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Thesis
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Transcultural study of the Tibetan Diaspora: Tibetan cultural identity survival in Australia, India and Switzerland

"No culture can survive if it attempts to be exclusive"
Mahatma Gandhi

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Introduction:

This study focuses on the resistance of identities to destruction brought about by struggles for land and resources. This research is set in the present trend of unifying cultural specificities under large trans-national entities, where globalisation is thought to endanger the concept of identity,[1] erasing specificity in favour of a unique and homogenised global culture. Adding to this homogenisation is an increasing volume of international migration, either chosen or forced, which mixes cultures into a 'melting-pot.' Individuals are asserting their specificity through their identities, in order to resist the process of homogenisation. When in danger of annihilation, the trend is to fold back and close in on oneself, thus autarky is considered the best method of guaranteeing the survival of cultural identity. Consequently, people have turned to what constitutes their specificity and makes them culturally different from others.[2] Although "we live in a world that seems to be shrinking due to a process called globalisation, this same world continues to recreate its cultural diversity." (Kristmundsdottir 1999: 42) Jean-François Bayart (1996) adds that globalisation is accompanied, contrary to common belief, by the exacerbation of identities. It is my thesis that when one's specificity is threatened the reaction is to consolidate the endangered identity. Following on this thesis, I examine the mechanisms of protection/survival from groups that see their specific identity as endangered, and the impact such a mobilisation has on identity and group structure.

The subject of investigation in this thesis is the Tibetan Diaspora. It is exemplifies the process of communities attempting to maintain their specificity despite cross-cultural influences. "This attention to preservation —through both documentation and education— was prompted by dual legitimate threats: the disappearance of Tibetan culture in the homeland under Chinese occupation, and the disappearance of exiled Tibetans into their host societies." (Diehl 1997: 125)[3] This study of cultural preservation illustrates the struggle of group members to preserve an identity based on authentic traditions, while allowing contemporaneous adaptations of new cultural customs. When members opt to preserve some cultural aspects or traditions, there is need for a prior definition of what constitutes the cultural identity to be protected. It will be

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[1] The concept of identity is defined as the *ensemble* of traits a group presents as representing it and that is to be possessed by its members in order for them to be recognised as such. It is the materialised result of the identification process the members make to the *ensemble* of traits that they consider to represent them.

[2] Specificity is an *ensemble* of continuously changing characteristics that demarcate one group from another (Barth 1995).

[3] In the emergency of flight into exile, Tibetan identity was defined as being different from the Chinese and from that of the host countries. Although there is still this dimension to the Tibetan identity, documentation and work on archives are concentrating on the Tibetan heritage that can be useful in the contemporaneous Tibetan Diaspora.

shown that the members' attempt to define specificity requires a process of construction of that which differentiates them from individuals belonging to other groups, the process of dichotomisation that all individuals do. Thereafter follows an analysis of the concepts of group structure and cultural authenticity, closely correlated to the concept of identity construction. In the case of a diaspora, the issue of authenticity is especially interesting because of the struggle for legitimacy it provokes between the exiles and those who stay in the homeland, and the impact that it has on the safeguarded identity and the internal relational structure of the community as a whole. I attempt to explore the possibility that the seemingly coherent and homogenous Tibetan community on closer observation reveals a downplayed dimension of exclusion and discrimination among Tibetans of different backgrounds and life experiences. This study led me to investigate the process by which a certain group within the Tibetan community in exile denigrates Tibetans from other backgrounds (i.e. Tibetans from Tibet being considered as spies; Tibetans from outside of India having lost certain Tibetan cultural elements (see point 1.2.1).

The choice of the Tibetan Diaspora as the subject of investigation is twofold: firstly while the community in exile represents only about one hundredth of the Tibetan population –an element that could invalidate its representativity, it is very active on various national fronts in its efforts to protect its identity from disappearing into another national group and is as such, a micro-example of identity struggle. The necessary processes of identity construction, identification with this identity and consciousness awakening followed the flight of these people. This was necessary because of the threat the Chinese communist invasion posed for the Tibetan culture unified the heteroclite ensemble of traditions and people from Amdo, Kham and U-Tsang into a group to be called the Tibetans. This thesis will emphasise the process through which a community was established and a sense of membership created.

Secondly, the accessibility of Tibetans in exile to researchers and the danger such research would pose to Tibetans in Tibet makes the Tibetan Diaspora ideal for this study. Exile has brought the Tibetan community into visibility within the media, thanks particularly to the charismatic Tibetan leader, the Dalai Lama, who has made the Tibetan cause heard in multiple circles, ranging from schools to the United Nations:

> Had the Fourteenth Dalai Lama not escaped to India in 1959, inspiring a hundred thousand of his countrymen to follow him, Tibet would have disappeared without

trace into the map of China. But out of the refugee camps, a new Tibet has emerged in exile. Essential national institutions have been built, and a new generation of Tibetans are receiving advanced and modern education alongside their traditional schooling. While fighting for survival, the entire community continues its non-violent struggle for Tibet's freedom. By the late 1980s, Tibet was in the news again as freedom marches in Lassa erupted in riots. At this time of revived agitation both in Tibet and in India, the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, a gesture of the world's recognition in keeping the issue of Tibet alive while adhering to Buddhist ethics. (Perkins 1991: cover page)[4]

To demonstrate the process of cultural preservation within the Tibetan Diaspora, a comparative analysis of three cases of its different communities in exile (Australia, India, Switzerland) highlights the different mechanisms it applies to constitute and maintain itself as a totality of 'sameness' despite its geographic dispersion.

Thesis structure:

To help comprehend the Tibetan Diaspora and its struggle to maintain a unified identity, I shall firstly provide a theoretical overview of anthropological and sociological concepts of identity, *habitus*[5] (Bourdieu 1992a), social classification and group conformity, that intervene in the process of identity and community construction, as understood by authors such as Norbert Elias (1991, 1994, 1996, 1998), Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1980, 1992a), Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993) and Brian Keith Axel (2001). These concepts will be dealt with in the perspective of power struggle, and the configuration of established-outsider described by Norbert Elias (1994).

In chapter 2, I shall apply these theoretical concepts to a case study of the Tibetan Diaspora in general, with regards to the establishment of its community and its identity. More precisely, the importance of consciousness in the Tibetan community structure will be discussed, leading to

[4] This passage highlights certain mechanisms of construction that accompany the Tibetan identity, such as narratives (point 1.2.2.) told by insiders and outsiders to the Tibetan community that are strategic implements to produce the self-fulfilling prophetic image of Tibetans.

[5]The *habitus* is an *ensemble* of historical relations 'deposited' within the individual as mental and corporal schemes of perception, of appreciation and of action. It is a socially constituted system of structured and structuring dispositions—the social agent acts on his/her environment in accordance to schemes of thought modulated by his/her *habitus*—acquired through life.

the analysis of the concept of diaspora (Axel 2001, Gilroy 1993, 1999a, 1999b, Hall 1999). This chapter concludes with the analysis of cultural authenticity[6] that this discussion on identity construction and diasporic status involves.

Chapter 3 presents the results of the comparative analysis of the three fieldwork cases. This chapter examines a minority, the Tibetan community, in the context of larger groups (India in sub-section 3.2., Switzerland in sub-section 3.3. and Australia in sub-section 3.4.), to evaluate the variations of Tibetanness[7]. This chapter provides an analysis of the relationship between the host country and the Tibetans that may shed light on the structure and nature of the Diaspora in the different countries, and, equally, help us to understand the correlation between the nature of the relationship with the host country and the internal atmosphere of the community itself. This comparative study highlights the Tibetans' capacity to adapt their identity to suit the requirements of their host country, whilst attempting to maintain a discernable and unified Tibetan identity.

The concluding chapter will attempt to answer the central question of whether adaptation to the host country's culture has modified the Tibetan community's structure[8] and cultural identity, in its various host countries.

Research method:

To gather information on the cultural differences within the Tibetan community in exile and what it meant to be Tibetan for those concerned, I interviewed Tibetans in Australia,[9] India[10]

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[6] The concept of cultural authenticity traditionally refers to the quantity/quality of cultural characteristics possessed by an individual/community that represent continuity with the past. It is defined by a judgement of quantity/quality that others make. In this thesis, the identification to certain cultural characteristics by social agents, whether in continuity with a certain past or by adoption of novelty, provides authenticity and reality to these characteristics.

[7] Tibetanness refers to the mix of sentiments, bonds, ideas and associations that Tibetans in exile experience as the basis of their Tibetan identity.

[8] The community structure is composed of its network of relations, its social classification, its mode of operation and its leadership.

[9] The Tibetans in Australia I met were referred to me by the Tibetan Office in Canberra. Although it is a small sample if Tibetans living in Australia, they are of different generations, length of residence and geographic and social origin, hence they give a glimpse of what life in Australia can be for Tibetans.

[10] Tibetans in India were meet by either introducing myself to Tibetan officials, by giving English lessons (to two young men who introduced me to the new Tibetan immigrants in the Tibetan Transit School) or by being introduced by a French woman I met by chance. She brings money twice a year for sponsorship of Tibetans that was collected by the association she is member of in favour of Tibetans, based in Lyon, France

and Switzerland.[11] The technique of semi-directed interviews was applicable to this project, for the theme of cultural preservation is a conscious dimension of life in exile. Since it is an exile preoccupation, there is no need to press the question. Most of the Tibetans I interviewed were very attuned to the problems of cultural preservation, and having been educated in a modern educational system, there was no problem with grasping relevant concepts (e.g. identity, self-esteem, culture, democracy). However, with the newly immigrated Tibetans, there was not only misunderstanding at a linguistic level, but also a difficulty due to different cultural references, such as the norms of cultural and human rights and the right to self-determination.

Unfortunately, I do not speak Tibetan, so I had to call upon interpreters in interviews with the new Tibetan immigrants. Interpreters are a screen between the researcher and the interviewees, possibly introducing their own views and limitations into the translation. While recording the interviews in order to have them translated by the same individual would have reduced the number of distortions caused by opinions of different interpreters, its use would have been very difficult. The new Tibetan immigrants were already very wary of expressing their opinions out loud, so I can only guess that the sight of a recording machine could have distorted the truthfulness of interviewees' opinions even more.

Another problem encountered was that many new refugees did not understand terms and concepts in the same way I do: concepts such as democracy had been heard of, but their definition was not well known, the new refugees having been through the Chinese educative system and/or 're-education' sessions.

In order to clarify my understanding of what I had observed during my fieldwork, I found myself going to-and-fro between fieldwork and theory, between personal observations and Tibetan testimonies. Within the study of the Tibetan Diaspora, a significant number of descriptive and interpretative concepts mix and overlap in an effort to describe the phenomenon of cultural contact: terms such as group identity, *habitus*, community, minority, hybridity and diaspora.

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[11] The Tibetans in Switzerland were met through Tibetan language classes and the Tibetan Office in Geneva, Switzerland. While they represent Tibetans in the French-speaking region, they provided me with information on life of a Tibetan in Switzerland as a whole, by comparing Tibetans in the French and German regions. I decided to interview Tibetans from different social classes, professions and length of residence in exile. While officials were more particularly targeted (having to have appointments), in order to meet 'ordinary' Tibetans I let my encounters guide me through a numerous and heteroclite gathering of Tibetans. I interviewed Tibetans referred to me as well as Tibetans met by chance.

I wish to apologise if this study hurts certain people's feelings; I can only say that this was not my intention. Mention of some negative aspects of the Tibetan community is only made in order to facilitate understanding of the dynamism within it. One's admiration for the Tibetan community and its cultural preservation must not blind one from seeing the social dynamism and the structures that compose this group. As Jeffrey Hopkins wrote: "We are stirred by the dire situation of Tibet and its people to the point where we fail to exercise our critical faculties fully out of fear that fault-finding might sabotage the political, moral, and ecological objectives that many of us pursue." (2001: 257)

Names of the interviewed Tibetans in exile and in Tibet are not revealed in order to protect them and their relatives who may still live in Tibet.

Historical Background

If there still exists a Tibetan identity to discuss, it is thanks to the people that share this identity and the identification process they show toward what they deem Tibetan. As Adhe Tapontsang (1997) writes, it is the people that constitute the heart of a culture. And the preservation of the latter depends on their willingness and freedom to carry on its traditions. My attention shall therefore be focused on the Tibetans as 'a people' and their investment in the meaningful symbolism that structures their community in order to survive as a collectivity in exile. [12]

To understand the Tibetan community and its diasporic status, a brief historical introduction is necessary. The history of Tibet and of its unfortunate situation has been thoroughly documented (Avedon 1986, Richardson 1984); the genocide of Tibetan people and the ethnocide of their culture are recognised facts that only few persevere to deny. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama fled Tibet on March 31, 1959, after having attempted to live by the Seventeen Point Agreement his government had been coerced to sign after the People's Republic of China had occupied Tibet in 1949. Thus the many thousands that followed the Dalai Lama into exile became refugees,[13] and had to learn to settle in an alien society and adjust to the new physical

[12] As stated in the introduction of this thesis, due to the inaccessibility of the Tibetans within Tibet, the focus is on the exiles. The perspective followed is therefore how the Tibetan community in exile built itself as a diaspora and the subsequent cultural preservation it has undertaken.

[13] To many Tibetans there exists two alternatives to their future: if they stay in Tibet, they are confronted with an ineluctable ethnocide and genocide, and if they flee, they lose their land. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that these two possibilities are no solutions; each holds a perverse effect. On the one hand, by staying in the country the

and socio-cultural environment. They were only the first to go through cultural transplantation, their experiences setting a pattern for what would become a long-term diasporic community. Their rehabilitation was helped and financed by international aid agencies and the Indian Government, which gave asylum to the Tibetan exiles. Once the facilities for basic survival were established, the aim of the Tibetans was to preserve their identity, traditional culture and religion (Arakeri 1998: 161).[14]

The Chinese authorities, despite having promised not to interfere with religious and cultural life, made them their target of reforms, revealing how they perceive these to be constitutive of the Tibetan specificity. By focusing on the destruction of the Tibetan identity, they have pushed Tibetan cultural specificity to centre stage in Sino-Tibetan relations. On the Chinese side, this identity prevents them from gaining a dominant hold on the population, while on the Tibetan side it is the symbol of an opposition to this will to destroy and assimilate. Since 1949, being a homogenous community has become a priority in the Tibetan exiles' agenda as well as for Tibetans within Tibet. As a Tibetan sent to Beijing to study at the Institute of National Minorities said: "When you are far away from your homeland, you lose all your petty internal differences in the larger national interest. Many of us became nationally conscious only during the process of indoctrination, because before that we faced no such provocative challenge. But when we arrived in China, we united to face the challenge. Sect, province and social class were all irrelevant. The important part was that we were all Tibetans." (Norbu 1997: 135) Pierre-Antoine Donnet (Ardley 2002) confirms that the attacks on the national way of living were to become the foundation of the reawakening of Tibetan nationalism, both within the country and in exile.

Passage from the unconscious to the hyperconscious has been necessary: in exile, the Tibetans have been confronted by cultural difference, and consequently the question of 'blind faith' and of 'taken for granted' has been replaced by a hyperconsciousness of their cultural schemes, customs and traditions, for the survival of their specificity (Gilroy 1999a). The need for cultural promotion in situations of cultural encounter has reinforced the Tibetans' conception of

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resistance which attempts to avoid the acculturation leads to a genocide, at the same time as passivity leads to ethnocide—the individuals neither reacting to 're-education' sessions, nor to the Han Chinese population transfer. On the other hand, fleeing is a guarantee of the cultural identity's survival; however, it is offering Tibet to Chinese authorities without them having to 'cleanse' it of its inhabitants. Reality must not be dichotomised to the extent of not considering other alternatives.

[14] "Freed from the concern about how basic human survival would come, Tibetans had the advantage of being able to devote most of their efforts to the great task of remaining Tibetan in culture and community, and as individuals." (Devoe 1987:59)

themselves. A growing sense of self-awareness combined with the regeneration of the Tibetans' own cultural and historical destiny has gradually assumed new and creative proportions. Needing to preserve their identity brings their experience of everyday life into focus, creating cultural hyperconsciousness and collective awareness of a shared specificity.[15] They know their capacities, their limits, the requirements of their environment and what they can expect from others with their Tibetanness. As Jean-Marie Tjibaou (Bensa 2001: 290) points out, 'a people' is a collective reaction, a reality that organises itself when confronted by 'otherness'.

Subsequent to the Dalai Lama's flight to India, a large section of the Tibetan population was to focus on not merely physical survival but also on the question of the cultural codes surviving the various negotiating stages of rupture and integration in their forced migration: the Tibetan people have had the explicit job, sanctioned by the Tibetan authorities in exile, of becoming the carriers of their cultural specificity. "The Tibetan leadership position is that the purpose of refugee life is to rescue the nation, the people, and the cultural traditions of Tibet." (Devoe 1987: 59) The aim has been to maintain an assembled group around the figure of their leader.

During the first three years of exile, the Indians reluctantly allowed the Tibetans in, not wanting to worsen relations with China by doing anything to support the refugees. It was only after the India-China war over the border between India and Tibet that India—having lost the war—became a willing host to the Tibetan refugees. The Indian government realised that foreign assistance for its struggle with China was easier to get if the Indians were seen as aiding the Tibetans. As a result, India allowed more freedom for the Dalai Lama to operate in Dharamsala, leading to the establishment of a *de facto* 'government in exile' on some unused land that the Indian government set aside. The Indian Government began to allocate substantial aid for the rehabilitation of refugees and set many Tibetans to work to build roads in the Himalayan region. With life conditions so harsh that many died, the Tibetan government in exile allowed its people to immigrate to countries willing to welcome Tibetan refugees, hence the emergence of the Tibetan Diaspora with the settlement of Tibetans in countries such as Switzerland (sub-section 3.3.) and Australia (sub-section 3.4.).

[15] Tibetans have as refugees "an opportunity to reminisce and record [their culture], to reconstruct, reenact, and teach it." (Devoe 1987: 60)

CHAPTER 1: Conceptual framework

1.1. Tibetan problematic presentation

"The production of identities, that is, the production of cultures, is relational; it translates a relation to the Other, as well as a relation to Self." (Bayart 1996: 102, my translation)

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework of the thesis, laying out the concepts of identity, culture and *habitus* (Bourdieu 1992a). Specifically, this chapter examines the central idea in Jean-François Bayart's statement that draws an 'equivalence' between the concepts of identity and culture. Bayart's statement also highlights the relational nature of the production of identities and of cultures: they make sense both within and between groups. Identity unites and differentiates simultaneously. Does the definition of an identity, originating from the elaboration of specificity, evolve from the confrontation with otherness or a perceived threat to destroy that same specificity? As an exiled Tibetan said, it was thanks to the Other—citizens of the host country—that she was able to return to herself, to define her Self. She needed the Other to become conscious of her uniqueness (I/S2003_1). This to-and-fro between oneself and the other is possible for the relational nature of identity definition.

Common belief defines identity as the symbol of the recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, inducing solidarity and allegiance. The surprising homogeneity of the profile in the Tibetan community would lead us to believe in a psychic type and an authentic notion of Tibetanness.[16] However, one should be critical of common belief and its notion of an integral, original and unified identity. This constitution of the insider may be "founded on (real or perceived) external threats, rather that on (real or 'invented') common cultural heritage" (Mottier 2000: 538). This chapter outlines the value associated with the concept of identity as a key element that unites a group to stand up against the worst threats to its members' own lives, to ensure that this identity does not disappear. To avoid the trap of structuralism, identity needs to be seen as the result of a process of identification that implies the choice of the object of identification. Hence the object can change, be selected or be constructed, which includes the possibility of creativity and

[16] Tibetanness does not only refer to the personal sphere of feelings that Tibetans may experience as their Tibetan identity. This thesis adopts the perspective, which while acknowledging the constructed nature of identity, recognises a specificity that distinguishes Tibetans. This specificity, which is therefore not only felt by Tibetans, but also recognised by the outside world, is called Tibetanness.

imagination (Anderson 1991, Hobsbawm 1983). The notion of construction is a process never completed, always 'in process' (Hall 1999). This conception includes dynamism: identification entails the action of an individual, a will to associate, differentiate and make sense by selecting elements of the outside world.[17]

While some dimensions of culture are largely identifiable by members, such as artistic productions or modes of governing, others may never be 'unearthed', even by specialists.[18] Many researchers have studied these hidden structures or unarticulated knowledge, the terminology varying from the complex notion of *habitus* (Bourdieu 1992a) to the well-known, and no less difficult, concept of culture.[19] Are these all synonymous, or do they chronologically cover different levels or aspects of the notion of identification? Reference to theories of authors such as Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1980, 1992a), Norbert Elias (1991, 1994, 1996, 1998), and Anthony Giddens (1982, 1984), Stuart Hall (1980, 1999) and Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993), among others, will shed light on the possibility for a group to construct itself in a manner that efficiently preserves its shared heritage, its identifying culture, even despite a dislocation from its environment of origin, such as a diaspora (Clifford 1999, Gilroy 1999, Hall 1999). For society to function, that is to maintain itself and its cultural structure, a common direction must be given to the individual trajectories, while providing each social agent with a margin of autonomy.[20] This could entail that the notion of identity is constructed to serve a purpose.[21]

Despite the Tibetan Diaspora's presence in numerous countries and the cultural influence to which it is subjected from other co-habiting cultural systems, a vast majority of Tibetans has maintained the Tibetan community –whether in exile or within Tibet- as a source of

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[17] The fact that an identity is the summarised symbol of shared characteristics or an oriented construction should not minimise its role in integrating members by the identification process it provokes. This identification process is a protection against the outside threat of dissolution either from a will to destroy or from feeble identity boundaries due to intense cross-cultural influence.

[18] The specialists' methods of observation are influenced by the hidden cognitive and behavioural structures in their unconscious, these structuring the consciousness they have of their being.

[19] We shall soon see that there is a close relationship between the concepts of *habitus* and of culture. These two terms may be referring to different dimensions of the same symbolical baggage within each individual; the notion of culture may be a more abusively used term for it may relate to the more accessible dimension of the social agent's unarticulated knowledge, to the visible cultural productions, whereas the notion of *habitus* may be more obscure for its efficiency derives from its hidden operative nature.

[20] This chapter explores the process that moulds the individual into a member of a cultural *ensemble*. The classification that touches all aspects of social life has a simultaneous enabling and depriving force: it deprives the social agent of choosing his/her own trajectory independently of the social configuration into which he/she is integrated, but it provides him/her with a coherent and meaningful environment.

[21] The construction of the Tibetan community was preliminary to its cultural preservation, hence it was structured in accordance with such a cause. Culture, identity, and community are therefore interdependent conceptual tools at the service of the Tibetan profile's continuity.

identification (I/A 2003; I/I 2003; I/S 2003). This leads one to question the reality of the constructed nature of all identification processes and makes one wonder how a group with such a large geographical spread keeps any cultural variations in balance throughout its diaspora and how it maintains its members' allegiance. Is it because the nature of cultural preservation in diasporas is static and nostalgic, which often results in the fixation of traditions? An answer to this question shall be attempted in chapter 2.

The subject of cultural preservation introduces the discussion of social structures reproduction.[22] While Tibetans reproduce the Tibetan culture in their actions and thoughts because of the *habitus* they acquire during socialisation, they adapt this reproduction to the present context and time, so it continuously provides meaning.[23] Individuals can be made to identify with a certain ideal or culture by the incorporation of the social structures that produced the identity. A method of motivating social agents to work with the system is to make their cognitive schemes structurally similar to the social structures in which they interact (Bourdieu 1992a).[24] Hence, one's identity is rarely chosen, but rather induced. Consequently, the identification process is to a certain degree conditioned, and the meaning given to the identity is contextually determined.

Since meaning is contextualised, that is, linked to social structures, the Tibetan Diaspora has many interpretations of the Tibetan identity as a result of the fact that Tibetan exiles are living in different countries. The confrontation of these different definitions raises the problem of legitimacy and authenticity.[25] Homogenisation of all cultural interpretations requires an asymmetrical power structure in order for those who decide on the definition to impose it. The homogeneity that the Tibetan community presents to the outside world may be therefore less a result of a widely possessed core of Tibetanness than an imposition of one definition over others. This theoretical study will help determine what group can claim to be the holder of the authentic identity and what an authentic identity is.

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[22] All agents carry an assortment of social indicators that will 'direct' their actions to reproduce the values that sustain the specific social frame in which they move. What happens, though, when the social frame that produced this social and cultural identity disappears?

[23] What guarantees the efficiency of these unconscious structures structuring the social agent is the emotional investment in self and group representations; the fact of collectively believing provides their legitimacy. What the social agent believes is what gives validity, metamorphosing the mental scheme into a materialised social structure or behaviour.

[24] This chapter tries to find a balance between the determining role of hidden structures within the social agent and the definition of identity as a constructed social entity, to avoid the dangers of holistic structuralism and pure individualism.

[25] Parallel interpretations of a certain identity raise the question of possible alternatives even more potently.

This chapter introduces the configuration of established-outsider (Elias 1994)[26] to help clarify cultural interaction within and between groups. Firstly, within the Tibetan community two situations of Tibetan encounter arise: settled Tibetans in India (the established)[27] *versus* Tibetans abroad, and settled Tibetans in India *versus* newcomers from Tibet. Secondly, the position of the Tibetan community within the social configuration changes depending on conditions in its different host countries. This relational concept will be applied to clarify inter—and intra-group problematics, such as cohesion, power, exclusion and identity definition, where the established grant themselves the right to determine the outsider's trajectory and mode of living and the outsiders have difficulty responding.

This established-outsider configuration highlights the mechanisms that paralyse action among the outsiders, who are unable to counter the discrimination or choice they are subjected to. It can also show, on the contrary, how a minority group benefiting from a valorised image within the larger dominant group can confront a difficult situation of domination (threat or cultural influence inducing mobilisation). The type of integration from which they benefit in the larger group is set to reproduce itself as a self-fulfilling prophecy in the Tibetans' behaviour due to the incorporation of the value scale that condemns/valorises them (Elias 1994, Bourdieu 1992a).[28]

The following sub-sections examine the identification processes that categorise individuals into a structured *ensemble* through the construction of similitude, the institutionalisation of this shared profile and its mechanisation into a self-perpetuating entity.

1.2. The *habitus* in identity formation

According to Emile Durkheim (1994), there are ways of interacting that lend themselves more to becoming habits by repetition, because of being more conformed to the structure of society.

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[26] The definition of the concepts of established and of outsider is taken from Norbert Elias' study of the town of Winston Parva, where one group (the established) was able to ostracise another (the outsider) group and condemn them to reproduce the configuration they formed together in their behaviour.
[27] Since India was where the first Tibetan refugees fled, many have settled and established *the* Tibetan mode of life (see chapter 2), in reference to which Tibetans from other horizons are judged.
[28] The Tibetan community in exile is largely considered as a valued immigrant community to have in the host country. This may have facilitated their survival in exile.

These habits, strengthening with time, are transformed into codes of conduct. The interest here is centred on how these codes of conduct spread to a large group to become an institutionalised mode of conduct and subsequently a recognised culture. The other focus is on how individuals are induced to maintain these norms on a regular basis, which involves the study of the identification process and the manner in which individuals in order to co-habitat conform to a mode of life that sometimes seriously curtails their freedom. Different concepts explaining individuals' association with communities will be explored, such as those of identity, culture and *habitus*. The main question asked is whether these concepts might not be referring to the same core process of life in a collectivity, although at different levels of consciousness or institutionalisation.

The institutionalised norms structure interactions that form a pattern from which the social configuration evolves. The latter is set to reproduce by structuring the individuals through their norms and customs. Human actions by means of interactions create what can be designated as society, more precisely the social tissue. By repetition and constancy, they inaugurate an interactive pattern that becomes exterior to the agent, because of its propagation to others. Pierre Bourdieu (1992a) advances a hypothesis that social[29] and mental structures are physiologically identical because they are 'genetically' linked, bringing to light the social determinism that makes mental structures result from the incorporation of social structures. The individual who is repeatedly exposed to similar experiences in regards to his social position integrates an *ensemble* of lasting dispositions, which are required—and become compulsory—by his/her social environment (because its structure relies on them). This internalisation inscribes inside the organism the structured social space and the constraints of the external reality. Bourdieu calls this 'individuated collectivity' the *habitus*. Thanks to the *habitus* the biological individual is collectivised through socialisation. He defines his concept of *habitus* as an *ensemble* of historic relations 'deposited' in the individual bodies, in the form of mental and corporal schemes of perceptions. It is a socially constituted system of structured and structuring dispositions.[30] This structuring mechanism acts on the agents from within: "Persons, at their

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[29] Social structures can be defined as social configurations (Elias 1998), in order to reveal the dynamic nature of structures: interactions weave a network of social links around the individual, within which he is situated and acts. This network is the constantly changing social configuration. Society has a dual character: objective facticity and subjective meanings. Peter Berger & Thomas Luckman (1975) explore how subjective meanings become objective facticities and how it is possible that human activity should produce an objective world. Hence social configurations are quite difficult to control and orient, for while having been 'created'—though unconsciously—through interactions, they do not obey them.

[30] The *habitus* structures the structures that condition the social agent and his/her trajectory. It provides the mental and corporal schemes that function like symbolic matrices for the practical activities, behaviours, thoughts,

most personal, are essentially the personification of exigencies actually or potentially inscribed in the structure of the field or, more precisely, in the position occupied within this field." (Bourdieu 1992b: 44) When Bourdieu writes that mental structures are produced by the incorporation of social structures, he ignores the process of 'externalisation,' which Berger & Luckman (1975) and Durkheim (1994) analyse. What is produced by the ritualised actions of individuals becomes external to their individual wishes, which then become incorporated by them. It becomes a 'vicious social circle', in which it is difficult to determine what produces what.

The concepts *habitus* and field[31] work in a dual relation to each other. On the one hand, there is a relation of mutual conditioning, where the field structures the *habitus*, because it is the product of the incorporation of the required rules of the field. And on the other, there is a relation of knowledge and cognitive construction, where the *habitus* contributes to constructing the field as a world with significance, imbued with sense and value. This relation of knowledge depends on the relation of conditioning that precedes it and which fashions the structure of the *habitus,* thus providing the social tissue with a reproductive pattern. However, structure does not mean there is no change. A social configuration being a *champ de force* (Elias 1998), there will be a power struggle for the definition of the *habitus*. "Structures produce habitus, which determine practices, which reproduce structures." (Bourdieu 1992b: 135)

It is necessary that social agents possess the rules of the field to exchange and to conform to the requirements of the *milieu*. The essential thing is to possess the *habitus* that will facilitate movement in accordance with the norms of the *milieu*. Every actor possesses an *ensemble* of characteristics, whose efficiency varies with his/her distance to the *habitus* and kind of capital[32] recognised in the field in which the individual evolves. A field is fraught with conflict and

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feelings and judgements of the social agent. If we turn to the definition given to culture in social anthropology, we could wonder if they are not different terms given to the same social entity. In this study, the concepts of culture and *habitus* will refer to the same identification process. We could consider the embodiment of the *habitus* as being what is commonly called culture. What may be seen as a difference in content is in fact a difference in the degree of depth in the agent's mental structures.

[31] The field (Bourdieu 1992a) is a social structure, a configuration of relations between social positions. It delimits the individual and reduces the outside world's complexity by providing social agents with a social space with a classificatory system identifiable with their normative scale.

[32] Among other traits, certain people have economic, political and possibly physical power (capital), and give themselves the right to judge others. For that reason they possess the monopoly on definition of the acceptable and the condemnable, as well as the monopoly on the establishment of socially authorised norms and the suitable *habitus*. The interactive partner with more power will be able to impose more directly his/her vision of the orientation of the social relation. The criterion, which allows the classification, is a transmitted tool, a normative scale transported by the culture of the individual who judges. To judge is largely a preconditioned unconscious behaviour, the social agent thinking he/she is his/her own arbiter of his/her opinions.

competition, where social agents compete to obtain the monopoly on the valued capital in the field.[33] It is part of the definition and the establishment of a group. The settled Tibetans in exile working on the establishment and the maintenance of their definition of Tibetanness are continuously fighting for its legitimacy because of the constant arrival of new Tibetans from Tibet who come with a competing definition of the Tibetan identity (see sub-section 3.2.).[34] The new Tibetan immigrants carry an alternative definition of Tibetanness, which competes with the exile definition. One must therefore be overshadowed and condemned. The Tibetans in exile have the international community's recognition, which elevates their cultural definition as *the* Tibetan identity.[35] Contrarily, the newcomers, who in general are not used to expressing their identity in order to get what they desire (they are used to living with a negative image of Tibetanness), do not generally benefit from a well-established group of newcomers who know each other, and they are therefore at a disadvantage in exile. They are obliged to conform to another definition of their identity (the identity they have fought so hard to maintain in the face of the Chinese authorities' attempts to define the Tibetan identity). [36] When two social entities meet, they necessitate adjustment of their respective normative and symbolic systems to a common consensus in order for a series of relations to occur. Very often though, this relation takes place in an asymmetry of power. One group imposes the rules of conduct and grants itself the right to sanction those who do not conform to them. Norbert Elias (1994) distinguishes the *established*, who possess the symbolic and very often physical power which enables them to force by threat the deviants to follow their *habitus*, from the *outsiders*, who are considered anomic. The capacity of a group to label another as unqualified and therefore inferior comes

[33] The *habitus* can be fought for the social power or value that are affiliated with it. The idea of identity is another ideological device designed as much for the exclusion of the 'Other' as a mechanism for achieving the member's normative and social integration and classification. They are the tools with which certain actors obtain what they seek, an advantageous position in the social configuration. This signifies that certain social actors have a better capacity to manipulate social interaction and understand the value of possessing certain characteristics demarcating them from others they are brought to interact with. Tibetans in exile have become very agile cultural manipulators, in order to move within their community and between groups of different cultures. Most Tibetans know the normative system and symbolism of the host country in which they must act, and know the value scale within the Tibetan exile community. However, new Tibetan immigrants, knowing a different Tibetan normative system and the Chinese system are disadvantaged in exile because they do not know the exile values, nor the host countries' values, and consequently see their possibilities severely reduced. Firstly, host countries want immigrants who know the norms in their environment, and secondly the Tibetan community in exile wants its members to be good representatives of its own way of life and level of knowledge.

