

Analysis and Comparison of Cultural Educational Schools

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Abstract

Tibetan culture and languages encounter numerous challenges of globalization, urbanization, and mainstream Chinese culture in contemporary society. In particular, the Chinese education system interrupts the transmission of Tibetan cultural heritage to Tibetan youngsters in state schools. To improve the situation of Tibetan culture and languages, it is important to investigate possibilities for transmitting Tibetan cultural heritage, the types of cultural program that may be feasible within the Tibetan cultural and political context in China, and why particular cultural programs may contribute to Tibetan cultural sustainability. Therefore, I conducted case study research on four ethnic cultural educational institutions in the United States to explore the following questions: how these schools were established, who are the targeted communities, what kinds of cultural courses they teach, how they teach culture and language in their classes, and what are their policies for administration? I am exploring these questions because I am a native Tibetan, and wish to maintain Tibetan culture in my home community. I undertook research on this topic to learn how such schools sustain culture in the context of educational programs. I have worked to learn best models for culture-related educational programs. In my analysis, I examine how these diverse U.S.-based models may help sustain Tibetan culture and identity both inside and outside Tibet. I learned that these cultural schools may or may not have big impacts on learning native culture and improving language fluency, however, these schools create a sense of community, strengthen cultural identity, and build confidence through the learning of culture and language. My overarching question asks: How can an education system nurture and sustain traditional cultural knowledge?

Chapter 1: Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to investigate best-practice models of cultural education with the aim of applying these principles to cultural education in Tibet. The term cultural education refers to the education that fits in the native language and local cultural contexts for the purpose of transmitting indigenous cultural heritage. In this paper, I am going to present the situation of Tibetan education and particularly focus on Tibetan education in Qinghai Province, which is located in northwest China. My analysis will address the situation of cultural education by reviewing current scholarship and my personal experience to discuss its complexity.

Language and culture are essential to people because they represent identity. As Marcus Garvey says, “A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots.”¹ My villagers also apply a similar expression to remind each other when they forget or ignore their local culture and language. Language and culture reside in the soul of its people; abandoning them means deserting their soul. Without the soul, people in Tibet are considered to be a “corpse.” People commonly accept that language is part of culture and they are inseparable, even though language and culture are different concepts. As Douglas Brown wrote: “A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the

¹ This is quoted in Rufus Burrow, *James H. Cone and Black Liberation Theology* (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 1994), 21.

two without losing the significance of either language or culture.”² This suggests that there is a close relationship and they would be affected if they lose each other.

Urbanization and globalization shape language and culture in contemporary society. Minorities throughout the world strive to maintain their cultural heritage under such circumstances. They hope that their culture will be transmitted to the next generations by retaining their native language. However, it has not been easy for native peoples to preserve their languages and cultures because majority groups dominate their societies. Linguists indicate that language endangerment occurs any time the younger generations stop learning the native language.³ It implies that language is vulnerable, especially minority languages since they have less power than dominant languages.

Modern schooling focuses on pursuing economic and material development instead of moral and cultural education. Meanwhile, nations with a majority use education as a strategy to achieve their political agenda by deculturalizing the minorities’ cultural heritage, as Joel Spring described the history of education in the United States to review how educational policies devalued and deculturalized American Indian and other minorities’ culture and language in the United States.⁴ As such, various problems emerge and minority cultures experience endangerment around the world.

² H. Douglas Brown, *Language Learning and Teaching*, 3rd ed. (NJ: Prentice Hall Regents, 1994), 165.

³ Daniel Nettle and Suzanne Romaine, “Vanishing Voices,” *The Extinction of the Worlds Languages*, 2000.

⁴ Joel Spring, *Deculturalization and the Struggle for Equality: A Brief History of the Education of Dominated Cultures in the United States*. (ERIC, 1994).

China, as a big country with 56 minzu (ethnic groups), has the second largest national population in the world. China's majority ethnic group is the Han, and minority ethnicities confront various challenges, such as education, employment, language usage, and cultural maintenance. Tibetan, as one of the ethnic groups of contemporary China, experiences a similar situation. It may be facing even more challenges, because of the complicated history and political conflicts between the two nations since the 1950s.⁵ The following paragraphs will underscore how this is particularly true in Tibet through both outside research and my own experience with the Tibetan educational system.

Through Chung Dolma, Catriona Bass, and Jing Lin's research on Tibetan education, they conclude that the Chinese education system uses typical colonial tactics to destroy Tibetan culture and assimilate the Tibetans by transmitting their Chinese political ideology.⁶ The relevant studies accompanied with detailed descriptions and evidence may help readers understand Tibetan education in depth. When scholars introduce Tibetan education, they often discuss the Tibetan monastic education and clarify the differences between

⁵ Elliot Sperling, "The Tibet-China Conflict: History and Polemics," *Policy Studies*, no. 7 (2004): III.

