Tibetan' nationalists engage in religious cultural activities solely to assert their national identity.

Clearly, Buddhism plays a key role in reinforcing a sense of "Tibetanness" among the Tibetan youths in major North American cities (McLellan, 2002). However, at the same time, it is important to emphasize that the identity of the second generation is highly fluid with allegiances to both the homeland and their host culture, as they are also influenced by other factors such as their social and political context. Therefore, while Buddhism does play a role in influencing the transnational practices of Tibetan youths, there are also other social, cultural and political factors that shape their transnational activities.

Imagining the Tibetan nation-state

For Tibetan youths living in exile, their "imaginings" are significant to their political struggle and to their transnational efforts to maintain ties with the homeland (Bakhtin, 1981). Memory is important to understanding transnationalism among Tibetan youths since memories help build a social group and it allows a "collective" understanding of what each individual has endured, as well as fostering an understanding that brings a community closer together. As Halbwachs (1992) explains, "collective memory is not a mythical notion of parapsychological connections; while the collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent body of people, it is individuals as group members who remember" (p. 25). While this process of memory is deeply embedded in the past, it nonetheless plays a vital role on the course of future events as it acts as a social force.

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In contextualizing the diasporic identity of second generation Tibetan youth, it is useful to consider the work of Anderson (1983) who directs attention to the set of social circumstances in which authoritative discourses are strategically and actively engaged, as they are inserted into identity processes of those groups that are forced to relocate. For Anderson (1983), "all communities…are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity, but by the style in which they are imagined" (p.6). Therefore, while all communities are "imagined", what separates each nation is the way in which these nations come to be imagined. However, for second generation Tibetan youths who are part of the diaspora, the concepts of "nation" and "nationalism" take on new meanings since the traumatic nature of forced exile cannot be compared with the experience of voluntary migration. This viewpoint is supported by Venturino (1997) who argues that in the Tibetan case, "survival as a migrant is not an end in itself, but a means to an end" (p.99). While voluntary migrants may capitalize on the opportunity to develop a global identity, people forced into exile by an oppressive regime live in a diaspora in which they face a daily threat to life and culture (Venturino, 1997, p.100).

Lavine (2001) explores the ways in which individual and group identity in diaspora is based on notions of "loss, displacement, exile, memory, hope, and anticipated return" (p. 25). As a result, this idea of an "imagined homeland" that sustains the culture and identity of the diasporic population becomes an important one, especially for Tibetan youths in exile. In addition, Levine (2001) posits that the memory of life before exile and diaspora, the glorification of the homeland, and feelings of strong ties with other members of the group through a shared remembrance, culture and identity are all important to maintaining unity amongst the exile or diaspora community (p.31). Consequently, Lavine (2001) suggests that in many ways, exile and diaspora have actually brought Tibetans closer together as a cohesive community working for the same cause, an ultimate return to Tibet.

With regards to the notion of "collective memory and longing for the homeland," there is a clear emphasis on place and place-making among diasporic populations that were forced out of their homeland. As a result, Marsden (1997) emphasizes that a new geography may be emerging for the younger generation; one that is about the reconstitution of identity and place; and one that is more relevant to the interaction between "what is global and what is local" (p. 39). Since it is highly unrealistic for Tibetan youths to gain full independence or autonomy of their homeland in the near future, creating a physical place through a shared collective memory that resembles the homeland subsequently becomes important in understanding a Tibetan population that longs for a distant homeland. Building on this notion of the homeland, Appadurai (1990) posits that the notion of the homeland lying as the symbolic centre of diaspora groups is in fact an invention, produced by the imagination of people who are outside of their homeland (p. 11). In many cases, this is the reality for members of conflict generated diasporas and include those who originate from violent settings.

While it is known that memories are socially constructed and negotiated between individuals, collective memories also provide a narrative that influences individual identities and gives meaning to the lived experience of individuals and groups (Halbwachs, 1992). Yeh (2007) provides a striking example of "collective memory" in her work on Tibetans abroad, with her observation that they are frequently characterized as having an 'imagined' or 'mythical' home. Since the majority of second generation Tibetans have never seen or experienced the 'homeland', "one reaction has been the emergence of an alternative imagined geography of homeland" in which Dharamsala, the political capital of Tibetans in exile and the seat of the Dalai Lama, has supplanted Lhasa, the former capital city of Tibet as "the center of Tibetan diasporic geography" (p. 662). Similarly, the depiction of Tibet as an imagined homeland can also be related to the experiences of the Palestinian refugees. For Bisharat (1997), there is a

displacement of a Palestinian community in exile that was once thought of as being rooted in particular localities, and now spread out to the level of the nation. For instance, in both cases, it is clear that the longing for home has changed over time, from return to certain villages, to an emphasis on a collective national return to a homeland that is thought of more abstractly through a shared sense of collective memory (Bisharat, 1997). Therefore, similar to the Palestinian experience, Tibetans also conceive of a common homeland through collective memory, as they try to create an imagined homeland that supports the vision of a 'free Tibet.'

Burke (1989) describes the role played by collective memory in identity construction by analyzing significant archetypes in national historical narratives in which good prevails and evil is either destroyed or purposely omitted. In this sense, memory helps preserve the collective values that individuals aspire to follow, shaping history as a teaching mechanism for a proper way of life. Assmann (2008) explains the progressive stages in understanding the relationship between history and memory. This includes the relation between "history and memory, the polarization between history and memory, and the interaction between history and memory" (Assman, 2008, p. 57). While all three of the stages are significant, the third and final stage of "history and memory" has led to the recognition of memory as an ongoing activity (Assman, 2009). As a result, collective memory has been referred to using alternative terms such as collective remembering to emphasize the subjects involved in constructing memory, rather than simply the narrative itself.

Clearly, the notion of collective memories is highly applicable among second generation Tibetan youths due to the fact that narratives of memories have the potential to create an imagined homeland that lacks the hardship that defines life in exile, particularly in a large city such as Toronto. Through a shared sense of collective remembering, the former homeland of

"Tibet" is depicted as a land of peace and freedom where Tibetans can live freely among other Tibetans who are currently within Tibet. As a result, it is evident that various narratives of "memory" are used within political demonstrations on March 10, which allow the second generation to cultivate an imaginary nation-state of Tibet. Therefore, the second generation have been supplied with an imaginary version of Tibet, as memory is utilized to depict this idealized version of the nation in order to provide personal solace, as well as to solidify collective resolve among the Tibetan youths.

With regards to second generation Tibetan youth, this is an important period to explore their transnational experiences as they are more opportunities to engage in various transnational activities such as political activism in their daily lives. Therefore, while navigating transnational social spaces, there are intersecting identity motivators for Tibetan youth as they can adapt through identities of both "Canadianness and Tibetanness". The following chapter will describe the methodological framework of the paper.

Chapter Four

Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology used to conduct this study. Therefore, it begins by discussing the approach of selecting a qualitative method. It then discusses sampling, recruitment strategies, participant characteristics, data collection methods, researcher's positionality, data analysis strategy and the limitations of the study.

Approach

This study utilizes a qualitative method because it allows for an in-depth analysis of the data. According to Archer & Berdahl (2011), the value of a qualitative research lies in exploration, discovery, context, details, and interpretation. This approach is relevant to this study as it focuses on transnational practices and identity construction among the second generation. Unlike quantitative approaches, a qualitative approach allows for the exploration of a topic through interviews, focus groups or observations of real-world participants, and emphasizes the experiences of the participants, rather than the interviewer's viewpoint. Despite the fact that results of qualitative research cannot be generalized because it is based on limited cases, the findings do have significant value as they emphasize meanings, rather than quantifiable phenomena (Check & Schutt, 2012).