[34] Both Tibetan communities have experienced different ways of living their Tibetan identity; therefore these have different definitions and contents.

[35] The outside world has gotten used to the exile definition of Tibetanness, with its Buddhist concepts and key figure interpreted to conform to the West's need or desire of religiosity.

[36] References to the Tibetan case are illustrative examples for understanding the theoretical explanation. The study of the Tibetan Diaspora is examined more deeply in chapters 2 and 3.

from the social configuration the two constitute together and the capital they each possess.[37] Therefore, for those who want to guarantee for themselves a favourable social configuration it is necessary that they obtain a monopoly over the *habitus* definition, which will be in harmony with their vision of the world, and which in turn will provide them with the capital for power. In everyday life however, groups change positions in the social configuration, an example being the Tibetan population, which went from being a group with a status of a majority to a minority in its country with the Chinese invasion and then abroad. The *habitus* that suited the structure of one configuration changes more slowly than social positions in another configuration. This may be the reason why one does not associate the Tibetan Diaspora's attitude with that of an excluded group[38]; the Tibetans in exile constitute a strong community with a valued reputation, because they have the *habitus* of an established group, while being a minority (O/I 2003).

Bourdieu's concept of mental structures evolving from the incorporation of social structures does not explain how homogeneity and permanence can be found in the Tibetan identity that lives in such diverse host cultures. With the *habitus* described by Bourdieu and the link between cognitive structures and social structures, culture answers the needs of social agents in a certain social configuration. If a *habitus* answers the needs of a social configuration while helping to create these needs, how could it be the same across a variety of cultural environments? What other determining factors are involved in the preservation of culture in regards to a Diaspora since it can survive outside its country of origin? One could see culture, and subsequently *habitus*, as a pattern of interactions and of a mode of life, which permits the saving of energy, and the preservation of a social configuration in which certain identities thrive. Although the social tissue is in essence an evolving entity, there are mechanisms invented by social agents to maintain social configurations that endow them with power as they wish. The important aspect to remember is the hidden dimension of interaction. Agents carry within them their environment, the configuration of the network of interactions in which they are active agents.

[37] Every agent can classify his/her environment, but all do not possess power to classify others and make them accept their categorisation: some are doomed to accept the status distribution and positions decided by others, who can in turn determine trajectories—their own and that of others.

[38] Many of those who are excluded are unable to respond to the discrimination to which they are subjected, because they have incorporated the established' value scale. They therefore judge themselves with the symbolic system that was instituted to condemn and exclude them.

The *habitus* is essential to the social configuration's operation. The human agent, being a collectivised individual, will have 'cultural reflexes,' mechanisms that orient him/her from within to present the desired identity. Bourdieu (1992a: 146) calls the process of internal determination 'symbolic violence,' a violence that acts on social agents with their unconscious complicity. By incorporating norms and social constraints during socialisation, the individual loses consciousness of the fact that they are of social origin. This indirect 'violence'—violence because it limits the social agent's self-determination—is characterised by its latent efficiency, eliminating the feeling of domination by rendering unconscious its reproduction in the individual's daily acts and thoughts. It is what Anthony Giddens (1984: XXIII) calls 'practical knowledge' that operates through the agent's motivations, by moulding them to suit the direction of the social structures' perpetuation. While practical knowledge has the strength of an innate reflex, it is acquired by living within society, whilst being a primary associative factor. Socialisation of members, a guarantee of group perpetuation, is a method of infiltrating the social norms into the individuals to produce a similar identity across a number of people.

The Tibetan Transit School[39] was therefore established by the Tibetan government in exile with the intention of maintaining the Tibetan identity from a different conception of Tibetanness coming from Tibet. This is of course, not the explicit reason given. However, the school may have not only reinforced the Tibetan identity but also created a new definition of it, which over years the Tibetan exile community has established as *the* Tibetan identity. This new Tibetan identity that united Tibetans into a collectivity is the result of the *habitus* produced by the social configuration in exile.

1.2.1. The *habitus* as a group structure

To limit a group and establish its boundaries, and consequently its identity, one must attempt to establish homogeneity of norms and values among the members. The *habitus* ensures group cohesion within the areas it enforces. To be a member of a group, the member must present a specific scheme of thought and behaviour, thus creating a collective opinion by the association of a multiplicity of individuals. The reproduction of the collective opinion in the individual

[39] The Tibetan Transit School (Dharamsala, India) is within the transit camp that welcomes all newly escaped Tibetans between 18-35 years old for 2-5 years. They learn the official Tibetan dialect and receive basic education, and more specifically, the official and established Tibetan *habitus*, the exile Tibetanness. (This shall be examined more in point 2.2)

occurs at the unconscious level of the internalised *habitus*, and equally at the conscious level for fear of sanction and group reprobation, which condemns misdemeanours. "Empowerment (a group taking force from its constitution as coherent and cohesive) also seemed to work on the basis of suppressing difference, ambivalence and contradictory subject positions within the group." (Yon 1999: 37). Edmund Goblot (1967: 9) summarises culture, and thus group identity, in two concepts: that of 'barrier,' because it is distinctive, maintaining distance between those that respect the inside value scale and those who do not, and that of 'level,' because the objective of identity construction is distinction, thus moral and behavioural infringements risk endangering the homogeneity that establishes identity. Identity is therefore coercive, distinctive and intolerant. By establishing a culture, or distinctive qualities of a group, social agents differentiate and consequently delimit and exclude. The process of group construction—social agents demarcating themselves from others to better associate themselves with those they choose—involves selection and exclusion. The homogeneity within a group is only established ulteriorly, with the constitution of an internal cohesion in the group and the establishment of norms, in reference to which sanctions can be placed (Durkheim 1994, Elias 1994). The barrier is erected in a double opposing process of self-valorisation (because of the respect of the norms the barrier protects) and denigration of others (who violate the norms). The level is formed by this deviancy—proof barrier for protection, and by vexation of group members who believe that some individuals hold membership in disdain because these individuals transgress the group's norms. This disdain is, however, most frequently an ignorance of the existence of the barrier (Goblot 1967). The distance placed between themselves and outside entities guarantees the homogeneity of members. This distancing of the outsider is an example of sanction for deviancy, as well as a guarantee against questioning the legitimacy within the group, by hiding the possibility of alternative *habitus* in other groups.

The impossibility of a total physical separation between the people one wants to associate with and valorise, and the others from whom one wants to distance oneself requires a distinction that allows mixing without confusion. Hence the emphasis of the characteristics specific to each group leads to the creation of stereotypes, simplifying each group identity in order to represent a larger number and facilitate the identification process. In the light of this, one could suppose that with the establishment of the Tibetan community in exile, there was a selection of distinctive traits that would guarantee its visibility throughout the world, no matter which national environment it was integrated into. There would be competition for the monopoly of the authentic definition between the newcomers and the settled Tibetans, for the latter would see that the newcomers have equally preserved a certain culture in Tibet, and this would pose the question of legitimacy. Exclusion and stigmatisation of the outsiders are powerful tools at the established's disposal to maintain their identity and to reinforce their superiority by degrading others. They are means for the established to close ranks in order to protect themselves, allowing the established group to therefore avoid any threatening competing identity that would endanger the interiorised defences of its members by making them question their common norms and taboos. If similar individuals possess different *habitus* it risks endangering the adherence to each *habitus*. This is where self-glorification and 'denigration of others' intervenes.[40]

This is an emotional generalisation from the particular to the *ensemble*, where the good reputation of the established is due to the most respectable person among them, whilst the outsiders' reputation is stained by the presence of the worst within them, by the process called 'negative alterisation' (Chebel d'Appollonia 1998). Within the Tibetan community in India, we have the well-settled Tibetans' image associated with that of the Dalai Lama, because they have lived close to him, while the new immigrants' reputation is tainted by the perception that a minority of Tibetans supposedly working as spies for the Chinese authorities (I/A 2003; I/I 2003).[41] The image of the established Tibetans is modelled on the minority of the best. It is idealised; the image of the outsiders is copied on unpleasant characteristics, causing its degradation. A group with high value to preserve brings pressure on its members, the latter receiving in this manner self-esteem and self-respect, by transposition of the group charisma to the individual level. To guarantee loyalty there must be incitement: by qualifying the individuals with the *habitus* the members wish to protect as superior, the risk of dissension is reduced.[42] An excessively valorised *we*-ideal compared to the real image is symptomatic of

[40] Identity is *always* constituted relationally, through determination of the other, of what is not oneself. Identity construction is based on the processes of inclusion and exclusion and boundary-drawing and boundary-maintenance, as mechanisms for reducing ambivalences. Through identity boundaries order is constructed in terms of binary categorisations such as us/them, inside/outside. "The negative (second) term of the binary opposition is seen to give a content to its positive half, as its 'constitutive outside'." (Mottier 2000: 539) Mechanisms of *othering*, constituting specific groups of people *as* other, are *about* the constitution of communities, of defining cultures.

[41] At the time of my fieldwork, and it probably still is a present preoccupation, the suspicion toward new Tibetan immigrants for being spies for the Chinese authorities was widespread. The newcomers know this, and consequently keep a discreet profile. Moreover, new Tibetan refugees are used to keeping to themselves, in order to avoid Chinese scrutiny and reduce the risk of being denounced by a fellow Tibetan. This combined with the settled Tibetans' censorship contributes to their absence from the public debate.

[42] As in the study of Winston Parva (Elias 1994), where the homogeneity of the opinions expressed by the members of the established group reflected an incorporation of the values transmitted by the collective consciousness, all the exiled Tibetans I interviewed expressed the same opinion on what constitutes 'Tibetanness'. The Tibetan community in India has the problem of Tibetan newcomers not knowing the current normative system

collective unease, of a desperate attempt at distinction. New Tibetan immigrants are physiologically similar to the old settlers, consequently to differentiate, emphasis is placed on distinctive elements that are considered to be Sinicised (e.g. clothing, style, modes of expression and self-esteem). The importance of these becomes primary when interacting. The more the established feel their privileged status threatened by the outsiders from whom they are trying to distance themselves, the more the image they project of themselves and of the others will be distorted. When attempting to integrate the Tibetan community in exile, the new Tibetan immigrants learn rapidly they do not fit the Tibetan identity that is in exile, and so they also start focusing on details they know are distinctive.[43] The settled Tibetans often highlight the success of the higher classes, such as those surrounding the Dalai Lama's family, and when talking about the new comers from Tibet, will focus on the poorest and most marginal.[44]

This focus on social reputation is based on the individual's realisation that self-esteem is largely based on collective esteem of his/her group. Hence strengthening one's reputation gives a better chance to the members of the valued group to possess 'power' during the exchange. A comparison of the self-esteem of the settled Tibetans in exile *versus* that of the Tibetans newly escaped from Tibet illustrates this. The former benefit from an internationally valued public image[45] compared to the latter, whose identity the Chinese authorities constantly diminish as barbarian.[46] When the new Tibetan immigrants come to interact with the old settlers, they are perceived to be ashamed of their identity as Tibetans, having learnt that to be of that culture is not a valorised exchange item to show. Hence the settled Tibetans benefit from the advantage of knowing how to use their Tibetan identity in their favour.

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in their new environment, and since the new arrivals are a constant input of diverse behaviours, there is a need for constant and explicit control over all members. In interactions, it is usual that two or more *habitus* enter in contact, requiring the emergence of a social constraint to determine the normative system that will prevail.[42] The social agent knows what behaviour, normative and symbolic systems his/her *milieu* requires of him/her, and he conforms to it either by acknowledging the need for a common *habitus* from each member for a homogenous group or by fear of sanction for deviancy.[42] Social actors are therefore exteriorly and interiorly conditioned to act in conformity to what is prescribed by their group in order to present a common collective identity.

[43] Comments by new Tibetan immigrants (I/I 2003) reveal they know they are judged as uncivilised by the settled Tibetans. And they seem to focus much of their attention on finding these details (e.g. clothing, manners, speech) among their group and among the settlers.

[44] So the encounter of new immigrants with exiled Tibetans of long date reveals an impossibility of a *we*-image they are supposed to form together (see sub-chapter 3.2.).

[45] The Dalai Lama's charisma has been transplanted to the Tibetan community as a whole: when encountering Tibetans, many view them as a peaceful and friendly people. It is however difficult to ascertain if this is a Buddhist trait or a way of living up to this reputation that results from recognising its benefits. Tibetans are equally reputed warriors, and signs requesting 'No fighting' posted up during festivals (O/I 2003), may reveal another Tibetan character that the Western world and the Tibetan government-in-exile have downplayed.

[46] Testimonies reveal how Tibetans within Tibet have to bear the Tibetan identity as a guarantee of poverty that induces harsh conduct from others.

Rejection by the settled Tibetans does not facilitate the new Tibetan immigrants' establishment. New Tibetan refugees lack a supportive environment and integration within an *ensemble* that could help them orient themselves. By refusing the newcomers the possibility of integrating into their group, the settled Tibetans push them into a position that is marginal in the latter's eyes, whilst condemning them for it. This creates a situation of mutual avoidance: the transgression by outsiders of the group norms creates barriers because the offended members will not unite with the source of their anguish. In parallel, the individuals labelled as marginal will not bond with the people that render their lives difficult. Even after having completed their stay in the Transit schools, the new immigrants rarely mix with the settled Tibetans. They feel the established's disapproval and disdain (I/I 2003).

Does the settled Tibetans' rejection of the new Tibetan immigrants make the latter feel inadequate? Are they able to create a feeling of inferiority in the newcomers? In India, the social configuration of the Tibetan community is very similar to that in Winston Parva, for one cannot speak of a real group of outsiders among the newcomers in comparison to the group of settled Tibetans. The settled comprise a group that could exist by itself and reproduce autonomously. On the contrary, the Tibetan newcomers' status of marginal cannot reproduce without the presence of the settled, for their status of excluded derives from the action of the settled Tibetans and not from a desire to group together. Most new Tibetan refuges feel a sense of being socially paralysed, because of a lack of a relationship network, and consequently of a common identity. The lack of mobilisation comes from the relational structure of the newcomers: they are all strangers and view each other with suspicion—an attitude that the settlers also show towards them— which is an obstacle to the development of a communitarian life of their own in order to establish a network of solidarity.[47] This atmosphere of general suspicion does not favour the assembling of individuals and the sharing of the experience of 'outsider,' which could have made them conscious of the inaccuracy of the judgements that were made about their fellow countrymen and consequently about them. For this reason newcomers from Tibet do not possess a common *habitus*. These isolated individuals do not compose a community because they all come from diverse geographic origins and present various modes of life. Their co-habitation being limited to a couple of months for some, the group process can only produce a minimal quantity of common memories and experiences, insufficient to create a feeling of unity and a will to construct a common life. However, they do

[47] Cf. footnote 44.

possess the common experience of living under the Chinese, which could help to canalise their efforts to make their opinions known by the settled Tibetans.

A characteristic of the established group is the density of exchanges among its members — because interaction with the outsider is condemned and interaction within members is facilitated by the common normative system—which permits reciprocal scrutiny. Mutual observation results in the creation of a homogenous and powerful front to the outside because of the unity the members portray. Settled Tibetans have a settled pattern of interaction because of the established normative system. The Tibetan government in exile counts on the Tibetan Transit School and the other camps to establish new links between the new Tibetan refugees. However, these transit camps prevent the new immigrants from having any contact with the settled Tibetans, who would be the best source for integration.

Tibetan identity differences are not only problematic between the settled Tibetans in India and the new Tibetan refugees, but also between Tibetans in India and Tibetans abroad. The tolerance of *habitus* differences arising from exposure of Tibetans outside of India to other cultures results from the need to bring the Tibetan cause to the knowledge of the world. So while Tibetan communities all show a rather similar profile, they present differences from living different life experiences. The Tibetan Diaspora must therefore be on constant 'alert' for cultural differences in order to maintain a common core of Tibetanness across its members. Hence, it is necessary to induce membership feeling within members of a group for them to conform to the required norms and identity.[48]

1.2.2. The *habitus'* role in the feeling of membership

A national group is an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991) in the sense that members have their fellow countrymen in their minds. They must build an image of the community of sameness they all form, which is constructed with 'invented traditions' (Hobsbawm 1983). As is true for any membership, this community's constructed nature remains unrecognised by its members, for it is naturalised in daily routine interactions and produces meanings around a shared national identity. However, one must not overemphasise the invented nature of

[48] As Max Weber (1995) illustrates in his ideal-type classification of domination, domination cannot last without inducing the dominated to comply.

traditions, for nations are nevertheless deeply rooted in ethnic identities[49] and in attributes such as language, religion, customs or institutions. Even if Tibetanness is a modern concept, it does not lose its reality and meaningful nature, especially as a community constructor, for as Craig Calhoun points out, it "may be constructed and relatively new without losing its force and significance." (Mottier 2000: 535). Although it is an 'imagined community', the convergence of multiple acts of imagination may well produce an objective reality that is recognised as the Tibetan community. Therefore Tibetanness may be defined as feelings of a shared identity between Tibetans and as a recognised cultural identity by the outside world. National identity has the same function as any identity: to distinguish the insider from the outsider. "National identities are narratives which are concerned with the drawing of boundaries between members of the nation and non-members, between 'us' and 'them'." (Mottier 2000: 538) The *habitus* helps to instil a feeling of belonging to a certain group, based on the perpetuation of a collective social tradition to which they adhere and the shared experiences that constitute the collective memory. This provides the individual with the capacity "of remembering not only those things which concern himself immediately but also of remembering the same category of things as the rest of the society." (Chaudhuri 1990: 376)

There is a dual phenomenon that serves to provide the social agent with an identity. On an individual level, the individual must identify with the characteristics of his/her group in order to grasp them, and on a collective level, the other members of the group associate the social agent with an identity. Each member's conformity constrains the other members to adhere to the collective profile. Identity is a constructed social instrument, a profile with which the individual is associated and to which he/she relates. Whether the uniting force is based on natural or constructed characteristics is secondary to whether or not individuals relate to these characteristics. It is this identification that gives them sense and relevance as classification agents within the social configuration. The fact that the social agents refer to them makes of them significant criteria. The identification process gives body and form to entities that could otherwise be insignificant. The effort to identify makes the social agent properly take possession of characteristics that are supposed to represent him. When the Tibetans first came into exile, they had to explain to the outside world what their shared characteristics were. This probably was a revelatory act for them too. Having to distinguish and elaborate criteria that made up their Tibetan identity, what differentiated them from the encountered cultures (Barth

[49] Ethnicity is defined as national constructions so archaic that their emergence coincides with 'the beginning in time'.

1995) led them to identify and comply with them as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Consequently, on an individual level, "identity is constituted through the continuous formulation and re-formulation of *narratives of the self* [...]." (Mottier 2000: 537) The individual by presenting him-/herself and acting in reference to the values of his/her group (either in acceptance or in defiance) reiterates the characteristics of his/her profile, thus reinforcing them. An individual does not need to explicitly confirm his/her identification; he/she can enact it in his/her daily behaviour.[50] There is a *performative* nature to identity narratives (Mottier 2000; Papastergiadis 1998), where they do not simply express a pre-given identity but also function as *performatives*: speech acts, which bring into being what they designate.

This process can also be found in collective identity construction, requiring a group of selves to reproduce the narratives and identify with their meaning: "stories mark out identities; identities mark out differences; differences define 'the other'; and 'the other' helps structure the moral life of culture, group, and individual." (Ken Plummer in Mottier 2000: 538) Common past and shared memories have an integrating effect. Calling upon the history of the group, even if constructed, consolidates unity by justifying it and reiterates the members' identification. Groups desire continuity, inventing an original identity that unites the members; the invention of a past often reveals the present situation of the group, and what function it wants its identity to have.[51] The settled Tibetans have the same origin as the new Tibetan immigrants, but having shared different experiences, they have established different memberships. They may consequently relate to different aspects of the shared past, giving emphasis to different dimensions of the Tibetan identity, thus creating different identities. For exiled Tibetans, the Tibetan identity may have more reference to survival in exile, and the Tibetan natives' may accentuate their survival of colonisation.[52] The feeling of membership evolves from the feeling of sharing the same experiences and having the same references. Consequently, these two groups may think they have different memberships because they have different referents. However, this may be overcome by looking at their different experiences as the result of one shared event –the Chinese arrival in Tibet- that affected the future of all Tibetans.

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[50] This identification is not only a conscious act. Socialisation causes individuals to unconsciously identify to the values they have been conditioned to recognise and value and to act them out.

[51] Collective identity is a concept that is a "social construction whose social and political meanings are contextually bound." (Mottier 2000: 534) Looking at the group's position in the social configuration reveals the role it gives to its identity. The Tibetan identity provides insight and makes sense within the context of a diaspora, which is attempting to justify its claims to an independent country.

[52] The difference of content of the Tibetan identity was revealed through the interviews of the settled Tibetans and the new Tibetan immigrants (I/I 2003).

An individual's identity is not a self-referential entity; one cannot establish his/her own identity without reference to his/her surrounding world (Meyer-Bisch 2001). The *self*-image is largely determined by the *we*-image, even if certain sociologists tend to give a larger margin of freedom to the 'modern' individual, considering that the collective conscience covers to a lesser extent the individual conscience (Durkheim 1994). Membership in a group gives credibility to the member, and others know what attitude and frame of thought to present to him/her during the interaction. It is very difficult to encounter an individual without attempting to discern his/her origin and membership, in order to determine one's own position in regard to him/her. Social identities are therefore visible and are 'markers,' for they are associated with normative rights, obligations and sanctions. As a Tibetan told me: "When one loses one's identity, one cannot interact with others." (I/A 2003_4) While identity provides others with indicators of one's membership, hence with an 'interactive map' that informs what rights and obligations can be expected, it also provides the owner with a cognitive scheme that helps to orient action and gives meaning to what is done and to the external world (Bourdieu 1992a).

Social identities constitute what Anthony Giddens (1984) calls *mutual knowledge*[53]: they provide a *grille de lecture* for the individuals to determine the mode of action to adapt to a certain context. There is a large 'stock of knowledge', a *perpetual memory* (Chaudhuri 1990) incorporated in encounters that is not accessible to an agent's consciousness, but rather limits the field of possible actions and orients agents. In a situation of inter-group relations, the group of each interacting partner determines his/her mental frame and the power he/she will have, from the position the group has in the social configuration. The individual's interactive capacities will largely be due to the influential position of his/her group —without negating his/her own personal abilities. His/her image will be influenced and provide the social agent with a valorised/negative image by transposition of the valued/condemned position he/she occupies within the social configuration, and consequently the valued/banished mental and behavioural scheme he/she presents.

In situations of intra-group relations, there is seldom an even distribution of knowledge and power within groups. Elites and leaders often set the normative frame which all should obey. Turning to the Tibetan Diaspora, it is clear that the concept of established-outsider is applicable. The settled Tibetans have determined a set of norms and values that constitute the

[53] Mutual knowledge may be considered as the underlying symbolic core that is witness to the social perpetuation of culture. Culture could be considered as the materialisation of this mutual knowledge; every day rituals can guarantee a value's continuity.

basis of their Tibetan identity. One could suppose that with the constant arrival of new immigrants from Tibet (and Tibetans from other countries), their definition is continuously challenged and requires a legitimating ideology (posing the exile Tibetanness as opposite to the Chinese version has had a strong impact on the Tibetan ideology). The established treat all individuals they do not want to be assimilated with as not belonging, as outsiders, people from the *outer side* —geographically[54] and symbolically—of the norm of sensitivity. Finding him-/herself on the other side of the barrier of decency and 'normality,' this individual will have to 'prove' he/she is worth being accepted as an insider. Sometimes the rejection is not due to difference, but simply ignorance—ignorance of the existence of a newcomer's *habitus* by the established or ignorance of an established mode of living that the newcomer is expected to respect. All individuals are not instantly classified as outsiders; they commence as *strangers,* passing to outsider upon their failure to show conformity to the established group. The new Tibetan immigrants, having no chance to prove themselves, are automatically classified as belonging to the 'uncivilised' group by the settled Tibetans.[55] This early definition is hard to shed, as many newcomers even after ten years still have difficulty interacting with the older settlers and finding positions with more power.[56] They are viewed as respecting no rules, when in reality they are respecting *other* norms. Difference is the key to rejection and exclusion, sometimes even requiring the creation of difference in order to proceed to the exclusion. An important role is played by the differences of norms and standards of constraint in the relationship of established-outsider. The distinction between these two groups is the density of exchange and the structured interaction pattern. The established have an established mode of living together, and a tight network guarantees solidarity and mutual observation. The outsiders on the contrary have low control over members' behaviour because of the absence of solidarity and scrutiny networks and the absence of a common normative system.

The necessity to eradicate some 'differences' within the group by homogenisation and to erect differences with the outside by positing specific traits for one's group and other negative characteristics for others confines those deemed 'degenerate' or un-Tibetan to another class of individuals. To legitimate the symbolic system that validates exclusion, there must be a

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[54] The Tibetan Transit School is a certain distance from Dharamsala and McLeod Gang, with difficult access, isolating the new immigrants from the other Tibetans.

[55] Discussions with settled Tibetans during my fieldwork in India revealed how they have a normative scale they apply to Tibetans in order to classify them in either the established group (with whom they can interact) or the new refugees group (to avoid) (I/I 2003).

[56] The new Tibetan immigrants are ostracised from decision making positions: firstly from being established in the transit camps and then, having not often benefited from many years of education, they find themselves working in factories owned by the Tibetan government in exile, without decision power (I/I 2003).

similarly structured social configuration that upholds such a worldview: the new Tibetan immigrants are ostracised because of their Sinicised Tibetan character. They do not have the benefit of the doubt because they are nationals of Tibet, under Chinese rule. They are tainted by what the exile government is trying to get rid of and to delegitimise: the Chinese definition of Tibetanness. To an extent, the exiles are attacking the Chinese government by condemning their fellow countrymen who have lived under the Chinese rule. The difference between these two groups (Tibetan natives and exiles) is increasingly pronounced even if the newcomers settle with time. The longer the exile community and natives are separate, the more their respective identities will be different, as a result of their specific experiences: Tibetans under oppression and Tibetans in freedom. Both are nonetheless a different reflection of the events affecting the Tibetan community as a whole: occupation and diaspora.

The concept of a *Tibetan* identity emerged from the flight into exile, where Tibetans assembled and fused their specificities into a common definition of Tibetanness.[57] Their membership is stated in their identification with the cause of Tibetan cultural survival. According to Patrice Meyer-Bisch (2001), the foundation of a cultural community is a recognised identity as a commonwealth, which he associates with a common will: a heritage of reciprocity guaranteeing a willingness to adopt a specific trajectory to preserve the commonwealth. The Tibetan Diaspora emerged from the Tibetan community's allegiance to the cause of maintaining its shared heritage of Tibetanness.

The next chapter focuses on the Tibetan Diaspora in general, concentrating on its transition from a community to an international diaspora, the elaboration of the trans-national Tibetan identity and the struggle to legitimate claims of cultural authenticity to have the right to self-determination within its national borders.

[57] Whilst identity permits the union of individuals through an identification process, association of individuals results in an interpenetration of personalities by means of relations and in the emergence of a new social entity, often unintended by the social agents. Could the concept of identity be the result of this interpenetration of the members and be the total that Emile Durkheim (1988: 195) distinguishes from its components? The Tibetan identity was, however, intentionally created, which may have an impact on its structure. Do consciously crafted identities bear more rigidity or adaptability than identities born out of the result of identity interpenetration?

CHAPTER 2: Tibetanness, a trans-cultural *habitus*

2.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the identification process for the one Tibetan identity that evolved from exile when prior to 1959 there were a multitude of normative systems.[58] There was a need not only to construct a new entity with the previous cultural 'stuff' (Mottier 2000: 535), but this had to be done in an environment that was foreign, the link with the context that gave sense to practices and traditions having been broken. This increased the need for the identity to be even more specific and discernable since it was mixed in with foreign groups. The process of differentiation may have been exoticised by a nativisation or 'rooting,' leading to the construction of a diaspora as a remembered social unit. Representations of nationhood and national culture "can be seen [...] as constituting the collective imagining by a great number of people of a description of their identity and their relation, which is organised around a selected principle or idea to which they ascribe the certainty of fact. [...] They arise because people produce them, not because of some reality that allows only a single interpretation" (Barnett 2001: 271). This study will have to deal with the dual nature of a community, first as an imagined and constructed entity, and secondly, as a physical reality, considered as a historical fact by its members and the outside world. While Tibetans recognise the effort required to maintain their community, this does not imply they realise the nature of their intervention, and the subsequent emergence of an oriented reality that serves the diasporic cause of cultural identity preservation. But with exile and the subsequent spread of the Tibetans across the continents looking for a stable establishment, "[it] has now become apparent that since 1959 two quite different although related societies, one in South Asia exile [simply outside of Tibet] and the other under Chinese administration, have begun to emerge as a result" (Huber 1999: 9). The confrontation of the different life styles has become a crucial issue within the Tibetan community (see chapter 3).[59]

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[58] Association and cooperation are considered to be facilitated by a common past and a collective memory, but can one say that the Tibetans in exile really shared a common past trajectory? Did they have a national group structure and identity prior to their invasion? It would be interesting to have access to such a field of research; however, the lack of time and space make such a question just an allusion to possible fieldwork.

[59] With time this is becoming a conflict situation, for the difference between their modes of life is increasing. The natives in Tibet are slowly receiving better education and want a say in the orientation of the Tibetan situation, positing a competing version of Tibetanness to the monopoly detained by the Tibetan community in exile, especially the elite in exile (see sub-section 3.2.).

Either in exile or in the homeland, where the Chinese arrival confronted Tibetans with difference, there was no turning back to the isolated certitude of everyday life taken for granted. The confrontation that arose required self-positing as culturally different and specific; the Tibetans were to realise that their culture was what made them different in the eyes of the invader, and that it needed protection. "When secular customs break down, when traditional ways of life disappear, when the old solidarities crumble, it is, indeed, frequent that crises of identity arise." (Karmay 1994: 112) The focus here is that despite the changing circumstances and the break in the symbolic interpretation of life, the Tibetan community is continuously overcoming the forces of disintegration into other cultural groups to which living in various foreign environments as a dispersed community subject it. The Tibetan community has assimilated these and still is a strong and recognised diaspora.

Sub-section 2.2. studies the process in which a former national and dominant group reorganises and firmly establishes itself (while previously it was a heritage of the past) as a coherent and definable group. My interest is in how the Tibetan community has overcome the cultural estrangement they have suffered when coming into exile and how it has developed from a weakened people of an exiled community into an identifiable and strong diaspora. This study oscillates between, on the one hand, the classical conception of diaspora, as continuity and unity of a national group throughout its diverse established groups in different countries and the cultural preservation by perpetuation of traditions and customs. And on the other hand, I will examine the perspective that considers a diaspora as a 'rhizome' (Gilroy 1999), promoting difference within the diaspora, a consequence of the national groups it is inserted into, emphasising the contribution of cultural creativity to guarantee cultural survival.

Michel Vovelle (Bayart 1996) underlines that the history of mentalities in general, not only in diasporas, is not only constituted of resistances, such as inertia or latency, but also of real possibilities of unexpected mutations, of spontaneous creativity; these are times when a new sensitivity abruptly crystallises. The terms 'Tibet' and 'Tibetan,' as Toni Huber (1999: VIII) underlines, evoke the existence of stable and fixed social and geo-political entities that conceal, as we shall see, the actual ambivalence and fluidity between past and present. Change is a chance for creativity and the reinterpretation of the past to suit the present, or to construct the present with traditions. According to Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993), symbolism referring to language, religion and way of life is crucial for maintaining ethnic identity through periods of change.[60] He sees social identity as being most important the moment it seems to be, or is, threatened. Hence the importance Tibetan identity has for the Tibetan community.

One must ask the question of whether this identity, saved in exile, is a real survival in the traditional sense—a continuity of ancient traditions—because in a new environment, the *habitus* adapts and transforms itself. This chapter explores the notion of cultural survival as either continuity of traditional norms and practices, or as an adaptation of the meaning of the traditions in order for them to make sense to the members. Cultural identities that cannot thrive in the context that produced them and die by 'rigidification' from melancholic clinging to the ancient, are also studied. Do cultural identities that do not have the 'nourishing' links with the events of daily life to allow them to evolve 'fossilise'?

While the rigidification of traditions is a common trait in groups cut off from their land of origin, to limit one's research to such a point of view would be to ignore the evolving nature of cultures, in regard to contact and cross-cultural differences (Gilroy 1999b). The present Tibetan identity may be a product of its diasporic status, and may thrive on outside cultural influence. Hence a dynamic perspective on the diasporic situation suits the Tibetan community. The seemingly invariant cultural core, the *habitus*, shall equally be a dimension of our study, in an attempt not to fall into either of the two extremes of, on the one hand, promoting unity and continuity, or on the other, privileging mobility and reference change.