⁶ Chung Dolma, "Language, Learning, and Identity: Problematizing the Education for Tibetans," in *Social Issues in China : Gender, Ethnicity, Labor, and the Environment*, Book, Section vols. (New York, NY : Springer New York : Springer, 2014), 109–26. Catriona Bass, "Learning to Love the Motherland: Educating Tibetans in China," *Journal of Moral Education* 34, no. 4 (2005): 433–49. Catriona Bass, "Tibetan Primary Curriculum and Its Role in Nation Building," *Educational Review* 60, no. 1 (2008): 39–50. JING Lin, "Education and Cultural Sustainability for the Minority People in China: Challenges in the Era of Economic Reform and Globalization," *Cultural Sustenance Cultural Education: Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 2008, 69–84.

traditional monastic education and modern education.⁷ Traditional monastic education plays a significant role in Tibetan society, and was the educational institution in Tibetan society before modern schooling, and private lessons in the household of noble and leaders' families. In the monasteries, the students were not only learning the religion, but also practicing language, arts, literature, medicine, logic, philosophy, technology, livelihood, labor, and so on. This demonstrates that monastic education has its own educational system and a culturally-centered education.⁸

Chinese modern schooling emerged in Tibet relatively late, and it was established in Tibetan regions by the Peoples' Republic of China between 1950 ~1960s. At this time Tibetan literature courses were taught in schools, and ordinary Tibetans began to participate in modern schools; however, the Tibetan courses were removed from school curriculums during the Cultural Revolution (1966~1976), and monasteries were not allowed to practice Tibetan scripts since it was considered a religious superstition during that period. Tibetan education started to recover in Tibetan regions in late 1970s and through the 1990s, although education development was slower than educational progress in mainland China. Furthermore, Tibetans as an ethnic group have their own culture and written language with numerous spoken varieties, which is completely different from the predominate Han Chinese. However, China applies its national education system directly to the Tibetan schools, even though it is inappropriate for the purpose of Tibetan education. Furthermore, Tibetan students encounter numerous challenges through the hegemonic

⁷ Badeng Nima. "Problems related to bilingual education in Tibet." *Chinese Education & Society* 34, no. 2 (2001): 92.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 92.

activities in school education, such as the promotion of Chinese cultural and political ideologies.

Chinese education rapidly developed in Tibetan regions over the past two decades, and a growing number of Tibetan students attended these schools. However, the Tibetan culture and language-related schooling is poorly developed. As Bass describes in her articles on the Tibetan primary school curriculum of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), schools focus on teaching socialist views to the Tibetan students to construct Chinese identity.⁹ The Chinese cultural context in textbooks and teaching materials for Tibetans neglects Tibetan cultural education in school. As a product of such an education system, I feel my knowledge of Tibetan culture is incomplete due to my time spent in boarding schools, which physically separated me from my community in Tibet. It is the norm to live in boarding schools for the majority of Tibetan students and this trend is increasing. Nevertheless, research shows that boarding schools' typical approach to education is to disconnect the native students from their cultural environment in order to recreate their cultural identity and perspectives.¹⁰

It is generally recognized by the schools in Tibet that bilingual education benefits minority students by enabling them to study in their native language, and the Chinese Educational Bureau promoted bilingual education in the early 1990s. However, many schools in Tibetan areas are still unable to properly practice Tibetan language and culture in class. For this

⁹ Bass, "Tibetan Primary Curriculum and Its Role in Nation Building."

¹⁰ Spring, *Deculturalization and the Struggle for Equality*, 33.

reason, a Tibetan teacher, Tashi Wangchuk tried to file a lawsuit to urge the Chinese authorities to offer more Tibetan education in his hometown of Yushu, and he was accused of separatism by the Chinese government.¹¹ In 2010, the Chinese Education Bureau announced plans to change the current bilingual education system in Tibetan schools by removing all Tibetan language instruction and replacing it with only Chinese language instruction. As a result, many Tibetan students protested the authority's decision and submitted a report to demonstrate the significance of bilingual education at a national level.¹² Finally, the Chinese authorities abandoned their previous decision and reinstated bilingual education. Although Tibetan schools practice bilingual education, the Chinese political ideology and mainstream Han culture are infused in the bilingual curriculum.¹³ This restriction placed on Tibetan culture prevents Tibetan students from learning much of the native culture through bilingual education.¹⁴ My own experience of Tibetan education reflects this.

¹¹ Edward Wong, "Tibetans Fight to Salvage Fading Culture in China," *The New York Times*, November 28, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/29/world/asia/china-tibet-language-education.html>. Edward Wong, "China Charges Tibetan Education Advocate With Inciting Separatism," *The New York Times*, March 30, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/31/world/asia/china-tibet-tashi-wangchuk.html>. Yushu is a city in Qinghai Province, China.

