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FROM TIBET TO INDIA AND FURTHER

Transit Journeys and Onward-Migration
Aspirations of Tibetan-Born Tibetans
in Dharamsala

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In Memory of my Father Harry Gustav Frilund,
an Activist and a Thinker

ABSTRACT

In this PhD dissertation, I explore the migratory settings, processes and aspirations of the Tibetans who have migrated from Tibet via Nepal to Dharamsala, a town in the Indian Himalayas. The main overall research questions are: what kind of migratory setting does Dharamsala have; what are the major triggers or drivers of the Tibetans to migrate to Dharamsala; how are their migration histories or journeys to India represented; and how do their onward-migration aspirations actualise *in situ* in Dharamsala. I also pay attention to the active agency of the Tibetan-born interviewees of this study. I used ethnographic methods, such as observations and interviews; the majority of the fieldwork was conducted in Dharamsala where I stayed around ten months between the years 2009–2015.

Dharamsala is a home of around 14,000 Tibetans, including their religious leader, the 14th Dalai Lama. The Government of India allowed Tibetans to establish the headquarters of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) in Dharamsala after the Dalai Lama escaped to India with his retinue in 1959 as the Peple's Republic of China (PRC) had occupied Tibet. India has also allowed the CTA to govern the Tibetan diaspora communities in the country rather autonomously. As Dharamsala is considered the capital of the Tibetan diaspora and numerous Tibetan-run non-governmental organisations have their headquarters in town, it was an informative place to conduct fieldwork; besides the fact that Tibetans migrate there from Tibet and the newcomers often stay in town, it is a scene for various types of out-migration activities. Hence, different types of mobilities encounter each other in Dharamsala.

This PhD dissertation offers a novel example of transit migration type of migration in the context of Tibetan-born Tibetans. It explored their migration from various yet complementary theoretical and conceptual viewpoints, most importantly from the angles of transit migration, refugee or forced migrant journeys and postcolonial studies on migration with an emphasis on postcolonial geography of migration. As their migration has not been studied from these perspectives before, the dissertation offers novel theoretical and conceptual insights which are meant to be applicable also when exploring transit migration type of migration among other minorities or refugees in the Global South.

The findings demonstrate that the journey of Tibetan-born Tibetans via Nepal to India can be considered as transit migration and that their difficult journey over the Himalayas tends to have an important collective meaning for the diaspora Tibetans in general. It is also very common for Tibetan-born Tibetans to migrate, or aspire to migrate, onwards from India particularly because of the difficulties that they face there. However, this is a more complex phenomenon as they come to India in order to see the Dalai Lama who is banned by the People's Republic of China (PRC), seek education from the Tibetan premises and find opportunities that are not available in Tibet, not only in order to migrate further. Hence, Dharamsala hosts organisations, which assist Tibetans from Tibet in India but also provide qualifications for them to migrate further by teaching them English and other foreign languages, for instance. Finally, it is demonstrated that unequal (post)colonialism-related power structures, such as unequal distribution of wealth or limited access to mobility and opportunities, manifest in the Tibetan migration to India and onwards.

Keywords: migration, transit migration, ethnography, postcolonialism, Tibetans, India, Dharamsala

TIIVISTELMÄ

Väitöskirjatutkimukseni käsittelee Tiibetistä Nepalin kautta Intian Himalajalla sijaitsevaan Dharamsalan kaupunkiin saapuneiden tiibetiläisten muuttoliikettä ja haaveita muuttaa eteenpäin. Kysyn väitöskirjatutkimuksessani, mikä on saanut haastattelemani tiibetiläiset jättämään kotimaansa, millaisia representaatioita heillä on pakolaismatkastaan sekä miten heidän aikeensa muuttaa Intiasta eteenpäin muotoutuvat Dharamsalassa ja miksi. Kiinnitän huomiota myös muuttoliikettä tukeviin puitteisiin Dharamsalassa sekä Tiibetistä Intiaan muuttaneiden haastateltavien aktiiviseen toimijuuteen. Tutkimusmenetelminä olen käyttänyt etnografisia kenttätyömenetelmiä, kuten havainnointia ja haastatteluja. Tein suurimman osan kenttätöistä vuosien 2009–2015 välillä Dharamsalassa, ja olin kentällä yhteensä noin kymmenen kuukautta.

Dharamsalassa asuu noin 14 000 tiibetiläistä, mukaan lukien heidän hengellinen johtajansa 14. Dalai lama. Hän pakeni Intiaan delegaationsa kanssa vuonna 1959, noin kymmenen vuotta sen jälkeen, kun vasta perustettu Kiinan kansantasavalta alkoi ottaa haltuunsa tiibetiläisvaltaisia alueita. Nämä tapahtumat sysäsivät liikkeelle laajamittaisen tiibetiläisten diasporan. Intian hallitus antoi tiibetiläisten perustaa pakolaishallituksen Dharamsalaan, ja antoi sille lähes autonomisen aseman hallinnoida tiibetiläisyhteisöjä Intiassa. Dharamsala on myös lukuisten tiibetiläisten kansalaisjärjestöjen kotipaikka, ja sitä kutsutaan usein tiibetiläisten diasporan pääkaupungiksi. Dharamsala on monia näkökulmia avaava paikka tehdä muuttoliiketutkimusta, sillä erilaiset liikkuvuudet kohtaavat kaupungissa; sinne ei pelkästään muuteta Tiibetistä, vaan myös muutto eteenpäin Dharamsalasta on suosittua tiibetiläisten keskuudessa.

Väitöskirjani nostaa esiin uudenlaisen esimerkin muuttoliikkeestä yhden tai useamman paikan läpi kohti muuttajan päämäärää Tiibetissä syntyneiden tiibetiläisten kontekstissa. Olen käyttänyt erilaisia, mutta toisiaan tukevia, teoreettisia ja käsitteellisiä lähestymistapoja Tiibetistä Dharamsalaan muuttaneiden tiibetiläisten muuttoliikkeen eri vaiheiden tarkastelussa. Väitöskirjani keskeisimmät käsitteet ovat kauttakulku (transit migration), pakolaismatka ja postkolonialistinen muuttoliiketutkimus erityisesti postkolonialistisen maantieteen kontekstissa. Näiden käsitteiden yhdistelmää voidaan soveltaa myös muiden vähemmistöjen tai pakolaisten useamman paikan tai maan kautta etenevään muuttoliikkeeseen Globaalissa Etelässä.

Tulokseni osoittavat, että erityisesti tiibetiläisten muuttoliikettä Nepalin kautta Intiaan voidaan pitää kauttakulkuna ja että pakolaismatkalla Intiaan on myös tärkeä merkitys diasporassa asuville tiibetiläisille; matka Himalajan yli Intiaan on osa heidän kollektiivista identiteettiään pakolaisena. Muutto Intian kautta eteenpäin on kuitenkin monimutkaisempi ilmiö, sillä tiibetiläiset muuttavat Intiaan myös esimerkiksi halusta nähdä Dalai lama, saada koulutusta tiibetiläisten omista lähtökohdista käsin ja etsiä mahdollisuuksia itselleen, vaikka he myöhemmin muuttaisivatkin eteenpäin. Dharamsalassa on Tiibetistä saapuneita pakolaisia avustavia kansalaisjärjestöjä, jotka opettavat heille taitoja, kuten Englantia ja muita vieraita kieliä, joita tarvitaan myös mikäli he muuttavat eteenpäin. Lisäksi tutkimukseni osoittaa, että (post)kolonialistiset valtasuhteet, kuten heikko sosioekonominen asema ja rajalliset mahdollisuudet liikkuvuuteen, vaikuttavat tiibetiläisten poismuuttohalukkuuteen sekä Tiibetissä että Intiassa.

Avainsanat: muuttoliike, kauttakulku, etnografia, postkolonialismi, tiibetiläiset, Intia, Dharamsala

List of Original Publications

This PhD thesis consists of a summary, the following three articles and one accepted manuscript (the papers are referred to the text by their Roman numerals):

I Frilund, R. (2018). Teasing the Boundaries of 'Volunteer Tourism': Local NGOs Looking for Global Workforce. *Current Issues in Tourism,* 21(4): 355-368. doi: 10.1080/13683500.2015.1080668.

II Frilund, R. (2019). (Transit) Migration via Nepal and India: Tibetans en route to the West. *Migration Studies,* 7(1): 21-38. doi: 10.1093/migration/mnx064.

III Frilund, R. (2019). Tibetan Refugee Journeys: Representations of Escape and Transit. Accepted Manuscript, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*.

IV Frilund, R. (2018). Exploring (Transit) Migration through a Postcolonial Lens: Tibetans Migrating from Tibet to India and Beyond. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2018.1501270.

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Setting

This PhD dissertation is based on a novel ethnographic case study on migration and migration aspirations of the Tibetans who have journeyed from Tibet via Nepal to Dharamsala, a town in the Indian Himalayas, and often aspire to migrate onwards. The main overall research questions are: what kind of migratory setting does Dharamsala have; what are the major triggers or drivers of the Tibetans to migrate to Dharamsala; how are their migration histories or journeys to India represented; and how do their onward-migration aspirations actualise *in situ* in Dharamsala[1]. I also pay attention to the agency of the Tibetans from several angles in the context of their migration and simultaneously emphasise the repressive structures that restrict their migration. According to my knowledge, there are no other studies that explore these questions in the context of current conceptualisations and theories of migration although Tibetan migration has been noticed or discussed by several scholars who examine the Tibetan diaspora from various angles (e.g. Anand 2007; Choedup 2015; Diehl 2002; Hess 2009; McConnell 2016; McGranahan 2018; Prost 2006; 2008; Swank 2011; Yeh 2007b).

In the current world where there are more than 68 million displaced people and more than 25 million of them are recognised as refugees according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)[2], Tibetan refugees, numbering from 130,000 to 150,000, may be a comparatively small group[3]. Nevertheless, their

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1   I focus on international migration among the Tibetan-born Tibetans, not internal migration inside India; no Tibetan-born interviewees of this study planned to migrate within India.

2   See https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html (last visited 22 January 2019).

3   The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), formerly called the Tibetan Government in Exile, estimates in its Demographic Survey that the number of Tibetans living in diaspora is around 130,000, but it states that the accuracy of their survey is not perfect as they have difficulties counting all Tibetans in diaspora (CTA 2010). According to Bentz (2012, 105), the CTA's survey missed lots of Tibetans living outside South Asia because many had taken citizenships of these countries, for instance. However, Professor Yeshi Choedon (2018) from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, seems to support CTA's

migration has caused heated debates between the two most populous countries in the world for long: the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been against India's policy to take in Tibetans who often leave Tibet illegally from the perspective of the PRC. India has ignored this and let the Tibetans enter the country whilst Nepal, through which the Tibetans tend to arrive in India, stopped taking in new Tibetans already at the beginning of the 1990s. Yet, their migration stream to India has continued ever since their religious leader, the 14th Dalai Lama, escaped to India with his retinue during the Tibetan uprising in the Tibetan capital Lhasa in 1959 as he feared being kidnapped by the PRC (e.g. McGranahan 2018). He arrived directly at the state of Arunachal Pradesh in North India after crossing the border (e.g. Subba 1990), but the most common route for the Tibetans to arrive in India has for long been to transit Nepal.

It is estimated that around 80,000 Tibetans particularly from central Tibet, an area that the Tibetans call Ü-Tsang and the PRC calls Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR), followed the Dalai Lama within the next few months after his escape seeking refuge in India, Nepal or Bhutan, a movement sometimes descriptively called the first wave of the Tibetan migration (Diehl 2002; McConnell 2016). After this, the PRC strengthened its border controls for twenty years, and the time of the so-called Cultural Revolution followed in 1966–1976. During this period, the Tibetan movement out of the country was scarce. At the beginning of the 1980s, in the post-Mao era, crossing borders became easier again, and the so-called second wave of Tibetan migration began (see de Voe 2005; Diehl 2002; McConnell 2016). Some Tibetans were given permission to make a pilgrimage to India between 1985–1988, but some of those who left Tibet had been prisoned during the earlier decades, and migrated to India without passports or visas (see de Voe 2005; Diehl 2002, 34; McConnell 2016; Yeh 2007b). The border controls of the PRC became tighter again due to the pro-independence demonstrations in Lhasa in 1987–1989. This led to Tibet being placed under martial law, which made travelling to India more difficult (see Schwartz 1994; Yeh 2007b, 652). Around 1990 more movement was allowed again and the so-called third wave of Tibetan migration began (Diehl 2002)[4]. All in all, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), which governs the Tibetan diaspora settlements in India and South Asia (McConnell 2009; 2016), estimates in its demographic survey in 2010

(2010) estimations in his popular article, whilst Yeh (2007b) and McGranahan (2018) support the number 150,000 and according to Lewis (2018), there are even more than that.

4   Following Diehl (2002), I recognise three waves of Tibetan migration, but McConnell (2016, 55) speaks only about two waves; the first that started after the Dalai Lama's flight and the second that started in the 1980s, whilst Yeh (2007, 652) sees that the second wave began just in the 1990s after the border controls were loosened again after martial law, grouping together what I call first and second waves.

that India hosts around 95,000 Tibetans[5] whilst around six million Tibetans live in Tibetan areas under the PRC[6]. A map depicting key places of the Tibetan migration to India can be found at the end of this chapter (Figure 1).

The Tibetan-born interviewees of this study belong to the third wave Tibetans and most of them came in the 2000s. The third wave Tibetans are often called 'newcomers' or 'new arrivals' particularly if they have grown up in Tibet and have habits and customs that differ from the customs of the first and second wave Tibetans and their offspring[7]. In contrast with the first wave of Tibetans who came mainly from central Tibet where their capital Lhasa is located, most of the Tibetan-born interviewees of this study came from the eastern border regions or cultural Tibet, areas that the Tibetans call Kham and Amdo, typical places for the Tibetans to arrive to India from after the first wave (see Vasantkumar 2017; Yeh 2007b). However, one's 'newcomerness' is also related to their identities or what is understood by the term exactly[8]. Hence, I call the Tibetan-born interviewees together with those who identify themselves as newcomers as Tibetans from Tibet or Tibetan-born Tibetans if I speak about them in general, but if I refer particularly to those who clearly identified themselves as newcomers and wanted to highlight their newcomerness, I use the term newcomer instead (see Yeh 2007b).

Most of the Tibetan-born Tibetans interviewed in this study resided in Dharamsala, like lay Tibetans from Tibet who do not go to boarding schools or monasteries in other parts of India commonly do (Routray 2007, 82). Dharamsala, which has more than 30,000 inhabitants altogether[9], hosts one of the biggest Tibetan diaspora settlements: around 14,000 diaspora Tibetans (CTA 2010). As the Dalai Lama's main residence, the CTA[10] and numerous Tibetan-related non-governmental organisations (NGO) or institutions have their headquarters in Dharamsala, it is commonly

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5   According to an article in the The Indian Express, the number of Tibetans in India has decreased due to out-migration and lower birth rate (Tripathi 2018) and some also migrate back to Tibet (e.g. Vasantkumar 2013; 2017). This would indicate that the Tibetan diaspora population is not growing at the moment, at least in India.
6   See http://tibet.net/about-tibet/tibet-at-a-glance (last visited 8 November 2018).
7   However, McConnell (2016, 55) calls also Tibetans who have arrived after the midd-1980s newcomers. The English term is based on the Tibetan word sanjorba (McConnell 2016) or sar jorpa (Diehl 2002), meaning newcomer (e.g. McConnell 2016) or new arrival (e.g. Diehl 2002).
8   The question of newcomerness is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.3.1.
9   See India's 15th Population Census 2011: http://www.census2011.co.in (last visited 8 November 2018). See also Dharamsala Population Census 2011: http://www.census2011.co.in/data/town/800093-dharmsala-himachal-pradesh.html (last visited 8 November 2018).
10 The Dalai Lama retired as a head of the CTA in 2011 and became simply the major religious leader of the Tibetans whilst a prime minister, *Sikyong*, was elected to lead the CTA. For the detailed description of the functions of the CTA and the Tibetan settlements in India, see McConnell 2016.

called the capital of Tibetan diaspora (e.g. Anand 2007; CTA 2010; Prost 2008). Even Dharamsala's nickname 'Dhasa' refers to the Tibetan capital 'Lhasa' (Siganporia 2016).

Most of the Tibetan newcomers reside in McLeod Ganj, a part of the town where the majority of Dharamsala's Tibetans live. The name McLeod Ganj, also called 'upper Dharamsala' (in contrast with the 'lower Dharamsala' inhabited mostly by Indians), reflects India's colonial history. It was named after General McLeod who ruled the area in the 1860s during the British Raj (Diehl 2002, 38–40). McLeod Ganj was turned into a British hill station during the Raj and transformed into a predominantly Tibetan village in the 1960s when the Government of India (GOI) allowed the 14th Dalai Lama to reside and establish the CTA in Dharamsala (e.g. McConnell 2011; Swank 2011).

The CTA is the most important Tibetan institution that supports the Tibetan diaspora in South Asia although it has more formal power in the oldest, biggest and most established Tibetan diaspora communities, such as Dharamsala (McConnell 2009; 2012; Roemer 2008). As McConnell (2016, 4) states, the CTA is 'an exilic political structure that is widely regarded as one of the best organised in the world' and the Tibetans have put serious effort to organise it according to democratic principles. However, the CTA lacks formal power, sovereignty over a territory and official recognition by other nations (e.g. Choedup 2016). Its position is not clearly identified and the GOI has not assigned jurisdiction over the Tibetan settlements to the CTA (McConnell 2011; 2016). As Roemer (2008) points out, a host country is crucially important for the existence of exile governments. Indeed, the GOI is extremely important for the CTA as its headquarters and the biggest Tibetan diaspora settlements are located in India. As the GOI has given the CTA rather free hands to organise the internal issues in the Tibetan diaspora settlement, the Tibetan diaspora community is more 'institutionally organised than any other socially networked diasporic community' and it has established a 'state-like polity in exile' which includes voluntary taxation, elections and issuing so-called Identity Certificates (IC) that also serve as passport-like travel documents if Tibetans want to travel out of India (McConnell 2009, 1; see also Choedup 2016).

Tibetan diaspora has been described as the most successful diaspora on earth (e.g. Bernstorff and von Welck 2003; Bruno 2018). This resonates with a popular article written by Professor Yeshi Choedon (2018) who states that '[t]he rest of the world, especially the Buddhist communities in various parts of the world, appreciates the Indian contribution in making the Tibetan refugee a most successful refugee in the world'. Dharamsala has a great role in this image as the capital of Tibetan diaspora and it attracts foreign and Indian tourists and travellers also outside the Buddhist circles.

Particularly the townscape of McLeod Ganj is filled with Tibetan dwellings, prayer flags and Buddhist temples and it is heavily shaped by tourism and migration. Travellers, backpackers, pilgrims and professionals, such as scholars, photographers

and journalists interested in the Tibetan culture gather there from around the globe (Article I; Prost 2006)[11]. 'Touristification' (Hitchcock, King and Parnwell 2009) of Tibetan culture is typical to McLeod Ganj and its main streets are occupied by tourist cafés, restaurants and shops that breathe what Anand (2007) calls 'Exotica Tibet' (Article I), e.g. a restaurant and hotel Snow Lion, located in one of the main streets of Dharamsala. On top of this, Tibetan art, movies, books and music are sold for tourists in the main streets of McLeod Ganj, and the most popular religious mantra "Om Mani Peme Hum" is played almost continuously during the daytime in the stalls were the CDs including the hymn are sold. According to Swank (2011, 59), the hymn has already got a nickname among the Tibetans: "Om Money Peme Hung". As Anand (2007, 112) argues, Dharamsala in its entirety has faced 'transformation from a poor refugee settlement to one of the most popular tourist destinations of India, a change from a small, dilapidated village to a cosmopolitan small town', attracting both Indian and foreign tourists[12].

Behind the exotic images of the Tibetans and Dharamsala's association of the capital of the most successful diaspora on earth lies a different reality, however. Tibetans from Tibet, particularly those who have relatively recently arrived from Tibet, do not necessarily feel at home in India even though they tend to respect the cultural and religious freedoms it offers. They usually hold a worse socioeconomic position in comparison to those Tibetans who have been born or grown up in India and their education level does not often match the Indian standards. Moreover, the newcomers tend to speak only Tibetan and perhaps some Chinese but not Hindi or English and their habits may be considered sinicised (e.g. Prost 2008). Hence, they have more difficulties in climbing the socioeconomic ladder in India than the Indian-born Tibetans whose position in the country is more established. Also the mental maps are partly different among the Tibetans from Tibet and the Tibetans born in India who Yeh (2007b) calls exile Tibetans, further noting that 'the Tibetans from Tibet draw on

11 According to Department of Town and Country Planning, Government of Himachal Pradesh (http://tcp.hp.gov.in/developmentPlan/8, last visited 8 November 2018), tourism is the primary economic activity in Dharamsala, but tourist arrival statistics are not available. They estimate that around 13,500 domestic tourists and close to 7,000 foreign tourists visited the Kangra district where Dharamsala is located in 2015 (no more recent data available) and that up to 60% of them visit Dharamsala. McLeod Ganj is particularly popular among the foreign tourists; many come there independently by local busses and many also stay longer with student visas, for example, as attending Buddhist or Tibetan language classes is popular. Hence, even any approximate numbers of foreign visitors in Dharamsala are hard to present based on these numbers.
12 Interestingly in this context, a popular article in *India Today* is titled 'Why McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala, is not worth your time anymore' (Abrol 2017). It claims that it has become too crowded and commercial for the domestic tourists who tended to go there because they wanted to escape the crowdedness and hectic lifestyle of Indian big cities to the mountains.

the embodied knowledge and experience of homeland, whereas 'exile Tibetans' seek to recenter authentic Tibet-ness away from the physical territory of the homeland and toward other geographical spaces – particularly Dharamsala'.

According to Choedup (2015, 15), who studies the Tibetans in an agricultural Tibetan settlement called Doeguling (also known as Mundgod Tibetan Colony), many studies on Tibetan diaspora have been biased towards the elite perspective as they have focused on Dharamsala, 'the residence of the political and social elite'. He considers that many scholars have been focusing on the 'non-representative segment of the population' in Dharamsala. He sees Dharamsala as non-representative also because it is a 'transit route for many young Tibetan exiles'. However, it is precisely this kind of setting in Dharamsala that I want to grasp in this dissertation. As the elite perspective has already been studied, I focus on the perspective of the 'large transient population' from Tibet (Choedup 2015, 176) who is commonly distant to the elites and whose onward-migration has not gained such attention. Hence, I do not present a general story about Tibetans in Dharamsala or seek such representativeness of Tibetan population as Choedup (2015). I rather focus on the migration and migration aspirations of the Tibetan-born Tibetans who belong to the 'transient population' that he mentions (but does not concentrate on or define in more detail). However, I have also interviewed some experts who could perhaps be considered more or less as part of the often Indian-born Tibetan elite that holds most of the higher positions in the CTA, different diaspora institutions or the bigger NGOs.