2.2 From a Tibetan community in exile to a Tibetan Diaspora

Part of becoming a nation or 'a people' is the production and the dissemination of national consciousness and a sense of belonging, which implies the concepts of invention (Hobsbawm 1983) and imagination (Anderson 1991). The invention of unifying traditions and the imagination of a community of members will provoke adherence from members to the same symbolism and/or leader. Imagination will help keep members together without direct knowledge of the people with whom the members feel united (Anderson 1991). There must be an identification process with an image of totality (Axel 2001), which is linked to the myth of a homeland (Safran 1999). The Tibetan community's sense of totality evolves from the feeling of

[60] "[Since] ethnicity arises so often in circumstances of social upheaval and transformation, which are frequently accompanied by severe cultural erosion and the disappearance of any customs that might serve as marks of distinctiveness, a critical issue is how that identity is to be maintained over a number of generations." (A.L. Epstein in Eriksen 1993: 67)

being all united under the Dalai Lama or seeing him as representing all Tibetans. The Dalai Lamas were a centre of veneration for a majority of Tibetans since the 16th century when the tradition of the Dalai Lama was established in Tibet, providing a solid basis for the future Tibetan identification with this key figure.[61]

We can encounter diasporas emerging from a national community, or a community evolving from a diasporic experience.[62] The Tibetan community evolved in two steps: while emerging from the country of origin, it became a community with its solidarities spreading further than the kin and region in Tibet to become a national group once in exile. After the primary necessity of establishing facilities for the physical survival of the Tibetan refugees, the Tibetan leadership had to confront the other essential focus: the structuration of a Tibetan community that would be a vector to the Tibetan way of life. Because of the change of environment, the identical social structure was not practical or possible in exile.[63] Construction of a new Tibetan society was required, necessitating the attempt to establish the hegemony of a particular social and cultural system. As seen in chapter 1, cultural identities are constructed to guarantee the creation of a homogenous group. In regards to this, with the flight from their land, the Tibetan people had to call on certain cultural dimensions upon which to construct a unified collectivity and accentuate them. The construction is made with the homeland and the past in mind whose interpretative nature increases with time. A diaspora is an imaginatively remembered social unit: for the displaced, the homeland is no longer a geographical place, but the "two-dimensionality of memory and nostalgia" (Indira Karamcheti in Axel 2001: 214), and a *bricolage* of past pieces that are distorted, valorised and/or discarded. Just as these "distortive powers of memory and nostalgia" empower the Tibetan diaspora to "create itself as subject" and "speak its own narrative", so also do they provide it with "policing mechanisms" that enforce "fixity and rigidity of cultural actions and beliefs." (Indira Karamcheti in Axel 2001: 214)[64] There must be a to-and-fro between reality, imagination and perceived reality. A diaspora has a vital relationship to a place of origin that is elsewhere and linked to another time.

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[61] Many have prayed to him only as an incarnated god, not considering him as a leader of the Tibetan people (Tapontsang 1997).

[62] A diaspora is a people living apart from their homeland or with no homeland at all, with internal and external representations that construct them as minorities.

[63] If the Tibetan identity was in existence before the invasion, there must have been a change of its function to answer the new status of its community; with the modification of the community itself and an adaptation of its symbolical dimension to give sense to the hardship its members were living.

[64] The diaspora's nature will be dependent on whether it is considered a threat or welcomed in its host country (see chapter 3).

"The argument is that place of origin or homeland—embodied in the formation of language, religion, tradition, race, ethnicity, indicators of territoriality, etc.—constitutes the diaspora." (Axel 2001: 8) However, to Brian Axel it is clear that it is the diaspora that produces the homeland. Was exile the beginning of the Tibetan homeland construction? Does the diaspora really define the homeland and the identity of those in the homeland? There is probably a simultaneous construction both inside and outside of the country of origin. The discourse of newly immigrated Tibetans shows the impact of the exile definition (I/I 2003),[65] possessing legitimacy from the Dalai Lama's narrative on the natives' rhetoric within Tibet (Schwartz 1994). In exile, there exists a mutual influencing relationship between the diaspora, the host country and the homeland that builds the feeling of community.[66] Even if Richard Marienstras (1999) sees the role of cultural preservation held by the homeland, thus freeing the diasporas of the worries of maintaining a clear identity across time and space, many diasporas are formed by the flight of nationals in hope of protecting what is endangered because of a threat within their homeland. This is what Steven Vertovec and Robert Cohen (1999) coin as 'flight migration' of refugees[67]. The Tibetan community in exile was established with such an aim: to withstand the destructive Chinese presence in their country, accepting to live as refugees or migrants in host countries. The Tibetan community's displacement across the world has constructed 'mini-Tibets' away from the homeland. And with time, there is a slow differentiation process between 'home' and 'homeland'. Increasingly 'home' is Australia, Switzerland or India, and Tibet, on the contrary, is becoming with time and generations a 'psychological homeland' (Bruce LaBrack in Axel 2001: 213), an ideal that unites Tibetans.[68]

Being a group among others in the host country, what provides the Tibetan community its specificity is this possible reference to a different homeland and a past; it is its imagination that sets it apart. It would be difficult to ascertain the mechanisms with which a group distinguishes between the cultural dimensions to preserve and valorise and the traditions it chooses to relegate to a past time. The focus concentrated on in the Tibetan exile community has been

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[65] New Tibetan immigrants profess a Buddhism which is associated with human rights and democracy, which is a result of the Western influence on the exiled Tibetan community.

[66] The experience of being members of a diaspora from their same homeland in different countries unites Tibetans into a community.

[67] In the Geneva Convention of 1951, a refugee was defined as someone feeling a real threat of persecution in their country of origin because of their background. This Convention places the responsibility for judging whether an individual corresponds or not to this definition in the hands of the admitting state.

[68] For many members of diasporas, the return to the homeland would be another displacement, but they still use the myth of a return to solidify ethnic consciousness and solidarity (Marienstras 1999: 372).

cultural elements deemed essential structures to the elaboration of a long-term diaspora. The Dalai Lama states:

> We divided our culture into two types. In the first category we placed that which, we determined, needed to be retained only in books as past history. The second category included whatever could bring actual benefit in the present. These things, we resolved, must be kept alive. Therefore, many of our old ceremonial traditions I discarded [...]. However, our performing arts, our literature, science and religion as well as those crafts from which we could earn a livelihood—painting, metal craft, architecture, woodworking and carpet making—these, we took special pains to safeguard. [...] As the wellspring of Tibetan civilisation, religion had first priority. (Avedon 1986: 92)[69]

In the Tibetan case, the threat of destruction has reinforced a pre-existing entity, waking it from its latent state and maybe reconstructing it into a new identity. Members of a group that is outside of its 'natural' boundaries grow "strongly self-conscious of their ethnic identity under these circumstances of extensive contact with others." (Eriksen 1993: 21) Diasporas may be the precursors of precise identities that are in a latent form in the homeland: prior to their invasion by the Chinese, most Tibetans probably did not have a very precise idea of what people from the rest of the world were like, and consequently what made up their own specificity. However, in this case, the natives within the homeland have also been confronted by difference and have grown to know their specificity—even if it is often portrayed as a negative one. From this has arisen a competing parallel definition of Tibetanness that is revealed within the Tibetan community in exile, when these two groups come into contact (see sub-section 3.2.2).

Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993: 39) elaborates a chronological process of the construction of diasporas, which is relevant in this analysis of Tibetans, to help us better understand the process they are going through in attempting to preserve their national cultural identity. Starting as an ethnic category, when the Tibetans came into exile, they became organised into an identifiable group. The selected boundary markers of the group were arbitrarily[70] chosen for Tibetans from

[69] "Cultural preservation establishments [in India] include a performing arts institute, Tibetan library and archives, Tibetan medical training school and hospital, several Tibetan residential schools, and over one hundred Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and temples." (Devoe 1987: 55)

[70] "[The] selection of boundary markers is arbitrary in the sense that only some features of culture are singled out [...]" (Eriksen 1993: 117)

different isolated regions randomly associated, having no real sense of shared community except for their faith in the Dalai Lama.[71] This Tibetan category became an ethnic network through the elaboration of enduring inter-personal ties. Primary group solidarities and regionalism[72] slowly helped the flow of continuously immigrating Tibetans to adapt, and settlement cooperation followed the lines of the old solidarities (an aspect that still has not disappeared in the present community). Eriksen then chronologically passes to the ethnic association, where a political pressure group constituted of influential members decides on a nationalist ideology to induce members to maintain their allegiance to the group. The Tibetans in exile, however, were established as a group from the start, under the Dalai Lama's leadership, which took rapid steps in organising cooperation on a Tibetan level, instituting the grounds for the Tibetan identity to overcome regionalism.

Can the Tibetan community be seen as an ideological group, providing the grounds for an ideological social identity? Since ideology is based on faith and the function of believing is integration into the ideological group, the Tibetans' faith in the Dalai Lama unites them in the belief of working together for their cause. The Tibetan ideology uses the network of the group's own social ties, such as those of trade that in turn used those of religious pilgrimages to establish a sense of identity across regions (Huber 1999), either in Tibet or in exile.[73] Identifying with the same normative system and having the rest of the community in one's mind (Anderson 1991) forces the simple association of people into real cooperation. Tibetans as 'a people' can only survive on a collective level, individuals tending to be rapidly assimilated into the dominant culture. Hence the Tibetan leaders' immediate preoccupation in establishing a recognised cultural identity and a communitarian structure among their people and the international community. The Dalai Lama and his government have concentrated much of their efforts on constructing a strong community with the intention of preserving their cultural traditions, accepting compromises such as settlement in foreign land and risking cultural influence in order to escape the Chinese solution (Tenzin Gyatso 1998).[74] The offer of land by Nehru allowed the Tibetans to find some stability and physical security and concentrate

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[72] Regionalism is the feeling of belonging to the different provinces of Amdo, Kham and U-Tsang.

[73] In exile, in recent years, the sense of belonging may be transmitted by the small community of Tibetan government workers that transfer from one Tibet Information Office to another, rather than by the paths of trade. Interviews of the Dalai Lama's representatives in the Tibetan Offices revealed their rotation through the different countries. Trade routes (e.g. carpet, wool manufactures) are nonetheless used in India, as a vector to spread information on the Tibetan community at large.

[74] Could the wish for a strong community expressed by the Dalai Lama be the cause of the present unity? While it is difficult to answer such a question, it is interesting to recognise its potential for uniting the Tibetan community.

their efforts on the survival of their cultural specificity. From this emerged the ethnic Tibetan community that Eriksen defines as being linked to a territory. For the Dalai Lama "[only] then would it be possible to begin an education programme and take steps to ensure the cultural continuity of the Tibetan people." (1998: 170) However, most of the land was in the South, which was a first step in the Tibetan exile's adaptation process, because of the climatic difference from Tibet and the distance between the Dalai Lama and his people there. When the Tibetans were distributed into the different settlements, there was a mixture of Tibetan regional groups in order to reduce their traditional group feelings and identities based on ethnic or geographic factors, and they were forced to develop a new type of group feeling, a trans-Tibetan membership.[75] This experience of distance was a test of the transformability of the exiled community into an international diaspora.

The Tibetan community's claim to diasporic status has legitimacy. Diasporas convey a strong sense of difference from their surrounding environments; hence they are vectors to cultural difference preservation. The Tibetan community had to become a diasporic movement *in order* to preserve itself; rather than its culture survived *because* it was a diaspora. Steven Vertovec (1999) sees three discernable dimensions of the concept of diaspora (i.e. social form; type of consciousness; modes of cultural production). Firstly, diasporas are social forms with a type of consciousness (Tibetans have a hyperconscious knowledge of their culture and heritage) that are the result of modes of cultural production. The Tibetan community is not a simple reproduction of the Tibetans inside Tibet. When attempting to define a Tibetan, one turns to the exile community as the reference to the authentic Tibetan—a belief expressed among the Tibetans in exile and many Westerners. Secondly, the Tibetan Diaspora is the producer of the Tibetan cultural identity in regard to its specific and developed conscience of what Tibetan is. So it is not a continuity of the homeland, but a constructor of the image of Tibetanness that is even applied to the Tibetans within Tibet.[76] The Tibetan identity stems from the experience of the Tibetan community as a diaspora. The Tibetan Diaspora entails dwelling in a foreign land, maintaining a community, having a home away from 'home,' different routes and roots (constituting the collective memory), forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identification outside the national time/space in order to live inside the host country, with a specificity (Clifford 1999).

[75] But the old ties tend to be strong, and when there are occasions to reunite between families or regional loyalties, such as at festivals, the unity of the Tibetan community loses its trans-nationalism.
[76] Sub-sections 2.3. and 2.4. show how the Tibetan definition in exile has been granted with the legitimacy of authenticity.

As the Tibetans started to be incorporated into the outside world in exile, they "moved from exclusion to inclusion, from periphery to centre, they found themselves reconsidering and redefining who they were" (Endelman 2001: 128). The definition of Tibetanness and the forging of new identities became a preoccupation for them. What kind of community do the Tibetans see themselves as belonging to? As the interviews revealed, the Tibetans in exile have learned to consider themselves as a united and homogenous community. A strong collective image has been installed in members (Vertovec 1999), where emphasis has been concentrated on the preservation of their culture, on what is shared and unites them.[77]

The elite saw the potential in collectivising the feeling of belonging to the same solidarity group at a national level, in order to preserve their cultural specificity and have their claims to Tibetan sovereignty be taken seriously. They hope that if there was an identifiable Tibetan community, this would constitute sufficient grounds for their claims to an independent state. The nationalist ideology centred on creating the feeling of belonging to the Tibetan society was the reason for elaborating the independent educational system, which was instituted in order to preserve the Tibetan specificity. The Indian government provided the chance for the Tibetan government to autonomously decide on the structure of the education that would ultimately benefit the Tibetan cause. The future members had to be structured into thinking and acting in accordance with the group's reproduction, which requires the recognition of shared values, hence the founding of the Tibetan School Society (later to become the Central Tibetan School Administration) by the Tibetan Government in exile with the help of the Indian Government. "School children are being indoctrinated with a new ideology, which puts national, group consciousness above regional and sectarian loyalties." (Nowak 1984: 142) To induce members' allegiance, the group drew on religion and myth for its symbolism and gave "profound meaning to people's experience in order to motivate them to give personal sacrifices for the nation." (Eriksen 1993: 112) The aim of the Tibetan leadership has been to install in Tibetans the feeling of membership with a people, which would enable them to survive as a national

[77] It should be mentioned that to some this identity has become overbearing, the allegiance to it sometimes overriding all other individual obligations and rights. Many interviewed new Tibetan refugees expressed the pressure they felt to conform to the exile Tibetan identity, even prior to their settlement. Some Tibetans in Australia expressed the obligation they felt to preserve their Tibetan identity even if settling there requires them to discard their specificity (I/I, I/A 2003). Personal views and especially dissension have been downplayed in favour of a distinctive and homogenous group, by censoring either contestation of what has been chosen to represent Tibetanness (Norbu 1994) or competing Tibetan identities that many Tibetan newcomers carry (I/I 2003). We see here that to guarantee a Tibetan identity through establishing a strong community that protects individuals, it is necessary to sacrifice certain individual rights.

community trespassing the narrow concept of a nation.[78] A nation can nonetheless be a collectivity of people, regardless of the place they inhabit, who conceive themselves as a shared community of common origin. Diasporas are not merely a group of nationals from the same homeland. They are instituted communities, structured to continue through time and space, with a degree of sameness—a fact recognised by the members and the outsider world—though subject to constant exterior influence. Apparatuses must be established to maintain the link to and representation of either the homeland or the faith in a leadership figure, such as the Dalai Lama. Since the Tibetan community in exile cannot rely on living in a national territory as an identity criterion, the focus has been put on the educational system centred on Tibetanness which works to fix the community in each member's mind (Anderson 1991) and the Tibetan cultural identity in each Tibetan, no matter where he/she is established. Hence the need to make people feel that they are members.

With generations, the Tibetan identity thus obtained has become an evident source of pride and solidarity, providing for all Tibetans who wish to identify with it a 'totality' (Axel 2001). Its success is visible in the fact that for most Tibetans there is a ready answer regarding what being Tibetan means, even if most Tibetans live in exile in the context of another national identity, which can provoke identity ambivalence toward what community to call 'home'.

While the educational system was intended to enable the Tibetan cultural survival, by implementing a sense of Tibetanness in Tibetans, it was also a cause of endangering the culture. Tibetan settlement centres are limited in opportunities. The rise of education combined with the host country's level of development has affected the nature of the Tibetans' needs and expectations (e.g. success in life, financial stability), and consequently the Tibetan youth is presently leaving the settlements in India to find better opportunities. This tendency toward looking beyond the boundaries of the community has increased the need to establish well-defined criteria that will prevail as a Tibetan identity reference, independent of the national environment in which the Tibetans settle. The Tibetan community has had to define criteria of pan-Tibetanness, for their exile was not to be limited to one environment.

The Tibetan Diaspora must juggle with the requirement of a specific and distinctive cultural identity, while living in societies that require different adaptation strategies. Tibetans outside of India must adapt to the requirement of learning the national language at school, by establishing

[78] Which many authors define as "a political apparatus, recognised to have sovereign rights within the borders of a demarcated territorial area, able to back its claim to sovereignty by control of military power, many of whose citizens have positive feelings of commitment to its national identity" (Giddens 1989: 303).

other modes for teaching the Tibetan language, or by concentrating on other criteria to define their Tibetan identity. While some authors consider diasporas to be 'centred' (Clifford 1999), with communitarian constancies across time and space, realistically most tend to be 'travelling cultures' (Clifford in Chivallon 2002: 52), which are diverse and delocalised, answering to the principle of mobility. The 'centred' diaspora would be possible because of a real or imagined link with the place of origin. It is the classical notion of a diaspora, with the idea of dispersion from an original territory and the maintenance of a specific community identifiable by its cultural heritage, a sort of collective 'one true self', despite the superficially different selves (Hall 1999). This perspective defines the cultural identity as reflecting the common shared cultural codes, which provide the members with a stable, unchanging frame of reference and meaning, even with the changing environment. But even Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* admits change, being an internal structure that is formed by and constructs social structures. This admits adaptation, which brings us to the perspective that emphasises difference and rupture. The Tibetan Diaspora is a 'hybrid'[79] (Gilroy 1999) because its different communities are influenced by contact with American, European or Asian countries. The notion of diaspora in Gilroy's view is closely associated with the idea of sowing seeds, which implies these seeds will germinate differently depending on the environment. Hence, he sees an intercultural evolution, positing the question of cultural constancies and core.

Steven Venturino (1997) views diaspora studies as having presented identity formation in a two-sided fashion: firstly that there exists a discernable ethnic integrity and stability of identity, and secondly that diasporic identity is fragmented and conditioned by the national environment in which it is set. However, the reality is more likely to lie somewhere in between: the Tibetans promote a homogenous cultural core, while being conscious of the cultural influence to which they are subjected. The perspective of multiplicity within the diaspora may apply to the Tibetan community, with its immersion in very diverse national environments. However, the constancy of a central point of reference brings the debate back to the classical vision: for the Tibetans, Dharamsala and the Dalai Lama are references which can provide exiled Tibetans with an identity reference regardless of their place of establishment. This allows all Tibetans, if they wish, to become embodied as one. While maintaining the myth of the homeland, the Tibetan community also benefits from the canalising force of the Dalai Lama. He causes Tibetans to converge toward him and his place of residence, either in pilgrimage or symbolically, to have

[79] This term should not be taken in its racial sense and be considered to express the result of various cultural influences. Culture is hybrid because it is rooted in changing social relationship.

their beliefs and ideology reinforced. The Tibetans are symbolically and normatively independent of both the Chinese definition of Tibetanness and the host country in which they are immersed, because they have a centre and figure of reference of their own: the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala. In the search for an overarching Tibetan community, national feelings are associated with the adoration of the Dalai Lama. This situation is contrary to that of the Gitanos that Paloma Gay y Blasco studied, who do not have structures such as a state or a territory that would bring them together under an "umbrella of a shared political project" (2002: 177). Tibetans not only have the goal of recapturing their homeland as a uniting force, but also the figure of the Dalai Lama.

Cultural 'deviancy,' which the Tibetan leadership censors (Norbu 1994), is probably caused by different 'routes' and national differences in the Tibetan identity. According to Christine Chivallon (2002), diversity in diasporas may be linked to the different ways of rendering the past and its cultural baggage significant to each national group. While difference produced by living in many national environments is a *quasi* certainty, sameness may demand more interference, such as censorship,[80] not only to preserve the sameness itself but also the belief in this sameness. It is the belief in their sameness that maintains the Tibetans together; however, Tibetans may be more different than similar, increasing the need to continuously fabricate distinctive identity signs. As Stuart Hall (1999) states, communities are not to be distinguished by their falsity/genuineness since all cultures are results of some construction, but by the style in which they are imagined and imagine themselves. Certain cultural dimensions are over-valued, while others are discarded. The cultural identity that is called upon at a given time is not something that has always existed or a mere recovery of the past, but the designation of the different ways the individual is positioned or positions him-/herself within the narratives of the past. As with the Tibetan community, Tibetans of Tibetan settlements in different national environments give emphasis to different aspects of Tibetan culture as being priority areas for preservation. Tibetans in Switzerland and Australia have mostly concentrated their efforts on preserving their language, whilst in India preservation is more at a religious level (I/A, I/S 2003). The reason could very likely be linked to the educational system, which in India is basically autarkic, allowing for the Tibetan language to be taught in school. In other countries, Tibetan children must follow the academic curriculum in the national language. Another dimension, which Tibetan communities from different countries diversely emphasise, is the group's proximity to the Dalai Lama, which by observation seems to change with geographical

[80] I have been told that censorship exists, but I have not found documentation that proves it.

distance: Tibetans outside India seem to regard him more as a leader than as an incarnation of a buddha.[81] Devising strategies of integration with a minimum degree of acculturation has allowed the exiles in the Tibetan community to continue to identify with the collective Tibetan goals. This may have simplified the Tibetan identity to a minimal number of essential identity traits. Tibetans are taught to remember and live with the cause consciously enacted in their activities, so in order to allow them to live lives as ordinarily as possible, there has been reduction of the Tibetan identity markers that are required to show allegiance to the community (I/A 2003).

Patrice Meyer-Bisch's distinction (2001) of three indicators that define a cultural community is pertinent, as they are viewed by the majority of interviewed Tibetans as the basis for cultural preservation. To him, a community is constituted of 1) language, 2) territoriality/habitat and 3) religion/vision of the world. Thomas Franck (1999) adds a sense of common socio-historical destiny, which could be the myth of the homeland that Richard Marienstras and Stuart Hall (1999) write about, and in the case of the Tibetans, involves the recapturing of their homeland. Eric Hobsbawm (1983) warns against the narrow definition of a nation as language, ethnicity, etc., as these are shifting and ambiguous criteria, especially with diasporic movements that consider themselves as nations away from the homeland. Despite the shifting nature of identity definition, clearly many Tibetans identify with certain aspects of this definition of cultural identity, such as language and religion,[82] and consider them to be pillars for their community's survival as a diaspora.[83]

Dealing with an exiled population and its organisation outside of its national territories, the focus is on what constitutes the Tibetan Diaspora's specificity to allow the settlement of the Tibetan community in different countries. Compensating for its separation from its homeland,

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[81] The Tibetans have been under the Dalai Lama's leadership for centuries, so there was no need to create a canalising figure (W.E.B. Dubois in Gilroy 1999), however, there was a need to transform the blind faith in his person into a conscious act of choosing their leader in order to validate the democratic reforms that the Tibetan government in exile has promoted in the past few decades.

[82] Language was the cultural criterion most emphasised as the basis of Tibetan identity amongst the interviewed Tibetans. Peter Bishop reaffirms what many Tibetans have told me, that Tibetan Buddhism "is no longer the absolute authority in Tibetan culture [...]." (2001: 217) In many writings on Tibetans, there is an overemphasis on religion to the detriment of other Tibetan cultural aspects, hence equating Tibetan Buddhism with Tibetan culture. This does not prevent many Tibetans from believing as Dawa Norbu does that "[all] our culture, traditions and customs were derived from religion, and that to deny religion was to uproot our life." (1997: 228)

[83] Another element that could be interesting to study would be the government's role as the instigator of cultural preservation. However, this cannot be discussed here for lack of time. Cultural preservation's dependence on each member's conscious efforts to conserve Tibetanness in their daily life makes the limitation to the Tibetan people a priority in this analysis. "A nation exists from the moment a handful of influential people decide that it should be so, [however] it must nevertheless eventually achieve mass appeal." (Eriksen 1993: 105)

importance is given to institutions such as language, government, leadership and religion. Two cultural dimensions are approached in this thesis as being vectors for cultural preservation. One is the religious faith the Tibetans show, including their faith in the Dalai Lama, for this is the Tibetan characteristic that most outsiders recognise as summarising Tibetanness. The other cultural dimension is the Tibetan language, which has the support of the majority within the Tibetan Diaspora as the primary cultural factor that must be maintained, it being an unmistakable differentiating dimension of their identity (I/A 2003; I/I 2003; I/S 2003).

> Post-1959 the potency of religion as a pan-Tibetan definer is even more marked, as refugees from all parts of Tibet have been flung together for the first time in other lands. Despite the fact that a major unifying principle among Tibetans in exile is also the notion of the absent country or nation, the religious 'way of life' is the dominant tool employed in cultural reconstruction and naturally one of the major foci for nostalgia. (Harris 1979: 161)

Religion is considered a pillar on which a communitarian unity is built (Durkheim 1976). It provides meaning to the members, and its practice indicates membership. As Patrice Meyer-Bisch (2001) correctly said, religion is not only a belief, but a concrete faith, implying engagements, a way of life and a regulation of time by religious festivals and ceremonies. It is also a social inscription that identifies the individual with a group. Although Tibetans are struggling to avoid having their Tibetanness reduced to Buddhism,[84] Tibetan Buddhism is a passport for most Tibetans; even if they do not believe, their respect for Buddhist traditions is an identification process. "Religion plays a major role in the life of the Tibetans and more so when they started living in exile." (Arakeri 1998: IX) Tibetans anywhere, when performing a *puja* or respecting a certain religious holiday, can identify with each other, feeling a similar sense of communion. One can see that religious faith is for many Tibetans the incarnation of their faith in Tibetan culture's survival. However, many lay Tibetans, especially among the youth, do not know much about the meaning of their religion nor about the many Buddhist teachings that explain the presence of religious traditions. But to practice them is to renew their faith in the Dalai Lama and in their culture and to reiterate their allegiance to their community. Many Tibetans answering the question of why they practice a specific ritual respond: "Because that's what Tibetans do, it's who we are." (I/I 2003_7)

[84] Buddhism shall not be approached at the level of its teaching; rather, my focus is on how the faith provides a sense of self and how it functions in the identification processes of Tibetans.

The functions of religion include regulation, maintenance and transmission of sentiments on which the Tibetan society depends. "Religious rites unite the members of a society in a common group and enforce the social interaction. It thus promotes the establishment and maintenance of social patterns outside its own immediate field. Religion also has provisions of authority for the belief and action. [...] It gives pattern and order [...]." (Arakeri 1998: 247) Religion is a historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by which people communicate and develop their knowledge about, and attitudes toward, life. A change in one's beliefs does not simply imply a change of the venerated figure, but a switching of the cultural symbolism that accompanies it (Tenzin Gyatso 1998). Religion therefore not only provides its members with a means to interpret their environment, but it also moulds their way of approaching life. It is a vector uniting individuals with the same *habitus*, the product of the social structures from which that specific religion emerged (Bourdieu 1992a)[85]. It gives meaning to the social and psychological reality that the Tibetans are living. The Buddhist principle of suffering for misdeeds in previous lives is a referent Tibetans often mention to give sense to their present suffering (I/I 2003). Samten Karmay (1994) sees a change in Buddhism as a national identity construction element: historically, the introduction of Buddhism and its precepts of interdependence and compassion decreased the Tibetans' will to fight for their specificity. However "during the last forty years, [...] Tibetan Buddhism, which once worked to counter a strong sense of nationality, now works the other way. With the Dalai Lama as its spokesman and with his policy of non-violence, Tibetan Buddhism has come to symbolise Tibet's national identity." (Karmay 1994: 113) Karmay considers Tibetan nationalists to be seeking identification with the Buddhist culture. In the course of my research I encountered many more Tibetans stating that religion had lost its central role in the Tibetan way of living, including Samdhong Rinpoche, the Tibetan Prime Minister in exile (I/A 2003; I/I 2003; I/S 2003).[86] However, one should be careful to distinguish between religion as a traditional practice, and religiosity as a belief and mode of living. While the former is still a widely practiced dimension of what is considered Tibetanness, the latter is on the decrease, as many Tibetans do not seem

[85] Although as Melvyn Goldstein (Ardley 2002) argues religion can equally be fragmenting and conflicting, its unifying dimension shall be emphasised in this study, in order to observe the mechanisms of inertia that can be instituted to compensate for the effect of the diverse national social structures on the Tibetan community.
[86] One wonders if his comment was more an echo of the official policy which states that religion and democracy have been dissociated, rather than a belief in religiosity's decrease.

to apply Buddhist teachings in their everyday interactions and lives (I/I 2003; O/I 2003) –a process of secularisation which has spread to most religions.

As previously mentioned, the figurehead of Tibetan Buddhism, the Dalai Lama, held to be the earthly manifestation of Chenrezig, Bodhisattva of Compassion, is another, if not the principal, faith canalising symbol to which all Tibetans can refer to no matter where they are. The Dalai Lama is a figurehead symbolising continuity in Tibet's history and culture. Many people both inside and outside the Tibetan community consider him to have been the force that is primarily responsible for Tibetan survival. Even in Tibet, support for the Dalai Lama is high (Tenzin Gyatso 1998). His exile united the Tibetan people in a manner which had never been possible before, for it exteriorised the Dalai Lama from the regionalist disputes.[87] He has become an exterior point of focus. The mixing of regional specificities, the Dalai Lama's exteriorisation so all can identify with him and the unifying faith of which he is the object have initiated the process of pan-Tibetanness as an outside phenomenon. As a Tibetan in Australia said to me: "The Dalai Lama is the Tibetan identity. He reminds all Tibetans that they are Tibetans no matter where they are and what other nationality they may identify with." (I/A 2003_4) Therefore, national feelings, the feeling of sameness, are associated with the veneration of the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama himself knows this, and such knowledge is inherent in his formulation of a new national identity based on the former religious one. One can say that faith in the Dalai Lama is a Tibetan trait. While some do not agree with the concept of democracy promoted in the Dalai Lama's government, not many Tibetans would want to see him gone.[88]

With time and space, the secularisation of the Tibetan community has increased, especially with the Dalai Lama's democratic reforms in the Tibetan government in exile. The Tibetans are under the same process of secularisation as most populations, while still maintaining a high level of religious practice among average Tibetans, positing nonetheless the need to promote different identification processes. With geographical distance due to the spread of the diaspora and modern education, there has been a decrease in blind religious fervour, in favour of an identity more adapted to the 'modern' world, especially the Tibetans' role in it. Despite religion not being part of the academic curriculum, the Tibetan identity continues to thrive. One may therefore question its central role in cultural preservation. On the other hand, Tibetan language

[87] For information on internal disputes over power in Tibet prior to exile see John Avedon (1986).

[88] The Dalai Lama himself has started instituting reforms in order to make his passing as unproblematic for the Tibetan cause as possible, because he is conscious of the importance he holds for most Tibetans (Tenzin Gyatso 1998).

is taught and is regarded by many Tibetans as an essential carrier of Tibetan identity.[89] The first step for an identifiable community/group is to have its own language. To preserve the Tibetan language and culture is primary as a Tibetan in Switzerland told me. Religion is secondary, for it is difficult and it may discourage young Tibetans from keeping in touch with traditions (I/S 2003_2).

Language is a basic and distinctive identity and membership indicator. Although not all Tibetans know how to speak Tibetan, especially outside of Asia, most know the symbolism associated with it: it is an objective repository of accumulations of meaning and experience. Language conveys information about the speaker; it is a symbol of identity for it contains 'social markers' (Scherer & Giles in Hogg 1988: 195) According to Patrice Meyer-Bisch (2001), language is the primary source of identification. The danger for Tibetans is not only the loss of Tibetan as a language, but as a mode of communicating their identity; articulating Tibetan unites all who speak the language in a distinctive group. Language 'makes present' for the individual not only fellowmen who are physically absent at the moment, but fellowmen projected as imaginary figures into the future as well (Berger & Luckman 1975: 54). "[Language] is capable of becoming the objective repository of vast accumulations of meaning and expression, which it can then preserve in time and transmit to following generations" (Berger & Luckman 1975: 52). Language objectivates shared experiences, making them available to all within the linguistic community as a collective stock of knowledge (Berger & Luckman 1975).[90] As Meyer-Bisch (2001) says, language contains history, as written or spoken traditions; it allows continuity, being a cultural object and source of identification. Language would reinforce Benedict Anderson's "Imagined Communities" (1991), where each member of a community has the others in his mind, despite not maintaining direct face-to-face interactions.

The Tibetan language is able to crystallise, stabilise and typify the Tibetans' own subjective notion of Tibetanness. Language, like religion, codifies reality, for the latter is mediated by and through language. While one Tibetan told me that losing one's culture is not as bad as losing one's language (I/S 2003_2), language is a vector to culture. Language summarises culture on an unconscious level; hence to lose Tibetan is to lose Tibetan meanings and values. Certain aspects cannot be thought in another language (I/A 2003_1). Thus to speak about Tibetans

[89] Then again, other countries outside of India do not provide their Tibetan refugees with Tibetan language training and there is nonetheless a homogenous Tibetan community.
[90] Inter-subjective sedimentation of experiences occurs when an *ensemble* of individuals share a common biography, the experiences becoming incorporated in a common stock of knowledge (Berger & Luckman 1975).

involves already determining them, defining the nature of the Tibetan identity. Hence the *sine qua non* of language is the framework of shared meaning. It is not only a means of communicating a message but also the occasion to develop a code, a manner of speaking, hence the importance of continuing the practice of the Tibetan language among the exiles, as a vector for Tibetan culture.