¹² Françoise Robin, "Streets, Slogans and Screens: New Paradigms for the Defence of the Tibetan," *ON THE FRINGES*, n.d., 209. Fernand de Varennes, "Language Rights and Tibetans in China: A Look at International Law," *Minority Languages in Today's Global Society* 1 (2012): 14–61.

¹³ Badeng Nima, "Problems Related to Bilingual Education in Tibet," *CHINESE EDUCATION AND SOCIETY* 34, no. Part 2 (2001): 91–102. Dolma, "Language, Learning, and Identity: Problematizing the Education for Tibetans."

¹⁴ Badeng Nima, "The Way Out for Tibetan Education," *CHINESE EDUCATION AND SOCIETY* 30, no. 4 (1997): 7–20.

My personal schooling experience was different from my peers in my home county because my family wished for me to receive a good Tibetan education, and the situation of Tibetan education continues to be bad in my home county, Hualong. Thus, I left my hometown when I was eight years old to go to Henan County, and stay in a relative's home.¹⁵ Three years later I transferred to a Tibetan school in Xunhua County and studied there until almost high school.¹⁶ I then returned to my home county to complete the rest of my schooling before entering college. It does not necessarily mean that I received profound Tibetan cultural knowledge, because there is a hidden curriculum embedded in the national school curriculum that transmits the mainstream Chinese culture and values to the Tibetan students. However, my educational experience noticeably benefitted my Tibetan literacy, which would have been difficult to achieve if I had studied in my hometown. On the other hand, my experience illustrates the harsh condition of studying Tibetan cultural education in Tibet, especially in Hualong County – students must be separated from their families to receive a good Tibetan education. In the hope of addressing this problem, I undertake this research to understand how minorities in the United States maintain their native cultural heritage through cultural education, and I describe my case study in the four cultural schools to show how they are related to the research topic.

I undertook my research in four different schools: the Tibetan Sunday School located in New York City, the Greek Language School located in Baltimore, the Jewish Religious

¹⁵ Henan is Mongolian Autonomous County in Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province.

¹⁶ Xunhua is Salar Autonomous County with a considerable Tibetan population, in Haidong, Qinghai Province.

School, and Washington Japanese Language School (WJLS), both located in the Washington, D.C. area. As minority groups in the United States, they struggle to protect their ethnic identity by sustaining their culture and languages. I realized their struggle is similar to the Tibetan situation in my community and learning about their experiences of developing cultural education in the alternative schools inspired me to apply what I have learned in my Tibetan community. The ultimate goal is to transmit their native language and culture by practicing a curriculum that is culturally relevant to them, and sustain their culture within their community and wider society.

In conclusion, the situation of Tibetan education needs to be improved. Understanding the existing issues in Tibetan education is vital, and seeking a solution is equally important for maintaining Tibetan culture and language. This study looks at cultural education models in the United States to develop Tibetan cultural education for sustaining Tibetan cultural heritage.

Chapter 2: Research Methodology

My field research occurred between March 2016 and May 2016 at four different schools. I started this research online, and my survey of the Maryland/DC metro area identified 11 cultural schools that seemed to fit my research needs. I eventually expanded my search to

include a Tibetan school in New York City, because of its relevance to my topic, and this expanded the options for other appropriate schools to undertake my field research.

I listed the schools I was going to contact and sent emails to express my interest in visiting the schools for research. I followed up initial email correspondence with phone calls in the cases of those that did not respond within two weeks. However, from the 11 schools I contacted, I received only one response – from the Greek Language School. I soon realized the fundamental rule of research is to “network”, and I started to contact people I knew to request recommends of appropriate cultural schools. Through my networks, I identified five schools and ultimately focused on four of them as my case studies for this project. To understand the research topic, I approached these schools by applying questions organized by the following matrix: mission statements, cultural policies, community involvement, management systems, curriculum, teaching materials (textbooks), pedagogy, funding resources, and partnerships. The reason why I choose this matrix is because my targeted schools are nonprofit cultural educational institutions and these are important characteristics of these schools. Also, I see this matrix is important for me to understand in order to develop similar cultural education in Tibetan communities. To have a successful field research project, I tried to ensure that the schools understood my research plans. Before each school visit, I confirmed with the school if it will be convenient to undertake my research, which I found quite helpful for me to avoid unnecessary conflicts in the process. I conducted at least five interviews from each of my focused schools, including the school principal or program manager, two parents, and two teachers from each school. The interviews were conducted based on the designed questionnaires (see Appendix A), and I

also had casual conversations with the participants to receive more relevant information. I used an audio recorder, TASCAM 100 Mark II, to record the interviews, and I asked permission from the participants every time before I recorded. To avoid losing the recordings, I archived the files in multiple ways.