These kinds of diversities among the Tibetan diaspora were not widely explored before the 2000s partly because Tibetology has traditionally dealt mostly with fields such as Buddhist scriptures and language (Houston and Wright 2003). However, studies on Tibetan diaspora have multiplied and scholars have started to pay increasing attention to the diversities inside it (Anand 2007; Chen 2012; de Voe 2005; Diehl 2002; Hess 2006; Houston and Wright 2003; Prost 2008; Swank 2011; Yeh and Lama 2006). They seem to agree that although the Tibetans share many common cultural symbols (de Voe 2005), cultural and mental differences often exist between those who have migrated from Tibet and those who have been born or grown up in India, a difference that exists also in Tibetan diaspora communities outside India (Lauer 2015; Yeh 2007b)[13].

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13   However, a historian Tsering Shakya states in an interview in a popular article 'Beyond Development and Diversity' in Himal Southasian (25 June 2018) that academics some-times 'inadvertently' serve the PRC state narrative when talking about Tibetan language and identity as 'it has become fashionable for some anthropologists to posit that there is no singular Tibet or Tibetan language and identity'. According to Shakya, this strength-ens the PRC's strategy to support localism in Tibet, i.e. Tibetan popular culture per-formed for tourists, for example, but simultaneously discouraging pan-Tibetan identity, which 'denies the Tibetans their right to construct a singular identity in opposition to others'. He considers that 'Tibetan nationalism and the construction of a common

Swank (2011) considers the division between newcomers and Indian-born Tibetans the most important distinction among the Tibetans in diaspora although differences such as regional differences, differences between monastic and lay people and gender differences exist among both groups and among the Tibetans in general (see also Yeh 2007b). As she points out, these differences occur also in 'relation to migration' referring to the fact that only Tibetan-born Tibetans have embodied experiences of Tibet (Swank 2011, 53). Furthermore, although migration out of India is common among the Indian-born Tibetans as well, they have built their Tibetan identity in India, the only residential home they had (Swank 2011, 53), whilst the migration of Tibetan-born Tibetans commonly proceeds via several places towards their possible final destinations and they may consider Dharamsala a passage unlike those Tibetans who have been born there (Article II). In the wider context, however, both groups partake in migration out of the country to wealthier places on earth, a rather common phenomenon in India, which currently has the most such migrants in the world who have been born in the country but reside abroad (17 million in 2017) according to the United Nations (UN)[14].

According to McConnell (2016, 127–128), however, the cultural differences are starting to become less stark due to the increasing cultural influence and encounters from both sides although the 'social marginalisation of refugees newly arrived from Tibet continues' in India. As an example, a movement called 'Lhakar', i.e. 'White Wednesday' (referring to the Dalai Lama's day of birth), started from Tibet and expanded to diaspora representing a new form of pan-Tibetan identity; a growing number of Tibetan participants wear traditional clothing, eat Tibetan food and concentrate on preserving their culture every Wednesday[15] (McConnell 2015). It is interesting to see where these new attempts to unite Tibetans will lead, but during my fieldwork it was rare that the Tibetan-born interviewees, even those who had been living in India close to twenty years, had close Tibetan friends born in India. Rather, they still socialised in their own circles that consisted mostly of Tibetan-born Tibetans.

Finally, the major conceptual and theoretical constructs of this PhD dissertation, namely transit migration, refugee journeys and postcolonial approach to migration, are perceived against this background. I stretch the boundaries of the concept of transit migration and discuss its borderlines by demonstrating through the Tibetan case that

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Tibetan identity through popular culture, Buddhism and a shared history has been an interesting development' that researchers should recognise (http://m.himalmag.com/beyond-development-and-diversity-historian-tsering-shakya-interview, last visited 8 November 2018).

14   See https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/international-migration-report-2017.html (last visited 23 January 2019).

15   For more about Lhakar movement, see: https://lhakardiaries.com (last visited 8 November 2018).

this type of migration exists also elsewhere than in the fringes of Europe where it has been studied the most, and where some scholars wish to border it (Article II). I also compare transit migration with recent studies on refugee journeys (e.g. BenEzer and Zetter 2014; Lyytinen 2017) and push the concepts into dialogue with each other by demonstrating that Tibetan journeys via Nepal to India can be interpreted as transit migration and refugee journeys simultaneously; (transit) migration often overlaps with refugee journeys just like the categories of refugee and migrant overlap (Article III). They also share some similar considerations about the conclusion of the transit phase or the journey and what can be considered as the final destination. Furthermore, I demonstrate that Tibetan migration from Tibet to India and onwards can be best interpreted through postcolonial thought as it echoes the unequal global power structures and accumulation of global capital to empires as well as minority policies and bordering strategies of the states. Besides that the role of the Western empire is particularly clear in India, a former British colony, I also recognise China as an empire, and its minority policies are among the reasons why the Tibetans migrate to India (Article IV). As Koh (2015) argues, there is a need to explore further how postcolonial power relations are present across racial, cultural and political lines in the context of migration trends in different parts of Asia.

The rest of the synopsis will proceed as follows. After the introduction and presentation of the four articles included in this PhD dissertation, I discuss the key concepts of this study. I move to the methodological choices that I have made, including fieldwork methods, materials and analysis. After that, I explore my empirical materials in more detail. In the penultimate chapter, I briefly sum up my findings and make suggestions for further research on transit migration type of migration in the Global South. Finally, I sum up this dissertation and look towards the future of Tibetan migration.

Figure 1: Many of the interviewees of this study first travelled to the Tibetan capital Lhasa where they arranged their trip forward to Nepal. The first Tibetan Reception Centre is located in Kathmandu, Nepal, from where the transiting Tibetans are assisted to India. In India, the Tibetans first arrive in Delhi where their papers made in the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu are checked. From Delhi, they are directed to Dharamsala area, the fieldwork site of this study, where their final Reception Centre is located. *Map by Marjanna Kaate.*

1.2 The Structure of the Dissertation and Article-Specific Themes

All four articles included in this PhD dissertation explored the migration and migration aspirations[16] of Tibetan-born Tibetans from different theoretical angles. In this synopsis, I create a framework that combines them flexibly. I hold that there is no single theory or concept that could explain the migration of Tibetan-born Tibetans altogether; it is possible to understand their migration complexities rather by combining different theories and conceptualisations and researching the phenomenon from various angles. Although I have not had a possibility to truly engage with the social scientific debates on agency and structure, which have long roots (e.g. Berger and Luckmann 1966; Bourdieu 1984; Giddens 1979), because the focus of this study lies elsewhere, one of the uniting forces behind my theoretical and conceptual choices is that they allow highlighting the Tibetan agency from several angles and allow their agency to flourish in the context of migration even though I simultaneously emphasise structural inequalities that the Tibetans encounter during their migration[17] (see Bakewell 2010). The overall research questions (i.e. what kind of migratory setting does Dharamsala have; what are the major triggers or drivers of the Tibetans to migrate to Dharamsala; how are their migration histories or journeys to India represented; and how do their onward-migration aspirations actualise *in situ* in Dharamsala) give a framework within which the more specific article-related sub-themes, which can be found below, are explored and discussed.

In the first article (Article I*)*, I explore the organisational and international setting which supports the Tibetans from Tibet in the grassroots, concentrating on the five NGOs that hire volunteer tourists on the spot in Dharamsala to teach them foreign languages, particularly English, and on how they are connected to Tibetan migration. Article one is an important piece on the wholeness of this PhD dissertation even though it deals less with actual migration and concentrates on the international and organisational setting that supports the phenomenon. Nevertheless, it highlights

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16   According to Boccagni (2017), migration aspirations are an under-appreciated but meaningful subject of research. Although aspirations remain more as a term in my study than well-theorised concept, sometimes used rather synonymously with intentions, I understand aspirations as integral for people's will to stay or migrate together with migration abilities, a conceptual pair that Carling (2002) and Carling and Schewel (2018) consider crucial for migration (Article IV). As Boccagni (2017, 3) states: 'aspirations are a valuable research field on the interaction between structure and agency'.

17   Interestingly, Hess (2018, 36) has applied Deleuze's concept of *becoming* to the situation of Tibetans from Tibet in diaspora because it interprets the experiences of 'a minority group within a wider minority' and reveals the 'multiple, overlapping, contested, and constrained nature' of the narratives of Tibetan-born Tibetans better than agency and structure although she admits that they are also important concepts (see also Deleuze 1997).

important connection between tourism and migration (see e.g. Salazar 2011). It also discusses particularly two of the overall research questions of this study as it explores what kind of migratory setting Dharamsala has and how the onward-migration aspirations of the Tibetan-born Tibetans actualise *in situ* in Dharamsala by demonstrating how the NGOs who focus especially on Tibetan newcomers in the grassroots contribute to the migratory setting and assist them in their aspirations to migrate onwards. It gives an idea of Dharamsala's cosmopolitan atmosphere and international (migratory) networks that the town offers; (volunteer) tourism as a whole contributes to these networks greatly. I also reverse the traditional subject/object relationship within volunteer tourism by highlighting the collective Tibetan agency through the Tibetan-run NGOs instead of the common tendency to focus on the West and Western volunteers.

The NGOs explored in this article were the major organisations that concentrate on educating particularly the Tibetan newcomers in the grassroots and although they often got some support from abroad, such as funds or volunteers, they were mainly run by Tibetans in Dharamsala[18]. Their English conversation classes were the most popular classes among the Tibetan-born Tibetans, but also other languages such as French or Spanish were taught if they were able to hire a volunteer teacher, and also computing classes were available. As the managers of these NGOs told that they do not only teach foreign languages because the newcomers would need these languages in cosmopolitan Dharamsala, but also because so many of them intend to migrate onwards, their migration-related agenda was evident. These NGOs demonstrate that the NGOs in the Global South can attract volunteer tourists by themselves, not being dependent on volunteer-sending organisations, and that volunteer tourism should not be considered a merely neocolonial phenomenon where (unskilled) volunteers from wealthier countries are sent to the Global South, a common critique that the phenomenon gets (e.g. Vrasti 2013). If the studies pay more attention to the active actors and strategic (collective) agency in the Global South, the findings can reveal unapparent outcomes or goals of the NGOs and people participating in them, such as the support for onward-migration among the educationally-oriented Tibetan volunteer tourism organisations in Dharamsala. Hence, also the definitions of volunteer tourism should include local actors and pay attention to the local (collective) agency, so as not to see them only as objects of the wealthy (and often white) volunteer tourists. This would balance the focus of scholarly writings on volunteer tourism and better recognise the agency of the participants in the Global South.

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18   See www.lhasocialwork.org; lit-dharamsala.org; http://tibetcharity.in; http://tibetho-pecenterindia.blogspot.fi; https://www.facebook.com/volunteertibetdharamsala (last visited 23 January 2019).

*In the second article (*Article II*),* I explore the migration processes of the Tibet-an-born interviewees via Nepal to India and further and discuss how to conceptual-ise these processes scholarly as the Tibetan migration has not been truly explored in the context of migration theories before. I explore the Tibetan migration from Tibet via Nepal to India and their migration intentions or aspirations onwards from India, comparing them with what is commonly called transit migration. I studied Tibetan migration via Nepal to India *a posteriori* in Dharamsala, but I also explored the pos-sibilities of transit migration to describe migration onwards from India *a priori* (see Collyer et al. 2011, 14-15). I argue that particularly the Tibetan migration via Nepal to India can be called transit migration, the most established scholarly concept to describe migration via one place or several towards migrants' possible final destina-tions. Their onward-migration aspirations or intentions were more complex in India, as they came to seek education, to see the Dalai Lama or to find other opportunities, but their aspirations or intentions also sometimes resemble transit migration.

I want to highlight the progressiveness and onward-looking dynamic nature of the migration patterns of the Tibetans from Tibet by using the concept of transit migration (see Collyer and de Haas 2012), but I also recognise the politicised con-notations of the concept which has led some scholars to tie the concept just to its origins, the fringes of Europe. However, this stand makes the concept even more Eurocentric and ignores studies that have successfully used it elsewhere (e.g. Miss-bach 2015; Servan-Mori et al. 2014; Terrón-Caro and Monreal-Gimeno 2014). Thus, I have chosen to extend the boundaries of transit migration beyond the fringes of Europe rather than creating a new concept describing Tibetan migration. This, for example, makes global comparisons easier. I consider transit migration as a dynamic concept, and this allows the emphasis of the active agency of those who migrate, but I do not use it in a strict structuralist manner, as migrants easily blur the edges of rigid categories.

In the third article (Article III)*,* I ask what kinds of experiences the Tibetan-born interviewees had en route to India and how they represent and reflect their jour-neys in India. This contributes to the scholarly call to increase studies on the jour-neys of refugees and forced migrants (BenEzer and Zetter 2014). I also discuss the collective meaning of the journey for the Tibetans and explore four different types of journey narratives of individual Tibetans as examples of the journey. Conceptually, the article draws from the studies of refugee journeys and transit migration. I argue that the Tibetan journey via Nepal to India combines elements of both, which allows the emphasis to the agency better than simply the concept of 'refugee journey' as the term 'refugee' has somewhat passive overtones (e.g. Bakewell 2010; Ehrkamp 2016). I highlight the active and strategic Tibetan agency during their journey despite the repressive structures that they encountered, such as the Chinese and Nepali border controls that may be violent towards escaping Tibetans. I also demonstrate that the journey tends to have an important meaning for the Tibetan-born Tibetans and the

Tibetan diaspora community in Dharamsala in general. Moreover, I emphasise that the journeying Tibetans need protection en route despite their status as the PRC do not recognise them as refugees, Nepal has not taken in Tibetans as refugees after 1989 and their refugee status is blurred in India although they call themselves refugees and they have a *de facto* refugee status in India (Hess 2009).

I also compare refugee journeys with transit migration and argue that the rather fresh field of studies on refugee journeys would benefit from stronger comparison with studies on transit migration; both share interest towards what happens in between the origin and destination. BenEzer and Zetter (2014) call for more studies on journeys of the refugees but also many transit migrants might become refugees and as Collyer (2010) argues, the dangers of the journeys of refugees and migrants that need protection during their journeys are the same despite what kind of status they possess en route or will get later. Hence, combining studies on refugee journeys and transit migration would increase the amount of case studies and benefit the theory formation of the journeys of refugees and migrants who need protection, groups that are hard to separate anyway (e.g. Long 2013).

In the fourth article (Article IV), I argue that the (transit) migration[19] of the Tibetans as a whole can best be explained by applying postcolonial thought (with the emphasis on postcolonial geography) because of its explanatory value in geopolitical and historical settings that have affected the Tibetan diaspora from its beginning, settings where also unequal global power structures actualise. This is not to argue that Tibetans would not have a strong agency, but to highlight the circumstances that frame this agency. I also pay attention to the questions that Mains et al. (2013, 139) consider relevant in bringing postcolonial theory and migration into dialogue, i.e. 'stretching the boundaries of the spaces of the postcolonial; by interrogating the spatial connections that are forged between disparate places through migration and by challenging singular or hierarchical notions of identity and/or place'.

I stretch the postcolonial thought to look beyond Western imperialism and empire by arguing that the notion of the empire cannot be based solely on the West anymore. That would actually be a West-centric idea, ignoring China's position as a world power, for instance. Yet, also the postcolonial conditions created by the Western dominance globally, such as unequal accumulation of wealth, unequal access to mobility and exoticisation of the Other (Said 1978), are visible in Dharamsala. Hence, the onward-migration aspirations of the interviewees of this study are common not only because of their subaltern position in India but also because of the international setting in Dharamsala, connected with postcolonial power relations created by the West, such as the visible unequal distribution of wealth in Dharamsala

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19 I use the term (transit) migration in such places where I refer to the Tibetan migration from Tibet via Nepal to India and onwards as a whole because as I have argued (Article II), only their migration via Nepal to India can be clearly defined as transit migration.

in comparison with the Western (and currently also Japanese, for example) tourists and travellers versus Tibetan refugees and local Indians (Article IV).

2 Theoretical Framework and Key Concepts

2.1 Locating the Research

According to Russel King (2012, 135–136), migration is 'intrinsically geographical' as a phenomenon and the interdisciplinary nature of (human) geography 'is best placed to appreciate and advance interdisciplinary thinking about migration'. I welcome this stand on interdisciplinarity as my scholarly background includes cultural studies and development studies with an emphasis on postcolonial thought and indigenous studies (e.g. Briggs and Sharp 2004; Escobar 1995; Marglin and Marglin 1990; Niezen 2003; Said 1978; Sillitoe, Bicker and Pottier 2002; Spivak 1988). Within geography, the basis of this research lies in geography after the 'cultural turn', when the geographical studies of migration had an epistemological shift; much human geographical research turned from populations to topics like ethnic communities, transnationalism and diasporas (King 2012). Migration research has often been situated within the context of social geography which has included related fields like population, development and mobility studies, whilst the postcolonial critique and studies of inequality, place and spatial practices have been traditionally connected more with cultural geography (Mains et al. 2013). Nevertheless, they often intersect in human geographical studies on migration and this PhD dissertation has elements of them both.

Furthermore, also the subfield of political geography has drawn from postcolonial thinking and authors such as Spivak and Said (Jones et al. 2015, 12). According to Jones et al. (2015, 18), one of the main tasks of political geography is to 'highlight the unequal effect of particular policies on different areas within the territory of state'. Interestingly in the context of my study, they take China as an example of state power in areal conflicts concerning Tibet, Hong Kong and Taiwan (Jones et al. 2015, 18).

As Smith and King (2012) argue, there is an urgent need to theorise migration from different perspectives and to discuss the challenges of the changing structures of migration globally. However, there have been debates in migration studies on whether general migration theory is needed or not. According to Castles (2010), scholars should develop middle-range theories on migration in empirical contexts rather than a single theory trying to explain it all. According to Bakewell (2010),

however, there is a need to form a well-working general social theory on migration as it is present in some form or forms in every society. I concentrate mainly to the middle-range theories as I conceptualise the migration of the Tibetan-born Tibetans by particularly exploring the migratory setting in Dharamsala, the (transit) migration of the Tibetans born in Tibet, their refugee journeys and the postcolonial approach to migration in this empirical context. As Castles (2010) argues, it would be difficult to create one single theory for all types of migrations; it would be difficult even to describe the migration of the Tibetan-born in Tibetans within one single theory. Therefore, I have applied several conceptual perspectives.

Although I do not think that there should be just one migration theory to explain it all, such conceptualisations that allow some global comparisons and common understanding of different migration-related phenomena are useful (Bakewell 2010). Therefore, I have explored the possibilities of transit migration to form a flexible and fluid understanding that would describe the dynamic migration processes of the Tibetan-born Tibetans via Nepal to India as well as contribute to the scholarly discussions on transit migration in other places than the fringes of Europe where it has been used the most, for example (e.g. Düvell, Molodikova and Collyer 2011; Missbach 2015; Terrón-Caro and Monreal-Gimeno 2014). In this synopsis, I aim to bring together the different conceptualisations I have used, along with my empirical study, in order to form a coherent understanding of Tibetan migration as a whole.

2.2 Tibetans as Refugees in Diaspora

I have used the concept of diaspora in this PhD dissertation because it describes the Tibetan longing of the lost homeland illustratively as well as their common aspiration to return to Tibet when it is 'free'. As Choedup (2015) states, diaspora is a concept commonly used by Western and Tibetan scholars who write in English, but also Tibetan intelligentsia often uses the term (e.g. Anand 2003; Hess 2009; Houston and Wright 2003; McConnell 2016; Vasantkumar 2017; Wangmo and Teaster 2010; Yeh and Lama 2006). However, the concept of diaspora has gained criticism among the scholars of postcolonialism (e.g. Ndhlovu 2016), for example, and according to Chen (2012, 264), it easily gives an oversimplified image of the Tibetans as categories like diaspora are often promoted by 'diaspora elites' (Article III).

Choedup (2015, 8; 2016) uses the term 'exile' when he speaks about the Tibetans in India and Nepal, where most of the Tibetans outside Tibet live, because it is closer to the original Tibetan wording that they use about their situation in India (i.e. *btsan byol ba*) and highlights better the statelessness of the Tibetan refugees and their political stand about Tibet under the rule of the PRC. By this he wants to grasp the 'emic perspective and the very defining characteristic of the exile society in India as one that has recreated a government in exile and separate autonomous Tibetan spaces in the form of a second homeland…' However, Choedup (2015, 8) uses the

term diaspora when he refers to Tibetans living outside India and Nepal (and apparently Tibet).

Most of Choedup's (2015) interviewees from an agricultural Tibetan settlement in South India seemed to be long-term residents in India whereas the Tibetan-born interviewees of this study often considered themselves newcomers and had not commonly adapted to India very well. As will be discussed later in this synopsis in more detail (see e.g. Chapter 4.2), for many of them, India was not truly a 'second homeland' (Choedup 2015). Rather, it was a place they wanted to transit after meeting the Dalai Lama and perhaps learning a little bit of English although some of them, particularly the interviewees of the older end often with families and jobs in Dharamsala, wanted to stay. The term diaspora highlights the longing for the lost homeland and the idea of return to 'free Tibet'[20] that was very common among the interviewees of this study even though many wanted to migrate to the West from India as Tibet is not 'free'. However, I have used the term exile simultaneously and I have tried to use the term diaspora flexibly.

McConnell (2015) has explored the concept of diaspora in the Tibetan context from the perspective of the Lhakar movement, a movement that encourages Tibetans to promote Tibetan culture every Wednesday (the Dalai Lama's day of birth) in and outside Tibet. She argues that Lhakar blurs the boundaries of earlier essentialist versus hybrid conceptions of diaspora identities and shows that culture can have an effective role binding the homeland and diaspora. In the case of Lhakar, the movement has changed the geographies of Tibetan political and cultural identity by connecting Tibetans in Tibet and diaspora Tibetans stronger together although they also have cultural differences (McConnell 2015). Hence, diaspora identities can be hybrid and connected to the homeland simultaneously, which was the case among the Tibetan-born interviewees of this study as well.

Perhaps the most radical definition and deconstruction of the traditional meaning of diaspora comes from Vasantkumar (2017) who draws from the Tibetan diaspora. He considers Tibetan diaspora in India classical diaspora in a traditional sense of the term where people have moved away from their original homeland, but argues that if we think more creatively about diaspora, also the Tibetans inside Tibet can be seen living in diaspora and as 'exiles in their own homeland'; the participants of his study often felt abandoned there by their government as so many countrymates, particularly the intelligentsia, had already left (Vasantkumar 2017, 115). He considers that

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20 This common slogan among the diaspora Tibetans emphasises the goal of having at least greater autonomy for Tibet with religious freedom and freedom of expression and movement but not necessarily an independent nation state. It is widely debated in diaspora whether the goal is to have independence or better autonomy, a stand that the Dalai Lama and hence the majority of the Tibetans seem to support, although there are popular diaspora NGOs, such as Tibetan Youth Congress, which have taken a more nationalistic stand, demanding full independence.

the conceptualisations of diaspora as something where people have been dispersed from their homeland are inflexible and is interested in making sense of 'diasporas *in situ*' and 'mobile homelands' (Vasantkumar 2017, 115). Hence, whereas diaspora has been considered something within which mobility can be explored (Urry 2007), Vasantkumar (2017) is determined to demonstrate how Tibetans inside Tibet could be seen as diasporic although they do not cross the borders of the nation states and are not mobile in this sense. He considers that Tibet has in a sense moved with the Tibetans away from its original territory and argues against the Euclidean idea of space where only people move but territories do not. For Vasantkumar (2017, 115), '[d]iaspora is not only about those who depart' and '[o]ne need not to leave home in order to be displaced'.