Using a semi-structured methodology to collect data, the analysis and interpretation of the findings are based on themes and patterns found from the data collected. A qualitative data analysis is more inductive in nature than a quantitative one due to the fact that a researcher can begin analyzing while data is being collected, rather than beginning strictly after data collection (Check & Schutt, 2012). In addition, a semi-structured methodology helped facilitate a deeper inquiry into understanding the participants' choices, attitudes, and behaviours in terms of their involvement in transnational practices and identity construction. The analytical objectives of the

objectives of this study firstly are to explore the reasons among the second generation for participating in political demonstrations in Toronto. Secondly, this study aims to describe the change in transnational practices and identity constructions after engaging in political activism. Lastly, the study explores the ways in which relationships were maintained to the "former homeland" through different transnational practices. I have used a qualitative analysis because it facilitates a deeper inquiry about these experiences among second generation Tibetan youths through political activism, subsequent acts of transnationalism and identity construction.

Sampling

For the study, a purposeful criterion sampling procedure was used as this procedure is valuable in extracting information from participants who meet the set criteria for inclusion in the study. This method of sampling is very strong in quality assurance since a researcher can set a criteria and pick all individuals that meet that criteria. Since the study is limited to the second generation Tibetan youth population, I define second generation as those who were born outside the homeland of Tibet, and are currently between the ages of 18 to 28. However, in order to find second generation Tibetans who have played different role within these demonstrations, the study recruited two types of groups based on their roles, responsibility, and commitment in the demonstration. These roles, responsibilities and commitment include the delivery of speeches, chants, or other leadership roles. Therefore, the study was limited to those who have attended the demonstration on March 10 at least once within the last 3 years. In total, I interviewed 6 second generation Tibetans who met the required criteria.

In addition, a snowball sampling was used in the study as it is a technique that is used by researchers to identify the potential subjects where the possibility of locating the subjects is difficult. Since the Tibetan community is relatively small, a snowball sampling method yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess

some characteristics that are of research interest. Therefore, this method is particularly applicable when the focus of the study is on a sensitive issue, such as political activism among second generation youths, and thus requires the knowledge of insiders to locate people for study.

Recruitment strategies

In terms of the National Tibetan Uprising day that is held yearly on March 10, it is mainly organized by young Tibetans who use various social networks to bring awareness to this yearly event. Therefore, in order to get into contact with potential participants, I contacted the head of several Tibetan organizations such as Students for Free Tibet Toronto (SFT) and the Canadian Tibetan Association of Ontario (CTAO). A recruitment email was sent to the directors of the program in order to get in contact with potential participants. All interested participants were asked to contact the researcher directly via email for further information.

In addition, a snowball sampling method was used to identify more potential participants from the recommendation of those who had already participated. In order to reduce the risks that are involved in snowball recruitment, the participants were asked whether they would be willing to pass on some information about the study they just completed to other potential subjects. Subsequently, potential participants were asked to contact the researcher through email if they were interested.

Participant Characteristics

The aim of this study's methodology was to sample second generation Tibetan youths who fit the required criteria. In total, I interviewed six Tibetan participants who were born outside the former homeland of Tibet, and are currently between the ages of 18 – 28. In addition, in order to gather different experiences, two of the female participants recruited had played a leading role within these demonstrations, as they helped lead the protest on March 10 through the delivery of speeches, chants, or other leadership roles. The remaining four male

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participants attended the demonstration but were not involved in any organizational or leadership roles during the demonstration. They ranged in age from 21 to 28 years old and consisted of four males and two females. Two out of the six participants were born in Canada, while the rest immigrated to Canada before 12 years old. All of the participants identified themselves as Buddhist and lived in Toronto.

Data Collection

The aims of the research were described to the participant via e-mail, which included a brief summary of the study, the role of the participant, and also confirmed their eligibility to participate in the study. On the day of the interview, the consent agreement form was reintroduced. The participant was informed that the study was completely voluntary and I restated that I would keep the information they provide confidential.

The research utilized semi-structured interviews since it is the most widely used interviewing format in qualitative research (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Unlike structured and unstructured interviews, semi structured interviews facilitate a level of openness that highly ensure researcher's comfort, as well as the participants'. More importantly, they contain predetermined open-ended questions, with as many pre-probe questions as possible. In addition, by employing a semi-structured interview style, the participant can elaborate in their responses and in turn, allow the researcher to reply.

Each participant was interviewed individually, and each interview lasted about 30 – 45 minutes. With regards to the interview questions, they were open-ended and related to participants' back-ground, as well as questions regarding their involvement in the political demonstration, etc. Therefore, the questions were directly related to the aims of the research and questions were asked that inquired into participants' personal information. In order to create a safe environment, the interviews were held at a private room booked at the Toronto Public

library and this was previously agreed upon at a specific date and time. With the consent of the participant, the interviews were taped using an audio-recorder, in addition to note taking during the interviews. Lastly, participants were informed that their identification will be kept confidential during the entire research and writing, process. Therefore, when sharing the findings of the study, I will use pseudonyms instead of using participants' actual names.

Researcher's Role and Position

In qualitative research, positionality is highly important, as it determines where one stands in relation to the 'other' and these positions can change when they are influenced by factors such as class, education, gender, etc (Merriam et al., 2001). As a result, it is important to consider the role positionality plays during interviews.

As a second generation Tibetan, there are both pros and cons connected to my social identity in regards to this research process. For instance, being a Tibetan provides me the opportunity to gain trust from the participants, having shared common ethnic experiences of diaspora, exile, etc. In addition, it may provide greater comfort and trust for the participants in this interview process as they may view the research as contributing to the broader literature on Tibetan Canadians. Past assumptions of the position of the interview relied on the notion that an insider had greater understanding of experiences within a group, whereas the outside exhibited an objective portrayal of the experiences (Merriam et al., 2001). Despite this assumption, it is understood that positionality of the researcher is valid, as long as the researcher acknowledges their social location and the limitations it may have on their scope (Merriam et al., 2001). Therefore, it is my intent to safeguard against biases by being reflexive throughout the process of data collection and interpretation. Consequently, I will consider my own positionality and assumptions with the aims of representing the participants' perspectives without any personal biases.

Data Analysis

The interview data is textual in nature, as it consists of digital recordings, typed transcripts of digital recordings and interview notes. Firstly, individual case analysis was conducted in order to identify themes. Subsequently, data analysis looked for significant themes that appeared in the data from the interviews for a cross case analysis. Therefore, through a cross case analysis, common themes emerged from various interviews, and provided a deeper insight and meaning derived from the accounts provided by the participants.

Limitations

Despite numerous advantages offered by a qualitative method, it is important to highlight that there are some limitations to this approach. According to Drisko (1997), bias in qualitative social research refers to any influences that may compromise proper sampling, collection, interpretation, and reporting of data. Clearly, one of the most common critique of the qualitative method lies in the concern over its generalizability to the broader academic literature. For instance, the findings of my study will not necessarily be generalizable to all second generation Tibetan youths due to the small sample size. However, while I may give up generalizability, it should be noted that the goal of qualitative social research is not generalizability. Thus, having a qualitative method ultimately provides me the opportunity to explore a particular issue with greater depth and detail than a quantitative study would allow. The following chapters will discuss the findings of the study.

