Beyond Ramaluk: Towards a more Inclusive view of Identity in the Tibetan Diaspora

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Abstract
This paper is an investigation of identity in the Tibetan diaspora in India, informed by the oral histories and narratives of Tibetan diasporic youth living in the capital city of Delhi. By documenting, comparing, and analyzing the experiences of Tibetan youth growing up in India (both Indian-born and Tibetan-born), and attempting to understand their varying notions of Tibetan identity, as well as perspectives on its role in their community, it seeks to answer the following: Why and how do dominant notions of Tibetan identity and/or "Tibetanness" become dominant? What are the unintended consequences of affirming these notions of Tibetan identity in the Tibetan diasporic community—especially in a pluralistic, urban context like Delhi? What voices are we excluding or silencing by focusing on the dominant ones? By exploring these questions through a mixture of narrative and analysis based on interviews, observations, and existing literature, I hope to contribute to a more flexible, fluid, and inclusive view of identity in the Tibetan diaspora—one that regards "Tibetanness" not as a static, fixed standard, but as an everchanging, ever-expanding spectrum of experiences and perspectives.

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The traditional model views identity in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. . . . This 'oneness', underlying all the other, more superficial differences, is the truth, the essence of 'Caribbeanness', of the black experience. It is this identity which a Caribbean or black diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light and express. . . . (393) Hall acknowledges that the "rediscovery of this identity is often the object