Vasantkumar's (2017) finding that the Tibetan-born Tibetans who returned to Tibet from India often did not feel like home in Tibet nor in India resonates with this study. Moreover, his argument that Tibetans in Tibet are displaced *in situ* is something that most of the Tibetan-born interviewees of this study more or less felt in Tibet. According to Vasantkumar (2017, 119) the 'true Tibet lies not in the territorially defined homeland, but in a body of religious and cultural practice that has travelled with the Dalai Lama and other members of the Tibetan religio-cultural elite into India and the West and, perhaps, beyond territory itself'. However, most of the Tibetans who I interviewed highlighted the presence of the Dalai Lama in India, and often also religious and cultural freedom, as something that they appreciated, but did not mention the Tibetan cultural elite. They most often found themselves distant from the diaspora politics, culture and Indian-born Tibetans and did not generally vote in the CTA elections, for example. Moreover, they constantly positioned and repositioned themselves against their places of origin, placing their identity more in their places of origin than in India. Hence, my understanding on their diaspora in India is based on them having some kind of shared Tibetan identity, some means of cultural survival and sense of displacement or 'not being at home', including a wish to find it, even though home can very well be mobile and is not necessarily only placed inside the borders of any existing state (see Choedup 2015; Pareñas and Siu 2007; Vasantkumar 2017).

The Tibetan refugee status is another important concept in order to understand the socio-political context within which the Tibetan diaspora and migration take place (e.g. Article III). The concept of refugee emphasises the displacement or 'not being at home' among the Tibetans and it was the English word that the interviewees of this study commonly used of themselves. In that sense, it is a more emic concept than diaspora. I have combined refugee and migration studies in different articles of this PhD dissertation, but not truly elaborated the question in detail because the main focus of the articles has been elsewhere, so the category of refugee needs some attention here. As Choedup (2015, 8) states, although the Tibetans often call themselves refugees and the term is commonly used interchangeably together with the

term exile, it is a complex concept in the context of Tibetans in South Asian diaspora communities (in Nepal, Bhutan and India) 'due to the fact that all these countries are neither signatories to the international treaty on refugees nor do they officially regard the Tibetan exiles as "refugees" due to both domestic and international political imperatives, not the least being, antagonising China'.

As Bakewell (2010, 1690) argues, recognised refugees have often been excluded from migration theory, and it is feared that the discussions on the agency of refugees can undermine the refugee status, as migrants are supposed to have a choice over their decision to migrate unlike refugees. This study is a contribution to the scholarship that does not separate refugees and migrants rigorously and I want to highlight both the protection needs and the strategic agency of the Tibetans in their migratory processes. I call the Tibetans in India refugees together with numerous other scholars (e.g. de Voe 1987; Dolma et al. 2006; Falcone and Wangchuk 2008; Hess 2009; McConnell 2016; Prost 2006; Sach et al. 2008; Wangmo and Teaster 2010; Yankey and Biswas 2012). Yet, I also support the line of thought that refugees and migrants do not necessarily have to be considered separate categories and that vulnerable or paperless people crossing borders need protection regardless of their status as refugees (Chimni 2009; Crawley and Skleparis 2018; Scalettaris 2007). Interestingly, Long (2013) demonstrates how refugees were considered a subcategory of migrants until the 1950s and argues that considering the asylum seekers and refugees simultaneously (but not only) migrants would allow them easier access to legal migration channels, better ability to change a place and seek better livelihoods.

According to Scalettaris (2007), empirical research demonstrates that it can be downright risky to apply categories such as 'refugees' to strictly separate classes of migrants because 'as products of a specific system, they bear assumptions which reflect the principles underlying the system itself'; while the category 'refugee' emphasises the protection needs of those considered refugees, it also leaves others out. As Long (2013) argues, it is often the nation states and refugee advocates who demand the separation of 'refugees' and 'migrants' at least partly because the categories of 'asylum' and 'refugee' are essential in international refugee protection even though there is enough evidence that they blur and overlap in practice. Therefore, the separation between 'refugee' and 'migrant' serves the interests of the policy debates rather than supports their use as analytical categories in scientific enquiries (Chimni 2009; Long 2013; Scalettaris 2007).

This resonates with Crawley and Skleparis (2018) who have studied the use of categories 'migrant' and 'refugee' after the so-called refugee crisis in Europe. They demonstrate how these categories have become highly politicised in European context, and how the media and different institutions, for instance, are trying to point out who are the 'real' refugees and who are just 'migrants' or 'economic migrants'. They argue that this does not meet the realities of those who move when many people live months or years in countries other than they originate from, a situation which

requires us 'to engage with the complex economic, social and political realities of the "in between"' (Crawley and Skleparis 2018, 49).

Also the Tibetans from Tibet who aspire to migrate further from Dharamsala are often stuck 'in between'. The refugee status of the Tibetans is blurred in India as it does not have an internal refugee law (Choedup 2016); individual asylum seekers can be treated in diverse ways (Rolfe 2008). However, India is participating in International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[21], taking in Tibetans based on humanitarian grounds; it has a non-binding mutual agreement with the CTA to consider Tibetans as refugees *de facto* (Hess 2006, 81-82; Routray 2007; see also Bentz 2012). Those who seek refuge in India are handled under the Foreigners Act and they are also subjected to the Foreign Registration Act, which means that the Tibetan interviewees of this study, like the Tibetan-born Tibetans in general, need to get a Registration Certificate (RC), a certain type of a residence permit in India, in order to get some protection. The issuing policies of the RC have varied and it commonly needed to be renewed yearly during my fieldwork; however, the GOI has started to issue a five-year RC for Indian-born Tibetans, a decision made in 2014 (Choedup 2015; 2016). According to the CTA's website, also Tibetans who have been living in India more than 20 years should be able to renew their RC only in every five years[22] and they are also encouraged to register online; if they are successful, they may need to renew their registration only in every five years[23]. Moreover, Tibetans have now got the right to apply for a multi-entry return visa that is valid for one year, instead of the former single-entry visa, but applicants need the CTA's recommendation.

As Choedup (2016, 20) states, particularly in Dharamsala where there are 'large numbers of transient Tibetan population', the police arrested and interrogated the Tibetans without RCs regularly until rather recently. Rumours about police detention and corruption, manifesting in demanding money or mobile phones from the Tibetans who did not possess the RC, for instance, circulated in Dharamsala during my stay. I happened to encounter such a detention attempt in 2010 when walking in McLeod Ganj with one of the participants of this study in the evening. The police started suddenly to demand that he should show his RC. He had one at the time but he had left it at home by accident and the police seemed angry because of that and asked him to follow. The reason why he was not taken somewhere to be interrogated in the end seemed to be because he was with a foreigner who got involved. More

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21   See http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AsiaRegion/Pages/INIndex.aspx (last visited 8 November 2018).

22   See http://tibet.net/2017/12/indian-government-streamlines-stay-and-travel-regulations-for-tibetans-in-india (last visited 8 November 2018).

23   The CTA's instructions for online registration can be found here: http://tibet.net/2018/01/step-by-step-guide-to-online-rc-registration (last visited 8 November 2018).

recently, the CTA has appealed the GOI to better the situation of the undocumented Tibetans and it has relatively recently legalised their presence; they can get the RCs so easily that almost everyone has one (Choedup 2016).

There have also been public debates on whether the Tibetans should apply Indian citizenship or not but the Tibetan-born Tibetans who I interviewed only held the RC and IC at most and no one mentioned that they would consider applying it (see McGranahan 2018). The CTA does not encourage applying the citizenship even if one would have been born in India or been residing there very long. It would be technically possible to apply the citizenship after residing long-term in India as there is no law that would deny it, but according to Falcone and Wangchuk (2008), Tibetans are often denied the citizenship if they apply (see also Bentz 2012; Choedup 2016). Falcone and Wangchuk (2008) suspect that the GOI and the CTA have some sort of an unofficial bilateral agreement about the policy.

Although there are also Tibetans who have successfully applied and got the Indian citizenship (Hess 2006), the majority have remained stateless[24], a collective decision that the Tibetan diaspora commonly considers 'crucial to the twin goals of restoring freedom inside Tibet and ensuring the maintenance of Tibetan identity and culture' (Choedup 2016, 7). As McGranahan (2018) notes, the fact that Tibetans have remained stateless in South Asia for decades has been purposeful. According to her, 'under the leadership of their exile government, Tibetans refused citizenship in South Asia to both claim sovereignty in Tibet and assert political equality and interdependence vis-à-vis the governments of India and Nepal' (McGranahan 2018, 367; see also McGranahan 2016). Hence, de Voe's (1987, 54–55) statement that 'for the Tibetan, the refugee paper 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', seems still valid.

Interestingly, the CTA has encouraged Tibetans who have managed to migrate to the United States to take full citizenship there which means that whilst Indian citizenship is considered a loss of identity, United States citizenship is considered as positive, spreading the Tibetan agenda for wider political and international spheres[25] (Hess 2006; see also Falcone and Wangchuk 2008). According to Choedup (2016), this policy concerns the West in general. He sees it not so much as a contradictory policy than an answer to the 'transnational social realities' as in this way the Tibetans can have the economic benefits of the West whilst also preserving India as an active site of

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24 According to a popular article in Tibetan Review in September 2018, a CTA spokesperson Sonam Dagpo estimated that there would be less than 100 Tibetans altogether who would have taken Indian citizenship (http://www.tibetanreview.net/steep-decline-seen-in-tibetan-refugee-number-in-india, last visited 10 November 2018).

25 Professor Yeshi Choedon (2018) has written an interesting popular article called 'The Unintended Consequences of India's Policy on Citizenship for Tibetan Refugees' about this question.

identity building or political actions, keeping the CTA's position as steady as possible (Choedup 2016, 28). Hence, migration to the West has brought new overtones to the citizenship discussions because although it is important for the Tibetans to nurture the Tibetan identity in India where the biggest Tibetan diaspora settlements and their most important institution exist, the younger generation of the Tibetans grown up in India already speak about 'three homelands' which are 'the imagined Tibetan nation', 'the refugee settlements in India where they were raised' and 'the West where they migrate to seek a better life' (Choedup 2016, 7). Choedup (2016) sees a strategic Tibetan agency present in the policies concerning the citizenship; political and economic issues as well as identity questions all play a part. As McGranahan (2018, 376) crystallises, in India or Nepal 'Tibetans' refugee citizenship is singular (we are Tibetan but not Indian or Nepali), whereas in North America, refugee citizenship now resembles a sort of dual citizenship (we are Tibetan *and* American or Canadian)'.

Although the Tibetan refugee status is blurred and there are conflicting debates over the citizenship questions in India (see McGranahan 2018), the vulnerable position of the Tibetans and their need for protection culminate when they journey from Tibet via Nepal to India paperless without protection (Article III). Their common route at least partly on foot over the Himalayas is extremely harsh and the border guards may be violent both in China and in Nepal if the Tibetans get caught en route (e.g. Dolma et al. 2006). According to the UNHCR, refugees cannot be 'expelled or returned where their life and freedom are at risk', and the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu, which all interviewees of this study transited, follows these principles. As Nepal has not taken in new Tibetans anymore during the third wave, they are assisted to India by the Reception Centre. It is mostly funded by the UNHCR and the CTA is involved mainly in running it in practice as an implementing partner of the UNHCR (e.g. Frechette 2002, 135–136; Kauffmann 2015).

Even though the PRC's policies towards the Tibetans generally softened after the times of the Cultural Revolution (Ardley 2002; Swank 2011) and the 'violent antipathy towards traditional culture that marked China's turbulent high Maoist years' lessened (Vasantkumar 2017, 117), religious restrictions and restrictions to free speech and movement seem to be common; there are memories and representations from Tibet that the interviewees of this study held and retold in Dharamsala. For instance, one of the interviewees of this study was jailed in Tibet in the 1990s as he was holding a badge with a Tibetan flag under his jacket and some PRC officials found that out (Personal communication 2, 13 December 2015) whilst another interviewee was jailed because she helped a monk who was beaten by the police during the Tibetan riots in Lhasa in 2008 (Personal communication 4, 16 December 2015)[26]. As the interviewees also had several other testimonies of practices of this kind, the

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26   The PRC's Tibet policy became more strict again after the Tibetan riots in 2008, the year of the Beijing Olympics, as will be discussed later in this synopsis in more detail in chapter 4.1.

International declaration of human rights articles 18 and 19 that acknowledge the freedom of thought, religion and belief as well as the 'freedom of opinion and expression' seem not to be always met in Tibet and they also met difficulties that the well-cited UN 1959 refugee convention considers as applicable to refugees. It declares that a refugee is one who (http://www.unhcr.org):

> '…owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.'

The Dalai Lama is the most central figure and the religious leader in Tibetan Buddhism, but the Tibetans are not allowed to hold pictures of him openly in general in China although the PRC has let Tibetan monasteries grow rather powerful in certain places already in the 1990s, and religious acts not disturbing the legitimacy of the PRC can be performed (Hillman 2010; see also Kehoe 2015). This has happened at least partly because these places serve as tourist attractions (Hillman 2010; Kapstein 2004; Kolås 2004), which resonates with Rowen (2016) who demonstrates that tourism also serves geopolitical interests of the PRC and consolidates its control over Tibet; China's is the fastest growing tourist market on earth.

All in all, should the Tibetans increasingly apply Indian citizenship or India's policy of considering them as *de facto* refugees change, their protection needs would still remain the same; it is important that they get international and national protection regardless of their refugee status in India and during their journeys to India (Article III). As Collyer (2010) emphasises, protection needs are the same during the journey for those who are considered refugees and those who are considered migrants in the context of the (often blurred) refugee laws and regulations.

2.3 Transit Migration and Refugee Journeys

Transit migration, discussed most deeply in the second article, is one of the major concepts of this PhD dissertation (see Article II). It is the most common and established concept that describes migration via one place or several towards migrants' possible final destinations, the type of migration that the Tibetans from Tibet often take part. It is thus useful in describing the progressive, dynamic and onward-looking nature of the migration of Tibetan-born Tibetans. It allows global comparisons and gives space also to the active agency of the migrants as it highlights the different steps and strategies that they use in order to migrate onwards. Moreover, it can be used in describing the situation of those who become asylum seekers or refugees, i.e.

those whose motivations to migrate are considered as forced by international agencies or states, as well as of those who migrate more voluntarily according to these (contested) definitions.

Transit migration has been rightfully criticised of being a politicised concept, however, as it has been mingling with migration control and unwanted migration in the rhetoric of the institutions, such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) (e.g. Bredeloup 2012; Collyer and de Haas 2012; Düvell 2012; Hess 2012; Oelgemöller 2011, 416). Nevertheless, I agree with İçduygu and Yükseker (2012) that this should not lead to a need to abandon analytical and empirical explorations of transit migration practices. Hence, I follow Gerard and Pickering (2014, 339) who highlight that it is possible to use the concept and not follow 'value judgments that "transit" migration is "wrong", "illegal" or "irregular"' (Article II; III). I have not truly focused on 'the policy context' of the term like many scholars who have studied the phenomenon in the fringes of Europe have done (see Collyer et al. 2011, 15). I have used it as a concept to explore migration via one place or several towards migrants' or refugees' possible final destination(s) without linking it to policy-making as such.

Several scholars suggest that the concept of transit migration is supposed to be used only in the fringes of Europe where it originates (e.g. Collyer and de Haas 2012; Düvell 2012; İçduygu and Yükseker 2012). Although these studies may want to avoid universalistic statements driven from the concept, I rather choose to stretch the limits of transit migration out of the European context than create a new concept. Even though some scholars admit that similar type of movement exists also elsewhere and that the uses of transit migration have been Eurocentric (e.g. Collyer et a. 2011, 17), the possibilities and applications of transit migration have not been discussed enough in the global scale (Article II). Hence, I share Missbach's (2015) mission to apply the concept of transit migration also to other parts of the world where similar type of migration exists in order to allow global comparisons of this type of migration. Opposing this choice would only make the concept more Eurocentric and ignore the various studies that have successfully used the concept outside the European context (e.g. Cárdenas-Rodríguez and Vázquez-Delgado 2014; Hoffstaedter 2014; Martinez-Donate et al. 2015; Missbach 2015; Servan-Mori et al. 2014; Terrón-Caro and Monreal-Gimeno 2014).

There are some concepts, such as *on-migration* (Düvell 2012) or *fragmented journeys* (Collyer 2007; 2010), that describe migration via one place or several towards migrants' possible final destinations, but they have not gained such popularity yet as transit migration and thus do not allow as wide-scale global comparisons as transit migration (Article II). Nevertheless, transit migration related activities in Dharamsala overlap particularly with Collyer's (2010, 279) concept of 'fragmented journeys' in that 'the characteristics of fragmented journeys highlight the drawbacks of viewing migration as a relatively rapid transition between defined points of origin and destination' (Article II). According to Collyer (2010, 275), 'it is often not the case

that entire journeys are planned in advance but one stage may arise from the failure of a previous stage, limiting future options and draining resources'. This resonates with the migration processes of Tibetan-born Tibetans onwards from Dharamsala, but their journeys via Nepal to India are not fragmented as such as they intentionally headed to the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu and usually managed to migrate onwards to India within a few weeks (Article II); I am looking for a concept that also describes Tibetan migration via Nepal to India, and this leg of their journey resonates more with transit migration.

I have abandoned the strictest structuralist (and contested) determinants of transit migration, however, which insist that transit migration should only describe international migration where the periods in the intermediate steps are rather short, maximum one year, and the migrant must have an initial intention to move forward (e.g. Düvell 2012; see also Wissink, Düvell and van Eerdewijk 2013). As migrating people easily cross categories and the fluidity of migration processes tends to escape fixed definitions in practice (see Collyer and de Haas 2012; Hess 2012), I favour flexible definitions which capture the dynamism and onward-looking nature of migration via one or several places towards peoples' possible final destinations (Article II). As Papadopoulou-Kourkoula (2008, 7) argues, duration alone cannot define the situation where the migrant relinquishes the intention to migrate and no longer acts according to the intention that defines 'the moment when the transit phase ends and becomes settlement'. Therefore, the best determinant of transit migration is 'the degree to which a migrant engages with the structures and opportunities in the receiving countries and invests in hopes, money, contacts and infrastructure in order to settle properly' (Papadopoulou-Kourkoula 2008, 7). This Papadopoulou-Kourkoula's (2008) definition can help solving the common question within the studies of transit migration and refugee journeys alike, i.e. when does the transit phrase or journey end as it can continue in peoples' minds even when they do not move physically (e.g. BenEzer and Zetter 2014).

Also some other scholars have combined the terms 'transit migration', 'journeys' and 'refugee' in their studies as they seem to overlap in practice. Kuschminder (2017) has combined the concepts in her study on the journeys and migration-related decision-making among Afghan refugees in transit in Turkey and Greece, whilst Gerard and Pickering (2014, 339) use them in their study on the refugee women journeys from Somalia to Malta. In both studies, the migrating people are called refugees even though they are considered to participate in transit migration simultaneously, and the scholars also concentrate on their journeys to Turkey or Malta (Article III).

Both concepts, transit migration and refugee journeys, allow the active Tibetan agency to flourish by not ignoring the structural forces that try to prevent them from migrating, including the border control policies of the PRC, for instance. As I found out that the journey has a great collective meaning for the Tibetan diaspora in Dharamsala and importance for the individuals who had done the journey, I also found

out that the concept of the 'refugee journey' provided deeper theoretisation about the meaning of the journey for the refugees than any other concept (e.g. BenEzer and Zetter 2014; Lyytinen 2017). Since there is a 'limited conceptual apparatus to explore and analyse the significance of refugee and forced migrant's journeys' (BenEzer and Zetter 2014, 301), the case of the Tibetans who journey via Nepal to India contributes also to the body of literature that fills the gap (e.g. Kuschminder 2017; Lyytinen 2017; Nardone and Correa-Velez 2016).

2.4 Postcolonialism and the Subaltern Agency

As Blunt and McEvan (2002, 1) argue, geography and postcolonialism are linked and 'their intersections provide many challenging opportunities to explore the spatiality of colonial discourse, the spatial politics of representation, and the material effects of colonialism in different places' (see also Sidaway, Bunnell and Yeoh 2003). Post-colonialism has its roots in tracing the forms of colonial power relations from textual materials (e.g. Fanon 1952; Said 1978; Spivak 1988), and issues related to colonialism and postcolonialism have been discussed also in geography for long. Hudson (1977), for example, paid attention to geography's connections to colonialism and imperialism already in the 1970s. According to Gilmartin and Berg (2007), however, the starting point of more systematic and wider-scale postcolonial geography can be placed in the early 1990s when authors like David Livingstone (1992) or Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose (1994) reshaped the histories of geography by highlighting colonialism and its consequences. At first, postcolonial geographers tended to study actual postcolonial societies and concentrate on the power relations between these and their former rulers (Sidaway 2000, 594), but postcolonial thought may currently also 'refer to position against imperialism, colonialism and Eurocentrism' (Hall and Tucker 2004, 3). In this form, it has been present throughout this PhD dissertation as an underpinning although I have used postcolonial framework fully as a theory only in the fourth article.

According to Sidaway, Woon and Jacobs (2014, 4), postcolonial geography has had difficulties in keeping up with 'geography's fast changing theoretical predilections'. The reason for this has perhaps been at least partly that there has traditionally been skepticism towards universal knowledge structures and cultural hegemonies that have been seen connected with the voice of the colonial oppressor (Strongman 2014; see also Raghuram, Noxolo and Madge 2013). However, it has more lately been argued that postcolonial geographers should engage more with epistemologies rather than see them as strengthening avoidable universal knowledge structures (e.g. Jackson 2014; Jazeel 2014), a line of thought that I follow in this dissertation.

In the context of migration, postcolonialism highlights unequal global or local power relations, tackling the question of unequal access to opportunities and wealth that affect people's choices to migrate (see Koh 2015). Examination of the power

dynamics that influence movement is important as they reveal inequalities that affect the migration or decisions to stay put, acknowledging that people and places are unevenly connected to each other (Kothari 2003). Koh's (2015, 1) argument crystallises the most important aspect of postcolonial approaches to migration in the context of this research as follows:

> [S]uch approaches shed light on fundamental issues of inequality, through which migration occurs as a response to differential access to opportunities and resources. By tracing how and why migration occurs in specific locations through a postcolonial lens, we can then map out the underlying power inequalities and discover possibilities for agency and social change.

I consider that postcolonial thought is helpful in connecting (transit) migration to the questions of collectivity, ethnicities, inequalities and migration cultures in Dharamsala, including the subaltern position and Otherness that the Tibetans from Tibet often encounter during their migration via Nepal to India and further (Article IV). According to Niezen (2009, 3–4), there have basically been two lines of thought reaching the questions of ethnicity and nation states within postcolonial thought; the first group of scholars highlights borderless cosmopolitanism[27] and has a 'humanistic, cosmopolitan agenda', whilst the other is 'more encouraging of efforts to not only cast of the tutelage and paternalism of dominant societies but also, beyond this, to recover the suppressed histories of subaltern subjects as foundations of belonging'. According to him, the first line of thought does not pay enough attention for the struggle of those who see themselves as 'oppressed colonial subjects' to whom 'knowledge must have something more than blunt edges of uncommitted humanist contemplation; it must affirm primordial origins and act as a source of self-discovery and liberation' (Niezen 2009, 4). This is interesting in the context of the diaspora Tibetans who are in a sense both cosmopolitan and deeply rooted in their ethnicities and histories. Their migration aspirations in Dharamsala often reveal attempts and will to become even more cosmopolitan and mobile but simultaneously a longing for a 'free Tibet'.