Chapter 5

Findings

The findings below suggest that the experiences of the second generation is highly transnational since they are able to engage in activities within transnational social spaces that link them to both Canada and their homeland. Across all themes, the findings showed that the second generation displayed "expanded and selective forms of transnationalism" which fluctuates according to personal choices, family responsibilities, school, etc. Similarly, with regards to identity construction, the findings showed that identity among the second generation is highly fluid, as it is shaped and influenced by transnational social spaces.

Therefore, this chapter will discuss the findings related to why second generation youths' engage in this yearly political demonstration on the March 10. Secondly, I will discuss the transnational behaviour of the second generation who choose to be involved in transnational activities that relate to their homeland, as well as discussing identity construction among the second generation. Lastly, this chapter discusses whether there have been subsequent participation in transnational activities since partaking in this yearly political demonstration, and the impact of this subsequent participation on their identity.

Transnational Political Activism on March 10th

Reasons for Engaging and Participating In Transnational Political Activism

When the participants were asked about their reasons for engaging in political demonstrations, there were varying responses among the participants. However, one of the common themes that emerged among the participants was that engaging in the demonstration was a way to feel a connection to both their homeland, as well as towards all Tibetans currently within Tibet under the rule of the Chinese government. Therefore, the participants wanted to participate in the demonstration to feel an emotional connection to the homeland, as well as for

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their own political reasons.

For example, for one of the two participants who played a leading role in the demonstration, she stated that she participated in the demonstration because:

> It is a way for me to connect with some of my family members that are still in Tibet. I can't go to Tibet because I fear for my safety, and I don't have much contact with most of my family members currently in Tibet because there is high surveillance by the Chinese government on my people. So, taking part in a demonstration like this is the only way for me to connect with them (Dolkar, female, 18).

As indicated from the above response, some of the participants noted that they became engaged in the political demonstration since they cannot physically enter Tibet due to safety concerns. Especially relevant for second generation Tibetan youths who have never visited or lived in their parents' homeland, it is evident that they can engage in transnational activities such as political activism that is not limited to physical mobility.

At the same time, other participants mentioned that they participated in the demonstration to give a "voice" to Tibetans in the homeland who are currently under Chinese occupation. Consequently, their strong sense of attachment to the homeland is exhibited when the participants repeatedly use the terms "my people and my homeland."

> I want to give a voice to my people in Tibet who do not have any right to protest or speak out. They are treated like second-class citizens by the Chinese government and I want the world to know that Tibetans in my homeland are suffering because of Chinese oppression (Lundup, male, 22).

> I became involved because it is a part of my life and the reason I am here is because I am a Tibetan. So many millions of people have died, either directly or indirectly due to

Chinese's illegal occupation of Tibet, and this National Uprising Day is to highlight the suffering of Tibetans and since it is part of my life, I have to honor my culture and do something about it (Gyalo, male, 28).

For another participant who also played a leading role in the demonstration, she engaged in this demonstration to not only connect with the former homeland, but to also raise awareness about the humanitarian injustices occurring in their homeland:

> As a Tibetan, I feel that it is my duty to participate in this demonstration to help unite all Tibetans living in diaspora. The type of violence our people is suffering in China is seriously inhumane and this type of behaviour by the Chinese government in the 21st century is really shameful. So, this is why I feel that it is my duty to do everything that I can to expose these human rights violations occurring in China against our people (Zenden, female, 24).

Some scholars have suggested that when there is crises in the homeland, it allows individuals that belong to a transnational social field to mobilize together for a cause that ties them to their homeland. (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004). Subsequently, while it was important to raise awareness about the Tibetan struggle among some of the participants, other participants also felt that being raised in transnational social fields which allowed cross-border flows of information influenced them to join the demonstration.

> As a child, my grandparents would tell me stories of their personal experiences escaping Tibet by foot, and walking several days through rugged terrains to reach the Indian border where they were granted exile. By the time I became a teenager, I had already known a lot about the history of my people and my homeland. Even today, my grandparents continues to maintain contact with some of their family members that are in Tibet and always keeps me informed with any recent conflict or development that relates to the homeland. So, because of the fact that I was informed from a very young age about the homeland and our people, it has really motivated me to participate in activities that raises awareness about our cause, which is ultimately a "Free Tibet" (Khadun, male, 23).

I feel that people throughout the world are still unaware of the fact that Tibetans inside Tibet have no right or individual autonomy. Some of my relatives back home in Nepal would always keep me updated about some of the issues that is happening in our homeland and that is how I hear about some of the issues such as 'self-immolations' in Tibet. Our people are closed off from the rest of the world because countries like the US and Canada don't want to confront China about their human rights violations against the Tibetan people. So, being involved in this demonstration is one way for me to raise awareness about Tibet (Lundup, male, 22).

Previous studies on transnationalism have argued that transnationalism implies the physical movement of people, and in this context, the term 'transmigrants' emerged, emphasizing a relationship between migrancy and transnationalism (Harney & Baldassar, 2007). However, as indicated from the above responses, this is not necessarily the case among the second generation, as some of these individuals choose to engage in transnational political activism as a response to barriers in physical movement to the homeland. For these Tibetan youth like Khadun, hearing firsthand experiences of the hardship endured by their grandparents in order to escape Tibet was a motivating factor to engage in this yearly political demonstration. Consequently, the transmission of these personal stories within transnational social fields played a significant role in their decision to attend the March 10 demonstration.

In these responses, it is evident that the second generation choose to be involved in this demonstration for varying reasons. However, one of the underlying themes that is prevalent throughout these responses is "nationalism." Clearly, their participation in political activism can be understood as a form of "long distance nationalism," as it is embedded in transnational networks, in which an ideology of belonging and longing forge people from varying location to an ancestral territory and its politics (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2002). As noted by Fouron & Glick Sciller (2002), long distance nationalists may fight, kill and die for an ancestral homeland

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in which they have never physically lived in. This sentiment is evident in Karma's response:

> Tibetans in Tibet live in horrible conditions, and they have no legal rights or freedom because of the Chinese government. I live in Canada and since I have the right to go out in the street and protest, I will do anything it takes to fight for my homeland. Our people are suffering under China's rule and I always hear about young monks in Tibet that are self-immolating themselves to raise awareness for the international community to do something. You see, as a Tibetan monk, when they are helpless under China's rule and can't resort to inflicting violence on others, then they give their own life for the sake of the people and the homeland. It is sad and even His Holiness the Dalai Lama doesn't encourage this type of act, but I can also understand why Tibetans sacrifice their own life for Tibet (Karma, male, 25).

As noted in the literature, the concepts of "nation" and "nationalism" take on new meanings for forced exiles such as the Tibetan population since the traumatic nature of forced exile cannot be compared with the experience of voluntary migration. Moreover, for Anderson (1983), once nationality became prevalent, it became transplanted to a wide range of social, political, and ideological issues. Thus, nationality brings forth deep emotional attachments to various causes such as the notion of a "Free Tibet" among Tibetan youths due to the aura of nationalism it cultivates. For Zenden, who played a leading role in the demonstration, hearing stories about the state of the homeland and the Tibetan people brought forth deep nationalistic sentiments:

> When I hear the news about how Tibetans in Tibet are treated by the Chinese government, it is really sad because no one is standing up to China except for the Tibetan people. Even when something major happens to Tibetans in Tibet, the media don't cover it for some reason and the world just turns a blind eye on the Tibetan people. I believe that as a Tibetan, I must support our cause and fight for those that are in Tibet right now because they don't have any rights or freedom inside China. (Zenden, female, 24).

As evident in the case of second generation Tibetan youth who are unable to visit their homeland

for different reasons, the transmission of information on the homeland and the diaspora spanning

borders has led to their engagement in transnational political activism. As a result, political

issues that concern the homeland, and which flow within transnational social fields subsequently

influence their political engagement in transnational demonstrations.