Language as an identification process has its value in both inter-group and intra-group relations: language has a great influence on the relationship between Tibetans and the host population. By maintaining their own language, Tibetans show their will to remain distinct from the surrounding host population. On the contrary, by learning the host country's language, the Tibetans show their willingness to integrate and contribute. In countries such as Switzerland or Australia, the educational system requires all children to learn the national language, thus insuring a partial integration of all inhabitants. As one Tibetan Australian resident told me: "It is difficult to expect from Tibetans in Australia the same knowledge of Tibetan language and culture as from Tibetans in India, with its high degree of governing autarky." (I/A 2003_1) Although these countries may put forward a multicultural society with their educational system promoting tolerance and equity, this language requirement is a barrier to real minority culture preservation. On the other hand, India, by granting a high degree of autarky to the Tibetan government in exile on an educational level, has cut the degree of allegiance to the Indian state and culture (O/I 2003; O/S 2003).

Some will choose to defend their language; others prefer to master the language of the majority. Others still will look for double identification (the two languages) to enhance their prospects, especially on an economic level. "[However] the loss of the ethnic language as a salient ethnic marker can result in feelings of anomie and low self-esteem coupled with a sense of betrayal in speaking the dominant group's language." (W.E. Lambert in Hogg 1988: 198) A Tibetan man in Australia reiterated such an opinion when he told me that not knowing one's language means losing one's identity, for it is the means to demonstrate one's membership with the Tibetan community. "I demonstrate that I am Tibetan when speaking it."[91] (I/A 2003_4) Many young interviewed Tibetans outside of India and Tibet felt shame upon not knowing as they said was their national language (I/A 2003), not realising the fact that they were subject to an ambivalent identification process. This feeling is deepened by the negative reaction that many fluent Tibetan speakers show, condemning lack of knowledge of the Tibetan national language as a

[91] "Tibetan, however, is not just *a* language; it is *the* language of being Tibetan." (Nowak 1984: 75)

sign of unwillingness to invest in the Tibetan cause. A young Tibetan woman who grew up in India was dismayed by the fact that young Tibetans in Switzerland did not know or show any interest in learning their national language (I/S 2003_1). "It is really shameful and unbecoming to a Tibetan if one doesn't know his language perfectly, being a citizen of Tibet." (A last year student in India cited in Nowak 1984: 87) Consequently, many of these young Tibetans outside of the large Indian communities looked upon their age peers in India as having been able to successfully preserve their specific identity, degrading their own efforts by evaluating cultural survival on the sole criterion of language (I/A 2003_1; I/A 2003_3). However, while considering that they have not been able to preserve their Tibetan culture well, they still continue to define themselves as Tibetan.[92]

The Tibetan language has another integration/exclusion role, this time within the community. The settled Tibetans in exile feel offended by the new Tibetan immigrants' Sinicised way of speaking Tibetan. As a newly immigrated Tibetan told me he felt that same way, since the old settlers discriminated against newcomers by introducing Hindi or Indian cultural references into their way of being Tibetan or when expressing themselves so as to distinguish and mark their membership in the exile version of Tibetanness (I/I 2003_14). It is a critical issue in the Tibetan community, since language is a vehicle to portray the speaker's identity. They believe that they should be united in portraying a homogenous identity. Firstly, at the level of the Tibetan language in exile: the official Tibetan is from the region of Lhasa, so newcomers from other Tibetan regions must adopt and even learn—often having not been able to go to school for a long period—the Tibetan that has become the pan-Tibetan language, the 'modern Tibetan talking' (I/S 2003_1). Secondly, in relation to the symbolic form of reference in the Tibetan language, the newcomers must learn the foreign elements in official Tibetan, mostly Hindi and Indian references that have become incorporated and stated as the official Tibetan way. Newcomers are not the only Tibetans who have difficulty with the fact that Tibetan is changing under the influence of Hindi; Tibetans from outside India feel alienated from the main Tibetan community, because they must adapt to a language that does not seem to be their own, some terms and ways of expression being Indian (I/A 2003_3).

Identity can therefore be constituted of different criteria, which are accentuated/devalued depending on the social environment. The Tibetan Diaspora, however, presents a homogenised

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[92] I perceived such a fact among the young Tibetans I interviewed in Australia and Switzerland (I/A 2003; I/S 2003).

identity despite the national variations of its different communities. The next sub-section illustrates the process leading to the creation of *the* Tibetan identity.

2.3 Tibetan identity: cultural syncretism

Let us return to Steven Vertovec's (1999) view of diasporas as social forms with specific types of consciousness and modes of cultural production.[93] A community, which the Tibetan Diaspora has been defined to be,[94] shares the same 'routes' and 'roots,' which leave a trail of collective memory of another time and place, which in turn creates new maps of desire and of attachment to a home away from home (Gilroy 1999). Tibetans have shared the experience of fleeing their homeland,[95] but with time their homes have become the countries in which they are settled (I/A 2003_3). Some continue nonetheless to wish for a possible return, and to define themselves as Tibetans, even when naturalised as another nationality.[96] The common experience creates a collective memory and a symbolic system that offers content worth mobilising for to protect specificity. A specific Tibetan identity was born in exile out of the prior society in Tibet, probably heightening Tibetan characteristics. Exile awakened this identity and exacerbated it.

Prior existence of networks and hierarchy of communication unified Tibetans into a group in order to preserve their collective identity, hence their personal identity. Tibetanness emerging from shared experiences had to suit the expanding Tibetan community, often outside of the framework in which many of the shared experiences occurred. The feeling of Tibetanness resulted in an objective Tibetan identity. Pan-Tibetanness was able to and still does spread through pilgrimage to religious sites and with Tibetan festivals. The union of Tibetans across the world is either on religious occasions—to listen to the Dalai Lama teachings or annual festivals—or at political-consciousness raising events, each having its Tibetanness-shaping character. This common understanding of religious principles and commemoration dates has

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[93] Types of consciousness shall be analysed in this sub-section, and the modes of cultural production shall be studied in sub-section 2.4.

[94] One of the main traits of a community is that this identification process operates on a collective level (even if in an abstract manner, by imagining others identifying to the same object), which creates a sense of communion. At the basis of the Tibetan community resides the identity to which members must show allegiance, if they are to benefit from it.

[95] Even the generations in exile know that period in their history in detail, compared to their lack of knowledge in many areas, including Buddhist principles and Tibetans customs (I/A 2003; O/S 2003).

[96] Many Tibetans living in exile reveal in interviews (I/A 2003) that they cannot see themselves living in Tibet, nor in India (if living in other countries); however, they still identify with the Tibetans from these regions; they feel united as a community. Is this an ideal that they express as a lesson well learnt or reality?

been shared by and has served to unite a diverse *ensemble* of Tibetan people separated by geographical, socio-economic and linguistic barriers.

The specificity of the Tibetan Diaspora's consciousness is its dual nature. Through interaction with others, Tibetans have come to know themselves as different, while feeling allegiance to the others (Bayart 1996), feeling 'at home' away from 'home.' There is a high probability for individuals in close vicinity to share common life experiences, which then transform into common references: painful events to avoid or desirable experiences to repeat. The result is the establishment of a symbolic and normative system with which they are expected to comply in order to facilitate a smooth functioning of the group (see chapter 1). While Tibetans in exile share similar experiences, having similar 'roots' and having covered similar 'routes', they have also, by proximity, shared memories with the host population. Decision-making Tibetans therefore have developed parallel *habiti*, one that is proper to their group, and the other that can be used within the host country, both being influenced by the outside group.[97] With time, knowledge develops of what aspects of Tibetanness are to be exposed and others to be limited to their group. The Tibetan *habitus* is structured so as to be applicable in situations of cultural crisscrossing or of cultural specificity, while always being the result of cultural influence.

The passage from simple repetitive events to a recognised pattern of behaviour and then its institutionalisation into norms follows the passage from a simple aggregation of individuals to a group of members. The key step is the act of recognition, the process of identification the individual makes with the social structure that surrounds him/her. The Tibetan *habitus* seeks to represent the Tibetan by moulding his/her behaviour and mode of thinking as a sign of membership. Certain memberships are more difficult to mould than others. A Tibetan may have the national *habitus* of his/her host country, but due to his/her appearance, he/she will continuously be assimilated with the Tibetan community, even if he/she has never been associated with it (e.g. many of the adopted Tibetan children in Switzerland).

Identification is helped by the fact of sharing common references, such as common experiences that mould a collective memory. In the study of social facts, such as national identity, the concept of association is primary.[98] Through association there is emergence of behaviour that is

[97] When discussing the Tibetan *habitus*, I am referring to the *habitus* which benefits from the support of the upper decision-making strata and which is recognised as *the* Tibetan *habitus*.
[98] Chapter 1 illustrates how the individual will unconsciously associate with people with similar characteristics, relations being facilitated by shared common values.

different from the individual components that constituted it (Durkheim 1988, Elias 1996). When individuals are close together (in space or ideology) they experience states of communion, creating social phenomena such as social identity that would have been impossible individually. This similarity will engender solidarity that incites them to unite to better protect themselves against outside threats. The perpetuation of the Tibetan *habitus* depends largely on its protection from other competing modes of action and thought that in turn depends on the degree of identification and the number of individuals that proceed to identify. The Tibetan identity was first unified through the regional identities that attracted Tibetans from the same provinces or villages. Having had close experiences in their flight into exile and then in their interactions with Tibetans from other areas and the host population, they identified with each other by their sameness (Elias 1994). This demands an act of reciprocal recognition that can be continuously renewed, modified or broken (Meyer-Bisch 2001). A key factor in the Tibetan struggle for the preservation of their specific mode of living stems from creating a continuous level of identification that keeps the Tibetan identity alive and guards against immersion in other *habitus*. It would be interesting to question Tibetans on the reason they identify with Tibetanness, even if they have lived in very different countries, or outside Tibetan communities. A probable explanation could be the Tibetan community's success in preserving a distinct and separate normative system to which Tibetans have access and on which they have been able to rely when learning the *habitus* of the larger group. Maintaining the Tibetan specificity in the private sphere provides a normative system by which any other system can be judged and selected. It is the basis upon which other cultural dimensions are added, leading to Tibetans defining themselves as Australian-Tibetan, or Indian-Tibetan, but always as Tibetan (I/A 2003; I/S 2003).

A normative system can either be established for the entire society, or uniquely for the group in which the common experiences occurred. How widely a specific value scale is spread depends on the group's power in the social configuration. Although a group may not possess enough power to spread its *habitus* to a larger number, it can still have the strength to resist succumbing to the influence of other groups' cultural specificity. While the Tibetan community will always be a minority within its host countries, its symbolic system has the self-sufficiency to maintain its cultural specificity in the face of the cross-cultural influence to which it is subjected. This can be largely due to how the host country perceives the minority in its midst. In the host countries, the Tibetan community benefits from a valued image; hence its influence is not considered to be a threat to the national environment in which it resides and is not targeted for destruction/assimilation. Its margin of influence varies. In India, benefiting from international aid, the Tibetan community contributes to the development of the Indian society in its proximity; its avant-garde status promotes Tibetans to positions of influence (Arakeri 1998). In developed countries where Tibetans have become established, their contribution would be situated more on a spiritual level, hence providing Tibetan influence with secondary importance in the host country's development (O/S 2003).

Within the Tibetan community, the detection of cultural influence and the search for legitimacy require a continuous struggle by the elite (i.e. politicians, higher social strata, the Dalai Lama's kin, etc.) to maintain its monopoly over the establishment of the acceptable *habitus*. Stuart Hall (1999) defines two moments in the process of cultural establishment. Firstly, there is the recognition of shared experiences that moulds a similar outlook on life and mode of operation, that could be coined *habitus*. Secondly, there arises the struggle over the politics of representation, where diverse groups within the community fight for the rights to choose the structures of the identity (Goldstein 1997), acknowledging that representations do not merely reflect culture but are constitutive of it. To structure the Tibetans into a community to downplay regionalist identification and to orient Tibetan refuges toward cultural preservation, the elite elaborated strategies to induce identification with their common cause of surviving as a specific and distinctive group. Education was one mentioned mechanism, as was the establishment of the criteria that were to be possessed by all Tibetans. Having spread to different host countries, these criteria (e.g. Tibetan language, Buddhism) have had to vary in importance due to the requirements of each environment, positing competing definitions to what had been established by the elite in Dharamsala. Modern education, encouraging debate and questions, has produced in the generation that benefited from it a new attitude of scepticism that also threatens this monopoly of definition. Hence a certain margin of the leading strata has made use of censorship (Norbu 1994) and ostracism of deviancy (I/I 2003_12). The result of this within the Tibetan community has perhaps induced homogeneity among the visible and affluent Tibetans. But it has also led to the emergence of the configuration of established-outsider (chapter 3), which is precisely what should have been avoided because of its negative impact on solidarity. This configuration has enabled the Tibetan community to maintain an image of solidarity amongst the 'presentable' Tibetans, whilst hiding a large margin of its population that has not yet proven its reliability on the cultural level with respect to the exile definition of Tibetanness.

It is in exile that Tibetans have had to present themselves and define the criteria that were to determine Tibetanness. When interacting with others, Tibetans have had to present the Tibetan community and its cultural identity, and describing it has materialised it in their minds and in the minds of others. It could be postulated that when Tibetans were attempting to define their cultural specificity for the outside world, they came to construct their identity (Mottier 2000). The selection of what was to be preserved has become what *is* Tibetan. Their definition has become part of the common knowledge that the international community has in order to have a global idea of who and where all the peoples are to be categorised. The outside world defines the Tibetans as a cultural exception, people who have preserved their traditional ways throughout time, despite globalisation and modernisation. Tibetans, while benefiting from an established normative system, at least among the elite, have been subjected to the definition of their Tibetan identity by the outside world. The use of 'Tibet' in a broad ethnographic sense, as the general area throughout which are found populations sharing a manifestly high degree of similarity in linguistic, cultural and social patterns, and historical experiences, that is, the 'Tibetans,' is a modern concept. It was invented for the Western world to classify these people, and used by the Tibetans to uphold their diasporic status, their specificity and claims to an independent state. The Tibetan scholar "Tsering Shakya[,] has rightly pointed out that there is in fact no indigenous term that includes all the population often denoted by the use of the word 'Tibetan' in Western literature [...]." (Huber 1999: VIII) Therefore the Tibetans turned to moulding their characteristics to fit the stereotypical image of Tibetanness that the West has used. Associating the Western norms with their Buddhist principles has made Tibetans adopt the Western terminology and set the pattern for future interactions between the Tibetan community and the international community.

The educated strata were rapidly aware of the benefits in claiming national values closely related to the Declaration of human rights, and work on orienting the entire Tibetan community to carry the *habitus* they had instituted. It is not only a process from the outside to the inside. The designation can also impart to those who are the target the very qualities that its architects supposed these individuals to possess. Perhaps the image of Tibetanness came first and was self-validating; it generated the conditions for the behaviour on which it fed. Toni Huber (2001) distinguishes four points in the emergence of the Tibetan identity: firstly, Tibetans themselves have constructed a Shangri-la image of their community, based on what he calls the three powerful '-isms': colonialism, orientalism, and nationalism, and the values originating in the West such as environmentalism, pacifism, and human rights. Secondly, this Tibetan identity was the creation of the leading elite in exile. Thirdly, this identity is a modern production emerging from the experience of diaspora. And lastly, the mythical Tibet was historically a Western enterprise.[99] The Tibetans instigated the exile definition "as a self-marketing device aimed at the West and a weapon in an ongoing propaganda battle waged against the colonial Chinese state" (Huber 2001: 367) that became a self-fulfilling prophecy among the Tibetans themselves. When questioned, Tibetans totally identify with this definition that gives the impression that the entire Tibetan community is incarnating the Bodhisattva of Compassion Chenrezig (I/A 2003; I/I 2003; I/S 2003).[100] The West has imprisoned the Tibetan cultural identity in a role of passivity, Buddhism being equated with pacifism and serenity. The Tibetan identity may be linked to Buddhism, but it cannot be limited to Buddhism. Among the young there seems to be a kind of religious reawakening, especially among new young refugees from Tibet. Many identify with the practice of Buddhism as a method for attacking Chinese authorities.[101] In this sense, one may say their reawakening is not religious, but rather anti-Chinese or nationalistic (which may be in essence anti-Chinese), promulgating the survival of a specific Tibetan cultural identity (Ardley 2002). "Religion in general provides an obvious focus for Tibetan conscience and opposition to the Chinese." (Wangyal 1994: 226)

The Tibetan Government in exile has specifically chosen to value certain aspects of the Tibetan society before exile, such as giving importance to Buddhism, while downplaying the role of violent resistance (Norbu 1994) in order to present a unified image in accordance with their mode of action, the non-violence policy. Its credibility is based on the stereotype of the peace-loving Tibetan community and its basis in Buddhism (Sperling 2001). While educating the exile children to perceive themselves and their community as pacifist, there has been censorship of other aspects of the Tibetan identity that did not fit their stereotype construction, such as Tibetans as good warriors or the violence of some monks' behaviour.[102] The settled, exiled Tibetans especially condemn the newly immigrated Tibetans from Tibet who possess a

[99] Many authors depicted Tibet as a haven of religiousness and happiness before Tibet was open to the outside world (David-Néel 1982).
[100] Educating children to carry a *habitus* with the peace-loving characteristic restructured the social configuration of the Tibetan community to suit the values that had become the preoccupation of the elite, and was important for the cultural marketing of the Tibetan cause.
[101] The practice of expelling monks and nuns from monasteries by the Chinese authorities, who view these places as cradles for the nationalistic movement (Barnett 1994), reflects how religion is viewed as rebellion by a doctrine that condemns it.
[102] Being Tibetan has been transformed with the experience of living under the Chinese: most Tibetans have experienced this, except for the new generations born in exile—who learn what it is to live under threat of violence through school and/or parents. There has been addition of the dimension of a people that has suffered to the definition of Tibetanness as 'happy and loving Tibetans'. Tibetanness is now defined in opposition to the Chinese definition or in accordance with what it means to be Tibetan to the international community.

habitus that has been influenced by the Chinese occupation, and hence is linked to violence, in order to legitimate their classification of themselves and that which others employ for them: non-violent and pacifist (I/I 2003_12).[103]

The focus here is how the Tibetans, initially not the intended consumers of these identities, become the actors of the constructed nature of their community's image. They reproduce, especially with the elite in exile's censorship of certain events, the traditionalist image of the Tibetan identity. "Though the Shangri-la stereotype is a Western creation, Tibetans, especially Tibetan refugees, are gradually succumbing to a similarly fantastic idea of their lost country." (Norbu 2001: 377) While the image of Tibet and of Tibetans seems to have been constructed to answer the needs of a specific Western public, it is interesting to concentrate on how the Tibetans have been using this image and living by it. This authenticates it as the vector linking the cause of their present situation with a past of cultural specificity. There is an intentionally selected version of the past and a monitored form of the present, which is central in the process of cultural definition and identification. Selected 'markers' must make sense not only for the people who will act them out but also for those who will be the spectators. Tibetan identity 'markers' are significant in the sense that they give meaning to what the Tibetan community is living, but also to how it is living: it is a distinctive and different entity from its surroundings. "It is only when they *make a difference* in interaction that cultural differences are important in the creation of ethnic boundaries." (Eriksen 1993: 39) Tibetans live their situation thanks to the belief that it is their specificity that is the cause of it and for which they must persevere in bearing it.

Having mentioned the dimension of self-perception that members of a community may have of their group, it is important to emphasise the creative role of self-definition and belief in producing reality. "Groups which have 'discovered that they have a culture', who have invented and reified their culture, can draw on myths of origin and a wide array of potential boundary-markers." (Eriksen 1993: 128) Hugh Seton-Watson defines a nation as "a community of people, whose members are bound together by a sense of solidarity, a common culture, a

[103] In opposition to the Chinese occupants, the Tibetan community in exile targets newcomers from Tibet as scapegoats, who represent all that the exiled community is trying to avoid: the incorporation of Tibetans as acculturated individuals into the Chinese motherland. The exiles seem to forget that they are also products of *métissage*, although it is recognised that Tibetans on both sides are influenced by their environment. Nonetheless, this realisation does not reduce the occurrence of the usage of a distinctive criterion such as authenticity in their daily interaction of the settled Tibetans and the newcomers and its impact on the contribution of each group in the construction of *the* Tibetan community.

national consciousness." (Franck 1999: 8) Not only does Tibetans' belief in their specificity produce cohesion and structure, their relationship with their homeland maintains their belief in their purpose of preserving culture, and consequently has a conducive effect on creating and maintaining a Tibetan community. The Tibetans in exile have learned to think of themselves as a united and homogenous community.

Tibetan culture has to be seen as eternal and invariant by its members in order to give reason for the struggle. Tibetans must believe in the Tibetan sense of cultural sovereignty. For cultural preservation a denial of change and disavowal of transformation are required according to Hamid Naficy (Diehl 1997). However, many interviewed Tibetan elite do perceive such changes, and do not seem troubled by hybrid cultural identity. But for the majority to continue to identify and wish for continuity of their identity, they must believe in the permanence and strength of their cultural specificity. Tibetans in order to fight for their rights must be distinctive to give legitimacy to claims to an independent country; this distinctiveness must be present in everyone's mind, and hence seem invariant. Group structure and cohesion permit the Tibetans to be self-sufficient on a symbolic level: the notion of collectively carrying a cultural specificity and having a group structure that can carry its own normative system hides the process of cultural syncretism of which it is the result. The fact that the Tibetan community has its own scale of values gives the impression that Tibetans are not obliged to refer to either their Chinese oppressor's values or to their host country's values. Adhering to one specific *habitus* helps in its turn to establish group structure; to homogenise a character to a collectivity requires the institution of a single normative system.

Since total identity homogeneity for the entire Tibetan community across its diaspora is impossible due to different life paths and environments, how then do Tibetans maintain similarity across such geographical disparity? The erroneous tendency of viewing an identity as a fixed state that equates it with the possession of specific characteristics would automatically associate a certain trait with an identity. Just as the possession of a specific characteristic by one person does not provide another presenting this same trait with the matching identity, the combination of traits bestows a multiplicity of identification possibilities. Identities are not the reflection of some natural order and inescapable characteristics. We must nonetheless not perceive the individual as an autonomous agent who can don an identity as he/she wishes. He/she is composed of that which is received as a biological and cultural heritage, and another part that is chosen. Interactions being constantly produced and producing society (Bourdieu

1992a), require a constant adaptation of identities to the social environment, thus demanding changing identification processes. If we were to adopt Bourdieu's (1992a) equivalence between social structures and mental order, the nature of each Tibetan community would be different. However, the characteristic that very often surprises me when viewing the Tibetan Diaspora is its consistency over time and space at a normative and symbolic level. Tibetans themselves express this paradox. One Tibetan man told me: "Tibetans are the same everywhere, but their environment will mould their life and affect their way of thinking." (I/A 2003_4)

One might wonder if there could be a Tibetan core, something that is not influenced by a foreign environment. "Culture is dynamic, it cannot be written down as a constitution. It's changing." Stated a young Tibetan in Australia. He continues, however, by stating that the values stay the same. "Every culture has its core elements, and for Tibetans, it's the Buddhist values." (I/A 2003_1) There always seems to be an unattainable essence in cultural identities.[104] Tibetan identity is recognised for its biological and cultural components. Samdhong Rinpoche repeats this in his suggestion that Tibetans should "keep their Tibetan-ness intact, and try and bring up their children as Tibetans. This means more than just culture. It means preserving the core of being Tibetan [...]." (*Himal* 2002: 23) The centrality of common heritage is crucial for a historical claim.

The effort invested in maintaining an identity of Tibetanness may be in reaction to the fault many perceive as due to regionalism in the surrender of Tibet to the Chinese army: regionalist differences prevented a concerted opposition to aggression Carnahan, Rinpoche, Shabtrung 1995; Goldstein, Siebenschuh, Tsering 1997; Norbu 1986, 1994; Pachen 2000; Tapontsang 1997; Taring 1970).[105] Many freedom fighters of the time of the Chinese invasion testify that the split alliance and solidarity line, due to many provincial identities, made the different

[104] Rabbi Cesar Seligmann's sermon to his Frankfurt congregants about the mobilising core of Jewishness demonstrates the reason for Tibetans to continue to maintain their Tibetanness despite identifying sometimes more strongly with their host country. "It is not Jewish conviction, not Jewish doctrine, not the Jewish creed that is the leading, the primary, the inspirational; rather, it is Jewish sentiment, the instinctive, call it what you will, call it the community of blood, call it tribal consciousness, call it the ethnic soul, but best of all call it: the Jewish heart." (Endelman 2001: 139) Such a statement does not help identify what Tibetanness is, but it shows how it can be a reality nonetheless.

[105] "If we Tibetans had fought together from the first day of the Chinese attack, we could never have lost. Our mountains are impregnable. There were no roads. The Chinese had no supply lines. Their soldiers were helpless for days, marching snow-blind one behind another. No army on earth could have conquered that country with the people united against it, but because of our own confusion, they just walked in." (Tibetan man in Avedon 1986: 29)

Tibetan fronts suspicious of the motives of unifying a front to resist the foreign threat.[106] As previously mentioned, the educational system in exile and all the transit camps for the new Tibetan refugees focus on the elimination of regionalist identifications, knowing the importance of a unified national identity. For a collective identity to prevail, there must be an imaginary horizontal association with other members, by means of a collective identification process. "It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion." (Anderson 1991: 6) With cultural and social innovations, which are especially present in times of transition such as an exile, follows a continual reworking of the communal identity. Even if identity is never a fixed state and the identification process varies for groups that are dispersed across many continents with every new context and people, there must be an explicitly expressed will and focus to maintain a set of determined traits and attitudes. Within a group there is a need to work for unity and cooperation with respect to what is seen as 'disunity' among 'its people.' A member seeing that his/her fellow members adopt a similar scheme of behaviour comes to consider the latter as the right option and wants to abide by it. Patrice Meyer-Bisch (2001) sees the identification and the inclusion into a cultural heritage as a publicly declared recognition of its importance.

The Tibetan's identification with his/her community founds his/her solidarity with the Tibetan cause. Although Tibetans can be ostracised for a seeming lack of allegiance, the only real cause for adherence to the Tibetan community is the process of identification. "Someone is [Tibetan] by virtue of believing and calling himself [Tibetan] and of acting in ways that validate his [Tibetanness]." (Michael Moerman in Eriksen 1993: 11) Similarly, Jean-François Bayart (1996) states that there are no identities, only identification strategies. There is an equivalence of the notion of identity and the process of identification. "For Tibetan culture to survive, even in adapted form, Tibetan people must continue to define themselves as such. For this to occur mere cultural preservation is not sufficient; innovation, too, must continue to enliven the cultural repertoire." (Nowak 1984: 166)

Establishing Tibetan markers recognised within as well as outside the community had priority with exile. The choice of markers had to be emotionally relevant for the Tibetans who were to identify with them. Choosing elements (e.g. costume, diet, religious or lay traditions, language)

[106] The resistance movement of 'Four Rivers, Six Ranges' was a first attempt to unify different regions for the benefit of the collectivity. However, it was founded too late to repulse the Chinese army that was already close to Lhasa and had destroyed many of the resistance groups in the areas it had crossed.

Tibetans encountered in their daily routines prior to exile, in addition to Buddhism, which pervaded most aspects of life in Tibet, provided the cultural dimensions that gave meaning to the Tibetans' lives and helped to restructure a shaken mode of interacting. The meaningful aspect of the identity is primordial to canalise desire for it and give meaning to life.[107] Each member of a group carries its culture as a symbol of his identity. One can distinguish but not dissociate the external expression of a culture, and the internal cultural baggage for which one is the vector. Within India and Nepal, the Tibetan education system provides explicit knowledge of Tibetan traditions, such as arts and crafts, and language and primary socialisation within kin moulds the member to consider him-/herself Tibetan and endows him/her with the feeling of Tibetanness. In other countries, this knowledge is limited to family or events promoting the Tibetan culture and cause. The internal structures set patterns of behaviour as well as aesthetic patterns that shape cultural productions. Does a culture not possess the moulding capacities that condition its members' behaviour and cognitive schemes? Contrarily to a *habitus* that cannot be the object of an explicit belief—the individual being oblivious to its existence—a culture gains legitimacy from individuals' identification. The *habitus* and its cultural perpetuation are guaranteed by establishing individual behaviours into a recognised institution of identification on a collective level. The *habitus* in turn unconsciously conditions individuals to identify with a specific culture. Tibetans may therefore be conditioned to identify with the Tibetan identity. However, they are also conditioned to identify with the host country's identity. The concept of culture is central to the question of identity preservation, constituting a dimension of the identification process at the base of identity construction. The identity could be seen as the embodied culture within each member. Identities are the 'shoots' sent up from the *habitus* 'root.' Whilst the concepts of identity and culture are identification 'papers,' the *habitus* must rely on them to be the indicators of its existence. All three concepts are dimensions of the identification process and categorise the individual in the social classification; they correspond to different degrees of consciousness of this process. The Tibetan knows he/she is part of a culture, and knows many of its traditions; however, the number of Tibetans who are aware of the components of their ritualised selves declines the closer the norms and cultural activities get to the *habitus*.

Unarticulated knowledge, the *habitus*, is twofold: on the one hand, there is the accessible dimension, which can be expressed as discursive knowledge (Giddens 1984: 23); and on the

[107] As Christiaan Klieger says, the central issue is not to determine if the revitalised traditions are real or fake, but whether they have "a meaningful continuity for Tibetan refugees." (Diehl 1997: 148)

other hand there is the inaccessible symbolic 'baggage' that influences even the agent's way of accessing his/her consciousness. One could therefore presume that the latter dimension of the individual mind has a slow variation rate and may explain the continuity of Tibetanness abroad.[108] Tibetans know tacitly what traditions to respect and which practices to perform from their socialisation within the Tibetan community; however, the meanings embedded in the practices are unknown for many. These traditions having become cultural indicators may have seen their consciousness pass into latency. For many Tibetans, daily routines require freeing their minds of the Tibetan identification process in order to allow a second identification with the host country. "Every Tibetan has two faces, the one that he adapts to the situation, and the one that he has in his heart. The one that nobody can see it, nobody can take from him." (my translation of a travel account in Tibet) Consequently, even Tibetans may be unable to access certain traits of Tibetanness, hence preserving them to a certain extent from manipulation. With the duration of exile lengthening, it will be interesting to observe the degree of 'sameness' that the Tibetans may still present in the future.

Attempting to maintain cultural specificity cannot flaunt cross-cultural influences.[109] Cultural authenticity is generally associated with history and tradition, hence continuity. It would be an error, however, to regard culture as culturalism does: as being composed of a stable and closed corpus of representations, of beliefs and symbols. Cultural preservation reveals culture's dual nature of form and content (Barthes 1972); the form can be archived, while the content exists through the individual's ways of living. One cannot distinguish between the two, they are interrelated; however, there is no frozen link between them.[110] A frequently expressed idea is that a tradition can have only one form with one content. However, when a custom is practised

[108] "The habitus does not consist of a system of ideas that a person 'internalises', but rather of a series of identities the person acquires and 'embodies'. It exists primarily in an embodied form, as 'a bodily hexis': 'Bodily hexis is political mythology realised, em-bodied, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and, thereby of feeling and thinking [...]' (Bourdieu 1977: 80) It is this 'em-bodied' modality of habitus that accounts for its durability: 'The principles em-bodied in this way are placed beyond the grasp of consciousness, and hence cannot be touched by voluntary, deliberate transformation, cannot even be made explicit; nothing seems more ineffable, more incommunicable, more inimitable, and, therefore, more precious, than the values given body...' (Bourdieu 1977: 94) Thus the habitus is 'not something that one has, as a knowledge that one can keep in front of him, but something that one is.' Bourdieu 1980: 73)." (Leledakis 1995: 83-4)

[109] Since mental structures and the structures of social configurations mutually condition each other (Bourdieu 1992a), social reproduction would be guaranteed, for one could not change without the other changing. However, social change is accepted, for social agents have a certain margin of freedom -a margin of their person that is less strongly infused by the *habitus*—of action despite the determined nature of their trajectory. In this perspective, evolution, change and adaptation would be 'normal'. Social life, however, shows a high degree of constancy; human society results from the effort of maintenance.

[110] In my opinion, the *habitus* constitutes culture, which cannot be archived in libraries nor exhibited in museums, even in its transcriptions of behaviours and mentalities, for the interpretation will be subject to the fashioning of the *habitus*.

daily, how can there not be a slip of meaning or a change in practice, from habit, misguidance, an expressed will to innovate or from a requirement to adapt to a change of environment? Individuals move, hence cross-cultural influences are inevitable. The ambivalence and hybridity of the Tibetan identity definition born from displacement must be understood as "signs of tensions of exile and strategies of resistance and syncretic accumulation" (Hamid Naficy in Diehl 1997: 147).