Some scholars also argue that there is a risk of understating the struggles of ethnic minorities or indigenous peoples as 'post' (Goss 1996) or regarding their situations as legacies of colonialism when they should rather be described as pure colonialism (Byrd and Rothberg 2011). As McGranahan (2018, 375) states, 'for Tibetans and many others, empire is not a past-tense phenomenon, nor is decolonisation a historical event that is behind us'. Nevertheless, I do not want to draw too strict a line between colonial and postcolonial as it is difficult to strictly separate them without

27   Niezen (2009) includes Edward Said to these scholars.

inflexible structuralist categorisations that postcolonialism avoids as its roots lie in poststructuralism and deconstruction (Article IV). I consider colonialism/postcolonialism as a continuum that is not only time-bound but varying spatially and being dependent on the conditions and policies in different places within nation states (Article IV; Koh 2015). Moreover, I do not just refer to concrete temporal aftermath of colonialism in this dissertation. I rather consider postcolonialism as 'cultures, discourses and critiques that lie beyond, but remain closely influenced by, colonialism, a line of thought that Blunt and McEvan (2001, 3) call 'critical aftermath' of colonialism (Article IV).

In the context of Tibetans, it is important that postcolonial thought and concepts such as empire can be stretched beyond Europe and its former colonies (Article IV). According to McGranahan (2018, 375), '[s]cholar's apprehension of contemporary polities as imperial has not kept pace with peoples' experiences of empire'. Referring to her and Stoler's article (Stoler and McGranahan 2007), she continues that '[n]aming empire in the present and thinking it beyond Europe is key to acknowledge contemporary imperial formations such as China, Canada and the United States (McGranahan 2018, 375)'. All these states have been built at least partly on the lands of those who are now called indigenous people or ethnic minorities and who are currently subjected to various governing strategies on behalf of these states.

Postcolonial thought is also helpful in highlighting the agency of the subaltern, a term originating from Antonio Gramsci (see Smith and Hoare 1971; Spivak 2000), debated further by the subaltern study group (e.g. Chakrabarty 2000; Chatterjee 1993; Guha 1982). Thinkers like Gayatri Spivak (1988), a writer of the foundational essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, have addressed the agency of the subaltern within postcolonial debates for long. However, I do not use the term subaltern in the strictest or earliest Spivakian sense in the context of the Tibetans, i.e. considering the subaltern as one who 'cannot speak' for herself or as one who cannot become understood due to the repressive power relations and dominant representations that affect her life (Spivak 1988, 308). Later, Spivak (2000, 319) has moderated her stand on subaltern from one who 'cannot speak' to someone who is not usually listened to (see also Ahmed 2000), which resonates with the experiences on many Tibetan-born Tibetans who generally felt that they were not listened to by the PRC elites but not truly by the CTA either. Hence, Spivak's (1988) discussion on how certain positions or power relations silence some while giving voice to others is also relevant in the context of the Tibetans from Tibet in Dharamsala. I also agree with Chakrabarty (1998), according to whom also minority elites can have subaltern histories even though minorities may include groups that are more subaltern than others (see also Chakrabarty 2000). I consider the Tibetan diaspora sharing a subaltern history; however, the Tibetan-born Tibetans, particularly the newcomers, tend to be in a more subaltern position in Dharamsala than the Indian-born Tibetans (Article IV).

As Ehrkamp (2016) argues, ignoring the agency of refugees is still too common within studies on refugees and forced migrants, and scholars should create a fuller understanding of their agency and subjectivities (Article III; IV). Also in ACME's (An International Journal of Critical Geographies) special issue called 'interventions in migration', several scholars call for methodology that 'respects migrants and their individuality, rather than collapsing them into discourses around victimhood, strangeness and otherness' (Conlon and Gill 2015). This is particularly relevant as the Tibetans have been seen as exotic Others and people of Shangri-la for long, an image that has a passive and victimising overtone (Anand 2007; Huber 2001; Lopez 1998; McConnell 2016). As Chen (2012, 285) states, also humanitarian or advocacy groups and media tend to 'address the victimhood and passivity of "Tibetan refugees"', spreading the passive image further (see also Choedup 2015; de Voe 1981).

Moreover, Yeh (2009) discusses that the Tibetans have sometimes been seen as a part of Western anti-communist and anti-China forces even in scholarly writings. She sees postcolonial thought that emphasises agency as a cure for this and argues that 'we need to recognise Tibetans as capable of being political subjects, who like all historical subjects, are inevitably complex and contradictory' (Yeh 2009, 987). Therefore, I highlight the active agency of the Tibetan-born Tibetans from several angles throughout this dissertation although I simultaneously emphasise the preventive unequal power structures that they encounter during their migration (Article IV)[28]. This contributes also to Jazeel's (2014) call for studies that examine the agency, resistance and spatialities of those who have traditionally been considered as Other; he argues that they should be better heard in current postcolonial debates.

Whilst migrants commonly show active agency simply by deciding to migrate and migrating, the type of agency that is connected with the Tibetan-born Tibetans' migration and migration aspirations reminds the 'agency of projects' discussed by Ortner (2011). According to Ortner (2011, 147), the agency of projects 'is about people having desires that grow out of their own structures of life, including very centrally their own structures of inequality; it is in short about people playing, or trying to play, their own serious games even as more powerful parties seek to devaluate and even destroy them'. This resonates with the different steps of migration of many of those interviewees who had a difficult journey via the Himalayas, fearing the Chinese and Nepalese border controls, and who faced such socioeconomic difficulties and

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28 When discussing agency, researchers should avoid 'speaking on behalf of the Other', a common issue in ethnography in general. However, being not interested in or ignoring the Other or the subaltern is even worse; it continues the 'imperialist project' (Spivak 1988, 298; see also Alcoff 1991). Spivak (1988) suggests that there is a need to speaking to the Other instead of speaking on behalf or ignoring the Other. Discussing the position of the researcher or ethnographer may also help to avoid speaking on behalf of the Other or the subaltern as it makes visible the subjectivity of the writer; I have done this particularly in Chapter Three.

inequalities in India that their onward migration aspirations started to rise. As Boccagni (2017, 3) argues, 'aspirations are a valuable research field on the interaction between structure and agency; put differently, between mutually interconnected structural factors (i.e. family backgrounds, education, social class, employment etc.) and individual orientation to social action'.

All in all, I use the postcolonial approach to explain the reasons for Tibetan migration, from Tibet via Nepal to India, and onwards from India. The empirical study that I will discuss after the methodology chapter that follows can be read against this background.

3 Methodologies: Ethnographical Fieldwork, Other Materials and the Analysis

3.1 Overview and Epistemological Background

The 'cultural turn' has encouraged geographers to concentrate on qualitative approaches and participatory methodologies used also in this dissertation (see King 2012). As I present a range of different voices and interpretations in this study (see Mason 2002, 177), including my own, I consider that the data is constructed through the research process, not just being 'out there in the world waiting to be discovered and gathered' (Charmaz and Bryant 2011, 293). I also believe that information and knowledge about the social world can be collected by observing, experiencing and participating in 'real-life settings' and interactive situations without claiming to having myself grasped the subjective perspectives of all observed (Mason 2002, 85).

All articles included are based on ethnographic fieldwork methods such as non-participatory and participatory observation, interviewing, writing reflective fieldwork diaries and paying attention to the visual and written materials, such as different publications of the CTA and various NGOs, websites, pictures and museum exhibitions, produced by the Tibetans in Dharamsala (see Clarke 2005; Gobo 2011; Mikkelsen 2005). I conducted fieldwork in Dharamsala, totalling around ten months during 2009–2015; the longest fieldwork trip in 2009–2010 lasted slightly less than eight months, I spent five weeks in Dharamsala in 2011 and the last trip to Dharamsala was a two-week trip in December 2015. I also made three interviews in Europe in order to be informed when I was far from India. Moreover, I have added some written and visual materials into my analysis after the actual fieldwork and the interviews in Dharamsala.

I consider ethnography as a process and it is not easy nor necessary to set strict boundaries when the process starts or ends; I have never stopped following the Tibet question via Indian newspapers, online media and other channels or discussing about Tibetan diaspora with my Tibetan friends. As Figure 2 at the end of this chapter demonstrates, I have visited Dharamsala and been interested in Tibet-related questions and Tibetan diaspora already before I started to do my fieldwork.

The study commonly follows inductive reasoning, i.e. the theory is driven from the data although it is questionable whether pure forms of either inductive or deductive knowledge creation can be followed (Mason 2002, 180–181; see also Clarke 2005). I did not go to the field without any presumptions or theoretical notions in mind, but they were not fixed, and the findings rising from the field guided the formation of the theory (see Charmaz 2006; Clarke 2005). As Charmaz (2006, 21) states, 'ethnographers have the opportunity to work from the ground up and to pursue whatever they find to be of the greatest interest'. This resonates somewhat with Mason (2002, 82–83) who argues that qualitative interviewing is 'an appropriate and practicable way to get at some of what qualitative researchers see as the central ontological components of social reality'.

Although I did not follow any specific method dogmatically and several writings have affected my work (e.g. Chambers 2008; Mason 2002; Mikkelsen 2005), the methodologies that I have used have epistemological elements of grounded theory (Straus and Corbin 1990), particularly constructivist grounded theory which is a revision of the earlier grounded theory method (Charmaz 2006; Charmaz and Bryant 2011). In contrast with those grounded theorists who assumed that they could remain rather objective observers (e.g. Glaser and Strauss 1967), the researchers are located within their inquiry in constructivist grounded theory, meaning that they are part of the research instead of being objective observers (Charmaz and Bryant 2011). As

Figure 2: This picture, hanging on one of the main streets in McLeod Ganj, illustrates the date of my first visit to Dharamsala and the political climate there in 2006, before the Beijing Olympics and before I started conducting fieldwork in town. *Photo by Rebecca Frilund*.

subjectivities are always involved in research, researchers should also try to recognise them and discuss them (e.g. Mills, Bonner and Francis 2006). It is important to be sensitive to the differences during empirical analysis and remember that all 'knowledge producers' have embodiments and situatedness and the 'truths' can be simultaneous and multiple (Clarke 2005, 19).

Clarke (2005) takes the grounded theory methods even further from the origins of the grounded theory, fitting them more clearly to suit the epistemological shift of the postmodern turn, abandoning its earlier positivist elements and bringing discourse into the core. The discourses include elements such as visual and historical narratives (Clarke 2005, 19), which are particularly important in this dissertation when exploring Tibetans' reasons to leave Tibet and narratives of their refugee journeys, for example. As Brooker (2003, 78) argues, discourse is 'generally used to designate the forms of REPRESENTATION, conventions and habits of language use producing specific fields of culturally and historically located meanings', a common way of seeing the meaning of discourse after the postmodern turn. Lots of these types of meanings actualised also among the Tibetan interviewees of this study in Dharamsala, such as representations of Tibet, their home country. Together with the visual material and writings about diaspora Tibetans, they formed a discourse of how Tibet is occupied by the PRC, one reason why the Tibetans tend to leave Tibet, for instance.

Drawing also from postcolonial studies and its legacy, I consider discourse 'as a concept of action' (Barnett 2015, 174), engaged with the world around it (see also Said 1978). As Barnett (2015, 174) clarifies, 'most distinctive about postcolonial theory is that it is less interested in reading representations as evidence of other sorts of practice, and more concerned with the actual work that the systems of cultural representations do in the world'. For example, I do not address the interviewees' representations of the West as the best possible place to live, boosted by wealthier travellers, tourists and volunteers in Dharamsala, solely as geographical imaginations but representations that actualise in practice in the onward-migration aspirations and actual onward-migration of the Tibetan-born Tibetans (and Tibetans in general) in India[29].

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29   If the representations and images of Tibet and Tibetans as such are of interest, see Dodin and Räther 2001 or Lopez 1998.

3.2 Participatory Observation

I used both non-participatory and participatory observation. The more distant observation was characteristic of the first weeks of my fieldwork whereas interaction was present in the latter stages. Participatory observation was among the most important methods of this study. Meaningful ethnographic knowledge is easily left out without it since it is difficult to generate all knowledge solely via interviews (see Mason 2002, 85)[30]. This is particularly true in Dharamsala where fieldwork requires attempts to go beyond the most typical and less informative narratives that Tibetans may tell foreigners (Chen 2012). The Tibetans sometimes told me, for example, that they would only like to migrate to 'free Tibet' as they supported the idea, without mentioning that they also aspired on migrating to the West if they had a chance. Yet, their actions in Dharamsala or further discussions sometimes revealed that they aspired on migrating onwards and were acting towards the goal. This is understandable as migrants do not necessarily want to speak about their migration aspirations or intentions because of the fear that the research would inform enforcement agencies, for instance (Wissink, Düvell and van Eerdewijk 2013)[31].

I volunteered in an English conversation class in one of the biggest grassroots NGOs in Dharamsala altogether for several months in 2009–2011 in two different fieldwork trips and one week in December 2015. My volunteering contributed greatly particularly to the first article where I discuss volunteer tourism. Although my focus was on the NGOs and their work, not in the experiences of the participants as such, volunteering gave me an opportunity to talk with dozens of Tibetan participants. As the participants were mostly Tibetans from Tibet, particularly newcomers, volunteering gave me a more wide-ranging understanding about their migration and lives in India than if I would have been just an outsider (Article I; Chambers 2008). There is a risk, however, that participatory observation would change the existing local setting if the researcher would have a strong impact to the behavior of the observed (see Silverman 2001, 234), but this was avoided in the conversation classes as I was just one of the many foreigners that came to talk with the Tibetans on a daily basis in a Tibetan-run NGO that purposively attracted foreigners to participate (Article I).

Although my purpose was not solely to conduct fieldwork in the conversation classes but also to contribute to the Tibetan diaspora community, I was open about my status as a researcher and none of the conversation class discussions are used

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30 Of course, it would be an illusion to assume that it would be possible to gain all potential knowledge by using any method.

31 Because of this, I thought it could have been questionable ethically to push the interviewees to discuss their intentions to migrate onwards from India openly in detail; we rather discussed about their motives to leave Tibet, journey to India, life in Dharamsala and future plans, including whether these plans included possible migration onwards but in a manner that allowed them also to remain silent.

directly in this study in order to protect the rights of the participants. In five cases, I interviewed someone who participated in these classes rather actively and three of them I first met in the class; a separate interview session was arranged so that the interviewee clearly knew that I would use the information they gave during the interview in my research.

3.3 Interviewing and the Interviewees

I conducted semi-structured interviews of 52 Tibetans during different fieldwork trips to Dharamsala. Five interviewees were interviewed twice and one Tibetan from Tibet, who arrived via Dharamsala, and one member of the CTA, were interviewed in Europe between the fieldwork trips in order to stay informed, making the total number of the interviews 57. The last interview was conducted in Europe 2018 as I got a good chance to interview the Tibetan-born Tibetan who I had already interviewed there in 2015 and get up to date. He had visited Tibet recently and we talked much about his representations of Tibet, India and the West, for instance, and moving between these places.

The interviewees included 31 Tibetans from Tibet, ten CTA officials who either monitor the Tibetan diaspora in India or work closely with Tibetans from Tibet, six NGO managers from NGOs that focus on the newcomers or both the Indian-born Tibetans and the newcomers and five representatives of different institutions, such as the Tibetan Reception Centre, Sherab Gatsel Lobling School (formerly known as Tibetan Transit School) for the adult Tibetan newcomers and the Tibetan Children's Village School for Tibetan children, both newcomers and Indian-born. One of the NGO officials who I interviewed was not a Tibetan, but she had formed the NGO with her Tibetan husband and they lived permanently in Dharamsala. Particularly one of the interviewees, whom I interviewed twice, has become a friend who has helped me to check a few things also after my actual fieldwork in Dharamsala.

The number of the interviewees was not decided beforehand and I relied on informational considerations (see Mason 2001, 134; Mikkelsen 2005). As Bowen (2008) argues, 'in this sampling strategy, the researcher does not concentrate on "generability" or "representativeness" and therefore focuses less on sample *size* and more on sample *adequacy*'. I compared and cross-checked the findings based on the interviews with the other materials used. I also had numerous informal discussions with Tibetan-born Tibetans about migration and being a Tibetan newcomer in India; some became my friends or wanted to discuss about these topics informally with me as they knew I studied these issues and wanted to help.

The interviewees from Tibet were young adults or middle-aged lay Tibetans who had first-hand experience on migration from Tibet via Nepal to India, but some had been monks or nuns in Tibet and given up their robes in India. Most of the monks and nuns engage more with the monastic environments and may live rather remote

lives in monasteries; some, however, participated in the language classes of the NGOs that I studied and may have had migration aspirations as well (Article I). I think that I should have had a possibility to examine the Tibetan monastic system and Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries around the world deeper in order to include monks and nuns in my PhD dissertation. Yet, it would be interesting to study the migration aspirations of Tibetan monks and nuns and compare them with the migration aspirations of lay Tibetans in the future as it tells how attractive they see the Tibetan monasteries and Buddhist circles outside Tibet and India if they do not want to give up robes altogether.

Most of the Tibetans from Tibet who I interviewed had arrived in India before 2008, after which the number of new arrivals reduced remarkably (e.g. Article II). They had been living in diaspora from two weeks up to more than twenty years during the interview, but most often between five to ten years. Hence, all but two of them had already finished or not attended the Sherab Gatsel Lobling School where all newcomers under 30 years are directed after arriving in India if they are not directed to other boarding schools further from Dharamsala. This means that they had chosen to stay in India at least for a while, not to return to Tibet after finishing the school, like some Tibetans do and are encouraged to do (Hess 2006; Prost 2008, 60). 20 of these 31 Tibetans were men and 11 were women. However, migration from Tibet to India is male dominant; there are more newcomer men in Dharamsala as more men migrate from Tibet to India (CTA 2010).

The Tibetan-born interviewees were usually selected with a snowball method and so that the recommendations of whom to interview affected the selection. Sometimes I got contacts because the snowball was running but I was actively asking the permissions for the interviews by myself. I was hesitant to contact the interviewees without any recommendations or them knowing me at all because of their vulnerable position and because it was relatively common, for example, that the Tibetan-born Tibetans were afraid of someone spying them for the PRC and this spy could also have been a Westerner[32]. Hence, I often interviewed Tibetans I met through people who already knew me if I did not have a direct contact. Elements of convenience sampling were also present as I sometimes simply asked people to join when it was convenient (Mostafanezhad 2013).

As I acknowledge the risk of this kind of sample, I chose the interviewees purposely from various social circles so that I would not interview only people from the same social group. Hence, I interviewed also people who did not spend a remarkable amount of their time in the most visible migratory circles in Dharamsala, i.e. for example in the tourist-popular restaurants in McLeod Ganj where the potential interviewees were most easy to reach or where they could have easily reached me first, like

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32   On the other hand, it is not uncommon that Indian-born Tibetans suspect the newcomers of being spies and spying for the PRC (Hess 2018).

happened in a few cases. In practical terms this means that I had to pay attention to the fact that my interviews could have easily represented particularly youngish men most keen on migrating out of India. Sometimes I was in a situation where I was considered as a potential sponsor or someone who could help the interviewees out of India, which highlights the fact that the researcher is not only an observer in the field, but is also observed and evaluated by the locals. As a European woman, I represented also my gender, nation and the mobile global wealthy in India for the interviewees.

I had a framework of themes and certain questions that I wanted answers to, like the interviewees' migration to Dharamsala and migration aspirations forward, for example. My interview questions often begun with words such as 'what', 'how' and 'when'; questions of when did the interviewees leave Tibet and why, how was the journey and what kinds of plans did they have for the future (see Charmaz and Bryant 2011). As the informants could talk rather freely, sometimes their storyline guided the discussion and I just made sure that I got answers to my major research questions. I have had only a beginners' course in Tibetan language and thus cannot speak Tibetan (I just understand some common words and sayings), but I did not want to exclude those who could not speak English completely. Hence, 11 interviews with the Tibetans from Tibet were translated. I used four different Tibetan interpreters from different social circles, two women and two men. Moreover, in the Tibetan Reception Centre, where I interviewed two newcomers who had arrived in India just two weeks before, an official from the Reception Centre became the interpreter (the opportunity to interview the two appeared just on the spot). The interviews without an interpreter were usually deeper than those with the interpreter even if we needed a vocabulary. As the interpreters and interviewees were all Tibetan, there might have been non-verbal power relations involved in relation to whether one was from Tibet or born in India, for example (two interpreters were born in Tibet and two in India).

The information that the interviewees from Tibet provided was compared with the information provided by the second type of interviewees that included Tibetan community officials from various NGOs and branches of the CTA. Six of them were women as the officials in Dharamsala are more often men, but I once interviewed an official from the Tibetan Women's Association just because I wanted to get some information about the situation of the Tibetan women in diaspora specifically as my fear was that they would be less represented. The officials were often chairs of their organisation or unit and commonly born in India or grown up there as the officials in Dharamsala tend to be, due to their education and language skills, for example. All officials were not migration experts, but they gave me overall information about their field of expertise, about the situation of the newcomers from their perspective and about migration-related phenomena in Dharamsala. For example, when I talked with a CTA official who worked with development-related issues considering the Tibetan diaspora communities, I got important information about the situation of the Tibetans in India and the challenges that they face. The challenges were very similar that

appeared in the speech of the Tibetans from Tibet and were among the reasons that explain their onward-migration aspirations. I also interviewed one of the CTA officials twice as he was an expert in migration-related questions and had updated information about the censuses that the CTA collects.

I recorded 49 interviews but made handwritten notes in seven cases. I did not use the recorder if the interviewees did not want to be recorded, if I knew that the interviewee was thinking to migrate back to Tibet or if the interviewee seemed to be very suspicious of what I was doing. As Hess (2012) discusses, it is quite common that the migrants do not want to be recorded due to their vulnerable position. As the Tibetan newcomers were particularly afraid of leaking information and spies, and a Westerner could also have been one (see also de Voe 2005, 1127), I was also as sensitive as I possibly could for the unspoken signs of the interviewees (see Mason 2002), and considered the fieldwork ethics carefully in order to protect the anonymity of the Tibetans. Moreover, all names that I use are pseudonyms and I have avoided defining the interviewees so well that they would be recognised otherwise although some officials said that their names can be used (see Ryen 2011).

A certain saturation point was reached during the interviews (Bowen 2008); discourses considering the main research questions, such as the major migration methods and reasons to migrate to India and further were repeated by the Tibetans from Tibet and the diaspora officials alike. Although I brought in new participants to the research in all fieldwork trips and the individual narratives of the newcomers varied, the materials that I collected in my last fieldwork trip in 2015 were very relevant but did not bring much completely new information considering my major research questions; they rather made the discourses that I had found stronger (see e.g. Bowen 2008). Hence, I considered that the information provided by the interviewees had saturated enough in the context of the major arguments of this dissertation, given also that the interviews are not the only materials that I have used.