Identity Construction during the March 10 demonstration

Participants were asked whether they felt "more Tibetan or Canadian" during the demonstration,

as well as the ways in which they negotiated their identities. The findings showed that those who

played a leading role in the demonstration felt much closer to their Tibetan side than those who

did not play a leading role. Nonetheless, at the same time, it is important to note that most of the

participants did mention feeling 'more Tibetan' than 'Canadian' during the demonstration

regardless of their roles.

> I definitely felt more Tibetan because I was fighting for my homeland and for every
> Tibetan in Tibet who do not have a political voice. When I was leading the
> demonstration, I wasn't thinking about anything else except for how proud I was to be a
> Tibetan. Still, I wouldn't say that I was confused about my Canadian identity because at
> that time, I chose to feel more Tibetan (Zenden, female, 24).

> When I was demonstrating, I definitely felt more Tibetan because I was in this space
> where people were waving Tibetan flags, chanting Tibetan slogans, and speaking to each
> other in Tibetan. Also, I didn't feel confused because even though I was born in Canada
> and consider myself as Tibetan-Canadian, I knew that I was just expressing my Tibetan
> side at that time. So, I knew that I was expressing my anger and frustration with everyone
> else (Khadun, male, 23).

For most of the participants who did not have a leading role in the demonstration, feelings of

attachment to their Tibetan side were not as strong as those participants that had played a leading

role in the demonstrations.

> I did feel a little more Tibetan than Canadian because I was with my Tibetan friends. But, at the same time, I was also proud to be Canadian because me and my friends could go out there and protest without any fear. So, in a sense, I was proud of both my Tibetan and Canadian identity (Karma, male, 25).

> While protesting, I would definitely identify myself more as a Tibetan, but I also value my Canadian side at the same time since being Canadians allows me to have the freedom of speech to express myself (Gyalo, male, 28).

Despite feeling closer to their Tibetan side, most of the participants still acknowledged that they were cognisant of their Canadian identity during the demonstration. This indicates that feelings of personal identification is voluntary among the second generation as they can switch between one identity over the other based on social, cultural, religious, and political factors. Clearly, the participants are aware of their bicultural identities and this contradicts studies that mention that migrants must forego the 'other' culture to embrace the culture of the host society. Rather, it is clear that among the second generation, being bicultural does not always have to end in conflict of choosing between one identity over the perceived 'other' (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009). For instance, Dolkar's viewpoint supports the argument brought forth by some scholars that being bicultural does not involve choosing one identity over another as she stated that:

> Even though I felt more Tibetan in that kind of environment, I feel that I was expressing both my "Tibetan and Canadian" identity. I was proud to support Tibetans in our cause for a "Free Tibet," but I was also really proud of my Canadian identity because I felt that I also had the support for Canadians in the streets who joined in on our demonstration. I remember that on March 10, I brought a couple of Tibetan flag and also a Canadian flag to the demonstration, and I gave some of the flags to other protesters. If I was in India or Nepal, I would probably be taken by the police because they assume we are out there in

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the streets to cause trouble. So, this is why I also keep my Canadian identity because of our freedom here in Canada to gather for political events like March 10th (Dolkar, female, 18).

As evident in Dolkar's response where she simultaneously felt both "Tibetan and Canadian" during the demonstration, the March 10 demonstration represents a space in which the second generation were able to freely express and negotiate feelings of belonging and identity to both culture. For instance, Ho (1995) posits that individuals brought up in multiethnic environments may develop multicultural or hybrid identities. Moreover, transnational social fields influence identity constructions and allows for hybrid identities to form. By participating in the demonstration, Dolkar was not only connecting to strictly one nation since she was also acting within a transnational social field that incorporates both Canada and Tibet. Therefore, it is evident that transnational social spaces allow for the assertion of her dual identity.

During the demonstration, various narratives of memories relating to the homeland were also used to allow the second generation to cultivate an "imaginary Tibetan nation-state," which subsequently makes them feel more 'Tibetan' than 'Canadian." For instance, some of the participants mentioned hearing positive stories of Tibet which made them feel more Tibetan during the demonstration.

> During the demonstration, I witnessed Tibetans who were retelling stories of Tibet and it really made me feel more Tibetan because I wished to go back in time to experience what they felt. When I heard those stories, I knew that my people were truly happy in Tibet because they were able to live their life the way they wanted to and they had the Dalai Lama to guide them. Also, people were playing some traditional Tibetan music and the lyrics of the music made me think about the Dalai Lama, and all of the Tibetan people inside and outside of China (Karma, male, 25).

> Every family, whether it is their parents or their grandparents did live in Tibet and it hasn't been that long since we lost our country. Therefore, the timeframe of losing our homeland is still fresh for our generation and memories is passed down through each generation. Therefore, it is really important to mention and hear these memories in the rallies (Gyalo, male, 28).

However, while some participants mentioned hearing positive and uplifting stories of Tibet and the Tibetan community, other participants recalled hearing sad stories from those who were forced to leave Tibet. For instance, Khadun felt upset during the demonstration when he witnessed older Tibetan protestors recounting horrific tales of the violence, abuse, and loss they endured at the hands of the Chinese military.

> In the demonstration, there were some older Tibetan protestors who were telling people about their horrific experiences leaving their loved ones behind in Tibet in order to escape the Chinese military. I also remember talking to an older Tibetan gentleman who told me that he had to walk by foot for several days in order to reach Nepal. During this journey, he mentioned that he had lost several close friends who didn't survive that journey. These stories that I heard was really heartbreaking for me to hear but I think that it is something that all young Tibetans should know because it motivates us to keep fighting to return back to Tibet one day (Khadun, male, 23).

For Tibetan youths like Khadun, it is evident that hearing personal and collective memories of Tibet during the demonstration motivates them to be more engaged in transnational practices that relates to the homeland. Clearly, for Tibetan youths living in exile, their "imagining of the nation-state" is significant to their political struggle and to their transnational efforts to maintain ties with the homeland. Therefore, as mentioned in the literature review, these responses affirm the viewpoint of Anderson (1983), who suggested that while all communities are "imagined", what separates each nation is the way in which these nations come to be imagined.

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Among all of the participants, it is evident that during their participation in transnational social spaces, they negotiate between both their "Tibetan and Canadian" identity. However, the level of their attachment towards feeling more 'Canadian' or 'Tibetan' is based on their level of involvement in the demonstration as some of the participants had helped lead the protest on March 10th through the delivery of speeches, chants, or other leadership roles. In addition, similar to situational ethnicity, it is evident that hybridized cultures are created as a result of constant socialization and transfer of information from individuals in a diverse multicultural society such as Canada (Phinney, 1999). While all of the participants mentioned that they never felt that they were privileging one identity over the other, it was evident through their responses that in most situation, they overwhelmingly felt 'more Tibetan' during the demonstration. Consequently, this type of identity distinction among the second generation is a result of the influence of the transnational social field in which they were demonstrating, which refers to sets of multiple interconnected networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are exchanged, and transformed (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004).

Transnational behaviour Post-March 10 demonstration

This section discusses the prevalence of transnationalism among second generation Tibetan youths after their engagement in the "March 10 demonstration." The aim is to explore whether or not transnational practices continue to play a significant role in the daily lives of the second generation, and determine how their current transnational practices affect their identity negotiation process.