The Tibetan community in exile has had to adapt its set of traditions to the environment in which it is immersed. In spite of this, it presents a fair degree of unity, in time and space. So how can the social configuration be considered to continue to reproduce itself with minor changes, if *habitus* and culture are changeable? How does culture maintain itself without change when the social structures change, as in the case with a diaspora? Is the reason for this unity the Tibetans' relentless, renewed allegiance to their community? The individual's continued practice of rituals fossilises their form, while the content may adapt, proportionally to the cultural influence to which it is subjected. Tibetans unconsciously give a new meaning to old rituals, due to the cultural influence from their environment, while giving importance to the traditional practice to show their adherence (Bayart 1996).[111] Group practice therefore becomes conformist, especially in diasporas, by reason of wanting to stabilise a collective identity so as to homogenise the members' *habitus*. Habit and routinisation[112] of Tibetanness has to a certain degree preserved customs and rituals, but at the risk of instigating practice without sense and comprehension for the Tibetan. The question is whether this is preservation. There is nevertheless a need to take care that one does not limit oneself to transmission, reproduction, permanence, and continuity. Adopting such a limited view would imprison our thought in structuralism, where the social actor is seen solely as a cultural carrier, and not as an innovator. "To be an agent is to have the capability of 'making a difference,' of intervening in the world so as to influence events which occur in that world. To be a *human* agent is to be a highly knowledgeable and skilled individual, who applies that knowledgeability in securing autonomy of action in the course of day-to-day life." (Giddens 1982: 44) Human beings are knowledgeable and capable agents; they are knowledgeable because they can be aware of why

[111] What may not change is this identification with culture; the content is fabricated or more likely modified to suit the present social configuration. Consequently, the meaning changes but the act of giving or seeing meaning in the content is continuously reiterated.

[112] *Habitus* is closely linked to group structure reproduction, for it tints the intentions of agents without them realising their active role in the routinisation (Giddens 1984) of activities and behaviours, and subsequent social reproduction. The role of the *habitus* is to minimise the unconscious sources of anxiety, for most habitual activities do not stem from motivation, but provide individuals with set patterns that do not require reflection, or doubt.

they behave as they do and of the social conventions relevant to that behaviour. The individual is not passive, a victim of the *habitus*. He/she is a social agent, and therefore can change to a certain extent the system of values that determines him/her. This includes the capacity to choose to identify with certain social factors or to deny their legitimacy. A Tibetan can to a certain extent choose to define him-/herself in the frame of the Tibetan community. But as seen earlier in chapter 1, by living experiences in a certain social structure the Tibetan is conditioned to identify with the normative frame in which he grew up (Elias 1994). Tibetans in India may possess a higher degree of internal identification with the Tibetan community since it benefits from an important level of autarky. In the two other case studies, Australia and Switzerland, Tibetans being mixed into the larger society are more exposed to the cultural references of the host country and therefore give more credit to these. No group can, however, be immune to cultural influence, especially when the group is a minority (see sub-section 3.1.). If they choose to, Tibetans can therefore adopt cultural elements (e.g. music, clothing, diet) of their host country, while still promoting a Tibetan identity.

In spite of their conditioned nature, Tibetans are capable of innovation and imagination. To identify with the norms and symbols promoted by their community, they must delve into their own symbolism (which may imply reference to the cultural system of the host country) to give meaning to what they are to respect. The degree of consciousness of such a phenomenon is not to be considered as fully an act of reflection, but also a mechanism of self-preservation, where reflexes intervene to make sense of the outside world for the individual in search of personal integrity. As a young Tibetan said: "I have to decide what to accept and what to reject with my own brain. I want to preserve my culture, but I have also learned to question." (Nowak 1984: 131) A problem faced by many young Tibetans is the potential alienation from self or their primary group and a difficult self-definition as aliens in a foreign country.

> Tibetan refugees, cut off from their homeland, can no longer live and dwell within Tibetan traditions 'in the naivety of the first certainty'. They must struggle to retrieve the meaning of Tibetan traditions beyond whatever loss of certitude has occurred. Their attempt, then, is to rescue the possibility of an ongoing cultural heritage by adapting and creating new meaning out of the dialectic interaction of their past and present ideologies and experiences. (Nowak 1984: 160)

Identities may be seen as temporary materialisation of the identification process. Each individual possesses multiple roles that correspond to his/her daily activities. Each role corresponds in turn to a certain dimension of the social reality or group identity, a profile that its members must show. Classification produces ambivalence: belonging to one group is theoretical, for in everyday life the social agent must deal with several crisscrossing groups, each requiring adherence to its normative systems. Belonging to diverse groups, such as being a Tibetan while belonging to the Australian society, requires a certain cultural dexterity from the social agent. As a young Tibetan woman told me: "I feel Tibetan, but my home is Australia" (I/A 2003_3), the sense of belonging to the host country may be more spontaneous than the sense of membership in the Tibetan community, which is the result of an explicitly conditioned alliance. The notions of displacement and hybridity defy the rigidity of identity categories (Yon 1999). This adds a supplementary dimension to social agents, for while being conditioned by their membership in a group, they must also be able to juggle with the multiple social profiles they are to master. They adapt their identity to the circle they are in at the time, while keeping their adherence to their other memberships. Individuals therefore have multiple identities (Berger & Luckman 1975), an idea present in W.E.B. DuBois' (1997) concept of 'double consciousness,'[113] having to deal with two or more different sets of values.

"Brought up in a society within a society where power and legitimacy are ambiguous and where self-identity is particularly difficult to achieve, these [Tibetan] children and young adults are being doubly socialised: both through institutions planned to be as traditional as possible, and through new, sometimes radically different social experiences." (Nowak 1984: 166) Some identification processes can live in harmony; although some create a situation of dissonance within the social agent, creating conflicting loyalties. There is no principle of identity uniqueness, according to Jean-François Bayart (1996); the identification processed by the social actor is always contextual, multiple and relative. The emotional investment shown to a certain group may vary with the environment of the social agent. He/she may find it more favourable to hide a membership in a certain context, or show adherence to a certain group in order to increase the efficiency of his/her actions or the recognition from which he/she will benefit when presenting such an identity (Decanx 2001). The Tibetan has the potential to migrate between available worlds and has deliberately constructed a self out of the 'material' provided by a number of different identities. All Tibetans may seem to present homogeneous identities;

[113] Double consciousness is "this sense of always looking at one's self though the eyes of others [...]." (Du Bois 1997: 38)

however, they vary greatly according to the host countries in which they live, and in the extent to which they show solidarity with the host population. Many identify with their country of origin as their homeland, but see their host country as home; Tibetans can easily adapt their Tibetan identity to the national identity they are surrounded by and very often identify with it in a double identification process (I/A 2003).

This possible change of object of identification is an important dimension of a diaspora. There can be a parallel identification process: while turning to new references of the host country, the community in exile may still maintain a 'primary' or even a 'secondary' allegiance to the identity of the group of origin.[114] Tibetans are conscious of their double nature resulting from the mixture of heritage and contemporaneous allegiance from life experience. Although they may suffer from being apart from their homeland, they show a high level of trans-cultural flexibility, which makes them fluent in two or more spheres (I/A 2003; I/S 2003). The specific diaspora consciousness Vertovec (1999) refers to could be this hyperconsciousness of cultural requirements that allow juggling different cultural spheres, either by respectively fully integrating one at a time or by selecting and mixing the chosen and meaningful aspects of each membership.

Members of diasporas may have difficulty with the sense of oneness that is required from each social group. Certain memberships are harder to comply with, the feeling of limitation being too conscious and preventing the social agent from living to his full potential.[115] An example of this problem is the Tibetans within 'developed' countries: the requirements (e.g. work, school) of the host country do not allow for the practice of Tibetan traditions such as Losar and Monlam in their traditional form (I/A 2003_3). The traditional definition of Tibetanness[116] must be modified to enable Tibetans to maintain their specific identity. This version of Tibetanness will be adapted to the environment into which it is inserted: while being Tibetan, it will be a Swiss or Indian version, suited to the social structures of its host country. Not being

[114] A member may not identify with his/her group, but with the group of the host country in which he/she may have lived for all his/her life, while still being associated to the group of origin either by the other members or by the outside.

[115] In Daniel Yon's study of identity construction in a high-school in a neighbourhood with an Afro-American majority, one student belonging to a black-consciousness club stated: "At one stage I thought of myself as a black person but that limits me because as a black person there are things I am supposed to be. So I had to shed that. I am not just black. I am also a woman, and that limits me as well. We learn that and that is a sort of oppression because if I think that I am limited than I don't dare risk anything or try anything. So 'bust' being black and 'bust' being a woman. That is a form of oppression because you are limited in those two little notches." (Yon 1999: 37) This illustrates the duality of adherence and the limiting nature of identification.

[116] The traditional is the settled Tibetan's definition (see sub-section 3.2.).

able to live their Tibetanness in their daily activities has led to the possibility of the Tibetan identity of being latent: while all identities have an unconscious dimension, the fact of living them openly and collectively practicing the shared culture reiterates and reinforces membership. The *habitus* stems from the incorporation of social structures that are encountered daily; however, for the identity of the Tibetan Diaspora the link with social structures resides in the imagination of the former social frame. This inability to practice the Tibetan identity where it originated may be a cause for its 'fossilisation'; its application to the microcosm of the Tibetan society still restrains its evolution, confining it to a small, private sphere. But the Tibetan identity known today has originated in exile, and consequently its meaning stems from the social structures of the host counties.

2.4 Cultural authenticity

The question of authenticity is crucial in the Tibetan community. The definition of the authentic Tibetan identity and who possesses it is the object of internal struggle among Tibetans, separating Tibetans from different regions, promoting some into the international arena and hiding others. The organisation against the disappearance of their identity produced a social configuration that has endangered the solidarity necessary for cultural preservation. The issue of preservation and continuity with the past, hence of authenticity, has had its impact on the structure of the community. Cultural authenticity has an ideological dimension, for it is used to construct the Tibetan community, being an explicitly developed path of explanation by a certain social stratum with power (Yengoyan 2001). The established-outsider configuration (Elias 1994), based on the determination of the degree of Tibetanness possessed, is jeopardising the establishment of a collective consciousness of Tibetan membership, separating settled Tibetans in exile from newly escaped Tibetans (see sub-section 3.2).

In situations of displacement and intense change, the need to find stability arises, which is perceived to require continuity with the past. Displaced people attempt to reach this stability by searching for signs of a time when not everything was in upheaval, elements of a time that rapidly becomes idealised. The search for the feeling of belonging, which is accentuated by the loss of the homeland, resides in signs of being linked to that homeland, closely associated with the search for legitimacy. The efficiency of this procedure stems from the Tibetans' search for meaning in their present situation and organisation as a diaspora: maintaining an identity endangered within its homeland. To be legitimate representatives of this time and place, the issue of authenticity arises, posing certain problems in a diaspora. The Tibetan Diaspora is composed of a number of communities from the same homeland; their immersion in a diverse range of host countries (e.g. divers levels of economic development, different political systems, different religious faiths, etc.) has affected their Tibetanness. Tibetanness has been defined as a quality/quantity that 'authentic' Tibetans possess more than others rather than a process of self-identification (Yengoyan 2001).[117] This qualitative/quantitative definition has divided the Tibetan community into groups, by distancing some and uniting others. The classification into these sub-communities is a parallel process of designation by others and of self-perception, by the incorporation of the exile definition of the Tibetan *habitus*. However, even if the Tibetan cultural identity is a result of the dialectical relationship between Tibetans in exile, natives in Tibet, Western supporters, Western consumers of Tibetan religious doctrine and Chinese propaganda, its importance lies in the meaning it provides for its members and the identification process of which it is the object for the needs it fulfils (Korom 1997). Though an identity is constructed, the emotional investment it causes gives it reality and legitimacy. Tibetanness is not, however, a simple question of self-definition; others must perceive membership in the Tibetan individual, and they must possess the characteristics that identify him/her as Tibetan. For the Tibetan Diaspora to survive and maintain credibility, pan-Tibetanness is promoted to unify the diverse national Tibetan communities.

Criteria chosen to define the Tibetan identity were those that could unite a community and maintain it. For Jean-François Bayart (1996) the process of tradition invention is linked to the question of authenticity in a situation of changing social structures; the past is what united all Tibetans, thus contemporaneous unification has been established through traditionalism. As one interviewed man said: "To be Tibetan, one must eat, speak and see as a Tibetan. It's a state of mind." (I/A 2003_4) Before continuing one must ask what is an authentic identity? When talking about transmission there is already the idea of an authentic and anterior 'something' to pass on.[118] What is revealed from the interviews is a high identification, either among the Tibetans or outsiders, with Buddhist principles, such as humility, peacefulness, honesty and happiness. Whether this is the result of a socialisation or, dare we say, some biological features of Tibetanness, is irrelevant since they are the characteristics with which Tibetans are

[117] The Tibetan government in exile needed to define the Tibetan identity. That this definition would become a criterion of separation in the Tibetan community was surely not anticipated.
[118] This claim to authenticity would rely on the percentage of past culture that is still practiced instead of considering authenticity to be a result of an identification process to a valued normative system.

associated. To 'have a culture' resides in the belief that "there is an unchanging, stable core of ethnic belongingness which assures the individual of a continuity with the past", which "proves that one is faithful to one's ancestors and to the past." (Eriksen 1993: 68)

Tibetans are above all attempting to present a continuum with the past by concentrating on traditions, which are instituted as authentic signs of a time and a place that will be recaptured. Eric Hobsbawm (1983) writes, however, that traditions are often quite recent in origin and invented. The invention of traditions is an "attempt to structure at least some parts of social life within it as unchanging and invariant" (Hobsbawm 1983: 2) in response to novel situations. Traditions are therefore to be taken to signify a set of practices "governed by overtly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetitions," which implies "continuity with a suitable historic past." (Hobsbawm 1983: 1) Hence the invention of traditions arises at times of social change, such as an exile or change of leadership, and consequently past elements reveal structures of the present. "Tradition, usually said to be received, in reality made, is an activity of selection, revision and invention. Its function is to defend identity against the threat of heterogeneity, discontinuity and contradiction." (Sarup 1996: 182) The present Tibetan identity is the product of constant planning and revision, closely related to the nativistic movement discussed by Ralph Linton (1940)[119]. "Nativism can be seen in terms of 'conscious, organised' attempts to perpetuate selected aspects of culture. This can only occur when one is aware of one's culture as being unique—that is, in the contact situation." (Huber 2001: 366) The use of Buddhist principles to participate in the international movements of environmental consciousness, human rights and New Age religious demands, required rediscovering old traditions, a reinvention and emphasis on the importance of certain traditions over others. Collective memory is systematically unfaithful to the past in order to satisfy the needs of the present (Peterson 1992).

The past is used to make sense of the present (shared origins), and in parallel there is a present-day construction of the past. There is always a selective rendering of history, for it can be important in the fashioning of identity: negotiable history and a negotiable cultural content depend on their utility for the present group. It is what is called ethno-history, where the past is written in the present, expresses present concerns and "the presumed revitalisation of half-

[119] "The glorification of past or passing phases of culture is an almost universal accompaniment of situations of cultural change." (Linton 1940: 517) This requires a revival of a past, by nostalgia or will to call upon the strength of the past. "The revivals are selective and constitute symbols which are manipulated to produce certain results." (Linton 1940: 519)

forgotten ancestral cultures turns out to be something qualitatively new." (Eriksen 1993: 86) Cultural traditions are symbols, ideals, and ways of life of people that express the meaning of the destiny its members share. Therefore, even if the Tibetans in exile and natives inside Tibet are working to safeguard their culture each in their own capacities, they possess different destinies, hence adapting their own cultural traditions to their condition. A cultural identity is not the recovery of the essence of the past as a continuum, but is found in the way the individual is represented and in how he/she represents him-/herself in relation to a specific construction of the past amid a contextualised ensemble of individuals. Authenticity does not derive from the immanent properties of the tradition or ritual. It results from the manner which the individual seizes the past, in the context of the present (Bayart 1996). Cultural inventiveness[120] within the community with regard to the invention of one's past shifts the focus from the past to the present in order to work on the future. "[Tradition] becomes a usable past [...]" (Sarup 1996: 182)[121] suggesting that Tibetans work and adapt the meaning of their survival, and therefore of their past and religious traditions, to work on their identity's existence in the future. Authenticity involves the capacity of making the present and past meaningful for a future, and legitimating sacrifices for their cultural preservation.[122] The present identity reconstruction projects Tibetans into possible avenues of meaning that validate the present and canalise efforts into the future,[123] founded on the past for legitimacy and authenticity (Papastergiadis 1998: 177). Nationalism, as a self-consciousness ideology of action, invents Tibetanness; it can have meaning for the present and incite Tibetans to mobilise for the future. However, invention does not mean fabrication/falsity but imagination/creation, with the possibility of action in the present for the future (Anderson 1991).

According to Jean-François Bayart (1996), culture is less a question of conformity or identification than action:[124] making something new with the old and sometimes something traditional with the new, or making oneself with the other. When the Tibetans went into exile "[whatever] remained of old boundaries [needed] desperate defence and new boundaries had to

[120] What is remembered or valued in our traditions is the result of a selection, conscious or not.
[121] We give sense to past events with the help of contemporaneous values "[...] with the tendency to retroject into the past various elements that were subjectively unavailable at the time." (Berger & Luckman 1975: 182)
[122] Tibetan exiles as a culture in a host country is messier than vertical transmission from one generation to another. It includes practices that are partly inherited, and partly modified, as well as partly invented.
[123] The Buddhist principle of working for others to accumulate merits could help the exiled Tibetans to concentrate on preserving their identity despite the allure of the surrounding culture.
[124] Jean-Jacques Friboulet (2001) calls it a 'dynamic construction in perpetual becoming'; it is simultaneously a unique definition with multiple facets, as it is individual and collective, traditional and modern. "Identifications not identities, acts of relationship rather than pre-given forms: this tradition is a network of partially connected histories, a persistently displaced and reinvented time/space of crossings." (Clifford 1999: 234)

be built around new identities." (Zygmunt Bauman in Mottier 2000: 539) The two are closely related: where new identities receive legitimacy and become objects of identification through the re-working of former cultural 'markers'. Authenticity does not mean a strict adhesion to the idealistic traditional, it is not synonymous with historical truth, but is culturally constructed by its promoters[125] and by the public.

The settled Tibetans' culture is perceived by the exile community to be the culture closest to the original pre-1959 culture, for it was able to develop in freedom, and consequently is an authentic result of the popular will. Another reason for such a conception may be associated with the fact that in exile, Tibetan culture is more visible, where traditional practices are open procedures, being occasions for collective remembrance and communion with their common origin. In Tibet, on the contrary, the Tibetan *habitus* is restricted to the private sphere, with some exception for folkloric events and practices. However, one must not forget that even in democracies there are opinion leaders, and the Tibetan governing strata concentrate much effort in preserving their definition of the Tibetan culture and their mode of operating. "Authenticity is invented repeatedly throughout history by people who are in a position of power and authority to do so. Historical and existential agency thus must be taken into consideration when attempting to determine what is genuine and what is spurious at any given point in time and space." (Korom 1997: 10) Hence the 'authentic' Tibetan identity is a reflection of the elite's plan for Tibet's future. It has granted itself the monopoly of defining the Tibetan *habitus*, is determined to preserve its creation from competing designations and to make it acceptable to the majority in order to avoid having to use constraint and censorship (Weber 1995).[126] If we look at the current Tibetan social categorisation, the former regime has a strong continuation in the present policy making—the high social strata have powerful positions, not only because they impose their will, but also by reason of the interiorised social configuration among the larger population (Bourdieu 1992a, Elias 1994).[127] There are nonetheless an increasing number of dissonant voices that have, after exile and with the introduction of modern education, started to question the legitimacy of such decisional power.

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[125] "Traditions are invented by governments to give permanence and solidity to a transient political forum." (Sarup 1996: 182) It would be erroneous to limit this process to a political and power issue. The Tibetan government wants to structure and to maintain a community that will hold up despite its diasporic status; consequently, it interprets the past and legitimates the present by it. This has a uniting strength that should not be ignored when attempting to understand the Tibetan community's homogeneity in diversity.

[126] When Jean-Jacques Friboulet (2001) writes about cultural preservation being the affair of the concerned individuals (e.g. not one person deciding for others), he may be referring to the fact that without the collective effort of the entire community there can be no preserved traditions (e.g. the daily mode of action and normative system that cannot be exhibited in a museum).

[127] The Tibetans' *habitus* has conditioned them to regard as 'normality' what has always been until recently.

Why should there be one definition of the Tibetan identity, and for what reason does the exile definition in India continue to have supremacy over either that of the natives or the Tibetan identity in exile outside of India? The key issue that separates a diaspora into different groups of different importance is the question of authenticity at the centre of the notion of pan-Tibetanness. The struggle Stuart Hall (1999) explores concerning the representation monopoly is of primary importance in the Tibetan struggle for cultural preservation. If we totally accept Bayart's (1996) statement on cultural action, new traditions could be produced by anyone at anytime. This is not the case; fabrication needs identification to legitimate it: the constructed Tibetan identity in exile needed Tibetans to identify with it in order for it to become a reality and to fulfil the principal function for which it was instituted, unification. This identification process has to be collective. And the extent of acceptation by different groups depends in the power of the instigator, which in the Tibetan case is the Dalai Lama.

The question of authenticity requires approaching the issue of isolationism/cultural openness, especially in a situation of diasporic movements. Openness to others and shocks from the outside are essential factors for cultural continuity (Friboulet 2001). The changeable nature of the social environment and thus of *habitus* is even more pronounced when agents from another grouping or environment come in contact with it. Such is the case with the Tibetan Diaspora, which must deal with either the new Tibetan immigrants in India and their specific *habitus*, or the cultures of the host countries in which its communities reside. The diasporic identity lives with and through, but not despite, difference, being hybrid (Marienstras 1999).[128] Circulation of ideas and 'cultural loans' are indispensable for the life of collectivities (Friboulet 2001), because they reinforce them (Gilroy 1993) by introducing novelty. For Everett M. Rogers (Arakeri 1998: 5), the process of change within a cultural group can either be an immanent change—the change takes place within a given group with little or no external influence being exerted—or by contact. Change of culture brought on by acculturation is not one-dimensional, but a "process by which the exchange of cultural elements takes place on both the sides." (Arakeri 1998: 5)[129] While there is the unconscious fact of cultural influence, there is also the selective process of cultural adoption that allows one's own culture to adapt to cross-cultural influences. The external influence can either be a selective change: outsiders unintentionally communicate new ideas to members of a group, who in turn select those they wish to adopt, or

[128] Especially among new generations that have been socialised in the cross-currents of different cultural fields.
[129] As M. Fortes writes: "cultural contact has to be regarded not as a transference of elements from one culture to another but as a continuous process of interaction between groups of different cultures." (Arakeri 1998: 6)

a direct contact change: outsiders, who often as representatives of programmes of planned change, introduce reforms in order to achieve goals (Rogers in Arakeri 1998: 5). So instead of assuming the mechanical transmission of a culture or of an identity, culture must be seen as something that is reinterpreted to suit the mental structure of its members, which are related to the social structure of their environment. The Dalai Lama himself has discarded certain religious customs that were not essential (e.g. certain protocols involving his person), and that were adding to, instead of alleviating, the difficulty of cultural preservation (Tenzin Gyatso 1998). This selection is intended to build a more precise and essentialist Tibetan identity to allow Tibetans to concentrate on what is most important for them, with time to work on mastering the criteria of the identity of their host country. Cultural elements are continuously varying; however, no matter what the content that is put forward at any time, all aspects can be considered as becoming legitimate though adoption by the collectivity.[130] This is where the process of authentification is introduced; the selection that has taken place at a certain time must be promoted as the natural aspect of the cultural elements. Thus authenticity is closely linked to the notion of nature. For a value system to function, the people who are members must believe in it. Belief requires legitimating the object of belief. Tibetans' epics and narratives describe how Tibetans used to be fierce warriors, readily taking up arms to protect their region and culture; many contemporaneous authors (Karmay 1994, Norbu 1994) contend that the introduction of Buddhism has reduced Tibetan combativeness to not only pacifism but also passivity.[131] However, for most interviewed Tibetans, Tibetan characteristics derived from Buddhist teachings constitute the obvious essence of Tibetanness (I/A 2003; I/S 2003).[132]

Revitalisation is a "deliberate, conscious, organised effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture." (Anthony Wallace in Barnett 1994: 262) It is often found in communities that are involved in rapid and radical change, in contact with a larger and dominant group and its cultural pressure, which brings on social and cultural stress for the minority. Tibetans are skilful manipulators of cultural knowledge and actively work to maintain their cultural vitality through a cultural identity awakening—a feeling of responsibility and pride in their traditions. The Tibetan exiles struggle between preservation and change, in a

[130] The fact of publicly endorsing one's culture because it is meaningful gives legitimacy to that culture, hence it is authentic by being real for a group of people.
[131] "And whilst Tibetans are by nature quite aggressive people and quite warlike, their increasing interest in religious practice was a major factor in bringing about the country's isolation." (Tenzin Gyatso 1998: 10)
[132] Paradoxically, when asked what their hopes are for the new generations born in exile, their answers deal with the same concern of staying genuine to Tibetan values, which are more closely linked to the Tibetan mode of socialisation than a Tibetan biological nature, since possibly endangered by external influence from the host countries.

process "where Tibetan identity is reworked and deconstructed both at the same time." (Tsering 2003: 22) The process of reconstruction and deconstruction occur within the normative and symbolic system as well as by integrating traditions from foreign groups (Grew in Burguière & Grew 2001: 8). S. Vertovec (1999) rightly points out that diasporas are modes of cultural production. Diasporas result in processes of creolisation, from the to-and-fro transfer of meanings, which increases the relationship between the mixing cultures. Sound interaction of a diaspora with its host country is not isolationism, but mutual exchange and influence, requiring authentication of the 'borrowed' cultural elements in order to insert them into the community's symbolic system and make them relevant. Diasporic cultural identities show that identities are not preserved by not mixing, but can only continue to exist because of it. What holds together groups of Tibetans who are culturally fractured at the level of day-to-day living may well be what Dawa Norbu described to Keila Diehl as 'a core of sacred things,' including the Dalai Lama, Tibetan Buddhism, the Tibetan language, and a devotion to Tibet[133] (Diehl 1997). Norbu continues by stating that Tibetans in exile integrate cultural elements of their local surroundings to *'enhance what is sacred'* (Diehl 1997: 127). These borrowed or mixed practices can become locally meaningful, and even Tibetan, when adopted by the larger Tibetan community and dissociated from the national environment where these traditions had meaning. "To invent, borrow, play, and experiment with cultural forms become highly marked undertakings in a displaced community concerned about disappearing into melting pots." (Diehl 1997: 127)

Diasporas are by definition fluid (i.e. syncretic, creolised, hybrid, *bricolage*); they do not have an essence of purity, but rather one of heterogeneity and diversity. Facets of culture and identity (diasporic members have inherently dual or multiple identifications) are self-consciously selected from more than one heritage (Vertovec & Cohen 1999). The Tibetan attitude toward hybridity could be that of 'adapt and thrive' (Vertovec & Cohen 1999), while continuing to see a Tibetan essence that is maintained 'no matter what.'[134] The present Tibetan

[133] Tibet is retained as a special measure of their authenticity. Tradition provides the bond between the local attributes of cultural forms and their Tibetan origins (Gilroy 1993).

[134] It is in making their traditions meaningful to them in order to invest in the continuity of their identity that Tibetans can make concessions (compared to the strict observation of traditions that symbolise membership). Hence they can be inventive and creative social actors, while being under a certain degree of constraint to maintain and carry the Tibetan identity. What gives legitimacy to cultural identities is not tradition and history, but the emotional investment in identifying with the cultural creation. However, this identification is largely due to the belief of continuity in the present of a past that gives legitimacy. Imagination has an important role in connecting either people or eras: when in exile, the social and physical frame that provided meaning to the traditions is not present, it is imagined. Traditions provide memory of and meaning to the Tibetan identity, which may reveal themselves as oppositional: memory requires the past, and meaning comes from the present with reference to the past. This memory with time becomes disconnected from the past, and the meaning finds its source in the imaginary and fabricated.

identity may be a product of its diasporic status, and may thrive on outside cultural influence. The specific consciousness diasporas possess (Vertovec 1999) would be this identity enforced by cultural syncretism as 'glue' that unites disparate traditions and cultural 'markers' from the homeland and from the host countries into a significant object of identification for a displaced people. Exile has forced Tibetans from different regions together, so that they have had to learn to recognise their differences and their common condition. Through the national variations of the Tibetan Diaspora, an image of 'sameness' appears, which highlights the creative adaptation and cultural *métissage* that provide meaning to this diversity along the common line of shared Tibetanness. An indication of the hybrid nature of identity is the fact that when attempting to define oneself, there is often the discovery of the other within oneself. Interviews (I/A 2003; I/S 2003) revealed that Tibetans can in the same line of thought talk about the Tibetan community as a whole while discussing the differences they perceive between the different national Tibetan communities (e.g. Swiss-Tibetan, Australian-Tibetan). When identifying the Tibetanness within, there is a parallel deciphering of the country of settlement.

Vertovec's (1999) diaspora consciousness comes from the hyperconsciousness its members possess with regard to the norms of the *habitus* of the groups in which they move, hence the knowledge of cultural adaptation. "Fluency of movement and switching codes between a number of discrete cultures and social organisations is perhaps a more subtle and telling form of adaptation than syncretism."[135] (Vertovec & Cohen 1999: XXVI) It is less a question of jumping from one cultural circle to another than of moving between the private and public spheres: to *be* Tibetan and *act* Tibetan may be admissible in different areas. To act Tibetan would be most likely accepted within the private sphere, to be Tibetan may be tolerated in public in environments where Tibetanness is positively perceived, and also if it is accompanied by proof of possessing the *habitus* of the surrounding group. Tibetans learn that they can rely on their own discretion in order to show or hide their Tibetanness,[136] knowing the situations where their Tibetan identity is an advantage or weakness (Goffman 1996). To lead an optimal authentic Tibetan life is seen as being guaranteed by joining the monastic life, for it reduces role-dilemma, totally immersing the individual in the inner world (Barnett 1994), where Tibetanness does not have to be moulded to suit the foreign outside world (although in reality

[135] While cultural influence might be considered to be surrendering to another culture in this perspective, groups cannot be totally immune to their environment even if they persist as discrete social structures.
[136] Their physical appearance is of course a marker of their identity; however, it is mostly their mode of interacting that will confine Tibetans to a definition of the 'uncouth,' meaning the Tibetans from Tibet *versus* the 'civilised' Tibetans that have lived with Western standards.

there is a minimal, required adaptation to the outside world). Lay people, on the contrary, must live in a society that is different from their private lives. It is expected that they will live an adequate life by integrating into the host country's social and economical society, while simultaneously representing their community by presenting a traditional profile of Tibetanness.

Tibetans are generally traditional in their outlook on life (Arakeri 1998); even those who are not conservative give a high importance to continuing to practice traditional customs. This practice is a manner of reiterating one's allegiance to the Tibetan community, and increases with the geographical distance to the cradle of the Tibetan identity, the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharamsala. Conservatism is pronounced in Tibetan settlements in India that are far from the cradle; they tend to have strong opposition to change, for traditions give stability, continuity and unity with the Tibetans in Dharamsala. With the increasing distance from the government that provides legitimacy to all who associate with it, the authentic link must be proven, or at least be shown, in order to claim Tibetanness. These settlements are numerically inferior to the Dharamsala community, and hence are more assimilable and subject to the cultural influence of the larger surrounding group. This requires fixation of traditions as imperatives of membership in the Tibetan community. Conformism is considered a means to resist assimilation that is regarded as a factor that is accompanied by acculturation.[137] There is the development of new and adapted symbolic forms among the young generation of Tibetans educated abroad: they value traditional practices, often as identity markers, while simultaneously valuing the norms of the country in which they grow up; they could be defined as 'modern traditionalists.' Their social creativity comes from the comparison with the host group and not the population of origin. Tibetans in exile do not turn to the natives back in their homeland, for they view them as being 'polluted' by the Chinese influence (I/I 2003). This refusal to refer to Tibet for cultural material does not stem from finding the population there unauthentic (although this may be the given reason), but by an unconscious act of negating legitimacy to the Chinese definition of Tibetanness and of testifying to an emotional proximity to the host countries. The proximity is twofold: firstly, from shared experiences from living in the same environment, and secondly, by the general adoption of Western standards among the Tibetan community.

[137] However it would be extreme to accept Ralph Beals' conception of assimilation as "that form of acculturation which results in groups of individuals wholly replacing the original culture by another." (Arakeri 1998: 6)

Eric Hobsbawm (1983) distinguishes tradition from custom,[138] which should not be confused. While tradition's aim is 'invariance,' custom's function is that of 'motor' (Hobsbawm 1983: 2) that legitimates either change of state or resistance. Adopting Roland Barthes' (1972) terminology, tradition would be the form, and custom the content. The belief in the tradition's significance is what focuses the members to continue on practicing the tradition. According to Hobsbawm, the decline of custom inevitably modifies tradition, with which it is habitually associated.[139] One usually determines if a culture has maintained its authenticity by analysing whether it practices traditions, the materialisation of customs. It is, however, possible for a practice to become a habitualised action in spite of its loss of meaning. As previously discussed, traditions may have lost their content as Buddhist teachings, but because they are still practiced, they structure the Tibetan society by affecting the Tibetans' mental schemes (Bourdieu 1992a). Some traditions are re-evaluated, not because old ways are no longer viable, but because they are deliberately not used or adapted. The Dalai Lama made many such decisions, for he saw certain traditions as being ill-suited to their exile situation (e.g. protocols surrounding high dignitaries, including himself), and also for their claims to human rights and democracy. As he stated himself: "I had a strong feeling that we should not cling to old practices that were no longer appropriate." (1998: 166)[140]

Conversely, a change in a tradition can occur without changing its content or meaning. In order to recognise a custom, tradition is needed to symbolise it. With a change of situation, traditions adapt and change, hence one might think that the custom would be unrecognisable for the actor.[141] This change may occur either in the long term, changing imperceptibly, or drastically, with the explanatory help of the leading elite. Exile forced many traditions to adapt to the new physical environment and change form, but their meaning was maintained, and this helped to

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[138] Mores (customs and habitual practices, especially reflecting moral standards that a particular group of people accept and follow) are loosely defined as 'habits of the heart,' closely linked to thoughts that shape mental habits, that in turn will be shaped by the life experiences of the members of a group. No human thought is immune to the influences of its social context. Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* as something historically patterned is yet open to adjustment in relation to changing conditions of the social configuration. The possible change of traditions depends on their depth of incorporation (chapter 1).