Certain carefulness is relevant if claiming saturation, however, because as Charmaz (2006) points out, it is sometimes claimed although it has not occurred or it has not been elaborated what the researchers mean by saturation. Saturation should not mean 'foreclosing analytical possibilities', which would do more harm than good for the premises of the constructive grounded theory and methods alike as it is important to stay as open for data as possible (Charmaz 2006, 115). Hence, I do not consider saturation as fixed informational state after which nothing new can be found, but a state where knowledge has saturated enough to make certain interpretive arguments and conceptual or theoretical notions. As I pay more attention to fluid processes and connections than causality and linearity, I also emphasise understanding more than explanation (Charmaz 2006, 126).

In addition to the materials and interviews collected among the Tibetans, I made brief structured interviews with 100 foreign tourists or travellers in March 2011 for the first article. Most of them were young adults or middle-aged independent tourists

and travellers from the West, like the travellers in Dharamsala commonly are, and an equal number of men and women were interviewed. The main meaning of this was to collect information on why they chose Dharamsala as a destination and get some information about the international networks in Dharamsala beyond observation and participatory observation. I used a convenience sampling in a sense that I most often interviewed these people in tourist-popular restaurants located in the three main streets of McLeod Ganj, where meeting them was easy and interviewing was convenient in comparison with the busy streets, for example (see Mostafanezhad 2013). I also made participatory observations while simultaneously socialising with the tourists and travellers. Sometimes especially those who had been visiting Dharamsala often or over a long term, even years (just a few), wanted to talk in length about certain issues, or issues not included in my questions, which gave me extra information about Dharamsala from their perspective.

In the first article, I made a decision not to give detailed information about the NGO officials who I interviewed in order to better guarantee their anonymity, which means that I did not connect them with a particular NGO, for instance. They were either managers or co-managers of the NGOs that concentrated mainly on educating the Tibetans from Tibet during my fieldwork; if I had given detailed information about the NGOs, they would have been more easily identified. The NGO managers or co-managers interviewed were rather young or middle-aged Tibetans, not necessarily born in Tibet, and often belonged to a better socio-economic position than the Tibetan-born Tibetans who attended the language classes. Yet, not all of them clearly belonged to the diaspora elite either. The NGOs were working in the grassroots and the Tibetans among whom I volunteered were mostly Tibetan-born Tibetans or newcomers with very little language skills beyond Tibetan.

3.3.1 Fluid Borderlines of Newcomerness

Since the majority of the Tibetan-born participants of this study can be considered as newcomers who have relatively recently arrived from Tibet in comparison with those who have been born or grown up in India, there is a need to shortly clarify how the Tibetans define their 'newcomerness' although I do not promote any fixed definitions. If relying on bottom-up definitions, it seems to be a fluid identity question not only connected to the years that the Tibetans have been living in India but to their self-definitions and adaptation in India or its Tibetan communities.

Scholarly uses of the term 'newcomer' vary. Hess (2006) seem to call Tibetans who came from Tibet after the Cultural Revolution as newcomers, and Diehl (2002) calls all third wave Tibetans as newcomers. According to these definitions, all Tibetan-born interviewees of this study could be called newcomers as they came in the first half of the 1990s at the earliest. However, Hess's (2006) and Diehl's (2002) studies were published some time ago and the term 'newcomer' may become more distant

during the years that a Tibetan has spent in India for those that came at the beginning of the 1990s as some of the interviewees of this study who had lived closer to twenty years in diaspora did not truly feel like newcomers anymore, depending on the case.

Lewis (2013; 2018) has made a decision of defining only those as newcomers who have spent five years at the most in diaspora. All interviewees of this study who came as adults in the 2000s seemed to consider themselves as newcomers so Lewis's (2013) rather strict definition does not meet their realities. As an example, one middle-aged Tibetan-born interviewee with a low-paid job in Dharamsala, who came to India as an adult, had been living there for 17 years during the fieldwork period in 2009–2010. He said that he is definitely a newcomer and he had not adapted, and actually did not really want to fully adapt, to India (Personal communication, 26 November 2009). He had a child in Dharamsala but he had divorced his wife. He had strong onward-migration intentions, but his attempts to migrate had not been successful. In comparison, another middle-aged interviewee who I interviewed during the same fieldwork period also came to Dharamsala as an adult and had been living there for 16 years, did not consider herself a newcomer anymore (Personal communication, 28 October 2009). She had a low-paid job and a husband and children in Dharamsala. She was relatively satisfied in her life and did not have onward-migration intentions. It was common that those who had families and children in Dharamsala often felt more rooted because the children had been born or grown up in India at least partly. However, a woman who had four kids and a husband in Dharamsala and had been living there more than twenty years during our interview at the end of 2015 (she came 1995) thought herself a newcomer (Personal communication 1, 9 December 2015). Consequently, the years spent in India, or even having a family in there, do not strictly determine one's newcomerness.

According to Chen (2012, 266), 'Indian-born' refers basically to those who have got their upbringing in India. The age when a Tibetan arrived in India seemed to matter as these type of identity issues tended to be different for a 20-year-old Tibetan who has been living for 15 years in Dharamsala, arrived in India as a child and gone to school there than for a 45-year-old Tibetan who also has been living in India 15 years but arrived as an adult and has had no schooling in the country, except perhaps language classes in the NGOs targeting the newcomers, for example. However, the two interviewees of this study who had arrived in India as minors, got their upbringing there and gone through the Indian schooling system, did not identify as Indian-born although they did not consider themselves as newcomers either. They identified themselves as Tibetan-born Tibetans (but not newcomers) through their family histories and their earliest memories, for example (e.g. Personal communication, 15 March 2011). An interviewee explained to me that Tibetans have three different but fluid categories to describe one's relation to Tibet in Dharamsala: Indian-born Tibetans, Tibetan-born Tibetans who have grown up in India and newcomers. Yet,

sometimes some of them use both the term 'newcomer' and 'Tibetan-born' about themselves (Personal communication 2, 23 March 2011).

Finally, although there may be some differences in how the Tibetans understand the term 'newcomer', it was a common English word that the Tibetans also used themselves. The interviewees often defined themselves as newcomers if they had arrived in India as adults, they had got their upbringing in Tibet and they had not had a chance to go through the Indian schooling system, i.e. they had had no possibility to participate in the Tibetan Children's Village School where they would have received an education equivalent to Indian standards. However, if one was well adapted to India, having lived there for a significant period, and did not have onward-migration aspirations, the term 'newcomer' may have started to feel less applicable.

3.4 Other Materials

Although observations and interviews form the basis of this research, also several kinds of other types of materials have contributed to the findings either directly or in the background. As Clarke (2005, 146) argues, '[t]oday the qualitative research enterprise is moving beyond field notes and interview transcripts to include discourses of all kinds'. She continues: 'Because *we and the people and things we choose to study* are all routinely both producing and awash in seas of discourses, analysing only individual and collective human actors no longer suffices for many qualitative projects' (Clarke 2005, 146). Hence, it is also important to analyse cultural products such as films, magazines or symbols (Clarke 2005, 149); visual and literal materials collected from the field contribute to my analysis. An ethnographer easily encounters visual material related to the Tibet question just by wandering around Dharamsala as Figure 3 at the end of this chapter demonstrates.

I watched and collected many Tibetan movies, documentaries, books and YouTube videos and took pictures of the public places and wall paintings in Dharamsala, for example, as I explored how Tibet and Tibetan diaspora were presented publicly. When these materials have informed me directly, I have referred to their web addresses, for instance, making visible for the readers where I base my analysis (Article I; III). In the first article, websites became an important source of additional information providing knowledge about the NGOs that I focused on in the article. Also the interviewed NGO officials often recommended me to check out their websites if I asked some basic facts about their organisation, like how many participants they have, for instance, as this kind of information is often easily available online. It needs to be noticed, however, that the websites often include persuasive rhetoric as they are meant to get the audiences to become sympathetic to the Tibetan cause or the NGOs.

The demographic survey of the CTA (2010) was the most relevant statistical research material and it has been used in order to provide some approximate numbers

about the migration patterns of the Tibetans. Interestingly, McConnell (2012, 81) calls the CTA a semi-government in exile mainly because of its governing strategies, such as its efforts to 'know' its population by conducting demographic surveys, like the one used in this study. The survey needs to be read as suggestive material; also the CTA (2010) states that it is not perfectly accurate because it was impossible to reach all Tibetans in diaspora. However, it is the only source to provide demographical information or estimations about the volume of Tibetan migration, for instance. Most importantly in the context of this study, it demonstrates that the active migration out of India is a phenomenon that the CTA considers remarkable. This notion was strengthened by an official with whom I discussed the survey twice and who was involved in making it (Personal communication 1, 25 March 2011; Personal communication 2, 16 December 2015). These interviews gave me more information about how to interpret the survey as well as some relevant updated information in 2015. As Silverman (2001, 241) suggests, some quantitative data can be used in qualitative research if the numbers are relevant in order to support one's arguments.

Finally, some materials, such as the magazines of various Tibetan NGOs, became secondary materials that gave me background information about Tibetan diaspora. For example, a magazine 'Contact', published by one of the largest NGOs in McLeod Ganj called Lha, which concentrated on the education of the Tibetan newcomers, was something that I constantly read. It provides information about the Tibetan lives in Dharamsala and current happenings in town. As another example, a large NGO called the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) frequently publishes booklets about the human rights situation in Tibet. These kinds of materials gave me background information about how Tibetan diaspora NGOs and institutions view the situation of Tibet under the PRC's rule. Moreover, as I have followed the public writings about the Tibet question and Tibetan diaspora, I also sometimes refer to them in this synopsis in order to give some additional information or widen the perspective, but in these cases I inform the reader that I refer to public discussions, not to my interviews, for instance.

I acknowledged that there is a risk to choose only such secondary material that supports one's major arguments and leave others out (Silverman 2001, 241). However, I do not consider it as a remarkable risk in the context of the Tibetan diaspora and migration because these materials rather provided me understanding about the ideological and cultural setting where the migration aspirations and intentions grow in India and in Dharamsala. The secondary materials were also cross-checked with the interviews or fieldwork notes and critically evaluated during the fieldwork. Moreover, I extended the fieldwork ethics also to these types of materials and online materials; no interviewees can be identified based on them and they are no personal writings or productions besides in those cases where I refer to documentaries or films, for example, where the producers market them online and want to be addressed as authors or creators of the product (see Markham 2011).

Figure III: A picture on a shop door in one of the main streets in McLeod Ganj: a mental map of Tibet. *Photo by Rebecca Frilund.*

3.5 Analysing the Materials

I started to analyse the material already during the first fieldwork trip and continued the analysis during the whole fieldwork (Mikkelsen 2005), which resonates with Charmaz and Bryant (2011, 301) who crystallise: 'when the researcher thinks analytically when interviewing, the lines blur between what constitutes data collection and what constitutes analysis and thus here credibility is not simply a property of the data as separate from the *analysis*.' I continued the analytical process also when writing the fieldwork diaries and compared different pieces of information with each other; participatory observation often brought information that could be discussed later in another interview, for example (see Charmaz and Bryant 2011).

After interviewing, my analysis continued as I read the interviews of the Tibetans first literally when transcribing them[33]. After transcribing, I read them interpretively or reflexively and analysed the interviews by flexibly using selective coding, a typical method in grounded theory, although I did not strictly follow the type of selective coding discussed by Straus and Corbin (1990). I broadly categorised and coded[34] important discourses from the text and compared them with each other, the core category being as broad as 'migration' (see Strauss and Corbin 1990, 124). I did not let the core category determine the analysis as paying too much attention to it would easily silence the less dominant voices; I wanted to pay attention to several discourses and their relations simultaneously, not to search for the ultimate dominator (Clarke 2005). As Clarke (2005) states, 'By *not* analytically recapitulating the power relations of domination, analyses that represent the full array of discourses turn up the volume on lesser but still present discourses, lesser but still present participants, the quiet, the silent, and the silenced. Such analyses can amplify not only differences but also resistances, recalcitrancies, and sites of rejection of a discourse *per se*'.

Like in constructivist grounded theory, I consider the categories and codes emerging from the analysis rather than from the data (Charmaz and Bryant 2011, 302). However, as I did not use constructivist grounded theory dogmatically, I did not use gerunds (i.e. verbal nouns such as 'migrating', 'aspiring') when categorising and coding, which, according to Charmaz and Bryand (2011), are important and move the analysis forward. Categories like 'migration via Nepal to India', 'transit migration' or 'refugee journey' seemed more natural for me. I also made categories of the different types of interviewees, such as Tibetans from Tibet and CTA or NGO officials, since these interviewees were speaking from different positions.

Using this kind of categorisation and coding in a flexible manner allowed me to compare the information I got from different sources without an idea of the

33   The transcribed interview materials are archived by me.
34   I coded different categories rising from transcribed interviews with different colors, for instance.

discourses having 'stability over time', as Bowen (2008, 139) puts it. The lines of the categories were often blurred, however, and I avoid the positivist elements of the grounded theory methods (Clarke 2005); I do not consider my categories as fixed results but as fluid findings; something that helped me to trace the important discourses from the materials that can be put into discussion with each other. I also compared the major discourses that arose from the interviews with my participatory observations and secondary materials, sometimes going back to my original transcriptions and recordings to make sure that I had made as correct interpretation as possible (see Mason 2002, 148). Certain discourses, such as the PRC's occupation of Tibet or the importance of the journey via the Himalayas to India for the Tibetan refugee identity, often arose both from the interview materials and other materials, such as internet sites, visual materials or various publications.

I did not analyse all other materials, such as websites, pictures or literature produced by the Tibetans as systematically as the interviews; they rather reflected the Tibetan diaspora and their representations of life in Tibet and in diaspora which could be compared with the interview materials. They ended up in my writings fluidly when a discourse arose from my interviews and some secondary materials seemed to support or contradict the discourse, for instance. Some of them I used as a background material that increased my knowledge about the Tibetan diaspora and those that I used directly or analysed in more detail are referred to in the text (e.g. Article I; III). As Clarke (2015) argues, 'in comparing popular discourse materials and interview data, one can see which elements of a particular discourse are taken up by real live people and which are not and vice versa'.

In sum, the interviews and observations form the basis of this dissertation and the other materials were analysed more loosely through the discourses that arose from them. Analysis has always been an integral part of my fieldwork from the beginning; the process started already when interviewing and observing. It continued when I transcribed the interviews and categorised the transcriptions analytically after the interviews and observations, which then contributed to the theory formation. As particularly the first steps of my fieldwork were based on inductive reasoning, the analysis based on empirical details guided me towards loose categorisations and theoretical and conceptual notions arising from them (e.g. Mikkelsen 2005, 168). During my last fieldwork trip at the end of 2015, however, the theoretical frameworks and most of the categories were already more or less set; I mostly updated my knowledge in the field. Yet, the meaning of the refugee journey started to arise more clearly in this research phase and it started to guide me towards writing an article about the topic. Hence, none of the articles included in this dissertation were truly theory-driven from the outset although the theories already used surely affected the analysis in latter phases.

3.6 Positioning Myself

A scholar researching Tibet-related issues ethnographically faces easily two major dilemmas related to their positionality. The first considers ethnography a method and is common to all ethnographers; they represent their age group, gender, the part of the world they come from and so forth (e.g. Opas 2008). These issues also carry power relations which are particularly visible when a researcher from the Global North enters the Global South, a position that has been the most common since the times of colonialism. As Gobo (2011, 15) states, 'ethnography is still a colonial method that must be de-colonialised'; its roots lie in the times of colonialism where the western researchers, including geographers, were interested in the exotic Other (see e.g. Livingstone 1992; Said 1978).

This is not an easy dilemma when doing fieldwork in Dharamsala where visible postcolonial power relations are present as culturally-oriented tourists or volunteer tourists, backpackers, pilgrims and professionals, such as scholars, photographers and journalists, gather from around the globe together with wealthy sponsors of the Tibetan culture and politics (Article I; IV), making inequalities connected to mobility and wealth very visible. On top of that, I first visited Dharamsala as a backpacker years before I started to conduct fieldwork in town; a Western comparative religion graduate interested in Tibetan Buddhism and involved in NGOs focusing on the rights of the minorities and indigenous peoples, including the Tibetans (e.g. Article IV). Hence, I consider self-reflexivity very important in ethnography; we are not only representing reality when writing geographies but also creating meanings (e.g. Cosgrove and Domosh 1993; Livingstone 1992).

The second dilemma is the stand that one takes concerning the relations of the PRC and Tibet, an issue that scholars writing about Tibet or the Tibetans can perhaps never truly avoid. In McConnell's (2016, 14) words, '[r]esearching and writing about most topics related to Tibet is inherently political'. Also the (public) opinions and rhetoric about these relations are polarised and often heatedly debated between the diaspora Tibetans or Tibet supporters and those defending PRC's sovereignty over Tibet, sometimes including popular writings of the scholars (e.g. Parenti 2007). I cannot deeply focus on these debates in here, but Hartnett (2013, 287), who has studied the rhetoric of the PRC and the representatives of the Tibetan diaspora, crystallises the debates calling the PRC's rhetoric 'the patriotic rhetoric of communist modernity' and the rhetoric of the Tibetan 'dissidents' as 'the testimonial rhetoric of catastrophic witnessing', whilst the Western Tibet supporters often drive from the Western human rights agenda (Article IV).

Also scholars have used different rhetoric about Tibet's position in the context of colonialism. Goss (1996), McClintock (1992), Rajendra (2014) and Sidaway (2002), for example, have put forth that places like Tibet challenge the line between colonial and postcolonial, whilst McGranahan (2018) considers that the PRC colonised Tibet

and practises settler colonialism. Anand (2000) and Houston and Wright (2003, 219) use the term 'colonialism' when discussing the Tibetan situation under the PRC and Vahali (2009) describes Tibet as 'the largest geographical colony on this earth'. However, some scholars do not consider the PRC's rule over Tibet as colonialism or internal colonialism and support PRC's sovereignty over Tibet, linking their support to PRC also to anti-capitalist struggle and its modernisation policies in Tibet (e.g. Sautman 2006; 2008; Grunfeld 1996).

The problem with the last mentioned stand is that it sees defending the PRC's Tibet policy integral when arguing against West-led neoliberalism and imperialism (Yeh 2009, 983). This ignores Tibetan agency and considers Tibetans as puppets of capitalist anti-China forces, a standpoint which the postcolonial theory, drawing on analyses of subaltern agency, could potentially correct (see Yeh 2009). In line with Khan (2015), who explores 'the nature and transformation of the PRC as an empire, in the manner of imperial histories', I consider the PRC as an empire and that the Tibetans encounter both Western and Chinese 'imperial formations' (Stoler 2008) during their migratory processes (Article IV).

My approach is not state-centric, however, nor does it take a stand on how the Tibetans or indigenous people should solve their issues with the states under which they are located as it is up to themselves to decide which track to take. Rather than nation states, I focus on minority questions and border crossing of those who do not have a nation state. I consider the Tibetan situation related to, although not identical with, the situation of indigenous people in general (see Yeh 2007a; Zhu and Qian 2015). The diaspora Tibetans' assumptions of their situation resonate with the indigenous situation in certain sense that according to Yeh (2007a, 69) 'is widely understood to imply, among other things, firstness, nativeness, or original or prior occupancy of a place; attachment to a particular territory or homeland; marginalisation within a culturally or ethnically different wider society; and often, a history of colonisation'. Moreover, as Zhu and Qian (2015, 146) states 'Tibetan identity politics dovetail with key cultural and political idioms promoted by transnational indigenous movements' also inside Tibet although they do not use the term indigenous people about themselves. According to Yeh (2007a), demanding indigenous rights and connecting with indigenous peoples' movement globally would not be the best strategical solution inside Tibet as the PRC might connect it to separatism and thus only tighten its control over Tibet.

The diaspora Tibetans have not commonly built international or national contacts and identities considering themselves as indigenous people at least partly because it would mean that they are not seeking independence for Tibet; there are different opinions among the diaspora Tibetans whether Tibet should have a better

autonomy or independence (e.g. Lokyitsang 2017)[35]. The Tibetan relation to the idea of being 'indigenous' also depends on whether the indigenous people are considered just improving their situation within the nation states or challenging the rule of the settler colonialists[36] like the politically active (diaspora) Tibetans wish to do (Lokyitsang 2017). As McGranahan (2016, 339) states, being indigenous three decades back, when she worked with indigenous issues and the Tibet question, was 'interpreted by Tibetans to mean a small-scale group of people incorporated into a larger state who were fighting for rights vis-à-vis the state, but not for their own state sovereignty'. However, more recently in North America '[t]his refusal of indigeneity is one some Tibetans now reject three decades later, especially young Tibetan activists in Canada aligning with indigenous activists on issues of sovereignty and decolonisation'[37] (McGranahan 2016, 339). All in all, I hesitate to call the Tibetans as indigenous people as such as there seems not to be a consensus about the question among them; it is up to the Tibetans to take a position in this question if they so wish.

35   A Tibetan university student Dawa Lokyitsang has written an interesting popular article about this phenomenon for the website of Lhakar Diaries, a diaspora Tibetan run website: https://lhakardiaries.com/2017/12/27/are-tibetans-indigenous (last visited 8 November 2018). It is based on her presentation in the American Anthropological Association's conference in 2017.

36   Houbert (1997) has discussed settler colonialism in Russia, which has some similarities with the situation of Tibet within the PRC (see e.g. Maddison 2013 for settler colonialism in Australia and see e.g. Coulthard 2014 or Paquette, Beauregard and Gunter 2015 for settler colonialism in Canada).

37   Here, McGranahan (2016) compares the Tibetan situation with Coulthard's (2014) study on self-recognition and self-determination questions among the indigenous people of Canada.

4 (Transit) Migration and the Migration Aspirations of the Tibetans from Tibet in Dharamsala

4.1 Background of the Tibetan Migration and Transit Migration Journeys from Tibet to India

I have avoided getting deeply involved in debates about the history of Tibet as the focus of this PhD dissertation lies elsewhere and because it has been widely discussed by other scholars (e.g. Crowe 2013; Goldstein 1991; Hess 2009; Hsiao-ting 2006; Kapstain 2006; McConnell 2016; Shakabpa 1967; Shakya 2000; Smith 1996). However, it is important to notice that the conflict between Tibet and China goes back for almost a thousand years and that various dominating positions have existed in the area between Mongols, Han, Manchu and Tibetans already before the PRC was formed (e.g. Crowe 2013; Hsiao-ting 2006; Smith 1996). In this dissertation, I refer mostly to the Tibetan history within the PRC as it is something that also the interviewees of this study often referred to when they reflected on their motives to leave Tibet.

The history of the Tibetans under the PRC is something that the CTA and the PRC disagree on (Article IV). Both the PRC's and the CTA's stands have affected the lives of the Tibetan-born Tibetans as these views also manifest in realpolitik. Tibetan-run diaspora institutions and organisations rather often refer to colonialism and commonly hold that the PRC illegally occupied Tibet[38]. The term 'colonialism' has appeared for long also in the popular writings of the CTA and various Tibetan NGOs[39], whilst Lokyitsang (2017) argues that the PRC practises settler colonialism. As Hess (2018, 25) crystallises, the CTA is primarily concerned about 'Han migration, which is viewed as an important mechanism of colonisation; mineral extraction; nuclear waste dumping, and other actions detrimental to environment; language and

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[38]   See e.g. http://tibet.net/about-tibet/issues-facing-tibet-today; http://tibet.net/2016/12/tibet-is-not-a-part-of-china-but-middle-way-remains-a-viable-solution-cta (both last visited 8 November 2018).