Expanded and selective forms of transnationalism

As discussed in the literature review, the transnational practices among the second generation may be selective as the second generation may not visit their home country on a regular basis and their commitments fluctuate at different stages of their lives (Levitt & Walters,

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2002). Especially for second generation Tibetan youth, it is highly unlikely that they will ever visit their homeland due to the hostile political situation for Tibetans under Chinese rule. When the participants were asked how they currently keep themselves involved with transnational activities in their daily lives (such as going to cultural events, joining Tibetan cultural groups, religious ceremonies, etc), most of the participants emphasized that they are simply 'too busy' to engage in transnational activities in their personal lives:

> I attended the 10th of March demonstration because it is something that happens only once a year, and I can plan ahead for this demonstration. But in my daily life, I am not really involved in Tibetan politics or other Tibetan cultural events or anything like that. If I had more time, I would join some Tibetan organizations like "Students for Free Tibet" but I don't think I can commit to something because I go to university, and I also have a part time job on the weekend. (Zenden, female, 24)

> I am not really informed or active in my everyday life with what's happening in Tibet or any other issues that concerns the Tibetan people. With all of the stress I get from work and school, it is really hard for me to focus my energy on being more involved for the Tibetan cause. Of course, I want to be more involved in activities that promote Tibetan culture and this is why I try my best to use social media sites to keep updated with the issues as much as possible. (Karma, male, 25).

> Since I have to take care of my younger brother who is only 10, there are not a lot of opportunities for me to engage in. For me, I have lost contacts with many of Tibetan friends because my parents are working more hours now, and the responsibility falls on me to take care of him when they are not home (Dolkar, female 18).

> It will always vary because I don't feel the same thing from one day to the other. So, there are many factors such as 'family or work' that affects the level of my participation in my daily life. However, like I said, the March 10 demonstration is always there for me because it a day where we really express ourselves of our desire for our homeland, and it is also a tribute to all of the Tibetans who have lost their lives (Gyalo, male, 28).

Other participants reported increasing engagement in Tibetan cultural activities by joining Tibetan language classes, attending religious events, traditional dances, and cultural functions.

> After being in the demonstration, I met lots of Tibetans who encouraged me to take some Tibetan language classes at the 'Tibetan Community Cultural Centre' because I don't really have a good grasp of the Tibetan language. I inquired about the classes and since the classes are only on the weekends, I have gone to about 5 of the classes on the weekend (Lundup, male 22).

> After going to the demonstration 4 years ago, I became more interested in Tibetan politics and decided to join the "Students for Free Tibet Toronto" organization as a volunteer. I am a volunteer in the organization and it is really great to see that it is mostly young Tibetans who are actually running and organizing political and cultural events in our city. So, whenever I am not busy from work or from family duties, I always help out in any way I can (Khadun, male, 23).

Subsequently, as evident in this study, the transnational practices of the second generation is not static, as their participation in these activities depend on whether they have the time to balance their schedule between work, school, and family. Since the transnational behaviour of those participants who engaged in this yearly demonstration is highly selective, their willingness to engage in transnational activities in their everyday lives can subsequently be framed as an "expanded and selective form of transnationalism."

Another common theme among most of the participants revealed that after participating in the demonstration, their transnational activities in their daily lives are largely exhibited through "online political activism" on the internet. Clearly, due to the growing popularity of online social media, it is only recently that the literature on transnationalism has begun to consider the role of the 'Internet' in dissolving geographic borders by connecting different groups on the internet

(Bos & Nell, 2006). For instance, several participants enthusiastically mentioned visiting popular

websites relating to the homeland.

> I would say I have not really reached out to involve myself in activities that promote
> Tibetan culture. But, I am more politically active on social media sites most of the time
> because it isn't as time consuming as going out in the streets to protest. There are many
> websites I visit like "Phayul.com and SFT-Canada.org" and it is a way for me to connect
> with other young Tibetans like me who are interested in talking about issues relating to
> Tibet and what we can do as young Tibetans in Canada to help. So, I would definitely
> encourage other Tibetan youths like me to utilize social media more because it is a really
> powerful political tool to achieve our political goals (Khadun, male, 23).

> I haven't really had the time to join other demonstrations in Toronto or participate in
> Tibetan cultural events because of work and school. Since I am so busy with school and
> work, I would say I am more politically active on the internet because I feel that it allows
> me to communicate views on Tibetan issues more effectively online when I am writing. I
> like to post my opinion on issues that matter to Tibetans and I find that I can do this
> by posting status updates on sites like 'Facebook and Twitter' where I can reach as
> many people as I possibly can (Lundup, male, 22)

As mentioned earlier, the second generation engage in "expanded and selective forms of

transnationalism" due to other commitments in their personal lives. Clearly, due to the

convenience offered by the Internet for those with other real-life commitments, the Internet

subsequently becomes a tool for these second generation youths to raise awareness about their

homeland, and to connect with other groups across borders. According to Bos & Nell (2006),

transnationalism and new media need not broaden or dissolve geographical identity or

connectivity, but may reinforce it. The online lives of diasporic population often reveal

extensions of their offline activities, and their Internet usage indicates the extent to which

territoriality channels these groups' online practices. Clearly, this is certainly the case among

second generation Tibetan youths as the internet provides an easily accessible platform for those who are not able to afford the time and resources to devote to attending a protest march or other activities. For these youths, expressing their views on social media sites or engaging in heated political debates on blogging sites gives them a sense of political empowerment. In this way, homeland-oriented politics helps maintain the Tibetan ethnic identity by reproducing memories of the Tibetan struggle for the homeland and the rest of the Tibetan community in exile.

Thus, while transnationalism does indeed play a significant role in the lives of the second generation, their level of engagement and participation in transnational activities depends on their personal choice and life style demands. Subsequently, in the case of many Tibetan youths, a lack of time and resource has forced them to engage in other less time consuming activities such as engaging with issues relating to the homeland on the internet.

Identity construction and behaviour post-demonstration

While there were varying responses among the participants when they were asked whether participating in the demonstration enhances their feelings of "Tibetanness" or "Canadianness" most of the participants reported feeling more "Tibetan" after participating in the demonstration.

> Now, I definitely feel a stronger connection to my Tibetan side because I am more invested in different aspects of the Tibetan culture after seeing how the Tibetan community came together during the demonstration. So, I try to speak more Tibetan at home with my family and in front of my Tibetan friends, and if my Tibetan friends ask me why I'm speaking Tibetan instead of English, I just tell them we have to start speaking Tibetan more because we are Tibetan ourselves (Lundup, male, 23).

> After the demonstration, I do feel more connected to my Tibetan side because I have never actually been to Tibet and I want to visit Tibet one day. So, being involved in these demonstrations is the only way for me to be in touch with my Tibetan side (Zenden, female, 24).

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For me, going to this demonstration every year for the past 4 years has really strengthened my attachment to my people, and my homeland. I think a lot now about what being a Tibetan means in the 21st century, and my role as a young Tibetan to keep on protesting and fighting for my homeland. I don't think I will ever stop attending demonstrations like the March 10th demonstration because it gives you a new perspective on the meaning of life, and doing something important for my people in Tibet who are suffering and are oppressed by the Chinese government at this very moment. So, I feel a sense of duty for simply being a Tibetan now, and this is something I never felt before (Khadun, male, 23)

It is evident through these responses that in the Tibetan case, a desire to identify with a particular group or homeland without having material ties to the homeland significantly inform their transnational practices. Consequently, these findings contradict the claims made by some scholars who argue that transnationalism may be important for the first generation, but not for the second generation (Portes, 2001; Kasinitz et al., 2002). Clearly, while second generation Tibetan youths vary in their level of engagement with transnational activities in their daily lives, the findings show that transnationalism nonetheless plays an important role for the second generation as it allows them to either feel a stronger connection towards their own "ethnicity, the host culture, or both." Therefore, transnationalism does not necessarily decline as it may take other forms that are conductive to a technologically advanced society linked by social media and other technologies.

