

**The Tibetan Diaspora and the Politics of Belonging in the Twin Cities
(Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, USA)**

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ABSTRACT

Tibetans in the American diaspora express their identity in different ways. A good proportion of them emphasise the need for the renewal of Tibetan culture in danger of being lost and political engagement as a means of cultural resurgence. The new emerging identities of the Tibetans who have migrated to the United States and among the youth particularly those in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota) have significant roles to play in this discourse. This thesis aims not just to represent their voices but also to examine the nature of Tibetan socialisation through cultural re-education, political engagement and the establishment of space. The relinquishing of political power by the 14th Dalai Lama to Lobsang Sangay in August 2011 reinforces the importance of a struggle that has contributed to how the Tibetans' negotiate their demands for self-rule in Asia and beyond.

This research focuses on the Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota) Tibetan community. It not only highlights the new cultural and political fault-lines, but also shows the emerging reality of Tibetan American identity as Tibetans contrast their life experiences and memories of living in South Asia (India, Nepal, Bhutan) as expressed through their own Tibetan narratives.