[39]   See http://www.thetibetpost.com; http://www.tibetanyouthcongress.org/colonisation (last visited 8 November 2018).

education policy; as well as limitations on the freedom of monastic and lay people to practice their religion'. However, the PRC considers that it 'liberated' Tibetans from feudalism by starting to govern Tibet as well as from the threat of India and the impact of its Western imperialists or colonisers[40], a 'liberating' act that made Tibet China's buffer zone towards India (Ardley 2002; Khan 2015; see also Hess 2009).

According to Goldstein, Childs and Wangdui (2010), Dalai Lama's and the CTA's demands of greater autonomy for Tibetans are not accepted by the PRC because of security reasons. As the conflict between them is not solved, the PRC's strategy in Tibet has become as follows (Goldstein, Childs and Wangdui 2010, 57):

> As a result, the government of China has opted to resolve the issue internally by prioritising modernisation and economic development in Tibet as a means of linking Tibet inextricably with the rest of China, while also inculcating loyalty by showing Tibetans that being part of the PRC is in their short- and long-term material interests. This economic strategy also allows China to respond to international criticism by showing that living conditions in Tibet are good and improving.

Even though the PRC emphasises how much money it has invested in Tibet and the Tibetans have become wealthier in general, the problem is that the development projects have often been top-down projects (see Fischer 2014; Yeh 2013). As Fischer (2014) argues, the policies in Tibet have been mostly derived from outside by non-Tibetans who perceive Tibetans in such ways that can be compared with the European perceptions of the colonised. This is most probably the reason why also Tibetan-born Tibetans in Dharamsala were not praising these developments as such and commonly appreciated more the schools in India, for example, because they got education from their own premises (i.e. had a possibility to learn English or Tibetan history from the perspective of the Tibetans, for instance).

There is also a disagreement between the PRC and the CTA about the use of Tibet's natural resources[41], which is a common postcolonial phenomenon between the rulers and ruled. For example, the PRC state reports and the majority of the Chinese researchers find pastoralists' livestock overstocking and causing rangeland degradation in TAR (Nyima 2018), whilst the Tibetan diaspora often accuses the PRC of destroying the environment, considering the Tibetans having a respectful relationship with nature (Huber 2001; Yeh 2007a, 75). As Nyima (2018) argues, environmental questions, such as rangeland degradation, have political connotations in China, particularly in the context of the entirely politicised Tibet question, making

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40   See http://www.china.org.cn/english/13235.htm (last visited 8 November 2018).
41   See http://tibet.net/important-issues/tibets-environment-and-development-issues/#
      codeoslide3 (last visited 8 November 2018).

the Tibetan situation resonate even more with indigenous peoples' situations as they tend to struggle with rights to use their ancestral lands worldwide (e.g. Byrd and Rothberg 2011; Hitchcock 2002; Kolås 2014; Lemaitre 2011; Yeh 2007a). It is possible to justify the forced population transfers of the Tibetan nomads to the cities by rangeland degradation, for example. Currently, Western but also some Chinese scholars question the rangeland degradation caused by livestock overstocking in TAR (Nyima 2018).

The situation inside Tibet is connected with the Tibetan diaspora as 'subaltern manners of agency' of the Tibetans in Tibet include 'flight into exile' (Fischer 2014, XXX)[42]. According to Anand (2000, 274), it is basically modernity and colonialism that has established the current type of Tibetan diaspora identity, which is 'more a product of the processes of modernisation, colonialism and displacement, than of some historical nation'. By this he suggests that the Tibetans from different Tibetan inhabited areas are perhaps more united in diaspora than they ever where before the PRC colonised them. 'Had it not been for factors including Chinese colonial rule, the forces of modernity, the salience of nation states in the international community, and the experience of exile, Tibetanness could have taken a radically different form' (Anand 2000, 274). This resonates with McConnell (2016, 118) who argues that:

> The Tibetan government prior to 1959 knew relatively little about its population…. the boundaries of Tibetan territory were never clearly defined, regional identities subsumed a broader Tibetan national identity, and no census had been conducted. The process of taking refuge in exile, however, rendered this part of the Tibetan population highly visible – as destitute refugees and as ethnically, culturally, and religiously distinct from their hosts – and, as such, was in itself an "observational moment".

During the so-called first wave of Tibetan migration directly after the Dalai Lama's escape, and during the so-called second wave of Tibetan migration after the Cultural Revolution in the 1980s (Diehl 2002), Tibetans fled to India usually because of the political, sociocultural and religious persecutions of the PRC or in order to follow the Dalai Lama (Choedup 2015; McConnell 2009; Wangmo and Teaster 2010). Cultural Revolution was especially difficult for China's minorities, including the Tibetans (e.g. Ardley 2002), and many elderly Tibetan-born Tibetans still remember these times in diaspora (Choedup 2015). This can be seen as an example of how (post)colonial discourse works outside the European orbit, not only in territorial but also in cultural means.

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42   Other forms include actions such as protests and self-immolations or joining the communist party (Fischer 2014, XXX), depending on the position one takes.

As the PRC's policies towards the Tibetans have somewhat softened or changed after the times of the Cultural Revolution, according to the interviewees from Tibet and the Tibetan community officials alike, the most common reason to leave Tibet has shifted from clear political and physical persecution to seeking a better religious or secular education from the Tibetan premises, including studying English, and meeting the Dalai Lama in India (e.g. Personal communication 1, 25 March 2011; Vasantkumar 2013, 117). As some interviewees of this study highlighted, they could not learn Tibetan history in Tibetan premises, and they were against the pro-PRC rehearsals that they needed to do at school (e.g. Personal communication, 18 August 2010). Yet, as Lewis (2013, 314) discuss, Dharamsala remains 'a hotbed for political refugees' and there are lots of torture survivors in town. Many Tibetans have also faced suffering at cultural and societal level even if they do not suffer from personal mental disorders in clinical terms (Lewis 2013; 2018).

The fact that most of the Tibetans from Tibet who have arrived during the 1990s and 2000s come from rather remote parts of Amdo and Kham, where it has been difficult to get good education or learn English (Personal communication, 15 May 2010; see also Swank 2011; Vasantkumar 2017) somewhat resonates with Fischer (2005), according to whom the education gap between the Tibetan areas and the rest of China is so strong that even though education seems to improve slowly in Tibetan areas, it cannot meet the demands of skilful workforce during China's rapid economic growth, which leads to the demand of getting skilled workforce elsewhere from China. Although Tibetans in Lhasa can get education, Zhu and Qian (2015) demonstrate that Tibetans still lack skills that would make it possible for them to truly compete with the neoliberalised marked economy with the Han, and they often envy the Han who tend to have better professional and educational skills to run businesses in Lhasa, for example. This lack of proper or useful education in many Tibetan-inhabited areas – combined with the fact that Dharamsala offers education in Tibetan premises, in Tibetan language and English language classes by native teachers – attracts the Tibetans to migrate to India (see Hillman 2010).

It must be noted, however, that according to Hess (2018), who has interviewed Tibetan-born Tibetans who migrated to the United States from Tibet in order to receive high education, the CTA's narrative of 'Chinese oppression that precludes education for Tibetans in Tibet is belied by the existence of these highly intelligent, well educated, multi-lingual people, coming out of China to pursue graduate education in the West'. Hence, those Tibetans who are privileged enough to migrate directly to the United States cannot be victimised in general and the Tibetan-born Tibetans are heterogenous globally. However, Tibetan newcomers included in my study were not highly educated or did not have a chance to become so, a situation common among the newcomers in Dharamsala. Moreover, they themselves highlighted the lack of education from Tibetan premises in Tibet as one of their major reasons to leave Tibet; it was not only a discourse or a representation produced by the CTA but a lived

experience of the interviewees of this study. As Hess (2018) demonstrates by referring to the imprisonments of the Tibetan language activists and writers in China, for example, education in Tibetan language and language rights are still among the top concerns of Tibetans in the country.

In contrast, two newcomers (Personal communication 1, 14 December 2015), a couple from Kham who had been living just two weeks in the Tibetan Reception Centre in the Kangra valley, and who I interviewed together so that two officials from the Reception Centre translated the interview for me, told me that they left home because they could not get proper education as their families wanted them to work in the family farm, not to go to school. This was a novel reason among the interviewees although some of them stated that their parents did not necessarily like the PRC's schools (e.g. Personal communication, 18 August 2010). Particularly the district schools may offer teaching only in Chinese, the schools can be far away and the Tibetan farmer families have traditionally often wanted some of the children to stay and help the parents in the farm although this trend has started to change recently in many areas (Washul 2018). However, the couple also thought that they would get better education in India as they wanted to learn English well, which was their major reason to come to India. Apparently, they were planning a more international future for themselves than they thought they could get in Tibet or in China.

The tight control over religion, particularly the fact that the Dalai Lama is banned by the PRC, was also among the triggers of the migration of the Tibetan-born interviewees of this study. Even though the PRC has made some efforts to restore Tibetan culture and religious sites particularly for tourism purposes after the Cultural Revolution (Kolås 2004), and some Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in these areas have become relatively powerful and popular among wealthy Chinese supporters both overseas and in mainland China (Fischer 2012), many former monks were of the opinion that it is possible to get better religious education in India (I interviewed only lay Tibetans in India but several of them had been monks or nuns in Tibet and given up their robes in India). Moreover, because the monasteries in Tibet maintain good relations with the Tibetan diaspora, they have also become one of the top concerns of the PRC in Tibetan areas (Fischer 2012), and the control of the PRC over the monasteries was something that some interviewees referred to. Following the Dalai Lama is often very important also for lay Tibetans, and they are forced to leave the country in order to see him or follow him. Hence, their reasons to leave Tibet are often a mix of political, educational, cultural and religious reasons together with more personal reasons.

Interestingly, according to Hess (2018, 31–32), Tibetan-born Tibetans, who came to the United States from Tibet to receive education, sometimes thought that Tibetans who have been born in diaspora do not necessarily understand what is truly going on in Tibet. Although they did not think that the diaspora Tibetans or the CTA were lying, they thought that newcomers should be consulted more as they could

share their knowledge about the complexities of the Chinese state. This resonates with the interviewees of this study who often felt that they were distant to the CTA and that they did not have much possibilities to influence diaspora policies or take part in community activities. According to Hess (2018, 35), particularly the CTA is largely a creator of the diasporic narrative, which is so dominant that there is very little space to disagree; 'this narrative runs parallel to classic refugee and diasporic narrative and it is predicated on ideas of forced displacement, prolonged exile, and commitment to return'.

Although also those interviewees of Hess's (2018) study who migrated directly from Tibet or China to the United States commonly considered the PRC more or less like a police state with tight surveillance methods, their life in Tibet was often represented as rather good if they did not mingle with politics at any level. This resonates with a statement of a Tibetan-born interviewee of my study who commented that you can live relatively well if you do not "struggle" for Tibet (Personal communication 5, 16 December 2015), but many Tibetan-born interviewees were much more critical. As Hess's interviewees belong to the educated Tibetan elite in China and fly directly to the United States, unlike the Tibetan newcomers in my study who most often escaped from Tibet without much money or education and walked to India across the Himalayas, the interviewees of her study may also have a more positive image about the PRC.

Because of the conditions in Tibet, numerous Tibetans still begin the risky journey over the Himalayas to India. Despite the fact that the Dalai Lama and his entourage crossed the border between Tibet and India straight (e.g. Dalai Lama 1977; Subba 1990), all Tibetans whom I interviewed journeyed via Kathmandu's Tibetan Reception Centre. The interviewees could choose what to tell me about their journeys to India during the interview; they did not pay lots of attention to the institutional aspects of the journey beyond being grateful that they had an opportunity to get help from the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu, which clearly became their 'place of trust' (Article III; Lyytinen 2017). Even though two interviewees had passports, they still first went to the Reception Centre, knowing that they would be sent to India. Those interviewees who came without documents journeyed at least partly on foot over the Himalayas, hiding from Chinese and Nepali armies. They most often hired a smuggler or a guide who helped them to reach and cross the border (Article II; III); if Tibetans are caught by the border guards, they are often jailed and they may face violence (see Dolma et al. 2006). As the journey is often done illegally from the perspective of the PRC, it is also commonly considered as an action of resistance or a journey to freedom, reminiscent of a rite of passage for those who crossed the Himalayas on foot (Article III).

The journey also seemed to have a great collective meaning for the Tibetans, which can be realised for example by examining how it is represented through arts, music, literature, museum exhibitions and documentaries, for example (Article III).

This supports BenEzer and Zetter's (2014, 7) findings that the journeys may have an effect on how people 'perceive themselves as a group, including their social identity' and that the difficult journey over the Himalayas is 'one of the most significant processes of "becoming" and "being" a refugee' for the Tibetans from Tibet (Article III; BenEzer and Zetter 2014, 299).

As I have already discussed in this synopsis, I consider Tibetan journey via Nepal to India also as transit migration as it meets the strictest (but contested) standards of the concept (Article II), i.e. clear intentions to journey forward and staying just a short while in a transit spot (one year at the most), for example (see Düvell 2012). Although I question these kinds of strict determinants of transit migration altogether, sometimes transit migration cases in the fringes of Europe differ more from these determinants than the migration of the interviewees of this study as their journey took usually just a few weeks and they all had an initial intention to transit Nepal (Article II). Hence, it was clear that their next destination, although not necessarily the final destination forever after, was India.

The Tibetan transit journey has also unique characteristics, however, such as the fact that the Tibetan Reception Centre provides them the papers needed in order to enter India legally and helps them to get a bus to Delhi from where they tend to continue to see the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala[43]. This type of service is not commonly available for migrants in transit globally as many are stuck in the intermediate steps en route (e.g. Jordan and Düvell 2002; Mischbach 2015; Stock 2011), and are not helped to their (first) destination. Hence, it is no wonder that the Reception Centre has become the major place that the Tibetans trust en route to India (Article III; see also Lyytinen 2017).

Thousands of Tibetans transited Nepal and journeyed to India per year until 2008 (e.g. Frilund 2014; Anand 2000; Swank 2011), but soon the number of new arrivals decreased drastically. When I discussed this with Tibetan diaspora officials in 2011, they told me that the number of the Tibetan arrivals had fallen from thousands to hundreds per year (e.g. Personal communication 1, 25 March 2011). The new and spacious Tibetan Reception Centre in the Kangra valley hosted only two newcomers during my last visit there in December 2015 (the above-mentioned couple who came to India to learn English), and the officials stated that the common number of new arrivals per year is from 100 to 250 arrivals (Personal communication 2, 15 December 2015). According to them, the number of migrants decreased

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43   In comparison, those who arrive to Greece 'irregularly' from Turkey, for instance, are returned to Turkey according to the statement between the EU and Turkey on 18 March 2016 (e.g. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-963_en.htm, last visited 8 November 2018; https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20180314_eu-turkey-two-years-on_ en.pdf, last visited 2 April 2019).

because of the stricter border controls between China and Nepal after the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

Tibetans rioted against the PRC's rule throughout Tibet in 2008 as they knew that China gets worldwide attention because of the Olympics. Altogether, there were more than 90 protests particularly all over Tibetan-inhabited areas, most of which were not violent, but they had some violent outcomes particularly in Lhasa where some Chinese-owned shops were set on fire (Yeh 2009). According to Fischer (2014), the main reason behind the uprising was that the Tibetans have become frustrated with being marginalised as the PRC has encouraged migration of the Han Chinese to the major Tibetan cities and they also often own the most prominent businesses (see also Fischer 2005; Qian and Zhu 2016a; Washul 2018). The Tibetan desperation about the increased controls seems to be among the biggest reasons also for more than 140 self-immolations that the Tibetans have conducted, especially in Southern Amdo and Northern Kham since 2009, by burning themselves alive (e.g. Fischer 2014), which in turn may have affected the PRC's tightened control over Tibetan inhabited areas[44].

According to the Tibetan official interviewees of this study with whom I discussed the decreased number of Tibetans arriving in exile, some other reasons may also have affected the decreased number although the most dramatic change happened after the PRC tightened its border controls (e.g. Personal communication 2, 14 December 2015; Personal communication 2, 16 December 2015). Tibetan families have fewer children than before, partly because of the population control policies of the PRC, so there are not so many children to be sent abroad; in addition, there are more chances for Tibetans to travel directly overseas from Tibet than before, so there is no such need to migrate abroad via India anymore. Tibet has also become more developed economically and Tibetans have become more aware about the economic difficulties that Tibetans tend to face in India, views supported by some of the Tibetan-born Tibetans with whom I discussed the phenomenon (e.g. Personal communication 5, 16 December 2015; Personal communication, 18 December 2015).

Several interviewees of this study had the opinion that the Tibetans inside Tibet already know about the difficulties in diaspora, which would have affected the decrease of the number of Tibetan migrants, but according to Vasantkumar (2017), who has studied Tibetans who migrate back to Tibet, they were envied by their fellow Tibetans in Tibet as they were considered more cosmopolitan and made India appear as 'a mythical semi-paradisiacal locale'. Tibetan returnees are admired also because of their foreign influences and English skills in their home villages in Tibet, which has led the Tibetans in Tibet to consider their lifestyle boring and see 'themselves marooned in China' (Vasantkumar 2017, 34). According to Hess (2006), it is rather

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44   Most of the interviewees of this study arrived in India before the Beijing Olympics in 2008 when the self-immolation wave had not reached Tibet yet.

common that Tibetans return directly after finishing Sherab Gatsel Lobling School (see also Prost 2008). They are also encouraged to do that because the CTA is concerned that if the Tibetans move out of Tibet, Tibet will become even more sinicised and soon there will be no Tibet to return to (Hess 2006). As I interviewed only two newcomers in the school, and most of the interviewees of this study had decided to stay in Dharamsala after finishing it, I cannot estimate how common it was to return immediately after the school during my fieldwork.

As far as I know, only one interviewee of this study returned to Tibet after I interviewed him in McLeod Ganj in 2010, and he was critical towards the exile life in Dharamsala, but I have not had the possibility to observe how he reflects on his years in diaspora now that he is back in Tibet and what kind of representations he forwards to his friends and family there.[45] Although there are those who return as they just take a pilgrimage to Dharamsala to see the Dalai Lama or get some education, those interviewees who 'escaped' without documents most often feared the option as they thought they could be harassed and closely monitored by the PRC officials since they had left Tibet illegally from the perspective of the PRC and lived in Dharamsala close to the Dalai Lama and political activities concerning the Tibet question (see also Hess 2006). They seldom took part in them because they feared of being monitored also in diaspora and that the PRC could harm their families if they thought that they are politically active in India, for instance. As Hess (2018, 32) states, 'fear of Chinese repression continues to affect Tibet-born Tibetans in diaspora'. Although the CTA supported the Tibetans' trip back financially at least during my fieldwork and some interviewees said that they were better off economically in Tibet than in India, they were still generally more interested in moving to the West, a phenomenon that will be discussed next (see also Choedup 2016).

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45   Moreover, a friend of an interviewee, whom I also knew, wanted to return home in order to become a tourist guide after he had learned English in Dharamsala. I did not want to interview him because he told me he would migrate back home and was afraid of how he would succeed. He was from the place that the PRC named Shangrila; after the name was given, domestic and foreign tourism grew tremendously in the area (Hillman and Henfry 2006; Kolås 2004) and it has become one of the most economically developed and politically liberal places in Tibetan areas within the PRC where even monasteries can sometimes have a say in political decisions (Hillman 2010). Interestingly, according to Kehoe (2015, 321), monasteries in eastern TAR get funding also from the Chinese supporters, and hence Buddhism itself has currently less value for the Tibetans when they want to highlight the cultural difference between themselves and the Han.

4.2 Onward-Migration Reasons and Aspirations in India

The onward-migration discourse seemed to be present almost everywhere, especially among the young adult lay Tibetans from Tibet in Dharamsala, during my fieldwork. According to the interviewees of this study, the livelihood-related and economic concerns were their major reasons to aspire to migrate onwards. Yet, livelihood-related or economic problems among Tibetan newcomers have been seldom deeply discussed in scholarly writings (see Frilund 2014). No interviewee of this study was truly wealthy in Dharamsala and in two cases, even occasional lack of food was mentioned as a problem after they had arrived in India, but they had survived through the most difficult periods and found either some sort of livelihood or someone from whom to borrow funds. Yet, no one of the interviewees were beggar-poor and the livelihood-related difficulties seemed to mingle with their subaltern position in India altogether. Also sociocultural problems exist and the question of belonging is crucial as most of their family ties tend to remain in Tibet (e.g. Article IV; Swank 2009), which does not help adaptation to India.

It is not unexpected that Tibetans from Tibet, particularly the newcomers, often feel marginalised (Article IV); they are in a subaltern position both as Tibetans in India, who may face racism in India even if they have been born in the country, and within their own community where they may face racism because of their sinicised habits which are culturally distant from the habits of Indian-born Tibetans (see Chen 2012; Choedup 2015; Diehl 2002; Houston and Wright 2003; Smith and Gergan 2015; Swank 2011; Yeh 2007b). Those Tibetans who have arrived in India as adults are in the most subaltern position; they have fewer opportunities to get higher education and employment or (relatively) good jobs. Although the newcomers under 30 years are offered different types of full-day schooling opportunities in India, often in monasteries and boarding schools or other schools that demand full-time participation (e.g. Personal communication 3, 15 December 2015), the schooling they get does not often meet the Indian standards for higher education and they do not usually speak English or Hindi when they arrive (see Swank 2011). Hence, it does not provide them enough skills to compete in the job market with the Tibetans grown up in India although the schooling opportunities were appreciated. Moreover, lay newcomers older than 30 years and those who are not interested in or capable of participating in full-time schooling because of their families or work, miss these educational opportunities; they can only join the NGOs that give classes, in languages and computing, for instance (Article I; II; III; IV).

As the Tibetan newcomers, who were often nomads or farmers in Tibet, cannot buy land in India and start to cultivate it like in the beginning of the diaspora when

some agricultural Tibetan settlements were established around India[46] (Choedup 2015; de Voe 2005), those who arrive in India as adults often end up unemployed or working unofficially with a poor salary in the tourism sector, and the salary often hardly covers the costs of living in Dharamsala. The tourism sector is the most visible sector where the postcolonialism-related inequalities such as accumulation of global capital manifest; the global and mobile wealthy, tourists, travellers and life-style migrants, use the (inexpensive) services provided by the Tibetan newcomers or relatively poor Indians in financial terms (Article IV). The owners or managers of the hotels and restaurants are most often the Indian owning class or sometimes long-term Tibetan residents in India who had managed to climb up the socioeconomic ladder and rent or lease restaurants, shops or hotels. Despite all this, Dharamsala was still often considered the best possible place to live in India among the Tibetan-born interviewees[47] of this study and they were not keen on migrating within India because of work, for example (although sometimes some young men who worked mainly in the tourism sector travelled to Goa to work for a short while in the winter when Dharamsala had less tourists).