Active observation and taking field notes at the site was my strategy to keep aware of what was happening at the moment, to critically think about how I would deal with those challenges, and to reflect upon the activities in the classroom. My cultural perspective and educational experiences sometimes puzzled me when I observed the interactions between teachers and students. For example, the students were so active among them, and did not appear to be listening to the teachers – very different than the teacher-centered classrooms I am used to. A part of my methodology included a critical reflexive component. As Dr. Harold Anderson emphasizes in his Cultural Documentation lectures, my own cultural perspective will impact my observation and documentation of different cultural and educational contexts. With this in mind, I sought to understand the situation according to their circumstances.

By observing the practice of cultural education in the USA, I have been able to think more deeply about the educational practices I experienced within Tibetan education in China. At the same time, the literature on Tibetan education supported my understanding of a lack

Tibetan cultural context within Tibetan education, which I will discuss in the literature review.¹⁷

Analyzing the case studies was a process of interweaving the different findings from the field research. As my analysis moved forward, there were new findings and interrelations that emerged to the surface of the sea. For instance, I found the curriculum influenced teaching material and pedagogy in the schools, and determined how they developed cultural education in each school. Because I realized the importance of curriculum, I tried to understand the process of designing their curricula and identifying contributors. By studying the curriculum design process, I also learned about the inclusiveness of the curriculum and whether the community is actively involved in the program. At the same time, it is vital to be aware that since transmitting culture is a long-term goal, if the students like the curriculum they would continue to engage in the learning process. This helps me to understand how to design the curriculum and whom I should invite when I design such curriculum in Tibet. Furthermore, participatory learning is a great way to introduce the specific festivals and rituals. For example, the Tibetan Sunday School prepared a Tibetan performance by teaching the students Tibetan song, dance, and opera before the Tibetan New Year. A second grade teacher, instructed students in painting about a Jewish ritual that was going to happen two weeks later at the Jewish Religious School. I

¹⁷ Badeng Nima, "The Choice of Languages in Tibetan School Education Revisited," *Chinese Education and Society* 41, no. 6 (2008): 50–60. Bass, "Learning to Love the Motherland: Educating Tibetans in China." Dolma, "Language, Learning, and Identity: Problematizing the Education for Tibetans."

observed the students enjoying the process while I was undertaking fieldwork at the Jewish Religious School.

From analyzing these culture schools, I understood that the cultural school as an institution might not deliver a strong cultural awareness and fluent language to their students because of the students spending most of their time in the public schools and American cultural environment, and they only spend either half a day to one day each week in the cultural school. It is hard to practice their native language and culture outside the cultural school; they also have a hard time to speak the native language at the cultural schools. However, I identified that these schools are places for people to create a sense of cultural identity and belonging, as an ethnic group. They share experiences about their identity and their struggles to study their mother tongue. Learning their traditions, language, history, music, and homeland reinforces their connection and strengthens their ethnic identity as well. I understand that these are the additional outcomes from the cultural schools and stakeholders should recognize such impacts in order to develop cultural education.

Overall, the process of studying this topic increased my knowledge of cultural education. I learned how to develop a cultural school and the way native culture is transmitted through formal and informal education. By learning about this topic, I became more confident to apply this work in my home community based on the local Tibetan cultural context. In addition, this research experience increased my academic research skills and improved my ability to manage a research project independently.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Pursuing the sustainability of Tibetan culture and language is critical for Tibetans as an ethnic group in contemporary China. To achieve the goal, this study tends to seek a feasible way to transmit Tibetan culture by understanding the condition of Tibetan education, and look at the models of cultural education in other ethnic groups to consider the potential examples. In the previous two decades, some books and a variety of articles related to the topic of Tibetan education were published. Most of these publications looked at Tibetan language and culture within the context of education, with education being the primary focus and language and culture secondary. The researchers hint at the significance of Tibetan culture and language in the context of Tibetan education. Some of the literature played a significant role in helping to explore modern Tibetan education in China. At the same time, this review includes literature on cultural practices in the schools to obtain the knowledge of developing cultural education models.

Catriona Bass's work was the first comprehensive English-language study of Tibetan education.¹⁸ Her work offers holistic descriptions of educational policies and their implementation in the TAR (the Tibetan Autonomous Republic, in China) in the fifty years prior to this publication. Sections of the book could be divided into three categories: general education needs, discrimination concerns regarding educational opportunities, and political policy.

¹⁸ Catriona Bass, *Education in Tibet: Policy and Practice since 1950*, Book, Whole (Zed books, 1998).

Bass's working experience in Lhasa during the 1980s contributed to her excellent research. Subsequently, Bass also published two articles; *Learning to Love the Motherland: Educating Tibetans in China* and *Tibetan Primary Curriculum and Its Role in Nation Building*. They mainly analyze the school curriculum and the textbooks in Tibetan schools in the TAR. Her two articles are interrelated to some degree since they are about Tibetan primary curriculum in the TAR, but they examine the curriculum from different aspects. In the first, she looks at how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has used the school curriculum as a tactic to educate Tibetan students to embrace China since the 1950s.¹⁹ The second article discusses curriculum development through the different historical periods to examine how the changes influenced the curriculum of the Tibetan schools. She explores how the Chinese cultural contexts in Tibetan education re-constructed Tibetan identity, and transmitted the CCP's political ideology.²⁰ These findings imply that the Tibetan culture and identity face challenges in the cultural and political contexts, and the necessity to improve the situation.