[139] The Tibetan situation demonstrates how in exile the meaning of many rituals can be either forgotten or unknown, although they are practiced because Tibetans have given another meaning to them, such as renewal of membership, allegiance to the Dalai Lama, etc.

[140] "At times, our culture has made it difficult for us Tibetans to adapt to new conditions." (Tenzin Gyatso 1998: 189) When the necessity of burning to clear land for settlements and cultivation arose, the Buddhist precept of not killing any living being made it difficult for the Tibetans to proceed. So they had to put some of their beliefs aside in order to adapt and live in a foreign land.

[141] "[A] rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which 'old' traditions had been designed, producing new ones to which they were not applicable [...], when there are sufficiently large and rapid changes on the demand or the supply side." (Hobsbawm 1983: 4)

keep the community united. An example of new traditions is the circumambulation of the Dalai Lama's grounds and temple in Dharamsala. Its origin is traced back to the circumambulation of the Jokhang, the main temple in Lhasa, and to the days prior to the Dalai Lama's flight, when the population of Lhasa rose up to protect their leader from the Chinese army, encircling the Norbulinka where he was living. "Sometimes new traditions could be readily grafted onto old ones, sometimes they could be devised by borrowing from the well-supplied warehouses of official ritual, symbolism and moral exhortation [...]." (Hobsbawm 1983: 6) The change is usually instigated by actors attempting to find a suitable traditional practice to adequately express the custom. Paul Gilroy (1993) terms this a 'non-traditional tradition' or the 'living memory of the changing same.' The changing 'same' is not a same invariant essence that gets enclosed in a shape-shifting husk; it is the something endlessly hybridised and in the process of changing, but persistently there—memories and practices of collective identity maintained over long stretches of time.

As mentioned previously, there can be change of content with the preservation of form or change of form with the maintenance of content.[142] These two possibilities reflect the two different methods Tibetans within Tibet and outside of Tibet have adapted their Tibetanness to change. There is a distinction to be made between latent beliefs and manifest actions, which is the difference between content and form that Roland Barthes (1972) draws. Because only a limited number of Tibetan traditions are permitted, the natives in Tibet recognise the situations that ask for a manifest adaptation of their behaviour, without having to change their conviction. Since reference to the Dalai Lama and especially praising him is forbidden, traditions such as Tsampa throwing (throwing barley flower to celebrate his birthday) were used to celebrate his wining of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986. Hence, they may use the permitted traditions to collectively protest by changing the meaning. Practices such as the *korwa,*[143] used to accumulate merits, have become circumstances for protest, thus showing how every Tibetan can transform his/her personal practice of religion or of any tradition, by its transplantation into the symbolism of nationhood (Barnett 1994). The combination of the mutation of form over content, and the change of content with the preservation of form, help these traditions to maintain meaning for the actors. The Chinese authorities, allowing certain public practices of religion to be performed, have created a whole new venue for Tibetans to express their feelings.

[142] Such would be the case in situations where a certain practice is forbidden. In order to circumvent such a prohibition, one would change the exterior act while giving it the same meaning.
[143] The *korwa* is the act of circumambulating clockwise around the main temple, the Jokhang in Lhasa, while reciting prayers and spinning prayer wheels.

Has the West created such possibilities for the Tibetans in exile? Buddhist precepts have been adapted to the Western world's idea of democracy, where Buddhist values are seen ultimately as human rights for all. Thus the practice of Buddhism has provided Tibetans in exile with opportunities to express their allegiance to the Western political venue. However, the adjustment of Tibetan Buddhism as a source of illumination for New Age adepts may have influenced its content. "[The] practices involved present a grave danger that the profound philosophical and psychological insights of Buddhism in the Tibetan tradition could be lost and that, as a result, it will degenerate into mere superstition." (Tenzin Gyatso 1998: 308) The Tibetans in exile may be able to express their traditions without constraint; however, the content may be in the process of being lost by cultural influence of the surrounding host country and adaptation to the needs of the Western world.

According to Nikos Papastergiadis (1998), cultural identity can be considered as a symbol, often transformed into a fixed and rigid construction as a token of a people's uniqueness and the basis for unity. When an attack is felt, individuals react and 'freeze,' leading to the fixation of their *habitus* on old modes of operation, in order to maintain an identity continuum with the past. Hence in a diaspora where the national community is under intense cultural influence, fossilisation of the *habitus* can occur. A culture not only needs cultural 'stuff' (Mottier 2000) to allow its continuity and evolution, but its members must also be allowed to experiment with cultural patterns that will provide adequate meaning to the present. Tibetan culture is under constraint not only in Tibet, where it is not openly practiced, but also in exile, for it is under strict scrutiny intended to preserve it. There is pressure by the Tibetan government on Tibetans to maintain their identifiable Tibetanness. Since Tibetan culture has had its 'natural' environment destroyed or has been cut off from its nourishing link, the Tibetan community tends to overemphasise cultural knowledge as a sign of Tibetanness, instead of letting members simply live their daily lives without having cultural preservation foremost in their minds.[144]

The Tibetans have become very conscious of what constitutes their specificity and collectively work to preserve their cultural identity. Hence, more control is required, for thought permits questioning. Could this increased control suffocate the Tibetan culture? Tibetan culture may be less threatened by disappearance than by the possibility of its becoming an inert object, exhibited in museums (Norbu 1997: 282). The will to preserve an identity may have a perverse effect: the clinging to traditions, which prevents the cultural and religious identity from

[144] Many Tibetans I interviewed stressed this point (I/A 2003; I/I 2003).

breathing and evolving,[145] may lead to fossilisation: it is slow ethnocide. The Tibetan cultural identity risks falling into the trap of the art of appearances, where form predominates, the content being dried out. Is a 'ghost' culture emerging from the Tibetan cultural identity? This risk is real because the Tibetan culture does not evolve in its native environment, and the framework and the people that gave sense to its customs and traditions are vanishing with time, and someday there may remain only an empty shell. Although presently the generation of Tibetans having lived in Tibet prior to the 1959 exile is still alive and can transmit the mode of living of that time, Tibetan culture is becoming increasingly folkloric, according to an interviewed young Tibetan woman, because of the increasing distance from the era when Tibetans knew their country first-hand (I/S 2003_1). There is the danger that Tibetan culture is being transformed into a label of exotic 'far-away,' where all that is left of the old way of life are some folkloric traditions. As for example at Losar in Geneva, Switzerland, some Tibetans donned their traditional dress over their civil clothes, as if their Tibetanness was a costume to put on or discard according to the situation (O/S 2003).

Does the fact that Tibetan cultural identity cannot be lived freely within the context of its emergence lead to a 'rigidification' of its content, to the accentuation of the importance of traditions? Will this fossilise the Tibetan cultural identity? On the one hand, the Chinese attack against Tibetan culture provoked a hyper-consciousness of Tibetan cultural specificity, leading to cultural mobilisation that, perversely, may fossilise it. The preservation of Tibetan culture has affected the Tibetan cultural identity: there is a loss of cultural spontaneity in exile. Since the proper framework is missing, one must formulate a specific objective, a tradition to preserve. Many Tibetans learn in classes the songs and dances that were traditionally learnt during work hours, and come together specifically to practice them, especially before certain festivities, such as Losar (O/I 2003).[146] This may risk in the long term reducing Tibetan culture to its folkloric dimension and ghettoising it to certain times and places.

Is there a choice to be made between form and content in order to preserve a cultural tradition? Can it be polarised, or are these two dimensions of social reality linked, the change of one

[145] "Identities may change as society changes, and they are certainly not as 'inner', as private and immutable, as common sense sometimes insist." (Eriksen 1993: 62)

[146] The Tibetan nature that so many Tibetans present as specifically Tibetan may be, as Margaret Nowak perceived, another created Tibetan characteristic. "This kind of cultivated sensitivity—an openness to 'being moved by compassion', an ability to identity with sympathy and feeling, with all sentient creatures—lies at the heart of Tibetan values, and as such it figures prominently in the socialisation of Tibetan children." (Nowak 1984: 92) Can spontaneity be equated with authenticity?

affecting the other? Tibetans in Tibet have been allowed once again to practice their religion; however, only on an individual level, without any training or teaching. The Tibetans in exile, being cut off from their nourishing cultural link with their heritage environment, have had to be creative in order to be able to uphold their traditions and beliefs. Both cases demonstrate that something is real in virtue of its present, not its continuity with the past. Cultural difference will always be found with the past, without the present being seen as either deterioration or amelioration of the past. In cultural preservation, it is important to focus on the present and even if past traditions are different or absent, the existence of the Tibetan community is proof of its survival. The fact that capacities of Tibetans to continue to be specific and differentiated from the host population despite the impact of cultural influence demonstrates a creativity that may be considered as cultural survival. Adopting Donald Lopez's (1998) perception of Tibet's current image among Tibetans as a mere product of the historical reception of Tibet in the West, imprisoning the Tibetans in a hapless Shangri-la, would according to Thierry Dodin and Heinz Räther reduce Tibetans to simple reproducers, ignoring "their very active participation [...] in the emergence and continuing reiteration of the current image of their country and culture, as well as their remarkable skills in promoting it." (Dodin & Räther 2001: 410) If a group is able to be creative autonomously[147] with outside influences, it seems to be proof of survival. Were it not for the Tibetans' efforts in cultural creativity, their culture would be running the risk of 'rigidification'; however, the continually promoted identification with the Tibetan identity that the Tibetan community persists in showing and believing in is proof of their status as actors in their exiled lives. There is, of course, the danger of fossilisation, but proof of the Tibetan culture's evolving and adapting nature is its daily usage as a tool for interaction and ordering life experiences (Berger & Luckman 1975: 145).

[147] The Tibetan Diaspora cannot turn to its homeland for reference when self-esteem and claims to authenticity need validation.

CHAPTER 3: Three case studies of the Tibetan community[148]

3.1 Introduction: The Tibetan community as a minority

This chapter illustrates the different ways in which the Tibetan cultural identity has been preserved and the impact this preservation has had on the Tibetan community's structure. The three chosen case studies (e.g. Australia, India, Switzerland) show how the Tibetan community has adapted its methods of survival to the different ways countries deal with diversity. This discussion of the manner in which the Tibetan community is inserted into its host country introduces the concept of minority (Burguière & Grew 2001). The comparison of the different Tibetan communities in their national environment will show both their sameness and their difference: all are different compared to the host population, although that difference is not the same in all the environments; there is not the same relationship of otherness with each environment. All countries must deal with difference; what differs is how it is managed. Society accepts difference as long as it does not invalidate the unique norm of reference. This chapter will explore how the Tibetan community deals with the different normative systems of the host countries, how it modulates itself to fit in in order to adapt and protect itself. Minorities exist in every Nation-State, and their presence and how they are treated are symptomatic of the majority's strength of establishment. Most countries are multicultural, allowing diversity. But each society defines limits to difference (e.g. speaking the national language, having their own language, etc.); these limits manage difference by making it bearable. "Ongoing concerns about national unity mingle with debates on the merits and demerits of multiculturalism. [Some] view multiculturalism as undermining national unity while others see it as guaranteeing unity and coherence." (Yon 1999: 29)

One could examine the fact that members are relegated to the status of minority because they resist society's integrative pressures. Or one could consider individuals as becoming members of minorities because they are integrated into society.[149] Within the Tibetan community, there is the prescription to represent the community well by integrating into the host country's

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[148] Comments in this chapter are based on observation and interviews of a small percentage of Tibetans in exile, hence their validity must be interpreted accordingly.

[149] "To be considered a minority, a group must be both an integral element in the larger society and sufficiently outside its socio-political core to lack that access to status and power considered normal." (Grew in Burguière and Grew 2001: 3) Critics of modern society, in the line of Michel Foucault's thought, conceive society as a process of classification, of separation and exclusion, leading to society being divided between insiders and outsiders. "Their minority situation is caused by their integration, whether it is willed or not, into a larger system." (Eriksen 1993: 125)

community and acting as a member of the host country, while remaining Tibetan. Recognition of minorities (whether through labels imposed or claims acknowledged) establishes fields of tension caused either by cultural assimilation (Australia) or pluralism (Switzerland, India). Pluralism requires the search for balance between the attainment of a national consensus and the creation of a national identity, and maintaining cultural diversity.[150] Recognition of difference leads to establishing equitable treatment: there should not be the need to decide between "the right of ethnic groups to be distinctive versus the right to be treated as a equal [...]." (Eriksen 1993: 142) There is a risk that as "governing authorities hand out privileges, they may also be constructing minorities, among those who benefit as well as those who do not." (Grew in Burguière and Grew 2001: 4) At first there is the question of providing advantages to the minority in order to compensate for their status. But for how long must this special attention be given? This special treatment cannot be indefinite; otherwise it risks confining the members to a second-class citizenship, or to a privileged position, like Tibetans in India, who receive more humanitarian aid than the local population. This creates tension between the Tibetans, who have a supplementary income from aid and the Indians, who must work to survive.

Conversely, Australia, which is still attempting to find its cultural standard in the Anglo-Saxon tradition of melting pot, may have a lower threshold of variety acceptance. A policy of difference stems from the principle that the majority has correctly organised its cultural life and that such a right should be organised for minorities (Meyer-Bisch 2001). If a society cannot come to a collective definition of its objectives and/or induce its members to accept the 'privations' that are necessary for the realisation of its common objectives, it cannot succeed in overcoming the categorical antagonisms linked to the diversity of alliances. It loses, therefore, its capacity to unite the process of identification to common objectives. Defence of interests specific to one's group of alliance is not in itself pathological; however, the fact of only taking into account this particular point of view (especially if the political and economic power of this group provides it with the dominant position) may endanger the social link and lead to the generalisation of the specific communities. We would enter the logic of selective social link,

[150] A country like Switzerland has a multicultural core and tradition, where its Constitution specifies that legal status must be given to the cultural diversity within its borders. India, with its variety of religious and ethnic groups, has a tolerance for diversity. Both countries are based on ancient common history, and even if India's independence is recent, the possible co-habitation of all these diverse *habitus* has been proven (this does not mean there is no tension, nor open conflict).

when the nature of the social link is precisely to be built on the impossibility in choosing those that participate in it (Laidi 1997). Differential access to the social link marks a minority.

The degree of influence that a group has on another varies with its social position.[151] If the group possesses a valorised image, its influence will be welcomed and stronger, or *vice versa*. The minority's reputation is often linked to the majority's policy, whether pluricultural or homogenous; minorities benefit from a valued *we*-image (Elias 1994) with the former and will possess a stigmatised name when they are undesirable in the name of a national standard. The concept of a minority designates a weakness or affirms strength. In its negative conception, it identifies a group in terms of its vulnerability to a majority that threatens to oppress or reject it;[152] the concept is positive in its recognition of a group's cultural or moral value, which must be affirmed or recognised or protected.[153] "[The] majority has the power to define when minorities should be like themselves and when they should be different." (Eriksen 1993: 142) Tibetans learn from their host country whether to integrate or stay specific, which has a distinctive modulating impact on the Tibetan Diaspora as a community.

Although societies are attempting to deal with all their citizens equitably by codifying[154] their minority groups' rights, the inequity they suffer is often due to the dynamics of the social configuration, and hence it is difficult to change for the incorporated social structures in the social agents. Although diasporas being a minority surrounded by another larger or more powerful group are usually the outsider within the configuration of established-outsider (Elias 1994), the Tibetan community does not present the stereotyped profile of a minority.[155] The

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[151] Inter-group struggle is about power, that is, direct power (regarding who will control the other) and indirect power (who will determine the cultural norms). It does not only have to do with the size of the group, although the majority will have more possibilities for influence due to its number and the social positions of influence its members possess.

[152] In Tibet, where the Chinese authorities keep the autochthonous population under physical oppression, "anything Tibetan—language, dress, behaviour, culture—was [and still is] considered a sign of backwardness." (Norbu 1997: 280) This is a sign of the fragile hold the Chinese have on the Tibetans, because Tibetan culture is a threat to them.

[153] The Tibetan community in exile has been able to find a valued place within the world community; while being a minority, it has set a system of ideal norms and is looked upon for reference. "Minorities adopt much from the dominant society and often succeed in altering it. Concerns seen as particular or traditional can come to be considered universal." (Raymond Grew in Burguière and Grew 2001: 13) The Tibetans' Buddhist principle of interdependence, and consequently of altruism, has had an impact on human rights.

[154] "In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language." Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

[155] The outsiders in Elias' study were ineffectual social actors, outside of the social debate.

reason may be because the Tibetan Diaspora has not always been a minority; it has had to adapt its identity and culture to become a minority within a larger national group.[156]

Max Hildebert Boehm (Suny 2001) defines a national minority as a distinct ethnic group with an individual national and cultural character, living in a state which is dominated by another nationality. According to these criteria, the Tibetan community is a minority. Do the Tibetans *consider* themselves a minority? On the one hand, there are the individual and collective self-perceptions by which minorities maintain themselves, and that they project to the relevant majority. Minorities tend to assert some special needs, protections, or rights and claims. In the United Nations' declaration on the rights of minorities belonging to "national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic communities," the term community appears to be decisive: the feeling of belonging to a distinctive group, different from the surrounding environment, characterises Tibetans (I/A 2003, I/I 2003, I/S 2003). And on the other hand, there is the majority's self-perception and its projection of outsiders, along with the diverse ways in which minorities can choose to process such projections.[157] "Any society/culture tends, with varying degrees of closure, to impose its classifications of the social and cultural and political world. These constitute a dominant cultural order, though it is neither univocal nor uncontested." (Hall 1980: 134) Minorities are "precisely what [the] government has made them." (Thomas Babington Macaulay in Endelman 2001: 130) Minorities arise when the dominant group sets standards of conformity and calls for assimilation. Diasporas as national minorities are caught up in and defined against the norms of nation-states (Clifford 1999: 220). Minorities are socially constructed; they are perceived differently and then maintained in this way. "Once a group is defined as subordinate and subject to special provisions, the sense of difference tends to be reinforced by social discrimination, spatial separation, or legislation in a process that is reciprocal, involving responses within the minority as well as the larger society." (Raymond Grew in Burguière and Grew 2001: 13)

In the following sub-sections, the first issue to be explored is how the Tibetan Diaspora has found a viable social configuration within the three studied host-countries. The search for a stable relationship with the surrounding environment has led to the adaptation of its structure.

[156] The Jewish Diaspora may have always been minority within the Nation-States in which it has been immersed, but the Tibetan Diaspora has not only had to adapt to its exiled situation, but also has had to relinquish its position of national culture of a sovereign State for the status of minority—in its own country and outside it.
[157] There are the realms of coercion and oppression on the one hand, and of protest, rebellion, and reestablishment on the other.

Tibetan communities occupy different positions in the social configuration depending on the country in which they live.[158] This raises the question of cultural influence within the Tibetan Diaspora, which introduces the problematic of the struggle to authenticate one definition of the Tibetan cultural identity over the variety of Tibetanness in different countries of settlement. The second topic analysed is how the struggle for authenticity structures the Tibetan community's relations within its sphere and with its divers host countries. Due to differences in power and duration of settlement, a configuration of established-outsider has evolved into a problem of conflict and opposition recognised by the Tibetan government (I/I 2003_11). This configuration of 'settled' Tibetans *versus* the 'new immigrants' is especially present in India, but is also found in other countries in which the exiles have become established. Any new Tibetan immigrant must learn the established way of life of the new 'home' and the national variant of Tibetanness, and will be the outsider until he/she incorporates the national requirements and a new generation of immigrants replaces the his/her generation.[159]

3.2 The structure of the Tibetan community in India

This section focuses on the Tibetan community in India and the impact India's attitude toward it has had on its structure. The Tibetans in exile have been able to re-establish a governing unit over a large community, in quasi-autarky from the Indian state. The Tibetan Diaspora owes much to the Indian Government and people,[160] for this is where it came into existence, and where thanks to this high level of autonomy they were able to construct a tightly knit community, which was set on salvaging their culture. In 1969, discussions between the Dalai Lama and Mr. Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister at the time, resulted in a comprehensive educational program for an autonomous body under the jurisdiction of the Government of India.[161] Tibetan cultural identity has had a higher success in being preserved in India than in

[158] In India, while Tibetans live a reasonably autarkic life, the configuration of established-outsider is to their benefit. In Switzerland and Australia, they entertain rather unproblematic relations with the host population, in the former because of a national heritage of pluralism (I/S 2003, O/S 2003) and in the latter thanks to their assimilative attitude (I/A 2003).

[159] The fact of Tibetans in India being more visible and accessible because the protection of their culture is viewed as a community affair, I was able to observe them longer. In 'developed' countries, Tibetans are more integrated, and their struggle for cultural preservation is more restricted to the private sphere, rendering their existence difficult to observe.

[160] "Over the years now, the people and Government of India have given an extraordinary amount to us Tibetan refugees, both in terms of financial assistance and in many other ways—this despite their own enormous economic difficulties." (Tenzin Gyatso 1998: 165)

[161] P.M. Nehru said "since as far as he was concerned we would be guests of India for the foreseeable future, our children were our most precious resource. They should be well educated. And, in order to preserve Tibetan culture,

other host countries, since the Tibetan educational system is independent there. Being able to determine the mode of education permits the exiled Tibetans in India to have longer and stronger control on the structuration of their identity.[162] The education system, especially for the orphaned Tibetans,[163] is the main vector for transmitting Tibetanness, combined with the oppressive homogenous and distinct Tibetan community as is found in India. The transmission of Tibetanness everywhere has passed from latency to hyperconsciousness; it is explicitly produced. In India, however, transmission is considered to require less effort for a number of reasons: being in a community benefiting from a high degree of autarky to organise the community, the autarky protecting it from intense Indian cultural influence, Tibetanness is seen to come 'naturally.' Conversely, in other countries where the Tibetan Diaspora has become established, transmission requires more conscious efforts; a constant action that is in the Tibetans' minds in order to protect them from total abandonment of Tibetanness for another mode of living. It entails more work to know what the Tibetan culture is. Tibetan culture is very different from the culture of the host population in non-Indian countries that the Tibetan children are exposed to at school. This is contrary to the Indian culture, which has a strong affinity with that of Tibet (Tenzin Gyatso 1998).

3.2.1 Indian-Tibetan relationship

Despite religious and cultural proximity, relations between Tibetans and the Indian population in the Northern regions of India are tense[164], and are mostly reduced to the minimal, obligatory

it would be necessary to have separate schools for them. There should therefore be an independent Society for Tibetan Education within the Indian Ministry of Education. He added that the Indian Government would bear all the expenses for setting up the schools. (To this day, it continues to fund the greater part of our education programme.)" (Tenzin Gyatso 1998: 164)

[162] Margaret Mead (1955) sees a correlation between cultural model, education methods and personality types.

[163] "The 100'000 [Tibetans] who [sic; followed] [the Dalai Lama] into exile were largely illiterate and in the first decade the Indian Government employed them to build Himalayan border roads, paying young, old, men and women a few rupees a day. Tuberculosis rampaged through the encampments and, after so many deaths in the flight to India, many families were stricken again by fatal accidents and illnesses. The number of orphans and semi-orphan children spiralled and from this tragic situation the necessity for residential Tibetan schools emerged." (Perkins, 1991: 27) So the Dalai Lama founded the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV), the first of many to come all across India, built just above McLeod Ganj in Dharamsala, to not only provide children with knowledge of their culture through books, family environments were created, 'homes' where they learn what 'to be Tibetan' means in everyday life.

[164] My fieldwork was limited to the Northern regions of India, specifically Dharamsala. Indian-Tibetan relations in the North are not representative of the Southern Tibetan farming settlements. The Tibetans in the South entertain friendlier relations with the local Indian population and contribute to ameliorating not only their own situation but the Indian farmers' conditions as well, with the aid from which they benefit. The tension in the Northern regions may be linked to the function the Tibetan settlements have: maintaining the Tibetan culture requires a distinctive attitude, which may distance them from the local population. Conversely, in the South,

administrative and trade exchanges. This minimal interaction is facilitated by the Tibetan government's high degree of freedom of movement and decision making in internal matters, which allowed the establishment of an autonomous community. Concentrating on their own culture has turned Tibetans away from the Indian environment. Identification with India and Indians is rare, but influence by co-habitation is unavoidable, hence the Indian traits in the Tibetan cultural identity. Tibetans in India may think that since they do not mix with the Indian population, the cultural influence to which their identity is subjected is minimal, hence their claims to authenticity. However, there is always cultural influence when different groups co-habitat.[165]

While autarky may help to preserve Tibetan traditional culture because of a lack of assimilation, it may have led to a process of enclavement (Christiaan Klieger in Diehl 1997). Having an autonomous community where Tibetanness can be lived freely has not encouraged Tibetans to adapt to local mores; many Indians perceive this as snobbery with regard to their customs and resent this foreign presence that keeps to itself (I/I 2003_1; I/I 2003_16; I/I 2003_17). Leaders on both sides have attempted to bridge the increasing gap, but while contact does lead to greater acceptance, forced contact leaves no degree of choice, particularly if that contact is not accompanied by additional conflict resolution activities to reduce prejudice and tension.[166] While there may be dialogue between the groups, many respective members use this opportunity to confirm and apply the stereotypes that each group has of the other, re-enforcing the separation.

In general, there is mutual avoidance which does not ameliorate, and may have caused, the negative reciprocal perceptions both groups have of one another. The Tibetans consider themselves to be distinctively different from the Indians. "[Students] are taught to regard themselves as heirs of a distinct and noble tradition, which in turn leads them to perceive their 'feelings, habits, and customs' as being 'entirely different' from those of Indians." (Nowak 1984: 88) This becomes a lesson of proper demarcation between primary group and country of exile. Tibetans are encouraged to keep their daily interactions and allegiance to themselves to

cooperation is facilitated since Tibetans are farmers, as are their Indian neighbours. The analysis of this sub-section is therefore limited to Dharamsala and regions in its proximity.

[165] As seen in sub-section 2.4., cultural influence is dual: through unconscious influence and through the act of selecting the elements from the other group.

[166] The Tibetan government in exile has recently started a program of conflict resolution between not only Tibetans of different origins, but also with the locals. The impact of this program is not yet observable (I/I 2003_6).

insure the Tibetan identity has a future. And to keep the Tibetan ethnic group alive, endogamy and high birth rate are encouraged. However, endogamy needs little official promotion, because both Tibetans and Indians "perceive themselves as so very different from each other that marriage between the two groups hardly represents a real option." (Nowak 1984: 95). This encouragement of a high Tibetan birth rate, while the Indian population is subject to campaigns of family planning, promotes a differentiation of value scales being applied to each group. It gives the concerned people the image that one population is valued and the other discouraged from reproducing, although in reality both groups are dealing with different situations: the former with the threat of extinction (e.g. Han Chinese population transfer, forced sterilisation of Tibetan women) and the other with overpopulation. This is yet another element that contributes to separating them into very distinctive communities that see their feelings transformed into irreconcilable ways of life.

The Indians see Tibetans as a secretive and closed group, with a high degree of co-operation within the group, and an abusive attitude toward humanitarian aid. The latter subject is the main reason for recent, increasing resentment; the Indians think that the Tibetans flaunt their privileges in the face of the Indian population, which may be in a worse situation but receives nothing (I/I 2003_1; I/I 2003_16; I/I 2003_17). Many Indians express anxieties when questioned over Tibetans 'now receiving disproportionate attention.' They consider that everything is given to the Tibetans at Indian expense (their government providing funds for the Tibetan children's education, while basic education is not guaranteed for Indian children), casting them into the position of outsiders in their own country. Tension between Tibetans and Indians is mainly due to economic disparity between them fuelled by the Indian government's aid and Western aid and attention seemingly provided to one and not to the other. Many Indians have a certain grudge against the Tibetans, especially against the young who rely on humanitarian aid to better their situation and refuse to do what they consider to be lowly jobs, viewing Indians as being suited for them. An important dividing difference is the issue of dignity (O/I 2003). Although at the time the Tibetans went into exile, they had to struggle for their basic needs (this hard work has become a work ethic that has helped them become the dominant party in most of their dealings with the Indian population), their situation has presently greatly improved, not only because of the aid they receive, but also through their own business initiative and internal solidarity. Tibetans in exile have a strong sense of self-esteem, leading them to sometimes refuse certain jobs, whilst Indians, due to their number and the extreme struggle to find sufficient work to meet their needs, must often accept hard manual labour (O/I 2003). Having started out working on roads to earn their livelihood, Tibetans may now refuse these jobs, a sign of the improvement the Tibetan community has experienced. However, they do have the extra help of punctual benefactors and humanitarian aid as guarantees against total poverty (Devoe 1987). This may be the delicate issue that allows certain Tibetans to consider themselves as better than the locals since they receive international help, and which leads Indians to regard Tibetans as different. Tourism has increased the problem by bringing a higher number of potential Western benefactors to meet Tibetans, while Indians are ignored. Indians do realise the problem the Tibetan community faces in Tibet, but they are spectators to the mockery that a certain group of Tibetans (those that hang around tourist attractions hoping to encounter Westerns who might either give them money or a chance to leave India) are making of humanitarian aid and sponsorship (O/I 2003). As is often the case, a certain minority, often the visible one, taints the entire group to which they belong. Responsibility should also be carried by Westerners who do not follow certain guidelines on sponsorship and encourage abuse by giving out money to any Tibetan who asks (O/I 2003). A difference should be made between financial aid to the Tibetan people and giving money to Tibetans (Devoe 1987).

Tibetans in Northern India are not getting the best idea of democracy and equity, for they quite often occupy the dominant position in the configuration of established-outsider (Elias 1994) in their exchanges with the Indian population, with many Indians working for them (O/I 2003). Although most Tibetans tend to keep to their community, the Tibetans who do have dealings with Indians, mostly commercial, seem to determine the attitude to have toward the Indian population as a whole. Even if most Tibetans claim that there is no feeling of superiority, merely a feeling of being more fortunate, observation of Indian-Tibetan interactions reveals the impact of looking down on the Indian population and of acting out a stereotyped view has had consolidating the segregationist social configuration of established-outsider (O/I 2003). This disdain, and even hate that I observed and felt, between the Tibetans and the Indians in Dharamsala has positioned the Tibetan community against its outside environment.[167] This may distract from the internal struggle and conflict within the group that the Tibetan community has been experiencing for several decades.

[167] Observation of interactions between Tibetans and Indians in the Dharamsala region has backed statements by Tibetans and Indians alike (revealed in interviews, but mostly in casual conversations with inhabitants of Dharamsala) on their often negative feelings for the opposite group, while understanding certain causes for the other's behaviour (e.g. disproportionate aid to Tibetans annoys Indians; persecution of Tibetans in Tibet explains this help).

3.2.2 Settled Tibetans *versus* new Tibetan immigrants[168]

However different they may be in regard to their Tibetanness, new Tibetan immigrants and settled Tibetans unite in a common front to keep their distance from the Indian population. "Groups in conflict benefit by pretending that the boundaries between them are clear and fixed and that attempts to traverse those boundaries carry penalties." (Raymond Grew in Burguière and Grew 2001: 12) To the outside world, the Tibetan community seems to form a homogenous and coherent group, normatively self-sufficient, which permits its members to stay within its boundaries. However, when attempting to define what the Tibetan identity is and what constitutes the recognised *habitus* within those boundaries, a different image of the exiled community emerges.