For one of the participants, there was no change in his behaviour before or after the demonstration:

I still identify myself the same way I did before the protest. So, I wouldn't say I feel more Canadian now or more Tibetan now. I am still proud to call myself Canadian because I live in a great country like Canada, and also proud to call myself Tibetan because that is

part of my heritage and my culture (Karma, male, 25).

Based on the responses of the participants on identity construction, it is clear that the identity expressions of the second generation are fluid, as they evolve based on the location of the migrants, their social networks, and the make-up of these social networks with regards to nationality, ethnicity, and background (Somerville, 2008). In addition, as discussed in the literature review, the second generation does not have to choose one identity over the other (Hall, 1992; Woodward, 1997). Thus, second-generation Canadians are generally exposed to two cultural frameworks simultaneously. Firstly, the second generation involve themselves in transnational activities within transnational social fields which influence identity construction and expression. At the same time, the second generation are also actively engaged in the culture of the host society, which also shapes their identity (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009). In this study, when the participants were asked how they currently negotiated their identity in their daily lives after engaging in the demonstration, some participants felt that their transnational practices are influenced by their peers and social networks. Consequently, this has implications for their identity negotiation process.

> Since most of my friends are Tibetan, we always try to eat out at Tibetan restaurants in Toronto or attend some cultural events that promote the Tibetan culture. Last year, we went to an event here in Toronto called "Mr. Tibet – Toronto" which was a contest to promote the Tibetan culture among the Tibetan youths. So, there were about 5 young Tibetan boys who participated and they were all judged on their ability to sing Tibetan songs, dance to traditional Tibetan music, and so on. Basically, whenever I am with them, the conversations are always somewhat related to Tibet or the Tibetan people, and I always feel more Tibetan when I am with my Tibetan friends (Zenden, female, 24).

By contrast, Dolkar mentioned spending time with non-Tibetan friends from University:

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I spend a lot of time with my friends from University and none of them are Tibetan. I feel that this influences my identity in a significant way because when I am with them, we don't talk about issues or go to cultural events that make me feel more Tibetan. We mainly engage in activities that promote Western culture because our activities mainly involve watching movies at the theatre, concerts, shopping, and eating Western food (Dolkar, female 18).

As Phinney (1999) suggests, hybridized cultures are created as a result of constant socialization and transfer of information from individuals of diverse cultures. Therefore, as evident in the responses above, being exposed to both Canadian and Tibetan peer groups has encouraged the second generation to develop hybrid identities that connect them to both Canada and Tibet. For second generation Tibetan youths, situational ethnicity also allows them to select and discard certain attributes of both the Tibetan and Canadian culture, especially when they are in an environment with peers, family, and work place settings. For some, their primary ethnic identification as a "Tibetan" serves as the most potent identification. However, as Rosenthal (1987) notes, some may also adopt a more assimilatory position or view themselves as members of two cultural worlds, switching identification according to the situation (p.178).

Special influences on their transnational practices

When the participants were asked who influenced their transnational practices the most, most of the participants emphasized that their parents played the most significant role in reinforcing the preservation of Tibetan identity by encouraging them to speak the Tibetan language at home, as well as within the Tibetan community.

Ever since I was young, my parents always encouraged me to speak the Tibetan language at home because language is an important part of preserving the Tibetan culture and Tibetan identity for not only my generation, but also future generation of young Tibetans. If I ever spoke English at home with my sister or with my cousins, my mother would always tell me to stop speaking English because she would remind me that as a

Tibetan, it is important to speak the Tibetan language in our own household (Zenden, female 24).

I would definitely say my parents influence my transnational practices the most. They are really religious and they follow any advice given to the Tibetan people by our spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama. So, even though I can't read Tibetan, my parents always encourage me to listen to the speeches given by the Dalai Lama, and to apply the lessons that he gives in his speeches into my daily life. For my parents, what matters to them the most is that I strive to be a good human being by helping those in need, instead of hurting or putting them down (Karma, male, 25).

I came to Canada 11 years ago and before I came to Canada, my parents never really encouraged me to go to Tibetan cultural events or anything like that. But, after coming to Canada, they play a major role in my life because I feel that they fear I might forget different aspects of my Tibetan identity like the Tibetan language. One example is that my parents always remind me that it is important for me to preserve the Tibetan language because they tell me that if I don't value the Tibetan language, my son or daughter in the future will also abandon the Tibetan language because of my choices. This is why I always try to speak Tibetan when I am with my parents, my cousins, or other Tibetan (Dolkar, female 18).

However, some of the participants also stated that the 14th Dalai Lama has been the most influential person in shaping their daily transnational practices.

I always look up to 'His Holiness the Dalai Lama' as he is our spiritual leader, and he is always an inspiration to me in living the Tibetan way of life which is a spiritual and compassionate one (Gyalo, male, 28).

In terms of individuals, I would say the Dalai Lama is someone that I look up to as a role model because he is our spiritual leader. So yeah, I definitely feel that the Dalai Lama is someone that connects me to the homeland because he represents things like 'compassion, hope, and hard-work' for the Tibetan people who need to be empowered (Lundup, male, 22).

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As evident by the responses, all of the participants felt that the preservation of Tibetan culture and identity was not only important for themselves and their parents, but also for the future generation of young Tibetans who will adopt the Tibetan culture and identity. As noted by Levitt (2009), many households operate transnationally across generations and the level of engagement among the second generation depends on the degree to which they were brought up in transnational spaces. The findings supports the argument made by Pries (2004) who suggests that the second generation adopts transnational strategies, in ways that allow them to decide whether to engage or disengage in transnational activities depending on their "individual needs and wants" at that particular stage in their life. For second generation Tibetan youths, these responses show that both their "parents and the 14th Dalai Lama" play a significant role in reinforcing their transnational practices, as Tibetan youths follow the advice of their parents by speaking more Tibetan at home, as well as following the teachings of Buddhism by following the Dalai Lama.

Canadian vs Tibetan identity identification

When the participants were asked if they could choose one ethnic identity over the other in their personal lives, some participants emphasized that they felt elements of both cultures existing together, as they described a kind of hybrid identity that was produced by being in a dual cultural environment. Nonetheless, most of the participants noted that they more often than not felt more 'Canadian' outside of their home.

> In my everyday life, I would say I feel more Canadian because I deal with people that are not from my culture and being more Tibetan does not help me with my job. In my job, everyone speaks English and I have to look and sound professional when I deal with customers. However, when I am at home with my family, I definitely feel more Tibetan because there is no reason for me to act "more Canadian" in front of my family. Since I

work at lot of hours and I do not get to spend a lot of time at home, I would say I definitely feel "more Canadian" in most context and situation due to my work (Karma, male, 25).

Just in the daily day to day life going about your job, you feel more Canadian in this society. However when you are outside of the 9-5 job where you are more with your family or friends such as going to the Tibetan monastery or celebrating Tibetan new year, there are different situations where I feel one and vice-versa (Gyalo, male, 28).

I express my Canadian identity almost everywhere outside of my home. So, it can be whenever I go out with my friends to the theatre to watch movies, or when I go to school. In terms of my Tibetan identity, I express it mainly by speaking more Tibetan at home, wearing traditional Tibetan clothes to cultural events and by following the religious teachings of the Dalai Lama (Dolkar, female, 21)

However, for Khadun, the feeling of being 'in-between' two contrasting cultures created a sense of confusion in his identity since he could not locate or identify himself in either culture.