Gerard Postiglione offers some general background to Tibetan education by reviewing all of the articles published in this volume of *Education Review*. He describes that the geographical location is the reason for Tibetans who receive poor education, and the high rate of school drop-outs. He believes it is time-consuming to improve the schooling condition in the Tibetan area, which was claimed by the most researchers in the volume.²¹

Postiglione cites some historical background between Tibet and China without much

¹⁹ Catriona Bass, "Learning to Love the Motherland: Educating Tibetans in China," *Journal of Moral Education* 34, no. 4 (2005), 433-449.

²⁰ Catriona Bass, "Tibetan Primary Curriculum and its Role in Nation Building," *Educational Review* 60, no. 1 (2008), 39-50.

²¹ Gerard A. Postiglione, "Making Tibetans in China: The Educational Challenges of Harmonious Multiculturalism," *Educational Review* 60, no. 1 (2008): 1-20.

description; he simplifies the complicated political conflicts between Tibet and China by avoiding sensitive political issues.²² He implies that Tibetan people should make efforts to learn the Chinese language, as it is a responsibility for them to learn their national language. Postiglione also says learning Chinese will be a solution to making achievements in both school and in the business market.²³ In particular, he references the dislocated Inland Tibet Schools (or Xizang Neidi ban) as an educational policy that offers free education for the best Tibetan students who finish their primary education in Tibet, to study in boarding schools of southern Chinese cities. Postiglione views this not as an approach of deculturalization; instead he claims that it reinforces the capability of Tibetan students with particular skills to achieve their goal. However, many scholars consider that dislocated education is problematic, and it is an approach to re-construct the ethnic, cultural identity of Tibetans. For example, Zhu Zhiyong undertook a case study of Changzhou Inland (Neidi) Tibet school to examine ethnic identity construction in the context of a neidi school. He employed qualitative research to examine the school curriculum, policies, and experiences of the Tibetan students. He also looked at the attitude of local Chinese people toward Tibetan people. Zhu discovered that the Chinese people only know about Tibetans as an ethnic group through government media, and that they hold negative stereotypical views towards Tibetans. Zhu created a framework to explain how the inland Tibet school reconstructs the Tibetan students' identity and how the hidden curriculum transmits the political ideology to the students. He concludes that the Chinese state successfully achieved their goal of reconstructing the new identity for the Tibetan

²² Ibid., 5.

²³ Ibid., 9.

students through education in the school.²⁴ However, Postiglione, Zhu, and Ben inspect the identity formation of Tibet students by describing the development of modern education in the TAR and discussing the challenges of improving education in the context of poor and remote Tibetan areas. They indicate that the state's policies support minority education and culture. They disagree with the perceptions that Inland Tibet School changes the ethnic identity of Tibetan students, but that contradicts with Zhu's finding. They describe an experience of a field trip to the Inland Tibet School and according to the reaction of Tibetan students toward Tibetan sculptures on campus to demonstrate that Tibetan students' cultural awareness and ethnic identity is not decreased during their study in southern China. Additionally, they explain that the inland schools help the Tibetans to become familiar with Han Chinese culture, and gain practical experiences to help them participate in the global economy. Not only do their findings contradict Zhu's findings, but they have contradictions within their own arguments, they review the school curriculum and discover that it includes limited ethnic cultural content and that the Tibetan schools are following the national curriculum system, which is practiced by the rest of Chinese schools in China.²⁵

The Chinese government started an economic development policy, the "Western Regions Development Program" in 1999, to promote economic growth in western China. This economic reform opened the door for the local people, including Tibetans, to participate in

²⁴ Ibid., 57.

²⁵ Gerard Postiglione, Zhu Zhiyong and Ben Jiao, "From Ethnic Segregation to Impact Integration: State Schooling and Identity Construction for Rural Tibetans," *Asian Ethnicity* 5, no. 2 (2004), 195-217.

the business market to improve their economy and living conditions in general. However, Wang Shiyong believes the current Tibetan education is failing to prepare Tibetans to take advantage of this opportunity. Wang supports his argument by reviewing economic development in the Tibetan areas of China to describe the Tibetans' low involvement in the business market, which relates to education in Tibetan areas. Wang analyzes the Tibetan secondary schooling by offering the context of general Tibetan education to indicate what kind of challenges Tibetans are encountering. He uncovers the complicated situation of language instruction, lack of teaching materials, and lack of qualified teachers as the critical factors causing low performance in the business market after graduation. Wang suggests that the lack of Tibetan language instruction may not directly affect the economic result, but it would influence the students' understanding and performance at school, where classes are taught in Putonghua Mandarin.²⁶ Since Tibetans have their own language and writing system, it would be easier for them to gain knowledge in their Tibetan language. Therefore, he suggests Tibetan language should be the language of instruction for Tibetan students in school, and that would help Tibetan students be ready for future business opportunities. His argument implies that learning in their native language would not just maintain the language, but also improve their understanding of topics and content by learning in a language that is familiar to them.²⁷ Meanwhile, Wang urges that it is crucial to develop other factors as well, such as teaching materials and qualified teachers.