Switzerland and Canada took in Tibetan refugees already in the 1960s and 1970s (Lauer 2015; McConnell 2016, 60; Raska 2016), but according to Choedup (2015), Hess (2006) and a CTA official who I interviewed because of his experience in migration-related issues (Personal communication 1, 25 March 2011), the United States Immigration Act, followed by the Tibetan–U.S. resettlement project (TUSRP), created what many Hess's (2006, 86) Tibetan interviewees referred to as the 'craze' to go to the United States It granted 1000 visas for the Tibetans in India and Nepal in the early 1990s, commonly called the 'lucky 1000' (e.g. Hess 2009). The 'lucky 1000' included both Indian-born and Tibetan-born Tibetans who were considered as 'anchor relatives' who established a base in the the United States with a help of individual sponsors and their closest family members were given the opportunity to join them in following years (Choedup 2015; Hess 2009; Personal communication 1, 25 March 2011). As McGranahan (2018, 371) states, '[m]any who were not chosen in the lottery were emboldened by the stories of those who had migrated and whose success stories were contagious'. Success stories about those who had already migrated to the West circulated in cosmopolitan Dharamsala intensively also during my fieldwork, and although many Tibetans seemed to be aware that life in the West may not be overly easy, it was considered better than life in India.

46   Tibetan-born Tibetans do not often settle in agricultural Tibetan settlements anymore as there is not much land available to accommodate them (Routray 2007, 82).
47   Yet, the CTAs demographic survey demonstrates that thousands of Tibetans would like to migrate within India. There is no information about their origin or where they would like to migrate but this may refer mostly to the migration trend from remote villages and countryside to the Indian cities, a phenomenon that Choedup (2015) has researched, among other issues.

It must be noted, however, that only 100 slots of the 1000 included in TUSRP were reserved for newcomers (Hess 2009, 117; see also Hess 2018). Although this might be considered reflecting the percentage of newcomers in India in the early 1990s (Hess 2009, 117), it might have had long term effects that made the imbalance between the newcomers and the Indian-born Tibetans stronger. Sometimes I heard newcomers complaining that Indian-born Tibetans often have family members in the West, for example, unlike the Tibetan-born Tibetans. The TUSRP has surely contributed to this.

During my fieldwork in 2015, the CTA had immigration programmes going on with Canada and Australia (see Choedup 2016; Personal communication 2, 16 December 2015). The Australian programme target Tibetan-born Tibetans who had been political prisoners or jailed at some point, including their families. Two of the interviewees, whom I interviewed in 2015, were included in the Australian programme, and have thus most probably already migrated (Personal communication 2, 13 December 2015; Personal communication 4, 16 December 2015). Without the official programmes, Tibetans from Tibet usually stay in Dharamsala several years before being able to migrate further even though they would have had onward-migration intentions already for long. As the IC is not officially recognised by all countries as an official passport, it can also be very difficult for Tibetans to get an official visa (Article II; III; IV). Thus, buying a fraud visa has become common among the Tibetans if they afford one – and human trafficking is not rare either (Choedup 2015).

Although the CTA (2010) states that its demographic survey may not be the most accurate due to the difficulties in reaching all diaspora Tibetans, it demonstrates that out-migration has become an important phenomenon and is something that the CTA takes seriously. This resonates with the writings of several scholars who have noted that the Tibetan migration out of India and their migration intentions particularly to the West have become a remarkable phenomenon in general (e.g. Choedup 2015; Hess 2009; Lauer 2015). The survey estimates that out-migration from South Asia had increased more than one third between 1998 and 2009, i.e. between the end of the most recent survey and the previous one (CTA 2010; 2000). The CTA (2010) also estimates in the survey that around 25% of Tibetans in total intend to migrate out of the Tibetan diaspora settlements in South Asia, i.e. India, Nepal and Bhutan, and that nearly 30,000 Tibetans in India alone intend to migrate, but a smaller part of them intend to migrate inside India. Moreover, the CTA official that I interviewed about migration-related issues in 2011 later estimated in 2015 that around 3000 Tibetans per year manage to migrate abroad (Personal Communication 2, 16 December 2015). Although it might be difficult to measure migration intentions and these numbers are just rough estimations, it is important to notice that they indicate that a remarkable number of the Tibetans in South Asia and India would like to migrate and that the CTA (2010) estimates that the out-migration trend will continue to grow, making

it the strongest demographic change that the Tibetan diaspora communities in India have encountered.

Tibetan-born Tibetans are included in the CTA's (1998; 2010) demographic surveys but there is not much detailed information about them in particular migrating out of India (e.g. Article II). By doing careful participatory observations, I could familiarise myself with onward-migration related actions in Dharamsala although many of them were such that they could have other meanings simultaneously. The journey from Tibet to India was something that the interviewees from Tibet often talked willingly about, but all did not necessarily open up about their onward-migration intentions or aspirations immediately, as onward-migration is a sensitive issue for them, knowing that India takes in Tibetans, provides them protection, and that India is the home state of the 14th Dalai Lama. Hence, one typical narrative that the Tibetans often tell a foreigner who is not familiar with the 'migration culture' in Dharamsala or is not considered as person who could help them in migrating onwards, is that they would like to migrate only back to free Tibet. Even though migrating back to free Tibet might be the first priority for the most, it sometimes remained unspoken especially in brief lightweight discussions that they may also like to migrate elsewhere, at least because Tibet is not free yet.

If the Tibetans already knew me and knew that I am familiar with the 'migration culture' in Dharamsala 'the West'[48] in general was often mentioned as a destination but some also wanted to migrate first to the West and then back to Tibet or circulate between the West and Tibet with a Western passport (see also Hess 2006). The geographical imagination of the West as the best possible place to live as Tibet is not free echoed from the interviews of the younger and less religious Tibetan-born Tibetans who were not satisfied only with the possibility to live close to the Dalai Lama. Japan and South Korea were sometimes also mentioned as good places to migrate, but they were not first choices of the interviewees of this study as they wanted to migrate to Europe or the US. These geographical imaginations related to migration are manifestations of postcolonial power relations and accumulation of wealth to the West rather than in India or Asia in general. As Salazar (2011, 586) notices, '[t]he images and ideas of other (read: better) possible places to live – often misrepresented through popular media – circulate in a very unequal global space and are ultimately filtered through migrants' personal aspirations'. Although popular media surely affects migratory imaginaries and aspirations of Tibetan-born Tibetans, these imaginaries are also strongly connected to cosmopolitanism, foreign funders and

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48   Interestingly, Salazar (2011, 592) notice that also Tanzanians who had migration aspirations often imagined 'the West' in general as the best possible place to live, 'the West' referring to 'a widespread imaginary, not to a specific geographic location with homogenous cultural traits and historical background'. This resonates with the common image of 'the West among the Tibetan-born interviewees of this study.

tourism in Dharamsala as will be discussed in the next chapter in more detail (see also Article I).

Some interviewees who were the keenest on migrating investigated rather carefully where it would be the easiest to migrate or where it would be the easiest to get asylum and work; practical information beyond imagination was sometimes carefully collected. These migration-related actions (and actual onward-migration that sometimes followed) can be considered as an example of the 'actual work that the systems of cultural representations do in the world' (Barnett 2015, 174) among the Tibetan-born Tibetans in Dharamsala (Article IV). Hence, the question of seeking a better life is not only about imagination but leads to concrete migration-related activities among the interviewees of this study, depending on the person.

Also when the interviewees did not want to talk about their migration intentions, their actions in Dharamsala sometimes revealed their onward-migration aspirations. For example, dating (or constant attempts to date) foreigners and concentrating on learning English could be interpreted as falling in love and as a wish to learn a language common in India. However, if the interviewees were not making any efforts to adapt in India, to seek jobs or to integrate into the Tibetan diaspora community in Dharamsala, and they were instead concentrating on improving skills useful for onward-migration (learning French instead of Hindi, for example) they were probably trying to improve their chances of migrating onwards. As I have briefly discussed in my earlier study (Frilund 2014), having a girlfriend from the West was particularly popular among young Tibetan-born men who want to migrate onwards as getting married with a foreigner or getting other type of help from a Westerner to migrate is a popular method of migrating further. Working in a restaurant or a café as a waiter was considered a good way to improve one's changes to get a Western girlfriend and being a waiter was popular among Tibetan-born young men (see also Hess 2018). This resonates with Lewis (2018, 4) according to whom almost all Tibetan-born men in their early twenties who worked in a certain café in Dharamsala during her fieldwork had Western girlfriends and many from the same social circles had already migrated to the West with their girlfriends.

I also found out that a partner from the West could upgrade one's social status among the newcomers, particularly among those who were hanging out in the 'migratory circles'; the newcomers who were stuck in Dharamsala often openly envied those who had migrated onwards or those who were going to migrate because they had a partner from the West, for instance. However, the men seemed to be more active in reaching the Westerners in Dharamsala whilst the migration aspirations of the Tibetan women from Tibet were not so visible although my interviews reveal that they often had migration aspirations as well. Young Tibetan women were seldom waitresses in trendy tourism-popular cafés in the major streets of McLeod Ganj either although they were not rare in family restaurants or food restaurants. Yet, I seldom

saw Tibetan women hanging out with foreigners in cafés like the young Tibetan men did.

Interestingly, although tourism-related jobs provide relatively poor income in Dharamsala, I met some newcomer men who wanted to stay in the tourism sector, particularly as waiters in tourist-popular restaurants, rather than get another job with a better salary (see also Frilund 2014). This was because they wanted to improve their chances of migrating onwards by talking English with the customers and perhaps trying to get someone to support their migration intentions or find a partner from the West. As an example, one of the interviewees of this study did not want to have an office job with a much better salary than he had as waiter in a tourist-popular restaurant as working in the tourism sector was a better option for his long-term plans, i.e. migration onwards. He now lives in a wealthier Asian country with his wife whom he met in Dharamsala (Frilund 2014). Hence, although the livelihood-related difficulties often increased the migration aspirations of the interviewees, sometimes their migration aspirations hindered their willingness to improve their life in India. This cannot be interpreted so that these newcomers chose to remain poor rather than work, however; as they knew it is very difficult to get a good job or salary in India, they saw migration to a more affluent country as a better option. Thus, concentrating on working in tourist-popular places or studying foreign languages was like an investment for the future for them and yet another manifestation of their active agency against their difficult situation in India[49]. These types of methods to improve migration possibilities were important for the Tibetan-born interviewees of this study as they did not have much money or contacts to utilise in order to migrate further when they arrived in India and as no-one had such family members in the West that could have helped them there; usually their families remained in Tibet[50].

Many Tibetan-born interviewees of this study were extremely focused and determined in improving their chances of migrating onwards, some of the most active being successful in migrating. Most of the interviewees who I knew well, openly talked about their migration intentions or aspirations and gossiped who went and where. Those who had the strongest migration intentions out of India constantly planned migration further and made choices according to these intentions. The seven interviewees that I know for sure that managed to migrate onwards by 2015 after my interviews of 20 Tibetans from Tibet in 2009–2011 belong to them. One of them migrated back to Tibet and one to Japan but the rest migrated to the West. Four

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49   In comparison, Salazar (2011, 587) found out in Tanzania that the imaginary of the opportunities in better places to live could become a state of mind that led some to accept unemployment *in situ* as they anticipated migration.

50   This differs from the situation that Choedup (2015) describes common among the Tibetans in an agricultural settlement of Doeguling (around the size of Dharamsala's Tibetan settlement), where family reunion seems to be among the most common methods of migrating to the West (Choedup 2015; see also Yeh and Lama 2006, 814).

married a foreign woman and it took years for them to manage to migrate (Article II). It was common to them that they did not base their identity in the exile situation, Dharamsala or India in general and sometimes even considered these places a type of transit spots for themselves, aspiring to migrate further as soon as possible. As Yeh (2007b, 648) states, the homeland is different for the Indian-born Tibetans, who base their identities in diaspora, and for the Tibetan-born Tibetans, who base their identities in Tibet.

One of these interviewees crystallised this point reasoning that he does not want to stay in Dharamsala because he is 'Tibetan-born' and hence he does not want to 'waste time' in there (Article IV; Personal communication, 27 October 2009) whilst another one told me that he would 'become crazy' if he would live in India the rest of his life (Personal communication, 20 March 2010). Moreover, one of the interviewees told me in an informal discussion that if he ever has a chance to leave Dharamsala and India, he will never return. As I support Papadopoulou-Kourkoula (2008) in that the will to adapt to a country where the migrants stay and the processes where they concentrate their actions best define whether they are in transit or not, these newcomers clearly participated in transit migration related activities despite the fact that I do not consider them strictly as transit migrants altogether (Article II). According to Papadopoulou-Kourkoula (2008, 5), transit migration is a situation that 'may or may not develop into further migration', and the transit phase ends if the migrant wants to adapt to the host society, not migrate further.

Both studies of transit migration and studies of refugee journeys struggle with the question of when the migrant is in transit versus stops being in transit (e.g. BenEzer and Zetter 2014; Düvell 2012). This also addresses the question about the final destination of migrants or refugees. If they aspire continuing the journey although they may not be able to at least immediately, their final destination might be elsewhere than where they stay at least in their minds. Here, I consider Papadopoulou-Kourkoula's (2008, 7) flexible stand on duration and the degree by which the migrant engages with local communities useful; duration alone cannot define when people are in transit or still on their journey but if people truly invest in adapting to the place where they stay, the journey has most probably stopped and transit phrase more or less ended also in their minds. This does not mean, however, that they could not ever again migrate abroad, but then it is worth considering these new phases as new opportunities and changes that may happen during the course of life, not as continuing the journey or transit phase.

Also migration aspiration is a useful concept here as aspirations are integral to people's will to stay or migrate. As Boccagni (2017, 3) states 'aspirations are a valuable research field on the interaction between structure and agency'. Whilst migration aspirations reveal the will to migrate, migration abilities determine whether people are able to actualise these aspirations (Carling 2002; Carling and Schewel 2018). Abilities are also connected with the structures that may allow or restrict migration.

As an example, some of those who had serious migration aspirations already in 2010 have had no abilities to migrate and they still stay in Dharamsala. Even though according to Düvell (2012), for example, the migration patterns of those who stay somewhere for years cannot be included in transit migration, I think that these interviewees where rather stuck in transit or becoming what also Carling (2002) calls 'involuntarily immobile'. The reasons for their immobility were the repressive structures that prevented them from migrating (Missbach 2015), such as difficulties of getting a visa and save enough money for traveling because of unemployment or too poor salaries that hardly covered their living costs in Dharamsala. However, they were in transit in their minds and their actions were full of transit-related activities including foreign language lessons, the RC, IC and visa applications, marriage plans with foreigners, etc. As Papadopoulou-Kourkoula (2008, 7) crystallises, 'the degree to which a migrant engages with the structures and opportunities in the receiving countries and invests in hopes, money, contacts and infrastructure in order to settle properly' tells when people are in transit or want to adapt to the host society.

Although all interviewees of this study with whom I discussed the volume of onward-migration emphasised that it is a remarkable phenomenon, regardless whether they were Tibetan-born Tibetans or NGO or CTA officials, it must be noted that not all interviewees from Tibet aspired migrating onwards. Especially some middle-aged Tibetans from Tibet who had stayed in Dharamsala for long and had families and work there and often lacked language skills other than Tibetan did not necessarily want to migrate onwards or had lost their will to do so, and their actions in Dharamsala were also in accordance with this decision (e.g. Article II). As Schapendonk (2013) found out, it is also rather typical that some migrants give up their transit intentions because of work and reasonable salaries in the intermediate step. However, it is impossible to tell exactly how many of those interviewees who said they wanted to stay would have been willing to migrate if a perfect opportunity were to come up, but they just did not want to use their energy to pursue that opportunity. For example, a single mother of a teenaged son hoped her son would have an opportunity to migrate abroad in the future; she would perhaps like to join him then (Personal communication, 18 December 2015). Nevertheless, she did not consider migrating yet when I interviewed her in 2015 as her son was at school in India and had no opportunity to migrate at that time; I consider that she was not in transit even though she would migrate further at some point.

The relative proportion of the Tibetans who came to India clearly onward-migration in mind remains beyond the main scope of this study, but according to Prost (2006) and Lewis (2018), also onward-migration possibilities in India attract the Tibetans to migrate to India (see also Hess 2006). A CTA official argued that the newcomers do not want to stay in India anymore like they did in the 1980s or before (Personal communication 1, 25 March 2011), whilst an NGO official argued that the newcomers often wish to migrate to the West, having the idea in mind already when

migrating to India (Personal communication 2, 14 December 2015). I discussed the question also with two Tibetans from Tibet; one of the key informants of this study and a woman who had travelled several times between Tibet and India (Personal communication 5, 16 December 2015; Personal communication, 18 December 2015). According to them, many Tibetans come to India thinking that they could perhaps migrate onwards from there, but only one of the Tibetan-born interviewees told me clearly that she came to India also because she wanted to familiarise herself with Western culture – together with such common reasons as studying English and meeting the Dalai Lama – which indicates that she may have had some onward-migration aspirations already before arriving (Personal communication 4, 15 December 2015). It seemed that her journey to India had not truly ever stopped but continued at least in her mind also in Dharamsala (Article III). Hence, Dharamsala could be seen as what Collyer (2007, 668) calls a place 'in-between origin and destination', or even as a transit spot for some Tibetans albeit that migrating further would take time; particularly so if the strictest determinants of transit migration, such as a time limit for being in transit, are abandoned (Article II; Düvell 2012).

Nevertheless, Dharamsala cannot be considered as a transit spot alone for even the younger Tibetan-born Tibetans because so many come there to meet the Dalai Lama and stay at least for a while, albeit they would not stay for the rest of their lives. According to one of the key interviewees of this research, the newcomers do not necessarily think that they would stay in India for the rest of their lives, but it does not mean that they would not have come there for education and the Dalai Lama simultaneously. People do not necessarily have just one goal in life. According to him, the Tibetans from Tibet may have an idea of migrating further if possible, but they do not necessarily have a clear plan as to where or when. He compared Dharamsala with a 'gateway' or a 'bus station', where Tibetan-born Tibetans stand without truly knowing where to go, or when (Article II; Personal communication 5, 16 December 2015).

4.3 Tourism, International Networks and the Tibetan Other in Dharamsala

As Chen (2012) argues, Tibet takes part in the discourse of (post)colonialism through representations of Orientalism. According to Anand (2007, 65), 'Tibet as it emerged in the modern world as a geopolitical entity has been scripted in a tale combining imperialism, Orientalism, and nationalism', and the West has been an integral part of this tale. Tibetans have also been seen as exotic Others in the Western imagination for long and the Shangri-la myth has been connected to Tibet (e.g. Anand 2007; Huber 2001; Lopez 1998). As McConnell (2016) states, '[t]he myth of Shangri-la, premised on Tibet as an idyllic yet forbidden land inhabited by peace-loving Tibetans, is a powerful and enduring one'.

Dharamsala has inherited a certain Shangri-la[51] image because of the Tibetan culture that has travelled there and because it is the home of the world-famous Nobel Peace Prize laureate the 14th Dalai Lama, for example (see Anand 2007; Huber 2001; Lopez 1998). This actualises also in the lives of the Tibetan-born Tibetans in the grassroots, especially in the form of international attention, support and tourism, which has strong characteristics of indigenous cultural tourism, meaning that a cultural minority has become a tourist attraction (Bookman 2006; Butler and Hinch 2007; Smith 2009). Even though the Tibetans are not indigenous people of India, they are still a visible minority that attracts tourists (Article I). As Qian and Zhu (2016a, 897), who examine the Chinese 'drifters' seeking authenticity and alternatives to modernity in Lhasa, argue, '[t]he use of imagined geographies to negotiate modernity is perhaps nowhere more visible than in the inclination towards imagining and consuming remote places to which modernization has yet to come, as well as the cultural *others* inhabiting these places'.[52] Although Dharamsala is in many senses modern, it seems to still represent exoticism, otherness and spirituality for the (foreign) tourists and travellers (Article I).

In my quick survey of 100 foreign tourists and travellers (mainly Western) in March 2011, I found out that at least 80% of them had come to Dharamsala mainly because of the Tibetans and their culture (Article I). Dharamsala is favoured by the independent foreign travellers as engaging independently with Tibetan culture or Buddhism in Tibet can be difficult because of the PRC's rule although its officials have been making efforts to restore Tibetan culture for tourism purposes from the late 1990s onwards (see Kolås 2004; Makley 2007; Prost 2006). Other attractions were nature and the Himalayas but as one of the travellers crystallised, it is possible to see beautiful nature elsewhere as well, but you can see the cultural, political and religious capital of the Tibetans only in Dharamsala (Article I; Personal communication, 9 March 2011).

Although the touristification or exoticisation of Tibet in China is not the focus of this dissertation, it is interesting that Tibetans have become exoticised also in China where tourism to Tibet has become popular among the Han and many Chinese seek spiritual experiences in Tibetan monasteries (Hillman and Henfry 2006; Kapstein 2004; Qian and Zhu 2016a; Zhang, Druijven and Strijker 2018). Hilfman and Henfry

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51 Shangri-la refers to an exotic fictional place most probably located somewhere in Tibet, first introduced in British colonial literature in James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* in 1933 (e.g. Kolås 2017).

52 Interestingly, the Shangri-la image of Tibet has not gone unnoticed by the PRC either: it has officially renamed a place in the predominantly Tibetan region that the Tibetans call Kham as Shangrila in order to attract tourists, an example of what Kolås (2004) call 'place-making' in Tibet. Moreover, China's 'television documentaries and lifestyle magazines seem obsessed with images of Tibet, stressing its rugged mountain beauty and its spirituality' (Hillman and Henfry 2006, 256; see also Kolås 2017; Qian and Zhu 2016b).

(2006) argue that when they lived in Shanghai in 1999–2000, 'a visit to Tibet seemed to have become a rite of passage for the city's newly wealthy', whilst Zhu and Qian (2014) demonstrate how Han lifestyle migration has become a phenomenon in Lhasa as the Han 'drifters' seek less competitive and modernised, more relaxing lifestyle. This can be compared with India's touristic cities, such as Goa, Varanasi or Dharamsala, which host international lifestyle migrants (Article IV; Korpela 2010; Benson and O'Reilly 2016). Moreover, Qian and Zhu (2016b, 147) have studied place-making in Tibet among the Han writers who describe Tibet's lifestyle as less commercial and authentic in comparison with the rest of China. Certain places close to Jokhang temple in Lhasa have become 'colonised by bars, clubs and shops operated by Han lifestyle sojourners'; the places favored by the sojourners form the imagined geographies of Tibet in these writings and thus spread these representations further.

The exoticisation of Tibetans by the Han is in rather stark contrast with Washul's (2018) findings that Tibetans (and other ethnic minorities) face racism and discrimination in Chinese cities through the ethnic lines and that Tibetans may face serious difficulties renting apartments or getting jobs in the Han-dominated private sector, for instance. The stories of marginalisation, rather than exoticization, were also those that I heard among the Tibetan-born Tibetans in Dharamsala; the marginalisation in China had affected their decision to leave Tibet. However, they ended up being marginalised also in India, which affected their onward-migration aspirations.

In the context of the Tibetan diaspora, Tibetans are often victimised or exoticised by foreign Tibet supporters and media, but on the other hand Tibetans are aware of the attention that they can get as refugees and are also able to use this image to their advantage in general. According to Yeh and Lama (2006, 818), also the Tibetans often nurture the image of themselves as the 'most deserving victims' whether in South Asia or in the United States where some of the biggest Western Tibetan diaspora communities exist. This resonates with Anand (2000), according to whom the diaspora Tibetans have been active in creating a (neo)orientalist myth of themselves purposely in order to gain international support, both financial and moral, and in order to create international networks (Article IV). I see this as a form of active subaltern Tibetan agency.