Growing up, I have always felt that I was in this hybrid type of environment where I was taught by my parents to follow the Tibetan culture in my household, and was taught the 'North American' ways outside of my home by peers and teachers. In some ways, I still feel confused because even though I identify my ethnicity as a Tibetan, I am still leading my life in the outside world as a Canadian. So, I wouldn't say I identify more Tibetan than Canadian now because I am always questioning where I actually belong (Khadun, male, 23).

As evident by these different responses, the second generation are constantly negotiating their sense of identity by navigating between two contrasting cultures. For instance, Khadun expresses how difficult it was growing up not knowing where he belonged and how this led to the formation of a hybrid identity whereby he cannot choose a single identity over the other. Clearly, while embracing a hybrid identity can be a positive experience, the second generation

who are raised in a bi-cultural setting are not exempt from feelings of isolation and confusion since they do not fully identify themselves with either one of the two cultures. With regards to the participants, they continue to maintain several hybrid identities that connect them to both Canada and Tibet. As a result, it is evident that all of the participants were simultaneously being exposed to transnational social fields in which cross border flows induce feelings of connection to the homeland, while also participating in mainstream activities in Canada. The following chapter will analyze the findings and will conclude with future directions and concluding remarks.

Chapter Six

Discussion

Using the March 10 political demonstration' as the site of analysis, this study explored the ways in which transnational social spaces influence identity construction and transnational practices among second generation Tibetan youths. As an annual held political demonstration in the city of Toronto, the March 10 demonstration represents a transnational social space for the Tibetan community, as members of the Tibetan community gather on this date circulate information that crosses national borders and extends within this transnational social space. For instance, the second generation is exposed to social, cultural, and political relationships within these spaces that transcends physical borders and links them to their homeland. However, at the same time, they are also able to simultaneously capitalize on their democratic rights in Canada by engaging in various activities such as 'political demonstrations and civic participation' in the host country (Glick-Schiller et al., 1992).

The concept of transnational social spaces is particularly relevant for second generation Tibetan youths, especially when one considers that physical mobility to Tibet is highly unrealistic due to the volatile political climate imposed by the Chinese government that has contributed to the generation of exiles, refugees, etc (Nolin, 2006). As a result, the study revealed three main themes that explained why second generation Tibetan youths engaged in political activism directed towards Tibet. Firstly, the study revealed that they engaged in political activism because they felt a strong sense of belonging to both "Tibet and the Tibetan people" who are currently in Tibet under Chinese rule. Although none of the participants visited Tibet, it was evident that they all felt an obligation to participate due to their strong attachment to the physical homeland of Tibet, as well as for the Tibetan people that are currently suffering in Tibet

under China. Consequently, this represents the existence of "long distance nationalism" that is developed through the movement of information within transnational social fields, especially with regards to the national Tibetan youth struggle which seeks complete independence of Tibet from China.

Secondly, most participants decided to engage in the demonstration because they felt that majority of the people in the West are still unaware of the Tibetan cause and the "Free Tibet Movement" that is led by youth-led organizations in North America. In many ways, being involved in the demonstrations was a way to raise awareness about the vast humanitarian violations that is still occurring in Tibet. At the same time, the participants were aware that being Canadian allowed them to exercise their democratic rights to freely protest in a public space.

Lastly, the prevalence of transnational social fields was evident in the responses participants gave when discussing individual role models who encouraged them to participate in transnational activities such as the March 10 demonstration. For instance, among some of the participants, their "parents and the religious Buddhist figure of the 14th Dalai Lama" were major role models in shaping their transnational activities as these individuals helped them connect to the homeland through personal stories, online speeches, etc. Clearly, as people reared within transnational social fields, the participants were impacted by the personal stories and experiences of Tibet from their parents and the Dalai Lama. As a result, by being exposed to information and resources from these particular influences, these participants acted and engaged within a transnational social field.

In terms of exploring identity construction among the second generation who have to interact and navigate within a dual cultural environment, the study revealed that during the demonstration, the majority of the participants felt more 'Tibetan' as they were engaging with issues relating to the homeland with other Tibetans who were expressing similar viewpoints.

Consequently, it was evident that none of the participants ever felt more 'Canadian than Tibetan at any moment during the demonstration. However, for some of the participants who were born in Canada, they felt both 'Canadian and Tibetan' since they believed that being in Canada has afforded them democratic rights such as "freedom of speech" to freely protest in public spaces that they otherwise would not be allowed to do in many other places.

One of the themes that appeared in the findings was also the influence of memory in creating an "imagined Tibetan nation-state" among the second generation. Clearly, the findings support the work of scholars such as Yeh (2007) who provides an example of "collective memory" in her work on Tibetans abroad, in which she characterizes them as having an 'imagined' or 'mythical' home. In addition, as mentioned in the literature review, physical mobility is not a requirement for transnationalism, especially among the second generation. This is affirmed through the responses of the participants who emphasized their collective vision of a return to the homeland, despite the fact that this very notion of a 'homeland' among second generation Tibetan youths is, infact, an imagined one. The findings revealed that for second generation Tibetans who have never physically been in the homeland, a nation subsequently becomes fundamentally *imagined,* but it appears to its citizens as very real indeed. In addition, when a nation is imagined by a community, members of a nation will never know or meet most of their fellow members (Anderson, 1983). Subsequently, as evident in the study, the participants were able to form relationships with fellow members through the imagining of the nation-state which in turn increased their attachment towards their Tibetan identity.

One of the goals of this paper was to also identify subsequent forms of transnationalism that the second generation engaged in after the demonstration. While there were some minor differences in the responses, it was evident that the majority of the participants did not seek out

further engagement in transnational activities. For instance, most of the participants noted that they decided to engage in the "March 10 demonstration" since it was a political event that occurs only once a year. As described by Guarnizo, this type of engagement by the second generation can also be perceived as "expanded transnationalism," which refers to the activities that occur occasionally, such as demonstrations held by the second generation in response to various crises in the homeland (Levitt, 2001). The findings revealed that the second generation are limited in their involvement due to factors such as "work, school, and family duties." Clearly, their participation in transnational activities is not consistent in their daily lives.

These findings support Levitt & Walters (2002) who note that transnational practices among the second generation may be selective as they argue that the second generation may not visit their home country on a regular basis and their commitments fluctuate at different stages of their lives. One factor that is especially relevant for second generation Tibetan youths is that they are reluctant to visit Tibet due to the personal safety risk involved in travelling to the former homeland of Tibet as a Tibetan. Subsequently, the transnational practices of the second generation are fluid as their participation in these activities depend on the demands of work, family and school (Levitt, 2002).

In terms of the major influences on the transnational practices of the participants, it was evident that majority of the participants felt that their 'parents and the 14th Dalai Lama' helped shape their daily transnational practices the most. Subsequently, Tibetan youths follow the advice of their parents by speaking more Tibetan at home, as well as following the teachings of Buddhism by following the 14th Dalai Lama.

Another important theme that emerged in the paper was the expression of political views on 'online websites' by Tibetan youths, as it revealed an unexpected form of indirect transnational political activism among the second generation. Due to the demands of work,

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school, and family duties, it was evident that the second generation also rely on the internet to connect with issues relating to Tibet and the Tibetan people. Some of these participants felt more comfortable disseminating information online since it was 'less time-consuming' than other transnational activities that requires more time and effort. Subsequently, transnational surfing of Tibetan youth not only provides the basis of ethnic identification but also allows for expression of opinions and dissemination of information regarding homeland issues.