Badeng Nima is a native Tibetan and considered to be a leading authority on Tibetan

²⁶ Putonghua refers to Chinese Mandarin.

²⁷ Wang Shiyong, "The Failure of Education in Preparing Tibetans for Market Participation," *Asian Ethnicity* 8, no. 2 (2007): 131–48.

education. Nima examines Tibetan monastic education to present the situation of current Tibetan education. He claims that some scholars ignore Tibetan monastic education when they study Tibetan education. He explains that the monastic education system provided a holistic Tibetan cultural education for decades until the implementation of modern public education. Nima also describes the challenges of school education by indicating the kinds of difficulties Tibetan students were encountering in school, such as language barriers and lack of the traditional Tibetan culture in the curriculum. He applies cognitive structure to illustrate the importance of learning in the students' cultural context. Nima also offers solutions to solve the current Tibetan education issues for a better Tibetan education in the future: "Tibetan educators and scholars must adopt a scientific attitude toward the objective environment of education in the Tibetan region; Tibetans must carry forward our national culture and absorb the best of modern cultures; Tibetans should also assimilate the best achievements of the world's contemporary cultures."²⁸ Nima's deep understanding of Tibetan culture and educational experiences empower him to think critically about Tibetan education. He had conversations with different groups of people among Tibetans to understand their perspectives toward the contemporary Tibetan education. Nima employs the long history of Tibetan language and the Tibetan cultural richness to emphasize that current Tibetan education limits its culture in Tibetan schools.²⁹

Chung Dolma demonstrates that the current situation of Tibetan education is the result of stereotyping and ignorance towards Tibet and its culture by the majority Han Chinese

²⁸ Nima, "The Way Out for Tibetan Education."

²⁹ Nima, "Problems Related to Bilingual Education in Tibet."

people and the Chinese central government. The general educators normalize the underachievement of Tibetan students instead of seeking its causes and offering ways to solve the problem. She applies psychological and linguistic perspectives to illustrate that forcing Tibetans to only learn Chinese culture and language in school conflicts with the purpose of Tibetan education. Dolma points out that Tibetan bilingual education in the TAR is problematic, and it does not play a role in Tibetan education. She suggests that Tibetan should be the main language of instruction for all subjects, and that Tibetan cultural content should be incorporated into the curriculum, even in the Chinese language-learning classes.³⁰

By reviewing the literature above, I found that scholars commonly realized the issues of Tibetan education to be the curriculum, the textbooks, the question of bilingual education, the Neidi ban or Inland Tibetan School, and educational policies in general. They analyze these aspects from different points of view to better understand Tibetan education. Some scholars consider Tibetan education as a tool to promote the Chinese political agenda and recreate Tibetan ethnic identity. Some researchers address the ignorance of a Tibetan cultural context in the school curriculum and textbooks. The Tibetan scholars, in particular, advocate for the significance of Tibetan culture and language to apply in the Tibetan education system thoroughly. However, none of the literature provides solutions that would help achieve the goal of Tibetan cultural education besides formal schooling. None of them offer ideas for how to develop cultural education in the Tibetan community

³⁰ Dolma, "Language, Learning, and Identity: Problematizing the Education for Tibetans."

without changing the vast system of Tibetan education in China. It is crucial to have practical solutions for cultural education and more literature on the topic if we are going to sustain the Tibetan culture and language.

To sustain ethnic cultural heritage through education, it is significant to understand how other ethnic groups strive toward the same goal. Linda Deafenbaugh redefines “ways of knowing” to explain that people learn knowledge in different ways: school and community ways of knowing.³¹ She explains that the school way of knowing is to learn from the text-based teaching by teachers, and the community ways of knowing is to learn the knowledge within their cultural groups by transmitting and experiencing. Deafenbaugh indicates that the community way of knowing is accessible to everyone including the students. If schools apply community knowledge and community ways of knowing in class, this will benefit the students to make academic achievement. Deafenbaugh also suggests that adopting to the community ways of knowing and community knowledge could advance the school knowledge and community knowledge simultaneously. This learning method is what culture schools are looking for, and it would help cultural schools improve cultural education by adopting the learning method and community knowledge.