The need of a tight community in order to preserve the Tibetan cultural identity has raised the subject of cultural authenticity. The latter has in turn has modified the structure of the Tibetan community: it has been the motor in the institution of the established-outsider social configuration, which is a central challenging issue for the Tibetan community in India. This configuration is encountered on two fronts in India: with the Indian population, where the Tibetans have been able to secure a dominant status in the social configuration, as previously discussed and within the community, with the problem of newcomers from Tibet being disregarded by settled Tibetans (I/I 2003; O/I 2003). India, having its borders with Tibet and Nepal, is the host country where the Tibetan administration and government has settled, and this opens it to all newly escaped Tibetans. Settled Tibetans are consequently constantly

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[168] Every year the Tibetan community in exile increases by 3000-4000 new Tibetan immigrants who continue to escape from Tibet in the hope of a better future or simply to see the Dalai Lama, over high passes in the Himalayan mountains between Tibet and India or Tibet and Nepal. They risk freezing weather, sun blindness and the danger of being caught by Chinese patrols or Nepali police. The number that dies or is caught (either sent back to their home town or imprisoned either for leaving Tibet without permission or for entering Nepal without a valid visa) is unknown. Once they have reached Nepal or India, their future is not yet secured: if they wish to receive help from the Tibetan government in exile or any other country, they must be interviewed by a UNHCR representative who establishes whether their reason for leaving Tibet was that their lives were threatened. Those who are not sent back to their country receive a permit to stay in India (Nepal's legislation on immigration does not make any specific provision for refuges. All foreigners or asylum seekers must present a valid visa in order to stay in Nepal, which is difficult since most Tibetans do not travel with identity papers. Nepal's attitude toward Tibetans is closely watched by China, which puts pressure on Nepal for stricter control of its borders). The new Tibetan immigrants receive basic education in the Tibetan transit schools if they are between 18-35 years old. Otherwise, they receive a job from the Tibetan government in exile in one of its factories, if they are lucky. Many of the newcomers cannot secure an income for themselves and therefore return to Tibet. Those who stay in exile must integrate themselves into the Tibetan community, which may present a Tibetan identity that differs from their own (e.g. Indian references, Western norms, open expression of identity).

reminded of the state of their Tibetanness in Tibet and have had to create mechanisms to protect their definition of the Tibetan *habitus*. Because *habitus* has its realm in the unconscious, many of these mechanisms are unconscious, or the reasons for certain actions and perceptions are unconscious. The claim to authenticity, hence the negation of it in other definitions of Tibetanness, is a tool to insure validity and legitimacy to the settled Tibetans who have supposedly faithfully preserved what the past has handed down. It is because the settled Tibetans see that the newcomers have equally preserved a certain culture in Tibet that the problematic of authenticity arises. Only one cultural identity can claim to be authentic, so that Tibetans know which to privilege. The fact that there is more than one definition of Tibetanness is problematic for constructing a homogenous community. There is selection of the representations in any group, and the power struggle required to impose the choice impacts the structure of the community. The imposition of certain agents' perceptions and definitions over others in order to have a sole frame of norms requires an asymmetry of power. The power of the settled Tibetans derives from their monopolisation of the key positions in the community or national institutions in exile—giving them access to the communication network and power. These have been secured from a greater cohesion and solidarity among the members of the established group, which in turn derive from a common construction and uniformity of norms and beliefs by stricter discipline (e.g. constraint, self-evaluation). To show respect for the Tibetan identity is central for claiming membership in the Tibetan community (Elias 1994). The newcomers have a different Tibetan identity, and hence respect different values and norms from those settled Tibetans privilege.[169] What is considered disrespect for the established normative system is in fact respect for a different value scale. The differential degree of discipline causes discordance between the settled Tibetans and the new immigrants (I/I 2003_6; I/I 2003_7; I/I 2003_10; I/I 2003_14; O/I 2003). They have different ways with regard to how they promote their respective identities.

The more an identity must cover a large *ensemble* of people, the more it will be imprecise and undefined, unable to allude to criteria that are recognised and significant to all. The objects of reference will vary due to different conditions of life. As a consequence of the personal identities being less represented in the collective identity, the individuals will identify to a lesser extent. On the contrary, the more a collective identity is limited in space, the more it

[169] Settled Tibetans generally respect norms of non-violence, close scrutiny in order for a homogenous Tibetan identity to be maintained, knowledge of the Tibetan cause, and the importance of good hygiene and appearance. One can suspect that the Chinese authorities do not encourage these, consequently the newcomers from Tibet do not present such a Tibetan profile.

covers the local characteristics and will be close to the personal identities. The individuals must be able to identify with this collective identity in order to adhere to its values (Elias 1994). Following this perspective, the settled Tibetans are well grouped and categorised and consequently have a precise idea of the identity that is required within the group (I/A 2003; I/S 2003). The degree of internal cohesion and common control visible in the established group explains its power to determine the images attributed to it and to others. The principal factor of cohesion differentiation in Winston Parva (Elias 1994), and the Tibetan community in India is to be found in the fact that one group has been established longer than the other. The construction of a common *habitus* requires co-habitation; one's superiority may be solely based on a difference of anteriority in a place, and may not (as is commonly supposed) be entirely the consequence of economic power or physical strength.[170] Many members of the settled Tibetan community know each other or at least have a good idea of their fellow countrymen in their minds, and have constructed a past of shared experiences, a common mode of life and an *ensemble* of norms recognised by all. If they do not know each other, they can rely on certain distinctive characteristics of the settled group to trust that the other knows the interactive procedure. This geographic and affective proximity[171] allows and reinforces social control, which has an impact on the degree of cohesion and integration of the members. Respect for the established *habitus* is secured by the members' identification and mutual constraining observation. Between the settled Tibetan families there exist established friendships and hates. They possess internal cohesion and hierarchy: the fact that the members of the established group constitute a coherent entity does not imply mutual understanding. However, facing outsiders, they unite and forget their differences to protect what is shared (Elias 1994).

The new Tibetan immigrants from Tibet are handicapped for two reasons. Firstly, while in Tibet they were dispersed amongst the Chinese population that now exceeds the local population,[172] and they were condemned to hide the little of their specificity that they dared preserve. The fact that the Tibetans in Tibet must live their specific identity in hiding does not allow for the emergence of an idea of oneself as a member of a larger collective identity. The

[170] There is nonetheless a socio-economic dimension to the configuration. Many of the first exiles were from the upper classes, and although they lost much of their possessions, they have had time to re-establish and rebuild their fortune since. The newcomers, not only did not have much in Tibet, they lost everything with their escape. They are then confronted with the established mode of living of many settled Tibetans, which contrasts sharply with their own.

[171] Certain descendents have intermarried, uniting families into a macro-family comprising large numbers of the exiled community (Elias 1994).

[172] 7,5 million Chinese for 6 million native Tibetans now live in Tibet because of the financial encouragement to settle there.

Tibetans in Tibet have a different manner of living their Tibetanness than the exiles: in order to survive individually, and consequently to preserve their collective image, they have had to learn to live their specificity privately (Barnett 1994). Hence the population in Tibet maintains the Tibetan identity individually. They do not possess a well-defined collective identity other than that of the Chinese, resulting in a low self-esteem, especially visible when the newcomers meet the settled Tibetans in exile (O/I 2003). The settled Tibetans disdain the new arrivals for their lack of pride in being Tibetan, forgetting that the latter have never been permitted to be proud of their Tibetanness. On the contrary, the settled Tibetans have had to expose, maybe overexpose, their identity to survive as a group in their diverse environments. Can there be unity and a shared goal between the "articulate exiles—the minority—and virtually silent (by necessity) Tibetans in Tibet" (Ardley 2002: 120)? The newcomers were never allowed to claim their rights or fight for their desires. The Chinese government has discriminated against the newcomers so that in exile, when they are faced with the settled Tibetans' policy making (which relegates them to a secondary position (I/I 2003_5; I/I 2003_6; I/I 2003_14), they do not know how to stand up for themselves. Their Tibetanness has not undergone the reforms the Dalai Lama's government has instigated, so they do not dare express their feelings, as was the case under the old regime. The settled Tibetans conversely have been encouraged to freely express their *habitus*.

Secondly, the new Tibetan immigrants do not know on their arrival that there is a different Tibetan identity to their own, hence they violate the norms of the *habitus* that thrive in exile. Newcomers learn quickly that they do not fit into the definition; however, to present the right *habitus* takes much longer (I/I 2003_10; I/I 2003_14). The incorporation of the established's collective value scale by the newcomers, having none of their own to supplant it with, has a paralysing effect, for they will judge themselves by the established scale. They come to see that the community is the Tibetan community *in exile*, not the *Tibetan* community (I/I 2003_6; I/I 2003_10; I/I 2003_12; I/I 2003_14). They do not really have a feeling of belonging to the Tibetan people: Tibetan people for them are those that have suffered under Chinese occupation, not the abstract identity that is in exile.[173] New Tibetan immigrants belong to this community, but do not participate. They do not share a similar status. However, as Samdhong Rinpoche said, the newcomers in India become settled with time, as the present settlers were once newcomers. But the old settlers did not have to deal with an established community other than

[173] The fact that movement inside Tibet is limited by the requirement for travel permits accentuates the sentiment of regionalism.

the host country's population—where difference with it is acceptable and even desired. Thus the fact of newcomers having to integrate into an established group is a new process, a problematic issue within the community for several decades. The new Tibetan immigrant who wishes to be accepted in the ranks of the settled members of the community cannot keep his/her mode of life because of the risks of transgressing the norms of the settled residents, for he/she would come up against a coherent community, that will subject him/her to constraint (Elias 1994). If his/her old ways are maintained, he/she will be pointed at and humiliated, exposed to collective blame and depreciative gossip (Elias 1994). A new Tibetan immigrant who tends to maintain his/her own *habitus* will be labelled pro-Chinese, someone who wants to preserve something that is tainted by his/her oppressor, and hence will be marginalised within the community that sets itself up as antithetical to what the new immigrant stands for: an acculturated national.

The fact that the newcomers do not know each other[174] handicaps a group process, and consequently the elaboration of a common personality, with its *porte-parole* fighting for its rights. They are neither able to counter the negative gossip about them nor interact with the same chance of success as the settled Tibetans and their descendants: there is a social paralysis because of an inexistent network of relations between the newcomers. The settled Tibetans see the disrespect for their *habitus* and the lack of social control among the newcomers as a personal attack. The newcomers present a threat to the communitarian mode of life established after so many years of common construction. The relation between these two groups is that of mutual avoidance and results in the banishment of the deviant group from the social life of the settled group (I/I 2003_6; I/I 2003_14).[175] The transgression of the norms creates barriers because the offended settled members will not link themselves to the source of their anguishes, and in parallel, the newcomers labelled as antinomic will not unite with the people that disparage them, reducing their chances of success in exile. However, the Tibetan community's social survival depends on Tibetans' integration. Integration requires a double process of power of the established Tibetans to constrain the new Tibetan immigrants to comply with their definition of Tibetanness, and of the new arrivals' desire to integrate, associated with the hope of participating in the Tibetan cause. Until now, the settled Tibetans' strength guaranteed the newcomers' allegiance, although it may also be linked to the fact that newcomers perceive the settled Tibetans' requirements as representing the Dalai Lama's wishes. Many open conflicts

[174] Many new Tibetan immigrants have been in exile for only a short period, consequently they do not know many people.
[175] A large number of newcomers and settlers have never met members from the opposite group.

are avoided by quenching anger with the Dalai Lama's admonitions to endure the present situation in order to guarantee the future (I/I 2003).

The objective is to make all Tibetans want to integrate into the established community in exile; hence, the leaders of the established group launched the programme to educate all Tibetans with the same value scale, learnt in the transit schools for new refugees, or in the state-in-exile schools for the new generations in exile. It is an attempt to have all Tibetans incorporate the same value scale. Maybe not to supplant the prior *habitus* in the new immigrants, but at least to make them consider the exile definition of Tibetanness to be the authentic one. While newcomers carry their own definition of Tibetanness, they must be conscious of the fact that it is not the 'real' one.

The new Tibetan immigrants who ultimately have to conform—being confronted with a pre-established *habitus*—feel, at least in the beginning, the constraint to conform, having to integrate the rules of the *habitus* that they do not have. They have difficulty accepting that what they know of Tibetanness is not in fact recognised, and therefore they must learn a new definition of their identity if they are to find a place in this new community. They are constrained to conform to homogenise the community's profile. The Tibetan community in India has strong cohesion and social control, and expects from the newcomers a total adaptation to the established way of life. They rely on the submissiveness of foreigners (e.g. new Tibetan immigrants or Tibetans from other host countries) to their social control and on their will to integrate. Since the newcomers are coming to the settled Tibetans' home, they should adapt to those who are welcoming them. Many new immigrants seem very conscious of all the norms and ways that the settled Tibetans value, by commenting for example on the 'foreign' Tibetan way of preparing teatime and the ingredients used, while doing it their own, traditional way (I/I 2003_14, O/I 2003). The margin of freedom that members of the settled group possess is not a result of having escaped from being classified, but rather derives from their frame of behaviour and thought being in equation with the frame of structuration applied to classify society (Bourdieu 1992a, Elias 1994). The freedom they possess is not in terms of less coercion, but rather a better command of the codes of conduct associated with their category —having chosen the criteria representing them—and consequently transposing these codes to an unconscious level, freeing their minds of the effort of conformity. The new Tibetan immigrants recently faced with these social norms must struggle to get a grip on them and learn to handle them.

Insertion into a group is a double process: individual, since the social agent uses his capacities, and social, since the community gives a position to the new agent. This insertion is interrelated with the variable of group identity. Not everything depends on personal will; the group must also want to integrate the individual, which may depend on the reputation of the individual's origin (Elias 1994). The interactive pattern between settled Tibetans and newcomers covers to a certain extent the social class distinctions within the old regime before exile. Chapter 1 demonstrated how all individuals possess a set of proprieties, whose efficiency varies depending on the distance from the *habitus* or kind of capital recognised in the field in which the individual interacts. When the *habitus* enters the field from which it originated, it is more efficient and equips the individual presenting it with an increased potential to acquire the field's capital (Bourdieu 1992). The adaptation of the new Tibetan immigrants to their exiled community is facilitated if they are either coming from U-Tsang or from an upper stratum, since the established *habitus* is that of the first immigrants who mostly came from those two groups (Avedon 1986). Newcomers either from the provinces of Amdo or Kham, or from a poor background, have difficulty overcoming the barrier separating them from settled Tibetans. How long does the barrier between newcomers and settlers exist? Is it a socio-economical barrier, which disappears when the newcomer settles? There is low social mobility between the groups (I/I 2003_6; I/I 2003_9), which attests to the difficulty of ridding the individual of an identity received at some time in his/her life, not only because of the stereotyped opinion that others have of the individual but also for the habits the *habitus* leaves in the individual (Bourdieu 1992a).

Classification designates groups, whose membership varies: in certain cases the members have a high incentive to adhere and identify with their group; in others cases, the relegated actors are seen as members of their group only by members of other groups. The settled Tibetans benefit from a valued identity, which provides them with a good sense of self-esteem. The new Tibetan immigrants do not profit from a good reputation (either in Tibet or in exile), and certainly do not want to be part of a condemned group. As a consequence, in the settled community a group process and an identity construction follow membership allocation. There has been an identification process to the characteristics that they have been allotted. Among the new immigrants, a mutual scepticism and reciprocal suspicion reign, because the members have incorporated the value scale of the established.[176] They condemn their fellow 'members' for the same reasons they have themselves been relegated to the 'outsider' category.[177] There is, on the contrary, an alternative trajectory adopted by certain groups rejected by the mainstream ones, that of structured minority: these groups follow the same process as the established groups, and construct a valorised identity, despite it not being regarded as such by the outside world. A definite element of association emerges from a common past of victims: the collective conscience and shared memories of oppression that permits the construction of an official normative system and modelling a common *habitus*. Such an attitude among the new Tibetan immigrants is emerging: some Tibetan newcomers have asked to be heard, for example a young Tibetan woman who was chosen to take part in a seminar on how to deal with conflicts within the Tibetan community, and with the host population (I/I 2003_6). While the degree of impact that each group possesses on the other is correlated to its power, reciprocal action is not excluded. Settled Tibetans see that the new Tibetan immigrants have a Tibetan identity, albeit different from their own, and look at how Tibetanness is lived within Tibet. Each Tibetan community in different national settings has a certain interpretation of Tibetanness. However, *habitus* from different areas possess more recognition than others: those from the West are highly valued (not for their authenticity, but for the socio-economic power associated with it), while those from Tibet are less valued. But they are all evaluated in reference to the *habitus* established in India.[178]

Hence in order to differentiate, the settled Tibetans use the claim to authenticity. "Often such in-group disputes concerning the relative purity or authenticity of various indigenous practices are fiercer than objections to external influences, due to the potential of unfamiliar 'traditional' performances to point to fissures in a community whose solidarity is dependent upon concealing differences." (Diehl 1997: 127) On the one hand, the process of differentiation is instigated in order for the settled Tibetans to avoid any threatening, competing identity that

[176] The established group can survive on its own, its members identifying with it for the identity with which it provides them. Although the valorised position of the established would probably not be as distinctive (and powerful) were it not for the outsiders' presence. The outsiders constitute a group only in opposition to the established; without the latter they would not possess such a social position (Elias 1994).

[177] In Winston Parva (Elias 1994), the minority of families with deviant modes of life had tainted the reputation of the entire neighbourhood of newcomers. Some new Tibetan immigrants have made the settled Tibetans suspicious of all newcomers, because some have been spies (I/I 2003). Now, many settlers see the majority of newcomers as spies, trying to destroy what the settlers have fought for in exile. By refusing to the new immigrants the possibility of integrating their group, the settled push them into a position that is antinomic in their eyes, while condemning them for this same antinomy.

[178] The hierarchisation of preservation of Tibetanness has resulted from a measuring of authenticity, rather than the measure of adaptation methods. This has resulted in the valorisation of certain Tibetan *habitus* over others. "To marry a child to a Swiss-Tibetan is the dream of most Indian-Tibetan parents." (Perkins 1991: 31)

would endanger the interiorised defences of its members against any aggressions aimed at the common norms and taboos that are essential to preserve their identity. On the other hand, differentiation is desired and sought after because for many exiled Tibetans, the Tibetan cultural identity that they represent is the true Tibetan identity.[179] Tibetanness in exile is posited as authentic by the settled Tibetans, an antithesis to what Tibetanness is suffering in Tibet. To refute any Chinese role in the Tibetan identity, the settled Tibetans disqualify their counterparts newly emigrated from Tibet in a process of self-preservation.[180] The settlers use the newcomers as examples to show what the Chinese authorities are doing: the destruction of Tibetan cultural identity. Hence they criticise the Chinese government by stigmatising the new Tibetan immigrants, who have lived under its domination. So as to provide the Tibetans in exile with a clear aim of differentiating from the Chinese, the classification of insider and outsider according to their definition of authenticity provides standardised cognitive maps, which legitimise the insider's symbolism. As seen previously, the designation of the individuals results in self-fulfilling prophecies, which facilitate their classification (Elias 1994). This process requires the use of *clichés* and an organisation of the environment that makes sense for the author of this categorisation.[181] The newcomers are seen as ignorant—or as having a very feeble knowledge—of the true traditions, and as aggressive, because of their oppression by the Chinese authorities (I/I 2003_11). The settled Tibetans' opinions of the newcomers confirm their thoughts on the Chinese regime (e.g. violent, uncivilised, etc.); however, it condemns the newcomers to roles they do not always fit or do not want to endorse.[182]

[179] We may wonder if this wish to be the bearers of the original culture is a way to alleviate the pain of being separated from their homeland. However, for the settlers to consider the Tibetans from Tibet as polluted by the constant Sinicisation to which they are subjected and as the only ones that have undergone an identity change is to consider their own cultural identity under the culturalist school. The claim to authenticity is dear to culturalists, who allege preserving the original purity of their identity from exterior pollution and the aggression from the other, by reconstituting their culture by a regressive process (Bayart 1996).

[180] The marginalisation of the new Tibetan immigrants from Tibet is a recognised and current fact, as Keila Diehl observed, for they "offend many 'old arrivals' and younger Tibetans raised in exile by their unfamiliar haircuts, mass-produced polyester clothes, *kaccâ* (Hindi for 'crude' or 'rough') manners, and enjoyment of Chinese-influenced Lhasan pop music." (1997: 126)

[181] It implies a glorification of the elements with which the exiles want to associate and a disqualification of those from which they are attempting to distance themselves; the stigmatisation of individuals from whom the social agent is differentiating himself implies a social domination and a subsequent cultural refusal. The settlers have an ambivalent attitude toward the newcomers: in one way they consider the latter as poor souls who have lost their way on the road to adulthood; however, they equally dislike them for being closely associated with the Chinese—even if this is due to their co-habitation in Tibet—and suspect them of being spies in their service (I/I 2003, O/I 2003).

[182] As Tashi Tsering felt when he had newly arrived from Tibet: "One thing that bothered me the most was my sense that there ought to have been more alternatives than I seemed to have. My only choices seemed to be to join the government-in-exile and appear to endorse everything it stood for, or to return to Communist China and appear to approve of Chinese policies." (Goldstein 1997: 90)

The newcomers, realising that they will have to shed what they fought to preserve as Tibetan from the Chinese, rapidly feel the difference between themselves and the settled Tibetans. Tibetans in Tibet have had to construct new identities born of the colonial transformations, while the exiles' new identities stem from the Diaspora's transformations. There is a "widening chasm between Tibet's colonial reality and its exile experience, between their competing versions of history and politics, of perception and faith, of hope and despair." (Tsering 2003: 21) As an exiled Tibetan said, it is impossible for the Diaspora to stay united across the world. Thus, to overcome their situation of being a 'rhizomorphic' diaspora, the Tibetan leaders have had to define a trans-cultural identity of pan-Tibetanness. Consequently, censorship by the Tibetan government and community in India is especially concentrated on erasing any forms of difference in Tibetan behaviour. As a consequence, decision-making positions[183] are withheld from new Tibetan immigrants, at least for the duration of their rehabilitation process of learning the 'real' Tibetan ways.[184] As one Tibetan exiled outside of India said: India having allocated much freedom of decision to the Tibetan community, has allowed the Tibetan community to become a real 'factory' of 'good' Tibetans (I/A 2003_4). Those having gone through it benefit from the value of presenting the 'authentic' Tibetan identity, while the other Tibetans have to struggle to homogenise their Tibetanness to the Indian model.

3.3. Tibetan identity preservation in Switzerland

The case study of Switzerland is interesting, for it is the first country outside of India to have integrated Tibetans into its society. The focus is the method of Tibetan cultural preservation within the Swiss state and the impact it has had on the Tibetan community's structure there. This sub-section explores the Swiss cultural pluralism tradition (e.g. four national languages, federalism, multiple political parties) with respect to the Tibetans' feasible, unified struggle to safeguard their identity in this foreign environment. The real challenge for the Tibetans in Switzerland is to preserve their specificity while striving for economic progress within a society that offers such possibilities. As a Tibetan said, cultural preservation among poor

[183] The new Tibetan immigrants are ostracised from decision-making positions: firstly because they are placed in transit camps and then, often having not benefited from many years of education, they find themselves working in factories owned by the Tibetan government in exile. Even after the apprenticeship of being a 'real' Tibetan at the TTS, not many newcomers receive positions among the decision making group, a fact strongly lamented amongst the interviewed new Tibetan immigrants (I/I 2003).

[184] The configuration of established-outsider is also detectable within the Tibetan Diaspora abroad: for example in Australia, knowing English and the 'Aussie' mode of life gives Australian-Tibetan settlers an advantage over newcomers. The criterion in reference to which the distinction is made changes with the national environment.

Tibetans is not preservation; it is *status quo* (I/A 2003_4). For cultural preservation there must be progress, or the incitement from the environment calling for progress. We could infer from his statement that it is through a culture that looks toward the future and progresses that one can measure cultural survival. Another Tibetan commented on how new Tibetan immigrants have more to adapt to in 'developed' countries than in India or Nepal, hinting at cultural and socio-economic differences that have to be bridged and at the cultural allure of the host country's standards to which the Tibetans must avoid totally succumbing (I/A 2003_5). Tibetans must juggle the standards of their modern surroundings and their cultural heritage in order to participate in the survival of their people as a distinctive group. What is interesting with the Tibetans in Switzerland is their high degree of integration in the Swiss society, and their parallel high level of identification with their Tibetan identity (O/S 2003). The history of the Tibetan presence in this country and the national policy behind it, combined with the Tibetan will to survive no matter how far away their country of origin and their leader the Dalai Lama are, have shaped the Tibetan integration and community.

From the high death rate from road construction in the Indian Himalayas, where most Tibetans worked on arrival in exile in India in 1959, many Tibetan children became orphans. The Tibetan government-in-exile was unable to support all of them, so it was decided to give some of them up for adoption (even if there was the will to maintain all Tibetans in a Tibetan environment).[185]

> The Swiss Government was co-operative from the start and said it was willing to take 200 children immediately. Furthermore, it agreed to take steps to help ensure that, although the children were to be adopted into ordinary Swiss families, as far as possible there would be opportunities for them to pursue their own unique Tibetan culture and identity. The first batch of children was followed by others, and later there was also a scheme not only for some older students to study in Switzerland but also for the resettlement of 1000 adult refugees. (Tenzin Gyatso 1998: 181)

In 1962, Switzerland took the largest community outside of India after having passed a resolution in 1960 to accept 1000 Tibetan refugees, thanks to the help of the Swiss Red Cross and the Swiss government's tradition of welcoming refugees. This decision was taken in

[185] "Switzerland seemed to [the Dalai Lama] an ideal place, given the fact that it is a relatively small country with excellent communications and, as a bonus, mountains which are reminiscent of home." (Tenzin Gyatso 198: 181)

accordance with the embodied humanitarian solidarity that shapes Switzerland's image and that is a deep-rooted aspect of Swiss culture (Ribi 2003: 4). Humanitarian aid is targeted at victims of natural disasters or armed conflict. The acceptance of Tibetans as refugees needing a safe refuge is an indirect recognition of the situation in Tibet on the part of Switzerland, as is India's recognition of the importance of a solid infrastructure if the Tibetan community is to survive outside of Tibet. Both countries have provided refugee status to Tibetans, which is a political acknowledgement of the Tibetan community's need to survive outside of its borders. What can be added is the fact that Switzerland chose to accept the Tibetans; it has taken a fancy to the Tibetan community. Some would say as a token of their good will, to disqualify its detractors who see Switzerland as a hedgehog, recalcitrant to welcome too many foreigners.

Originally the Swiss government intended its new residents to live in isolated farming communities in high valleys, following its attitude of mixing charity and profit.[186] But with the new generations being educated within the Swiss system, Tibetans rapidly incorporated the norms and values of the West, dared to follow their desires and interests, and integrated into the Swiss society.[187] Hence while choosing to establish Tibetans within certain parameters, the Swiss government requires all young residents to follow the same process of secondary socialisation (i.e. education) in order to produce individuals capable of functioning within the Swiss society. This standardisation process guarantees a Swiss solidarity and identity despite its tolerance of cultural pluralism. Consequently, Tibetans, like any Swiss nationals, strive to pursue their interests, modelled on possibilities available in Swiss society. They are, however, socialised with a Tibetan attachment, and have the responsibility to maintain a Tibetan identity in parallel to their Swiss identification. Tibetans in Switzerland are regarded as having a strong sense of their Tibetanness and as demonstrating more involvement percentage wise (compared to Tibetans in other countries outside of Tibet and India) in the Tibetan cause (I/S 2003). Whilst some countries put emphasis on the national standard immigrants must adopt, Switzerland presents a landscape of cultural diversity that may soothe the transition into the main regional culture. Tibetans, by seeing the co-habitation of the diverse cultural groups, may

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[186] The Swiss mountains have been suffering from a rural exodus, and the Swiss government is consequently promoting establishment and financial aid to those in the mountains to maintain the tradition of alpine living. Having Tibetans settle in the mountains would have not only suited their usual conditions of life, but would also have helped preserve the Swiss traditions.

[187] "Younger members of the Swiss-Tibetan community prefer shift work on local factories to farming, speak fluent Swiss German, own their own apartments and cars and enjoy the European way of life. But, in parallel, they work hard to preserve their Tibetan identity and culture and provide financial and political support for the freedom movement in India." (*Tibet in Exile*, 1991: 31)

feel less pressured to conform; their exposure to the Swiss identity is guaranteed by compulsory national education and the work environment.

The structure of the Tibetan community is not only correlated with the Swiss administrative policies but also to the perceptions the Swiss population has of Tibetans. While the small number of the original group of Tibetans may have softened the people who usually are wary of accepting immigrants, the continued welcome of the Tibetan community in Switzerland may be linked to a feeling of affinity with their situation and the representations Swiss have of Tibet and its nationals. Some Swiss may feel that both populations are living peacefully in their mountainous countries, but are surrounded by a 'looming' foreign presence.[188] Every country has categorised potential immigrants in classes of desirability. The Tibetan stereotype of peaceful and unassuming individuals provides Tibetans with a positive image in a country that tends to value keeping to itself.[189] However, contrary to being effaced, Tibetans integrate into the Swiss society to improve either their personal situation or the knowledge the Swiss population has of the Tibetan situation. Taking advantage of the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, they never miss an opportunity to make their cause heard. The Tibetan community, independently of where individuals are established in Switzerland, is very active. Certain dates (e.g. the Dalai Lama's birthday, Republic Day, Losar) and events requiring promotion, lobby and demonstration are moments for Tibetans (and their supporters) to unite, giving them the opportunity to collectively live their Tibetanness, which is otherwise usually limited to the private sphere or primary group. The analysis of the issue of private and public sphere is important in comprehending the Swiss Tibetans' possible practice of their Tibetanness.

Today the majority of the 2500 Tibetans live in the Swiss German region, where communities such as the Rikon centre have been built. The community life has provided Tibetans with the possibility of interacting with other Tibetans, allowing a better transmission and sharing of Tibetanness, than for the thirty Tibetans that live in the French-speaking region of Switzerland. The latter are mixed in with the Swiss population, without any distinctive geographical establishment. Their number is so small that it is difficult for them to interact with Tibetans on a daily basis, and hence share their Tibetanness, outside of specific meetings. (A young Tibetan woman in Canberra, Australia, who commented on her isolated Tibetanness among Australian

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[188] For many Swiss conservatives the European Union is a threat ready to destroy the Swiss specificity, as China has done to Tibet.

[189] Most host countries desire that their 'guests' are undemanding, allowing the possibility of forgetting their presence.

friends, also raises this problem.) While India offers the highest degree of Tibetan communitarian autonomy, the Tibetan communities in the Swiss German region provide the individual with support and a place to live their Tibetanness openly. While they still must adapt to the Swiss normative system during certain moments of the day and in certain places, they have the possibility to retire into their primary group. This possibility of two groups raises the issue of W.E.B. Du Bois' (1997) concept of 'double consciousness', which leads to 'double primary groups,' since Tibetan children must follow the Swiss educational system. Tibetan children may, however, not feel any stronger membership with the Tibetan community than with the Swiss community, and therefore may not use the opportunity to relinquish one identity in favour of the other in certain places. There is the question of whether 'double consciousness' requires the carrier to have two identities at all times, or to learn to distinguish the spheres where the Tibetan identity takes precedence over the Swiss one, or *vice versa*. Each Tibetan has a personal answer to this question, depending on his/her life experience and level of investment in the Tibetan cause.

Tibetan children's compulsory attendance in the Swiss educational system reduces the time that Tibetans are exposed to Tibetan culture and environment (the private sphere of the family or community) and exposes them to Swiss culture during large amounts of their time. As a consequence, many Tibetan children are sent to India by parents to be educated in the Tibetan educational system. One might think that this tendency is more pronounced with the Tibetans in the French-speaking area, since moments to share and practice their Tibetanness are even more limited than for those in Tibetan communities in the Swiss German region. However, maybe due to their total immersion in the Swiss population, the standards to which they want to preserve their Tibetanness are less pronounced (I/S 2003_3; O/S 2003). This may be linked to two facts. First, these isolated families are neither influenced nor supported by other Tibetan families that might have made the same decision to send a child away, and hence the community cannot provide solidarity for the resulting destabilised family nucleus. Additionally, many Tibetans living outside of Tibetan communities have mixed marriages. Toleration has obscured lines of cultural demarcation that had once been sharply drawn (many inter-marriages). This raises the possibility of conversion at the levels of identity, national belonging and ethical engagement. [190]

[190] In India, the tension and mutual dislike among the Tibetans and the Indians guaranteed avoidance and withdrawal into specific groups. However, when members of each group are attracted to the symbolism and to the value scale of the other, as in Switzerland, identification with the primary group decreases. In situations where

Many Tibetans look to the Tibetans in Switzerland because they have the reputation of having been able to establish and succeed in their new environment while keeping a high Tibetan profile (I/A 2003; I/S 2003). Although observations confirm such suppositions, the way it has been successfully accomplished varies with the region and, consequently, with the structure of the Tibetan community. Private *versus* collective preservation depends on the available spheres where Tibetan identity can be shown; hence there are degrees of openness in their Tibetanness. The degree of Tibetan awareness seems to compensate for the lack of Tibetan solidarity in certain regions (such as in the French region) and to provide an opportunity to meet, and hence live collectively their Tibetanness for the Tibetans who otherwise may be quite isolated in some Swiss communities (O/S 2003).

To keep the Tibetan consciousness alive despite distance from the Tibetan government-in-exile, there have been many initiatives to build centres and organise groups that give Tibetans and other interested people the possibility to learn and live the Tibetan identity. The Rikon centre with its monastery was the first Tibetan community in Europe. It was built in order to accommodate a monastic community to serve the religious needs of the exiled Tibetans, provide language and cultural teaching as was done in the past, while adapting to its social environment by accepting both girls and boys, and providing Buddhist teaching for Westerners (Van Dyke 1997).[191] It is an example of how the traditional can be adapted to its surroundings in order to survive the transfer. While some could see this adaptation as acculturation, in my opinion, the real proof of the Tibetan community's survival is its capacity to incorporate outside cultural influence and still present a Tibetan profile.

In a foreign environment, it is not sufficient to ensure the homogeneity of behaviours and opinions horizontally (constraint of all the different Tibetan identities to the Indian model); the vertical is equally important, where the socialisation of descendents becomes a priority for group survival. For a minority attempting to maintain its specificity in the presence of competing, larger communities, education is a means of cultural transmission. Hence, it can be a tool of destruction for the cultural identity that is not of the *habitus* of the educational system.

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members are born within both groups, there arises the difficulty of defining which is the primary group of belonging. For the Tibetan community, this endangers its future, for its members may not turn to it for reference.