Lastly, with regards to identity construction after the demonstration, it was evident that being reared within a transnational social field allowed the second generation to interact with multiple identities. Levitt & Glick-Schiller (2004) differentiate between 'ways of being' which refer to material transnational practices and social relations in which individuals engage; whereas 'ways of belonging' signal a connection to a homeland through memory, nostalgia or imagination. Since most of the participants described feeling more Tibetan while demonstrating, this action can be understood as exhibiting 'ways of belonging,' whereby the second generation enact an identity that exhibits a conscious connection to the Tibetan community. However, at the same time, as evident in the study, the second generation who live within transnational social fields are also able to combine *ways of being* and *ways of belonging* differently in a number of ways depending on the contexts. Thus, some of the participants belonged to households which transmitted information that is related to the homeland, or were likely to behave in certain traditional ways due to the familial practice that exist within the household.

As the literature on identity demonstrates, hybridized cultures are created as a result of constant socialization and the transfer of information from individuals of diverse cultures (Phinney, 1999). For the participants in the study who were raised in multiethnic environments, they were able to develop 'hybrid identities' in the host society (Ho, 1995). However, while the participants mentioned feeling more 'Tibetan' during the demonstration, their strong attachment

to their 'Tibetan side' did not carry over to their day to day lives, as they still mentioned feeling more 'Canadian' after the demonstration in most of their daily activities. Consequently, the participants only mentioned feeling 'more Tibetan' in certain spaces such as their home. Subsequently, it is evident that their social contexts and networks significantly impact their fluid identities.

Clearly, while the participants were highly selective in their transnational practices which mainly included involvement in the mainstream Canadian society, they still belonged to a transnational social field. More importantly, the participants were aware of the fact that in order to be transnational, they had to engage in activities that connect them to both the host society and the homeland. These activities represent the different 'forms and intensities' of transnationalism that they experience in different stages in their lives. While there are many factors that influence the transnational practices of the second generation, this study shows that 'political activism' is one of the most highly prevalent form of transnationalism among second generation Tibetan youths in Canada.

Future Directions

This study help to provide a deeper understanding of transnationalism among second generation Tibetan youth in Canada and the ways in which their identities are constructed and re-constructed within social fields. While this study contributes to the existing literature on second-generation transnationalism and identity construction, future studies with a larger sample with regards to gender, age, language proficiency, and religion may produce different findings in terms of the intensity of transnational attachment among second generation youths.

Future studies can also build on this study by considering other factors that affect political activism among the second generation. One of the major factors future studies may explore is the influence of Canadian national policies such as multiculturalism, which is still

based on the nation-state model in which diasporic identities are seen in juxtaposition to the Canadian national identity.

As a second generation Tibetan reared in a transnational social field, it is also evident to me that the second generation are exposed to hegemonic popular discourses in the host society. Subsequently, future studies should also examine the impact of popular discourse on identity construction among the second generation and research whether negative representations of certain ethnic minorities groups in popular culture discourse affect their identity construction and engagement in transnational practices.

Ethnic media content is scarce among the Tibetan community in exile and future research should also examine ethnic media productions within the Tibetan community and the impact of these productions on identity constructions related to the Tibetan struggle for the homeland. Subsequently, studies in the future should also look into the ways in which the second generation negotiates between both discourses within the social fields that they live in.

This paper also touched on the significance of "online activism" for second generation Tibetan youths. With the growing expansion of online social media in the 21st century, it is clear that the internet has become a significant tool in the circulation of information across borders. Subsequently, future studies should explore how the younger second generation utilize the 'internet' as a tool to achieve various political goals relating to the homeland, as well as the ways online activism which it has become a tool that also connects young people across borders.

Background

1. How old were you when you arrived to Canada?

2. Do you have family/friends currently within the former homeland of Tibet?

a) If yes, do you keep in contact with them or no? If yes, describe by what means and how often do you keep in touch? (Skype, e-mail, chat, telephone, visits, remittances).

3. If you don't keep in touch, please describe the reasons for this?

b) Do you feel that it is important to maintain contact with Tibetans in the former homeland of Tibet? Why or why not?

4. Have you ever been to Tibet?

a) If yes, how many times? When did the visit occur?

b) If yes, please describe that experience, how you felt; did you feel connected or a sense of belonging to the homeland?

c) Did you feel a sense of relatability to the Tibetans during your visit? If so, in what ways?

d) If not, do you still want to visit your former homeland that is currently under Chinese rule? Why or why not? Do you feel connected to your/parents' homeland? How?

5. Please describe how important it is for you to maintain links with your heritage and culture?

6. What steps do you take to feel connected to your homeland?

6. In your personal opinion, what does it mean to be Canadian and what does it mean to be Tibetan?

a) How do you currently identify yourself (As a Canadian, Tibetan, or a Tibetan-Canadian)? Please describe why you identify yourself this way?

Political Demonstrations/Activism

1. Please describe your role during this demonstration and what you witnessed at these demonstration?

2. Why did you get involved in this yearly political demonstration that occurs every year on the 10th of March?

3. How and at what age did you become aware of this global politicized movement of a "Free Tibet?"

4. How can you personally relate to this movement which seeks a return to the former homeland of Tibet? How so?

5. Do you feel it is important for you to engage in these events or activities? Why?

6. How did you become aware of the widespread humanitarian violations and dire living conditions that exist as daily realities for Tibetans in China?

7. Please describe how you were able to get involved in this yearly demonstration?

8. Describe if you were ever unwilling to participate in this yearly political demonstration or were influenced by family members or relatives to attend this event?

a. If influenced to attend this yearly event, what relation do you have to these individuals who influenced your participation? (Family, friends, relatives?)

9. Describe how you felt while attending this demonstration? What types of feelings did you experience?

a) With regards to your political identity, did you feel more Tibetan or more Canadian (in-between) while demonstrating? Please explain how you negotiated your identity during this time. Were you feeling confused or perplexed about the way you felt?

10. Does this yearly demonstration on the 10th of March encourage you to maintain more frequent contacts with friends/family in Tibet, less contacts, or the same? Describe the feelings.

Present/Post-March 10th demonstration

1. In terms of your political identity, how would you currently describe yourself? Are you highly involved in political matters involving Tibet or less involved? Why?

2. After participating every year on the 10th of March, does being Canadian mean different to you after each event? Do you have a different sense of being Tibetan after the events? If so, in what ways?

3. Do you feel that there are situations or instances in your personal life where you tend to feel more Canadian than Tibetan or vice-versa? Describe these feelings, thoughts, and situation.

4. Do you feel that it is important to freely express Tibetan identity? Why or why not?

5. Please describe how you currently express your Tibetan identity on a daily basis? How do you express your Canadian identity? What type of activities do you engage in to express your Tibetan or Canadian identity? (Religious/cultural events, types of clothing worn, speaking Tibetan more often or English or French more often, etc.)

6. After the 10th of March, have you been engaged in any political or non-political Tibetan

events? (Tibetan cultural classes offered at the Canadian Tibetan Cultural Centre, joining various Tibetan organizations, partaking in subsequent demonstrations at a smaller or larger scale, etc)?

a) Describe why you engaged in these events or why you didn't.

7. Currently, are you able to participate in activities that promote Tibetan culture? Does your participation stay consistent or declines due to factors such as school, work, and family? Please describe. (Cultural events, community celebrations, religious ceremonies, etc.)

8. Are there certain events or individuals in your personal life that currently influence your transnational practices? How so?

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