Lydia Fish conducted a case study on Greek School at Buffalo, New York. Fish offers the general context of ethnic school in the United States. She approaches the study through the

³¹ Linda Deafenbaugh, “Folklife Education: A Warm Welcome Schools Extend to Communities,” *Journal of Folklore and Education* 2 (2015): 76–83.

folklore lens to describe the development of the Greek school, school administration, curriculum, and classes. The Greek school was founded after the first Greek church was established in the local area in 1911. Initially, the school's curriculum focused on reading and writing of Orthodox faith and later, a new principal added history and geography to the curriculum. Fish notes that the Greek language was influenced by the newborn generations who grew up speaking English, marriage with other ethnic groups, and when the Greek families moving out of the community. She also addresses the perspectives of individuals, such as parents, teacher, and the students, to offer a better understanding of the Greek school. For example, parents wish their children would attend the Greek school to understand their identity, but the students complained about studying Greek language even though they believe it is a good thing to speak the Greek language. Fish concludes that the Greeks have different views on the Greek school based on having different life experiences, and some of them are pondering what the school is for.³² The motivation of the parents is to strengthen their children's identity by sending them to the Greek School. However, the Greek youngsters could not understand why it matters for them to attend the school and study Greek language in the United States because they were in an English speaking environment. On the other hand, the connection between the young generations and Greek culture was damaged, and they do not value the opportunities to learn Greek language and culture. Such consequence could happen in any ethnic group when the relationship between the people and their culture is broken. Reading this case study

³² Lydia Fish, "The Greek School at the Hellenic Orthodox Church of the Annunciation," in *Ethnic Heritage and Language School in America*, ed. Elena Bradunas and Brett Topping. (Washington: Library of Congress, 1988), 249-264.

stimulates me to rethink what I should seek in my case studies and how to understand the context of American cultural schools when I undertake my research in these schools. Especially, it helped me to conduct field research in Greek Language School.

In conclusion, the studies on Tibetan education provided an overview of the situation of education in Tibet and inspired me to seek possible solutions from other ethnic groups in order to maintain the Tibetan cultural heritage, as they did not offer a model to sustain the cultural besides the public school system. By looking at the example of other ethnic groups, I am prepared to approach my case study and increase my knowledge to develop cultural education in Tibetan community.

Chapter 4: Case Studies

In this chapter, I am going to review the four ethnic cultural schools (Greek Language School, Tibetan Sunday School, Washington Japanese Language School, and Jewish Religious School) by employing my matrix: mission statement, cultural policy, community involvement, management system, curriculum, teaching material, pedagogy, funding resource, and partnership. The case studies will not necessarily follow the exact pattern of the matrix as I listed above but they are included in each case study. By reading each of

these cases, can help to understand the way I approached each cultural school and the development of cultural education in the United States.

Greek Language School

Context of the Greek-American Community in Baltimore

Baltimore City was one of the largest Greek-American communities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States.³³ The first Greeks in Baltimore were nine young boys, who arrived as refugees of the Chios Massacre, the killing of the thousands of Greeks on the island of Chios by Ottoman troops during the Greek War of Independence in 1822.³⁴ Subsequent Greek immigrants began to arrive and settled in Baltimore in 1890. As the Greek population increased in Baltimore, they started to develop public services for its community and built the Orthodox Church in the Greek-American community. The school vice principal Ms. Joy Kay Deuber states, the first generation of Greek-Americans decided they needed to maintain their language and culture in this new city. So, the Greek-Americans launched their Greek Language School at the church in 1912. After one hundred years, the language school still continues at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the

³³ Baltimore is a city located in Maryland, the United States. Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* (Transaction Publishers, 1989), 156.

³⁴ American Guide Series (1940). *Maryland: A Guide to the Old Line State*. United States: Federal Writers' Project. OCLC 814094.

Annunciation in Baltimore. The church is located next to the University of Baltimore, and is close to Penn Station, the biggest train station in Baltimore City. In 2014, an estimated 2,152 Greek-Americans resided in Baltimore City, comprising 0.3% of the population.³⁵ The majority of Greek-Americans lived in Greektown and Highlandtown for many years. However, the Greek population has decreased in recent years because of aging and moving out from these places.

Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation The Greek Orthodox

The Cathedral of the Annunciation is the place where the Baltimore Greek-American community comes together to practice religious rituals and festivals, and to organize different events to serve the Greek-American people.³⁶ The cathedral developed many sub-organizations in Baltimore to reach the goal of serving the Greek-American community. They have the Annunciation Senior Center, the Hellenic Heritage Museum, Theodore J. George Library, Kali Parea, Parish Council, Philoptochos, Women's Guild, among many others. All these programs are independently working to serve the Greek community in general. Sunday School and the Greek Language School are two other programs that the

³⁵ U. S. Census Bureau, "American FactFinder - Results," accessed April 12, 2016, http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_1YR_DP02&prodType=table.

³⁶ "Greek Language School « Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation." Accessed April 18, 2016. <http://goannun.org/ministries/greekschool/>.

cathedral funds. Although the two programs are independent of each other, I initially thought that they were the same during the early days of my fieldwork. Later, the Greek teachers explained that the language school focuses on teaching the Greek language, while the Sunday School emphasizes religious education. However, both programs share the same classrooms, but they run at different schedules.