[191] Mary Van Dyke's study of the construction of the Swiss Rikon Institute exemplifies the process of collaboration that unites the host population and government with the Tibetan refugees. There was an "oscillation between tradition and modernity on an exilic setting, an ongoing negotiation between conservative and progressive element." (Korom 1997: 9)

Making children from minorities go to the school of the majority exposes them to the latter's culture. While the Swiss state has a cultural pluralist heritage and does not request radical assimilation, the fact of not being able to maintain their children in a separate education system as in India has deeply exposed Tibetans to Swiss culture, leading to more contact between the two co-habiting groups. When the Dalai Lama went to visit the 200 children who had been adopted, he found them to be very shy and awkward in their behaviour toward him. "Sadly, most of them had completely lost the ability to speak their native language." (Tenzin Gyatso 1998: 216) However, on subsequent visits, he found the situation much improved. The children had taken lessons and spoke Tibetan. New refugees are not the only ones to have to adapt in the situation of cultural encounter. The Swiss government and the local refugee administrators had to establish an operational system that would permit survival of Tibetan specificity while integrating Tibetans into the larger society. Whilst the Tibetan culture and language were not to be taught in school, they were to be guaranteed by the establishment of infrastructures such as communities, where they could be shared. Although not all Swiss Tibetans speak Tibetan, one must not ignore the obstacles they have to overcome in order to learn it. In view of these obstacles (e.g. compulsory Swiss education, length of school hours, no Tibetan language media, either written or televised, scarcity of Tibetan peers[192]), the emotional and time investment some Tibetans have made in order to learn their language of origin is testimony to their identification with the Tibetan cause. Viewing Tibetans in Switzerland as speaking Tibetan well or insufficiently depends on one's point of view and the place of establishment of the questioned Tibetan. Although to some Tibetans having lived in India, not many Swiss Tibetans know the Tibetan language (I/S 2003_1), the latter do show a strong will to speak it (more than in other host countries). And to most Tibetans having lived abroad (outside of India), conscious of the extra effort such an acquisition requires in countries where Tibetan is not part of the academic curriculum, the percentage of Tibetan speakers among the Swiss Tibetans is perceived as high (I/A 2003_3; I/S 2003_3).

Since the same method and level of cultural preservation[193] is not possible, there may have been an unconscious distribution of roles for each community in exile. Tibetans in 'developed'

[192] One young Tibetan woman in Canberra highlighted how for her cousins who lived in Rikon it was much easier to speak Tibetan since they had friends of their age within the Tibetan community (I/A 2003). Although the numbers of peers among the Tibetans may be higher than in Canberra, the majority of Tibetan children's friends would come from other cultural groups, encountered at school in Switzerland.

[193] Criteria of cultural preservation such as Tibetan language and practice of religious traditions cannot be the same in all countries of exile because the method of teaching Tibetanness is not the same. Swiss and Australian Tibetans

countries may be responsible for providing financial support to communities, such as in India, where the accent is on cultural and community survival. "Tibetans in Switzerland,, who are earning a good deal, often send money to His Holiness to help their fellow-refugees." (Taring 1970: 307) This system is closely linked to the host country's policy on refugees or immigrants. India, in allowing autarky, provides the Tibetan community with an autonomous educational system in which the Tibetan identity and language can be taught and preserved. Switzerland, with its tradition of pluralism and welcome to refugees, gives Tibetans the possibility of living their specificity among a plurality of other cultural groups, while allowing them to establish and prosper, on condition that they know the normative system and language of the area into which they wish to integrate. Before being a productive citizen, the refugee must learn the host language, norms and social interactive patterns. This means that the Tibetan learns to mould his/her Tibetan identity to the requirements of his/her surroundings. This is what a Tibetan in Australia called a 'culture of convenience' (I/A 2003_5), to explain the diversity in the Tibetan 'sameness.' Tibetanness has become an adaptable culture: whether Swiss Tibetan, or Australian Tibetan, all conserve their Tibetan identity independently of an emerging identification process with the host country's culture. Whereas all Tibetans I interviewed identified themselves as Tibetans, their norms of reference were those of the host country in which they grew up, with a background of mixed Tibetan Buddhist principles (I/A 2003; I/I 2003; I/S 2003). While Tibetanness refers to Tibet and its nationals, its content has become linked to different countries that are host to it. For some Swiss Tibetans, it is the awareness of the historical events that culminated in life as a Tibetan in Switzerland and the knowledge of what Tibetan identity means in this country: a mixture of Tibetanness and Swissness that materialises either in a Tibetan or a Swiss identity depending on the situation. To some younger Tibetans, Tibetanness is the right to don Tibetan clothing as costumes at Losar and have two reference systems that their 'double consciousness' offers (O/S 2003).

The diaspora's specific consciousness (Vertovec 1999) may relate to the abstract identity referring to a time and/or place that has disappeared, whose content is nationally variable. The cultural dexterity that accompanies 'double consciousness' has become a Tibetan trait and mode of survival. The possible gradation of Tibetanness has allowed degrees of integration in the host countries for the members of the Tibetan community.

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cannot rely on a Tibetan educational system, as in India, to convey to the young what Tibetanness is. Hence the method in these countries must adapt to the criteria used to guarantee preservation of the Tibetan identity.

3.4. Tibetan specificity in assimilationist Australia

3.4.1. Australia and multiculturalism

The case of Tibetans in Australia is interesting, for it differs from the two previous case studies of the pluricultural countries of India and Switzerland. Australia's immigration policy is assimilationist and adheres to the principle of *jus soli*[194] because its state has emerged from a settlement colony.[195] Like the United States, Australia has a melting pot policy, according to which all migrants should find a better life by discarding their former identity (Lewis 2001). The Australian culture is uncertain and constantly evolving because of a multicultural input, whereas older European nation-states have a sense of identity, despite pluricultural heritage. They have always been dealing with otherness and cross-cultural influence, due to their geographic position. Consequently, there is a difference between national diversity in heritage, and culturally and ethnically diverse contemporary input. Old states benefit from an established and recognised ensemble of national traits that can very well be diverse or provide material for diverse variations of the national identity (e.g. Switzerland has an Italian, German, French and Romansh variation to the Swiss identity). More recent states are in the process of fighting for a standardised identity by homogenising a culturally diverse influx of migrants. Australian culture is therefore an entity that is struggling to deal with multicultural origins whilst promoting a monocultural image, because it clings to its British roots.

Until 1973, a unified national identity was attained with the 'White Australia' policy.[196] The government could protect its Caucasian profile by selectively accepting migrants from countries that presented similar ethnic origins. In the 1980s, the concept of multiculturalism may have been introduced in order to justify the influx of Asian immigrants accepted in order to compensate for the lack of skilled workers and for negative population growth.[197] With the Howard government, immigration is maintained below the sustainable population level. This may be partly due to the Asian origin of the most likely immigrants to Australia, hence the

[194] This means that individuals born in Australia automatically acquire Australian nationality.

[195] While this point does not claim to be an analysis of the Australian immigration policies, they are indirectly mentioned through this study of the Tibetan cultural preservation in a country of claimed multiculturalism.

[196] The process of removing the discrimination of this law, took 24 years, starting in 1949 when Prime Minister Holt allowed some 800 non-European refugees to remain in Australia and Japanese war brides to enter Australia. The final removal was in 1973 by the new Labour Government (www.immi.gov.au/facts/08abolition.htm).

[197] See www.immi.gov.au/facts/06evolution.htm and www.immi.gov.au/facts/61asylum.htm.

attempt to reduce the impact of such an influx of non-Caucasians on the British heritage.[198] The Australian state's present policies and attitude toward immigrants, especially those whose physical traits vary noticeably from those of Northwest Europeans, leads one to greet with scepticism the claim to a multicultural society. The Howard government is following "[...] the attitudes of racism and ethnocentrism which have firm foundations throughout all of Australian history." (Yengoyan 2001: 279) Different types of migration suit the present trend of increasing the Australian population while keeping the number of educated and skilled workers high. On the one hand, residency requests by international students in Australia are positively viewed because they have proven they can live within the country and their educational background is known (I/A 2003_6). On the other hand, seeking refugee status is regarded with suspicion, because it is viewed as a way to shortcut the system.[199] The Australian government is reticent to give the status of refugee because it entails having to acknowledge the problematic situation in the country of origin[200] on the one hand, and on the other, it requires that it treats a specific ethnic or national group as different.

Though Australian-Asians may be *seen* as part of the Australian landscape and psyche (Yat-Sen Li 1999), do they *feel* part of the Australian state? The feeling of belonging is correlated with having a place within the public sphere and contributing to mould the Australian national identity. This feeling of membership is twofold. On the one hand, the state must provide space and welcome the incoming individual. On the other, the individual must wish to integrate and feel 'at home.' The latter often depends on and evolves from the former. The welcome of Tibetans in the 1980s was set at the time of the mass Asian worker demand.[201] Hence, the Tibetans' integration into Australian society was not based on the wish to help cultural preservation, but on their economic power input. While they might have been rapidly integrated through their professional careers, the question of Tibetans as a community with a specific identity to protect was not an issue for the government.

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[198] In the new policy of 'united in diversity' (2003), the present trend to control migrants' background and their impact on the British 'ideal-type' has resulted in a strict and reduced acceptance of immigrants.

[199] Corresponding to the Geneva Convention of 1951, defining individuals as refugees is the admitting state's responsibility. Australia has not yet given this status to Tibetans.

[200] Australia in the past two decades has realised that its main trading partners are neighbouring Asian countries. Therefore, it has worked on consolidating diplomatic and economic ties with them. The Tibetan issue is a delicate matter that risks alienating the Chinese authorities and closing access to the Chinese market.

[201] Information on the first Tibetans' arrival is not well documented, nor known, even by the Tibetan Office in Canberra, because it was the result of personal initiatives.

3.4.2. The Tibetan community and its sense of responsibility

The Tibetan presence and the structure of the Tibetan community are largely influenced by the Australian immigration policy that only just three years ago granted a humanitarian program that provided visas to Tibetans. Once in Australia, however, Tibetans are like any other Australian and must provide for themselves. Their arrival and establishment is therefore not 'organised' and accounted for by the Tibetan Office in Canberra (I/A 2003_2).[202]

The fact of being immigrants and not refugees has greatly impacted the Tibetan way of living in Australia. On the Australian state's part, there was neither an offer of land where the Tibetans could settle as a community, nor was there financial support that helped settlement. Tibetans had to have the finances necessary to live in Australia before coming (whilst refugees are welcomed and supported independently of their situation). This not only influences the socio-economic strata that came to this country (Australia encourages skilled, long-term migrants), but also the reasons for which Tibetans choose to settle in Australia. In countries such as Switzerland and India, Tibetans ask for refuge; in Australia, they seek to improve their living standards.[203] Whereas in the former cases, the objective is physical and cultural survival, and community living is essential, the latter situation does not require any collective action. This does not imply that the Tibetans in Australia do not work for the Tibetan cause nor that they ignore their Tibetan origin. Since infrastructure to ensure these is absent, Tibetans have more difficulty complying with the requirements of Tibetan exile (responsibility for conserving their Tibetan culture in the name of the Tibetans in Tibet). Because of the lack of financial support and infrastructure for cultural preservation (Tibetans give much importance to being able to maintain their culture, hence they are discouraged from settling where this is impossible), the number of Tibetans in Australia is small, numbering approximately 200. Having to live where they find a job, they are very spread out and mixed into the Australian environment. In cities such as Sydney and Melbourne, Tibetans may interact more with their Tibetan peers because of their higher density; however, there is no geographical delimitation to their settlement that could unite Tibetans to constitute a visible group and a strong community. Because of having so few Tibetans with whom to interact, Tibetans in Australia must make an

[202] The Tibetan Office is only presently assessing the whereabouts of Tibetans in Australia. Since their settlement is not a state initiative, a survey of Tibetans is difficult.
[203] Although this trend may be changing with the opening of the Canberra Tibetan Office and the sponsorship of Tibetan shops by the Tibetan government in exile (I/A 2003_5).

explicit effort to have their community in their mind in order to feel membership with either a Tibetan community in Australia or the Tibetan Diaspora abroad (Anderson 1991).

Having no government aid, Tibetans have to finance their own settlement, and hence concentrate on their own lives and careers. Consequently, time spent on organising Tibetan events and societies is reduced. "Nearly all Tibetans in Western countries have networks which link them with each other and with sympathetic Westerners in 'friendship societies' which aim to preserve Tibetan culture and educate the general public about it." (Devoe 1987: 60) In comparison with Switzerland, where there are many such societies, Australia has very few places where Tibetans can collectively work on their Tibetanness.[204] Adding to this, many Tibetans in Australia are not members of societies for Tibetan solidarity. A Tibetan man commented on the fact that few Tibetans in Australia show interest in preserving a Tibetan community by participating in Tibetan religious festivals and commemoration dates, and even fewer work for the Tibetan cause (I/A 2003_5).[205]

As previously illustrated, the level of cultural continuity with the past largely depends on the level of cross-cultural influence, and hence on the degree that the Tibetan community can keep to itself. Although Philip Ruddock (the Minister of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs) cites in his "Message from the Minister (A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia 1999)" that "cultural diversity is a unifying force for Australia," safeguarding ethnic or national specificity is not viewed as being particularly desirable, contrary to his exhortation to, "[enhance] community harmony", because it turns the focus away from building the *Australian* national identity.[206] Homogenisation is required to create a national identity, and homogenisation operates on the principle of providing migrants with a group reference that will with time also become that of the membership group.

A diaspora is faced with the possible differentiation between the membership group and the reference group, creating an ambivalence of roles. Tibetans in Australia are struggling to

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[204] Though there is a relatively high number of religious centres where Tibetans can go where Tibetanness can be openly and collectively lived.

[205] Dorsh Marie Devoe (1987) observed in her studies on Tibetans in Indian that working for the Tibetan community and its cause for survival is considered a criterion to evaluate a Tibetan's success.

[206] "The freedom of all Australians to express and share their cultural values is dependent on their abiding by mutual civic obligations. All Australians are expected to have an overriding loyalty to Australia and its people, and to respect the basic structures and principles underwriting our democratic society. These are: the Constitution, Parliamentary democracy, freedom of speech and religion, English as the national language, the rule of law, acceptance and equality." (www.immi.gov.au/facts/06evolution.htm)

prevent their membership group from becoming the reference group and Australian society developing into their membership group. This is happening because the new generation of Tibetans feels 'at home' in Australia (I/A 2003_3; I/A 2003_4). Second generation Australian-Tibetans[207] assert their bond to Australia when questioned, although the cost for this feeling of 'home' is revealed when most children must struggle to speak Tibetan (often speaking it as a second language) or to show their knowledge of Tibetan Buddhist traditions. The painter Juan Davila's comment on his adoptive country confirms the requirement to conform and homogenise: "In Australia, the only options for identity are alienated ones." (Papastergiadis 1998: 172) Tibetan cultural preservation in Australia concerns the possible maintenance of specificity in a unifying policy society. Tibetans know the Tibetan heritage must be kept alive. So instead of feeling solidarity with the Tibetan community, they have a feeling of obligation to it. Tibetan youth feel obligation to know the basic traditions, even though these do not fit into their daily lives (I/A 2003_3). For this reason, an "individual may have many 'selves' according to the groups to which he belongs and the extent to which each of these groups is isolated from the others." (Robert Park in Eriksen 1993: 20) In countries where cultural pluralism is discouraged, the reference group will take precedence over the group of origin. The latter may be restricted to a very small sphere, which in Australia could be even more limited than in Switzerland, close to what the Tibetans in the French region experience. However, Tibetans in Australia do not have a close, strong Tibetan community on which to fall back, as do the French Swiss Tibetans. Tibetans in Australia feel they have had to adapt more than in Switzerland or India, for example (I/A 2003_5). Integration is required on an individual level for a good life, but here there is the risk of self-alienation. When integrated, members of minorities of other ethnic/national origins are exposed to difference and become acculturated.

Australia is where I encountered the most Tibetans who maintained an emotional distance from the Dalai Lama, many stating that devotion to him depends on variables such as generation and level of education (I/A 2003). There is a widening communication gap within the Tibetan community. The old generation never doubts their leader. Young Tibetans in Australia do not live in a Tibetan community and refer to other leaders and standards for most of their actions (I/A 2003_1; I/A 2003_3). Even they, however, trust the Dalai Lama and his decisions on

[207] With generations, a second defining term is added to the first term of Tibetan within the Tibetan Diaspora. The nationality of the host country in which the Tibetan is established comes to define who this Tibetan is: Swiss-Tibetan, or Australia-Tibetan. Is this second term over-powering the first, or is Tibetanness an accepted core, which it is not necessary to mention? Definition of Tibetans varies; their membership changes with the designator. According to Tibetans from India, Tibetans from Australia or Switzerland are Australians or Swiss, however according to nationals in those host countries, Tibetans are Tibetan.

Tibetan matters and teachings. Australian-Tibetan youth do not differ from the average Australian, except for their normative system. Comments on life in general and the frequent references to human rights are founded in their Tibetan Buddhist philosophy (I/A 2003_1). They are Tibetan representatives by virtue of their education within the Tibetan normative system, and later from eventual reading of Tibetan literature. For Tibetans everywhere, becoming a Tibetan relies firstly on being socialised within a Tibetan framework, and secondly on the Tibetan individual's will to deepen his/her knowledge of Tibetanness.

When more than one Tibetan assembles, they form a core group and consequently share their common identity. Although they may not be totally integrated in the wider society, their integration into a community that makes sense of their heritage may give them more strength to interact with the outside. While Tibetans in Australia cannot rely on a strong Australian Tibetan community, they have a good sense of the Tibetan Diaspora and through it feel linked to Tibetans. Tibetans in Australia tend not to turn to other Tibetans within their country of establishment for reference on the way to maintain their Tibetanness, but to Tibetan communities in other countries. In this way, in my opinion, they continue to show allegiance to the Tibetan community abroad. Although it is difficult to ascertain the reason for such a phenomenon, it may be linked to their evaluation of their level of cultural preservation. Many of the interviewed Tibetans in Australia did not regard their efforts in protecting their specific mode of living as being as pronounced as in other Tibetan exile communities (I/A 2003_3; I/A 2003_4).

Many Tibetans feel isolated either in their efforts to have their cause heard or in their Tibetanness. Their efforts for the Tibetan cause seem ineffectual to them, as a young Tibetan's comment shows: "When there are so few Tibetans demonstrating in front of the Chinese Embassy, you can only feel the uselessness." (I/A 2003_3) Since the Tibetan primary group converges with the Australian reference group, for many of the new generation of Tibetans born or brought up (e.g. attending public school, playing with peers of other origins) in Australia, one could infer that many would be acculturated and not have much to do with the Tibetan Diaspora. It is difficult to maintain cultural difference when competing with the surrounding culture. Ritual practices interfere with school and work schedules. "[Most Tibetans] know that, realistically, they must allow their children to take full advantage of the educational and economic opportunities available to them in exile, participation which requires a certain amount of accommodation to their foreign host societies." (Diehl 1997: 125) As a result, most Tibetan parents assume the responsibility to talk about Tibet and its culture, and incite their children to speak Tibetan by recounting legends and stories of life in Tibet in their mother tongue (Devoe 1987). For older children, access to Tibetan language literature encourages them to learn. But many do not deepen their linguistic knowledge further than the spoken form within the family circle, for it takes too much extra effort, combined with schoolwork, according to a young Australian-Tibetan (I/A 2003_3).

The same Tibetan woman commenting on her feeling of isolation continues, however, by stating that as long as there are Tibetans, the Tibetan cause shall be made known (I/A 2003_3).[208] The isolation felt by Tibetans may be a sign that they have not abandoned their Tibetan identity. To be isolated means to feel different from the surrounding population. Although the Tibetans are well integrated, it is in moments when they wish to *be* Tibetan that they feel that others will see them as different and as not fully endorsing their Australian identity. While Tibetans in Australia have successful careers and are included into the Australian society (e.g. work, school, social activities, sports), they must relinquish their Tibetanness for an Australian identity (I/A 2003_1; I/A 2003_3). This young Tibetan woman feels different when she must explain the historical events that have led to the exile of so many Tibetans, her people. While acting as any Australian, she is integrated; when she shows her specificity, there is differentiation. Hence it posits her on the other side of Australian-ness (I/A 2003_3. This is an example of how the Tibetan identity is malleable and illustrates the juggling act between private and public use of their Tibetanness that Tibetans are learning to master.

By refusing to Tibetans the infrastructure (e.g. independent schooling, community life) that allows for specificity continuity, the Australia government has given itself the chance to produce a homogenous identity. However, with the combination of the Australian tendency of always adding the denomination of Asian to any Australian of Asian origin and the decided Tibetan will to protect their specificity, the Tibetan *habitus* will need to be further targeted if it is to disappear from the cultural landscape. The Tibetan community in Australia may be loosely linked and *quasi* inexistent, but Tibetanness may hopefully be preserved through the individual attachment each Tibetan seems to feel to the Tibetan Diaspora abroad (I/A 2003).

[208] Approximately 90% of the Tibetans I interviewed held such a positive opinion on the survival of their people (I/A 2003; I/I 2003; I/S 2003).

CHAPTER 4: Conclusion

After the examination of the mechanisms of protection/survival of the Tibetan communities in exile that have seen their specific identity continuously endangered, is an answer possible to the question regarding the impact such a mobilisation has on Tibetan identity and group structure? And can we answer whether "removing a portion of the group from its original world of culture and society will completely cut off its relation to the total culture from which it derived moral, social and spiritual inspiration, beliefs, practices and values" (Arakeri 1998: 6)? The answer is to be found in the debate on whether cultural preservation requires denial of transformation — the fixation of cultural schemes—or if it presupposes survival, hence meaningful cultural construction, to suit the present—a change of meaning and practice. This includes adaptation to the social structures of the pervading *milieu*, bringing us back to the conditioned nature of *habitus* and its historically defined nature (Bourdieu 1992a). This leads to the question of whether the *habitus* from a specific environment can transmute to another and still provide its members with adequate mental and behavioural schemes and understanding.

Does the Tibetan identity's authenticity/survival depend on which pole it is situated?[209] Whether the Tibetan identity is a continuity of the past or a contemporaneous interpretation of past cultural material, the central issue is its survival in the present. Its survival until now would seem to prove that it provides meaning that Tibetans draw from for their identity. Meaning and continuity are not two opposite poles of cultural survival. If an identity continues in time, it would do so because of the meaning it supplies to its members, and the meaning is partially founded on the belief in the continuity of the identity, in an unchanging stable cultural core (Eriksen 1993: 68). Maintaining language, historical knowledge, etc. "[...] by no means [covers] all the attributes by which a Tibetan is authentically, recognizably 'Tibetan', [but] they do illustrate to some extent the bearing of this refugee group. [...]" (Devoe 1987: 62) While preservation of certain Tibetan characteristics is essential, the meaning increasingly associated with them may have had a canalising effect in projecting these characteristics into the future: Tibetans as long-term refugees appear to share a growing sense of nationalism.[210] In the days before flight, Tibetan self-image did not include a geopolitical sense of being Tibetans united in a nation governed by the Dalai Lama and his government (Huber 1999). Preservation, which is

[209] "Is this a question of last vestiges before an ineluctable and final disappearance, or will the construction of new consciousness of identity open other perspectives for them (as the 'neo-indigenist' movements that have been developing over the course of the last few years seem to testify)?" (Gruzinski and Wachtel 2001: 191)
[210] Even for the Australian-Tibetans who identify with the Tibetan community abroad as seen in sub-section 3.4.

often associated with the maintenance of tradition (Hobsbawm 1983), cannot be limited to this without tradition becoming a museum object (Norbu 1994). There must be an underlying ideology that the Tibetan community has successfully instituted.

> In the refugee context, however, being Tibetan has not only religious, language, and custom criteria, but additionally, a measure of national identity. National identity in this case means 'Tibetan orientation', allegiance voiced for the Dalai Lama who symbolizes Tibetan culture in its entirety, and action for *Rang-zen*, Tibetan's freedom cause. A good Tibetan not only acts out rituals and moralistic teachings of Tibetan Buddhist faith, but he feels Tibet in his blood and is willing to sacrifice for it. (Devoe 1987: 62)

It would be interesting to analyse the impact on the Diaspora of the 2001 first direct elections of the *Kalon Tripa* or Prime Minister of the cabinet-in-exile, for all Tibetans could participate no matter where they were in the world. For a moment the 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991) could have been transformed into reality, where the Tibetans' actions resulted in something tangible. Voting allows the community in the mind to materialise into action for that community.

Another important trait that unites Tibetans abroad is their common status as refugees. "Keeping refugee status is viewed as an action, an act of integrity in defence of faith. A Tibetan who has kept refugee status is thought to have kept his Tibetan-ness, an ethos mutually understood by Tibetans around the world. Taking citizenship, on the other hand, while giving functional benefits, renders the Tibetan unrecognizable, in both a profound and practical sense." (Devoe 1987: 63)[211] Dorsh Marie Devoe's statement does not take into account the 'double consciousness' that most members of diasporas present by learning to transfer from one cultural circle to another while staying loyal to both. In the context of a hybrid identity that thrives on cross-cultural influence, loyalty to one group does not entail betrayal of the other. In general, Tibetans show a balanced relationship between the knowledge of their Tibetan community and reference to its value scale and the affinity with the normative system of their country of residence. Although many Tibetans are adopting the nationalities of their host

[211] The benefits Tibetans derive from keeping refugee status are "[...] Tibetan self-definition and individual identity, while reinforced by the presence of the group's leader, the Dalai Lama, are more clearly understood and felt because of the refugee status which frames their lives in India. It becomes a boundary of sorts between a Tibetan life and a more assimilated, acculturated—processed—existence." (Devoe 1987: 63)

countries that have become with time their homes,[212] the majority share a willingness to keep up the hope of belonging to a Tibetan nation-state that will continue to exist. "For the Tibetan, the refugee paper[213] is expressive of a cultural, ethnic, and national identity, an allegiance to the past, and a candid avowal of dedication to Tibet's future freedom." (Devoe 1987: 56)

"Wherever they are in the diaspora, in India, in Nepal, the USA, Australia, Switzerland, France, Germany, the UK and elsewhere, the Tibetans continue to hope. [...] They are determined that when the Tibetans once again become free citizens in their own country, they will still have a heritage of which to be proud." (Craig 1999: 221) A young Tibetan told me that the Tibetan cause would never die, as long as there is still one Tibetan alive to transmit their values (I/A 2003_3). But if Tibetans want to win, they must all work together for the cause, and being spread across a diaspora renders unification around one allegiance difficult. While Tibetans in exile feel privileged to live their culture in freedom, they understand that privilege entails responsibility (I/A 2003_1; I/A 2003_3). Native Tibetans on their side continue to rebel and die for the freedom of their country and their right to be Tibetan. Consequently, when new Tibetan immigrants and settled Tibetans meet, expectations of the others' behaviour clash: new Tibetan immigrants expect freedom and a rebellious attitude from the settled Tibetans, and the settlers expect to see degenerate Tibetans. Many new Tibetan immigrants lose their faith in the exiled community (Panchen 2000 and I/I 2003_6; I/I 2003_10; I/I 2003_12; I/I 2003_14). Some regard the settled Tibetans as so well established that it seems that they have forgotten the reason for which they are in exile. With the issue of Tibet's future relations with China, the newcomers are less ready to accept the Dalai Lama's solution for political autonomy (the Middle Way) than the settlers (I/I 2003_10; I/I 2003_12; I/I 2003_14), the former because they have had to live under the Chinese occupation and the latter because they have had a similar trajectory as the Dalai Lama.[214] However, the option of autonomy has been officially accepted, since the new Tibetan immigrants do not have the power to be heard and are not used to expressing their opinion, especially if it runs counter to that of the Dalai Lama.

[212] Home is seen as being where the heart is. However Tibetans in exile see their host country as their home, but where is their heart? The official ideology answers: with the homeland, Tibet. But with new generations in exile, is this still true, independently from what the children are taught in school?

[213] Tibetans in India benefit from a type of 'passport' for refugees that allows them to travel.

[214] Criticisms of some more radical Tibetans in exile echo the new Tibetan immigrants' concerns regarding the current government's policy of continuing the traditions of its predecessors (I/I 2003_12; I/I 2003_14): "It had become the fashion to play it safe. [...] The people with conviction and talent stayed behind and fought in Tibet to the last, and a lot of second-level people, bureaucrats, made it out. In India, the whole establishment always kept quiet. It was not particularly the Indian government who clamped down on them, but their own selves." (Jamyang Norbu in Avedon 1986: 110)

If Tibetans return to their roots their feeling of belonging may be challenged: will Tibetans who go back to Tibet, just as with Americans of Scottish origin returning to Scotland, find out they are more of the nationality of their host country than Tibetan? All the Tibetan communities may be fighting for the Tibetan cause of either independence or autonomy, but as one Tibetan man said: "If Tibet is free, it is good for Tibetans in Tibet." His comment was reiterated by other interviewed Tibetans and illustrates the fact that probably not many Tibetans in exile will go back to settle in Tibet if it gains independence or significant autonomy (I/A 2003_4).

Is this a failure because the portion of the Tibetan community that was cut off from its main 'totality' has found other centres of allegiance? Whether Tibetans view the Tibetan community as a membership group or a reference group, the link with Tibetanness continues today in spite of the time and the space that has distanced Tibetans in exile from their lives prior to their 'forced migration.' The Tibetan normative system seems to have successfully provided a mental and behavioural framework for Tibetans that is independent of the country of settlement, and which has succeeded in guiding its members. This may testify to success in a test of survival. If a normative system can continue independently, or thanks to the contribution of a diversity of social structures, as a syncretism of numerous cultural settings, then the *habitus* may well have the determining role in adaptation or continuity. How would this affect Pierre Bourdieu's (1992a) hypothesis that social and mental structures are physiologically identical because they are 'genetically' (Bourdieu 1992a: 21) linked, which highlights the social determinism that makes the *habitus* a result of the incorporation of the social structures in which it is born? This points to a possible answer (and an opening for further research) to the question of whether the Tibetan identity emerged in exile or is a heritage of the once 'free Tibet.' If we adopt Bourdieu's perspective, the Tibetan *habitus* is the result of the incorporation of the social structures of the host countries, hence it would be multiple and born from the experience of exile. On the one side, since the Tibetan *habitus* maintains a consistency across time and space despite its hybrid cultural input, it may prove its unconscious reproductive potential, for it would stem from the social structures of the Tibetan society prior to exile (being the shared origin of all Tibetans). On the other side, most Tibetans have been born and brought up in a Tibetan context, so consequently the *habitus* can be imputed to a will to mould rather than a passive integration of social structures (although there is always some). Hence, this reproduction may be conscious, conversely to the usual way the *habitus* is perceived to operate. A study of adopted Tibetan children brought up in non-Tibetan families may provide clarifying information on such interrogations. Do they feel Tibetan despite growing up surrounded by people from another origin, or thanks to the explicit efforts of teaching the Tibetan culture to them by many adoptive parents?

Analysing the situation of the Tibetan cultural heritage's endangered existence may help bring sociology, and more generally social sciences, into 'policy-relevant' research (Spiegel, Watson & Wilkinson 1999: 187) by aiding it to provide knowledge on social system operation and inter-group interactions. The Tibetan Diaspora provides important clarifications on community establishment, identity preservation and cultural reorganisation. Few Tibetan historical testimonies have been theorecised into sociological explanations on community and identity construction that could be applied to other communities suffering from domination, self-determination violations and human and cultural rights aberrations.

Appendix: Abbreviation codification

Interview/Australia 2003 (I/A 2003):

1. Tibetan male, 19 years old, student, settled, Canberra
2. Tibetan male, approx. 45 years old, Representative of H.H. the Dalai Lama, settled, Canberra
3. Tibetan female, 19 years old, student, settled, daughter of I/S 2003_3, Canberra
4. Tibetan male, approx. 40 years old, Australian government employee, settled, Canberra
5. Tibetan male, 44 years old, Tibetan shop keeper, settled, Sydney
6. Australian female, 21 years old, Australian government employee, Canberra

Interview/India 2003 (I/I 2003):

1. Indian male, approx. 35 years old, hotel manager, Dharamsala
2. Tibetan male, 27 years old, unemployed, new comer, Dharamsala
3. Tibetan male, approx. 40 years old, shop owner, Dharamsala
4. French male, approx. 55 years old, unemployed, Dharamsala
5. French female, 37 years old, shop keeper, Dharamsala
6. Tibetan female, 26 years old, unemployed, new comer, married to I/I 2003_10, Dharamsala
7. Tibetan female, 17 years old, student, new comer, Dharamsala
8. Tibetan male, approx. 50 years old, President Tibetan Youth Congress, settled, Dharamsala
9. Tibetan male, approx. 30 years old, transit school teacher, settled, married to I/I 2003_6, Dharamsala
10. Tibetan male, approx. 40 years old, refugee at the transit school, new comer, Dharamsala
11. Tibetan male, 62 years old, Prime Minister in exile, settled, Dharamsala
12. Tibetan male, 35 years old, monk, new comer, Dharamsala
13. Tibetan female, 33 years old, dentist at the Tibetan Children's Village, settled, Dharamsala
14. Tibetan male, 23 years old, former student at the transit school, new comer, Dharamsala
15. Tibetan male, 27 years old, NGO worker, new comer, Dharamsala
16. French female, 24 years old, shop owner, Dharamsala
17. Indian male, 25 years old, shop owner, Dharamsala

Interview/Switzerland 2003 (I/S 2003):

1. Tibetan female, 28 years old, office employee and Tibetan language teacher, settled, Geneva
2. Tibetan male, approx. 60 years old, Tibetan Office employee, settled, Geneva
3. Tibetan male, approx. 50 years old, Representative of H.H. the Dalai Lama, settled, father of I/A 2003, Geneva

Observation/India 2003 (O/I 2003):

February-March 2003, in Dharamsala

Observation/Switzerland 2003 (I/S 2003):

January-February 2003, in Geneva (with continued observation since 1995).

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