Considering the circumstances, self-exoticisation easily becomes tempting among the Tibetan-born Tibetans, including the newcomers, if they want to grasp the attention of the wealthier tourists and travellers in Dharamsala. For example, sometimes younger Tibetan men from Tibet started to grow their hair in order to match the exotic (Western) imagination of the Tibetans, a phenomenon visible among young Tibetan men working in tourist-popular restaurants and cafés as waiters (Article IV). This also had something to do with place identity as I did not encounter similar fashion among the Indian-born Tibetans particularly if they were not performing artists and thus felt a need to present traditional Tibetanness. As the Tibetan-born Tibetans often have less contacts abroad and less funds if they wanted

to migrate, they learned in Dharamsala how to get the attention of foreigners and how to improve their possibilities to migrate onwards or get other type of support (see also Prost 2006).

The Tibetan diaspora has been collectively oriented towards the West in several senses almost since its beginning (see Anand 2007; Choedup 2016; de Voe, 1987; Prost 2006; Subba 1990), and different types of NGOs and charity groups have supported the Tibetan diaspora in India from its early stages (Choedup 2016; de Voe 1987). According to some scholars (Lauer 2015; Prost 2006) and an NGO leader with whom I discussed the case the most (Personal communication, 23 March 2011), this has also lead to a situation where the Tibetan diaspora communities have partly become dependent on charity work and sponsorships (e.g. Choedup 2016). As Prost (2006, 237) argues, these instruments of development are related to Tibetans' ability to offer 'cultural or spiritual performances of Tibetan Refugeehood' for the sponsors. Besides that the foreign supporters and tourists may come just to gaze the Tibetans (see Urry 1990), also organised cultural performances are arranged; I was once able to participate in the performance of the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) that was targeted particularly towards wealthy supporters and sponsors, both Asian and Western, although I did not belong to them.

Interestingly, de Voe (1987) found out three major discourses emerging from the interviews of the donors already thirty years back: the donors liked the Tibetans as people, they liked Tibetan Buddhism and they thought that the Tibetans were victimised. In de Voe's (1987, 58) words 'Tibetans, in the donors' view, are deserving and likable, making them "better clients" than others who are eligible for the same aid' (see Article IV). This seems to be still valid in the Dharamsala area where foreign support for the Tibetans seemed to be also well known among the local Indians. Knowing that the Tibetans bring money to the region, they often envy their foreign funding openly (see Salmela 2014). As Salmela (2014, 183), who studied Indian and Tibetan NGOs and their relationships in Dharamsala region from the perspective of the Indian NGOs, states, '[m]any NGOs were aware that Tibetan NGOs get a lot of money and volunteers from the West and some were suspicious about that and considered Tibetans rich compared to the Indians'. According to Salmela (2014, 183), it is apparent that McLeod Ganj is more popular among the foreign tourists than the Indian parts of town, but some Indian-run NGOs still recognised that Tibetan presence 'bring market value to the whole area'. Thus, the commodification of the Tibetan culture brings money to Dharamsala and has helped the Tibetans to survive economically in diaspora. As de Voe (1987, 54–55) stated already more than thirty years back 'Tibetans are able to survive refugee life because of the network of donors actively engaged in resettlement work and committed to Tibetans *as* Tibetans'.

It needs to be noted, however, that the Tibetans are also active themselves in building up their diaspora settlements, and that the CTA officials who I interviewed, as well as the officials of some other Tibetan institutions or NGOs, clearly encouraged

and wanted Tibetans to become self-sustained. There would not be such diaspora institution and organisations that there are today if Tibetans had been only dependent of foreigners; active Tibetan agency has been needed in order to construct the settlements. However, the Tibetan-born Tibetans who I interviewed, or Tibetan newcomers in general, seldom belong to the diaspora elite or classes who have been able to fully contribute to the community building or who have been able to get paid by doing so. Some newcomers felt that they were excluded from the community building, which affected their onward-migration aspirations, like in the case of an interviewee who had been living in India for seventeen years in 2009 and still lives there. According to him, he had attempted to participate more and presented some of his ideas to the CTA, but he felt he did not get enough support (Personal communication, 26 November 2009). Hence, Tibetan-born Tibetans face difficulties in being self-sustained without commodifying themselves or getting any sponsorships in India that struggles with its own poor.

This is particularly true in cities such as Dharamsala where the Tibetans cannot own land and get extra income from cultivating, for example. Moreover, all are not able to get much benefit of the tourist flow to McLeod Ganj as they may work with a minimal salary in the tourism sector that hardly covers the living costs in the relatively expensive Dhararamsala where prices are becoming higher also because of the tourism and lifestyle migrants. The problem with tourism in Dharamsala is that even if the tourists are often so-called alternative tourists who consider themselves aware of cultural and environmental questions related to tourism, they still make the global inequalities not only visible but also concrete in town.

As Mostafanezhad (2013, 322) argues, alternative tourists together with alternative consumers correspond within 'new moral economies' which demand global compassion but tend to subjugate their objects in developing countries under the patronage of the wealthy Western subject at the same time. This becomes evident in Dharamsala in the form of volunteer tourism where tourists and travellers are interested in getting deeper contacts with the Tibetans and contributing to the community while travelling. Athough they are a minority among the tourists and pilgrims in Dharamsala, they shape the community more deeply as they are more involved in the lives of the locals. They also strengthen Dharamsala's cosmopolitanism and potentially offer longer lasting contacts between the Tibetans and the foreigners than just random tourists and travellers who do not engage with the community by volunteering.

As these international networks are particularly important for the Tibetan-born Tibetans who do not tend to have relatives in India or abroad and have difficulties to survive financially in India, there are such grassroots NGOs that concentrate on

educating the Tibetans, particularly the newcomers, by hiring volunteer tourists[53] as their teachers or tutors in Dharamsala (Article I). Five of the most vital and important of them provided classes particularly in languages and computing nearly free of charge during my fieldwork and also those who have finished their schools in India often seek more education in these NGOs[54]. One of the NGOs of the smaller end had been closed just before I had my last fieldwork trip to Dharamsala in December 2015[55], but the other NGOs that I explored in 2011 are still active. If the number of the newcomers continues to decrease, it may be that some of these educational NGOs need to widen their focus as one of them had done already in 2015[56]. This does not mean, however, that their need for international volunteers would decrease or that the international networks that they provide would become less relevant as the Tibetan migration out of India continues vividly.

Some of these NGOs had a more political agenda than the others; one of them arranged movie nights about the political situation of Tibet and called ex-political prisoners to give talks[57], for instance, whilst some concentrated almost purely on teaching and contributing to the diaspora community, not to the political questions[58]. Their most popular activity was the English conversation classes where the volunteers teach the Tibetans English, but also some other languages and computing were taught. Those Tibetans who came to India when above thirty years or who had not had a possibility to participate in the boarding school type of teaching available for them, often joined the classes of these NGOs (Article I). I also met many Tibetans who said they came to Dharamsala from other parts of India in order to participate in their teaching.

It was easy for the bigger NGOs to find volunteers and one of their leaders emphasised that they do not need to go and find volunteers as they come to them, but one of the managers of a smaller one emphasised the difficulty to get enough volunteers around the year (Personal communication, 17 March 2011). One of the five NGOs whose officials I interviewed was more selective and preferred long-term

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53   I consider a volunteer tourist as a tourist or traveller who wants to support the communities where they stay by giving their time and volunteering in the NGOs (Article I).
54   See www.lhasocialwork.org; lit-dharamsala.org; http://tibetcharity.in; http://tibethopecenterindia.blogspot.fi; https://www.facebook.com/volunteertibetdharamsala (last visited 23 January 2019).
55   See https://www.facebook.com/volunteertibetdharamsala (last visited 23 January 2019).
56   See http://tibethopecenterindia.blogspot.fi (last visited 23 January 2019).
57   See lit-dharamsala.org (last visited 23 January 2019).
58   As Davies demonstrates (2012), Tibet Support Groups (TSGs) form a global web of assemblages focusing on the Tibet issue and its politics. There were also branches and headquarters of this type of NGOs in Dharamsala, but I do not consider the educational NGOs that I focused on in Dharamsala as strong players in this field as their focus was more local, despite the fact that one of them arranged movie nights and talks about the political situation of Tibet.

volunteers who booked their volunteering in advance. However, it was common that there were no demands for the foreign tutors in the most popular English conversation classes except decent knowledge of the language taught in class, and many volunteers just dropped in when in town and contributed only for a while. All of these NGOs had a good website providing information about their volunteering opportunities, for instance, so that the volunteers could contact them already before arriving in Dharamsala; they also hosted long-term volunteers and professional teachers for whom they arrange facilities (Article I). In 2015, I also met some Indian volunteers in the conversation classes.

These NGOs are an expression of Tibetan collective agency in diaspora as Dharamsala's volunteer hiring organisations are mainly Tibetan-run *in situ*. They do often get support from abroad but they differ from such volunteer tourist organisations that are based on (Western) volunteer-sending agencies (see Vrasti 2013). Therefore, the scholarly criticism that volunteer tourism organisations have got – because of their neo-colonial or commodifying effects and because Western volunteer-sending organisations send unskilled or inexperienced Westerners to the Global South thinking they would have something important to contribute (e.g. Brown and Hall 2008; Guttentag 2009; McLennan 2014; Palacios 2010; Raymond and Hall 2008; Simpson 2004; Vrasti 2013) – does not apply in the Tibetan NGOs where the volunteer tourism organisations are mainly run by locals who attract tourists and travellers themselves.

I do not claim, however, that the volunteer tourists that these NGOs recruit could not have any neo-colonial or commodifying ideas; I cannot make claims about them as I did not focus on them (but it would be interesting to study how the volunteer tourists gaze the Tibetans and whether they possess commodifying or neo-colonial perceptions). Moreover, the free of charge drop-in volunteer system is beneficial for the NGOs that want to maximise the number of volunteers. This improves their chances of educating the Tibetan newcomers as well as getting support for the NGOs and Tibetan community in several other ways, like increasing their international networks (Article I). Yet, similar critique that the more commonly studied Western-led volunteer tourism organisations get about being neo-colonial and inherently commodified cannot be applied to these NGOs; the power relations are too different and the local agency is much stronger.

It seems that Tibetan newcomers are the most exoticised in Dharamsala. The NGOs that hire volunteer tourists reflect this as they advertised themselves as providing an opportunity to meet the Tibetans who were most often born in Tibet and perhaps match better the (Western) imagination of the 'authentic' Tibetans. The Tibetan-born Tibetans represent 'refugeeness' more than the Indian-born Tibetans with their more established position in India and often better socio-economic status. It may be worth considering whether the Tibetan-born Tibetans are victimised like this, or even commodified; their presence represented Chinese oppression, difficult journey over the Himalayas and refugeeness in India which gains international

sympathy and support from the wealthier parts of the world. Moreover, the NGO managers were often born in India or at least had got their education in there, and hence at least part of them can be seen belonging to the educated diaspora elite whilst the participants of the courses were usually newcomers. This is partly natural, however, as the newcomers need certain skills, such as language skills, before they are able to get better jobs and more opportunities in India. The newcomers also truly need education offered by these NGOs and learning English was among their major reasons to migrate to India. Thus, the Tibetan newcomers encounter complex power structures in Dharamsala.

Most interestingly in the context of this study, the aim of the five NGOs was not only to educate the Tibetans or provide language skills for the Tibetan newcomers because they need language skills in India but also to support their onward-migration intentions, a phenomenon that was openly discussed by several NGO managers. One concrete example of this was that there were classes in some other European languages such as Spanish, French and German if a suitable volunteer was available but Hindi was not taught at all as it was thought that the Tibetans will learn it elsewhere if they need it[59] (Personal communication 2, 14 December 2015). As one of the managers crystallised, 'there is now a fashion in Tibetan community to go to Western country to for earn the money, to earn the better life', and therefore they provide them language skills in foreign languages (Personal communication 1, 28 March 2011). He continued that the language classes also aim at creating mutual understanding between Westerners and Tibetans:

> My opinion is to give the culture exchange between the Westerner and the Tibetan. To share our culture, to gain the knowledge from the other. So that's very important. So we're always very sharing a unique relation with the Westerner.

Another NGO manager, who had been born in Tibet but raised up in India and gone through the Indian schooling system, thought that providing a contact between the students and the volunteers, who came mostly from the West, was even more important than teaching the language (Personal communication 1, 23 March 2011):

> And then, we are focusing like having a bound of friendship, is more important than learning the language. So we really want you know have a close relationship between the volunteers and the students. So like we discuss topics like marriage, like friendship. What does friendship mean to you? And then like what is happiness? What do you do dream… All these different sort of topics.

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59   Yet, a newcomer spontaneously complained to me in an interview that he would need Hindi skills in India, but it is not taught in Dharamsala.

Because the Tibetans from Tibet do not usually have good international networks before migrating to India, the tourist scene, both volunteers and random tourists, are an important channel to meet foreigners. The foreigners or volunteers sometimes offered the Tibetans financial help or an invitation letter to the West as it helps a Tibetan to get a visa, for example. Although the Tibetans tend to be seen as exotic Others by the travellers and tourists in Dharamsala and their culture is explored with the 'tourist gaze' (Urry 1990), they may in turn gaze the (volunteer) tourists and travellers for support or migration purposes, trying to take advantage of the global interest towards them despite the repressive structures that still often push them in subaltern position and restrict their ability to mobility. Here, their active agency is present again.

Finally, the case of Tibetans in Dharamsala, their NGOs and (volunteer) tourism in town contribute to scholarly discussions about the connections between tourism and migration that could be explored even further in many places (see Salazar 2011). It would also be interesting to compare the Tibetan 'success' in using the global interest towards them in their advantage to other ethnic minorities, refugee groups or indigenous people in the Global South in order to discuss the borderlines of the negative effects of commodification, successful improvement of living standard as well as questions related to tourism, mobility and migration. As Salazar (2009) demonstrates, the Maasai, just like the Tibetans, have been represented as exotic Others and they have a reputation of having 'courage and unspoiled culture', an image distributed by photographers, documentarists, writers and tourists, for instance. The Maasai have been active in promoting their culture and creating means to survive better economically by commodification of their own culture: 'many Maasai themselves, like other indigenous groups, seem to be selling their own marginality' and portray 'traditional' versions of themselves for tourists, maintaining a well-developed sense of self-objectification and self-commoditisation (Salazar 2009). Similarly, the Tibetans in Dharamsala are active actors, not just passive objects, interacting with the tourists or sponsors and being 'well aware of their aesthetic appeal to a foreign tourism gaze' (Salazar 2009). In self-commodification, the need to get a decent livelihood is usually evident and the subaltern agency manifests; it is not practised just for fun in the Global South.

5 Discussion and Findings

Generally, this study asked what kind of migratory setting does Dharamsala have; what are the major triggers or drivers of the Tibetans to migrate to Dharamsala; how are their migration histories or journeys to India represented; and how do their onward-migration aspirations actualise *in situ* in Dharamsala. I explored these questions from several conceptual and theoretical viewpoints in different articles included in this dissertation, highlighting also the Tibetan agency in the context of their migration throughout the research – without forgetting the repressive structures that the Tibetan-born Tibetans encounter during their migratory processes, such as the border controls of the states that they crossed or the unequal distribution of global wealth visible in Dharamsala.

As my fieldwork methodologies and analysis have been affected by the grounded theory legacy (e.g. Charmaz 2006; Clarke 2005; Strauss and Corbin 1990), I consider that the inductive reasoning and bottom-up approach were the best possible methods to stay open for the information arising from the field. I let the conceptualisations and theories arise from the materials instead of fixing them before. This type of ethnographical approach is possible particularly if the researcher has enough time to spend in the field in order to let the ideas arise and do comparisons between the interview material, participatory observations and other materials collected. It allowed me to find Tibetan migration as the most interesting area of study and pay attention to the (subaltern) Tibetan agency from several angles in the context of migration, which in turn helped me to choose the most suitable scholarly concepts to describe the phenomenon studied.

The findings of this dissertation demonstrate that in addition to the individual Tibetans who have made the journey to India via Nepal, the journey has great collective meaning for the diaspora Tibetans as refugees. Simultaneously, the journey of the Tibetan-born Tibetans to India via Nepal can be considered as transit migration. For some of the interviewees, the journey stopped in Dharamsala and they were not in transit anymore, but it is very common for the Tibetan-born Tibetans to aspire to migrate and actually migrate onwards from India as they do not necessarily find the opportunities that they came to look for in India. This migration is a more complex phenomenon, however, as they come to India in order to see the Dalai Lama, seek education and find opportunities, not only in order to migrate further. Yet, it rather

often has some characteristics of transit migration if it is defined flexibly. Dharamsala also hosts organisations, supported by foreign actors, which assist Tibetans from Tibet in their efforts to migrate onwards by teaching them foreign languages, for example.

Consequently, Dharamsala or India in general was not necessarily the final destination especially for the younger newcomers; it was rather somewhere in the West, which often appeared to be some short of Shangri-la in their geographical imaginaries as Tibet's freedom was stolen from them. This image of the West, as well as their difficulties in India, increased their migration aspirations, which in turn turned to onward-migration actions among many. Unequal postcolonialism-related power structures, such as unequal distribution of global wealth and unequal access to mobility and opportunities, are very visible in Dharamsala where the local Indians and Tibetan refugees meet the global wealthy (or relatively wealthy) who may potentially also assist Tibetans to migrate onwards; all this manifests in the Tibetan migration to India and beyond. Ortner's (2011, 147) 'agency of projects' is useful here as it grows out of peoples' own desires and structures of life, including structures of inequality. Migration seemed to be this sort of project for many of the interviewees of this study.

Although I have used different concepts in this dissertation, I argue that Tibetan migration from Tibet to India via Nepal, and onwards as a whole, should be interpreted through postcolonial thought, as it has the best theoretical explanatory power when considering the phenomenon in general. Both the West and the PRC often hold patronising attitudes, regarding the Tibetans as Others who need their interventions either through modernisation or support based on exoticisation (see e.g. de Voe 1987; Hillman and Henfry 2006; Kapstein 2004), leaving the Tibetan agency too often overlooked and not seeing Tibetans as active agents capable of setting their own goals. Postcolonial thought is able to challenge this by paying attention to subaltern agency (Yeh 2009). Both Chinese and Western empires also create power relations that easily marginalise the minorities, power relations which actualise in various ways during the migration of the Tibetan-born Tibetans, starting from the drivers of their migration. In Tibet, the PRC's control and unequal power relations between the ordinary Tibetans and the PRC elite are among the Tibetan reasons to migrate to India although also more personal reasons exist, whereas in Dharamsala the global imbalances concerning global wealth and opportunities are very visible. Whilst the interviewees highlighted the PRC's control over religion, particularly banning the Dalai Lama, and inequalities concerning education as triggers or drivers to leave Tibet, in India the economic or livelihood-related inequalities are more present, but it is not the only reason why the Tibetan-born Tibetans so often aspire on migrating onwards. Their subaltern position also includes sociocultural factors in India and within the Tibetan diaspora settlements there.

Based on the findings of this study, I suggest that a fruitful approach to examine transit migration type of migration more widely, particularly in the Global South

or among different minority groups, is to examine the 'migration cultures' and the places and spaces that the migrants leave and cross. Also different kinds of organisations and NGOs in these places might be of importance as NGOs often have an important role in providing the informational and material resources that shape the opportunities of migrants (Wissink, Düvell and van Eerdewijk 2013). Recognising and discussing the agency of the participants in the form of their migration aspirations, for instance, can be cross-cutting themes as active agency of the migrants is inherent to migration, an aspect that could be pushed theoretically further than what I have done in this dissertation. Although some reasons that push people to migrate from the Global South towards the Global North might be more forced than the others, (adult) people who migrate tend to vote with their feet when they leave their places of origin or the places they cross and hence an active (subaltern) agency tends to be present. It is equally important, however, to simultaneously explore their reasons to leave their homes, structural forces that they encounter (such as the border controls of the states that restrict mobility) and unequal power relations concerning minorities, indigenous people or refugees that affect their chances of migrating. Finally, postcolonial thought, if stretched to explore inequalities beyond the Western empire, opens up avenues and explanations in discussing migration-related inequalities in the context of minorities or indigenous people as a whole, such as unequal power structures and unequal access to mobility that they encounter, and emphasising their subaltern agency. I consider this type of approach holistic; it offers explanations on how local and global settings, unequal power structures and the migrants themselves as active (subaltern) agencies interact in the context of progressive transit migration type of migration in the Global South.

6 Conclusions

In this PhD dissertation, I have aimed to increase scholarly knowledge about the (transit) migration of Tibetan-born Tibetans from Tibet via Nepal to India and beyond by providing empirical examples and conceptualising it from different angles. This is a novel endeavor, because the Tibetan migration has not been truly discussed in the context of the current scholarly debates and conceptualisations on migration before. Hence, this PhD dissertation also widens or strengthens some migration theories and conceptualisations. It stretches particularly the boundaries of volunteer tourism and transit migration and strengthens the concept of refugee journeys (BenEzer and Zetter 2014) and postcolonial (geographical) approach to migration by bringing a new case study into these theoretical and conceptual discussions as has been discussed in this synopsis.

The Tibetan diaspora appears to be a transnational space, interrelated with Tibetan nationality, where certain understanding of Tibetanness travels with the Tibetans wherever they migrate although they are not simply a homogenous nation, as has been discussed in this dissertation. The Tibetans from Tibet who I spoke to seemed to carry a mental map of Tibet in their minds; although these maps varied among the interviewees, it was common that they were not based on the borders of any existing nation state as such, but were cultural, social and ideological constructions. The Tibetan-born interviewees negotiated their 'Tibetanness' together with their migration histories and aspirations in Dharamsala with those Tibetans who have been born or grown up in India, with the mainstream Indian society and with the foreign tourists or travellers in cosmopolitan Dharamsala – while their roots remain in Tibet.

The Tibetan diaspora is encountering great migration-related changes; the Tibetan migration to India has decreased and the diaspora Tibetans in India migrate increasingly particularly to the West and to wealthier Asian states. These changes had already begun when I conducted fieldwork in Dharamsala, but what outcomes they will bring about to the big picture and how they will shape the Tibetan diaspora communities in the future remains to be seen. It also remains to be seen what will happen when the 14th Dalai Lama is no longer living. He is now over 80 years old, and his presence has been the backbone of the Tibetan diaspora in India and a reason for many to migrate there. As Hess (2018, 25) points out, also the CTA needs

the newcomers who can testify what is happening in China and their flow to India is an evidence of the PRCs oppression and the need of diaspora institutions such as the CTA. Moreover, especially the younger generation of diaspora Tibetans (from Tibet) do not necessarily intend to stay in India; they are often on the move at least in their aspirations. The younger Tibetan-born Tibetans who I interviewed often had, while living in India, their strongest attachments in Tibet and their minds in the West in the sense that it is where they saw their future (because Tibet is not 'free').

All in all, in the current situation, the Tibetans from Tibet would need more protection en route to India and a stronger voice in their homeland, in diaspora and internationally. The postcolonial power-relations based on state powers easily ignore their needs, such as accessible mobility, full cultural and religious rights, land rights and decent livelihoods, suppressing them to position where their needs are easy to disregard, which is reminiscent of the situation of ethnic minorities or indigenous people globally.

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