Management System

Ms. Foteini (Faye) Gorefalekis is the principle of the Greek Language School. The school vice principle, Ms. Joy Kay Deuber, assists Faye's work and makes sure the school runs smoothly. The Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation is not directly involved in the language school, even though it is a sub-organization of the church. It may be because of the organizational structure that only two people work in the administrative sector. However, it could be challenging for one or two people to manage the entire school.

Greek Language School

Greek Language School is one of the programs subsidized by the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation in Baltimore. The school offers Greek language classes to the youth and adults of the Greek community in Baltimore, as well as anyone who is interested in

studying the Greek language. At this school, I particularly looked at the language class for youth.

The Greek Language School requires minimum tuition fees from students to cover some expenses. The language school follows the American academic school year, which begins in early September until the third Friday in May, for a total of 34 weekly class days throughout the year. The class starts promptly from 5:15 PM to 7:45 PM every Friday, after the students finished their American public school. The school provides classes from kindergarten to sixth-grade. Parents usually accompany their children to the school and then leave the school while the children are in class. They come back around 7:30 pm to take their children home. The distance from home to the school is different for each student; for some students it may take about two hours by car, and it may take less than a half-hour for some students who live nearby. Therefore, it is difficult for those who live far away from the Greek Language School to send their children to the school every Friday afternoon.

According to the Greek language program, the curriculum mainly focuses on reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar to emphasize Greek conversation. Through the language classes, the students also learn Greek culture, history, religion, and things relevant to their homeland - Greece. Thus, it would be inaccurate to identify the school as a pure Greek language school.

The school has eight teachers, and some of them were originally from Greece. Some teachers earned their degree in the universities in Greece. For example, Maria Botonaki was born and raised in Greece, and she went to the university in Greece. Now she teaches second-grade students at the Greek Language School. Maria hopes that she could help these children to study the Greek language, even though it is a difficult language, because it is their mother tongue and fosters Greek identity. Most of the teachers at the school, like Maria Botonaki, wanted to use their ability to teach their Greek language and culture to the younger Greek-American generations in the local community. Maria said it is very important to teach at the Greek Language School because she was born and raised in Greece, and she has the connection with the people who speak her native language in the states. Maria also claims she is happy to see Greek Americans are excited with the Greek language and history. This is especially true of those native Greeks who moved to the United States and were passionate about making efforts for their ethnicity and home country.

The Greek Language School students go to the American public schools during the weekdays. They learn their entire subjects in English, and the teaching of the core public school subjects does not include opportunities for local culture, including Greek culture, to be learned or. As these Greek-American younger generations are born and raised in the United States, they receive an American education. Thus, part of their Greek identity is shrinking as time moves forward. As I observed, some of these students were tired after a long day in public school; they were not actively participating in the class. The participants indicated that it was not easy for these students to learn the Greek language on Friday

night while their non-Greek friends and classmates were enjoying the evening at home. However, when Maria asked why they would like to study the Greek language on Friday night, some students answered they came to the school because they have friends also coming for the class; some students said they could enjoy some delicious food with their parents after the class. Others think that Greek is their native language, and it's important for them to learn to keep their Greek identity.

When the students finish sixth grade, they will receive a graduation certificate. Greek-Americans in Baltimore come to celebrate the graduation ceremony in the church. It is a time for the Greek community to be involved in the school.

Regarding student attendance, the school has rules to reinforce school management. The following paragraph is taken from the school's policies and procedures manual and is aimed at ensuring student attendance:

A student is required to participate in no less than 28 classes total in a given year to progress to the next grade and pass the current class. Since Greek School only meets weekly and for 2-1/2 hours per week, it is essential for a student to be present in class and on time (from 5:15 PM to 7:45 PM) so that they may absorb all the material that is presented to them. Students will not progress to the next grade if the above has not been met. In the case of absence, it is the student's responsibility to get the material covered as well as the homework assignments. In any event, a student is not excused for not having completed their assignments due to absence. Every student is expected to be

*present for every scheduled class and events. In the event of absence from school, the parent or guardian must call or email the teacher or principal.*³⁷

This could be a strategy to encourage the students to come to the school if the students follow the rule. It may also trigger other issues if the students think the rule is too strict, such as they would dislike being in the school. Attendance between first grade and third grade tends to be higher, and the students are more active during class. However, the students start to drop from the Greek Language School after third grade when they become more independent. The increase in assignments in the public school could be another possible reason as to why the students drop out of the language school.

Ms. Faye is responsible for designing the school curriculum, and she asks other teachers to contribute. It is likely that Ms. Faye's Master's degree in Special Education helps her to develop the school curriculum, but during the interview she said that it is an arduous task for her. The school updates the curriculum every two years to keep it fitting the current students' learning situation. The textbooks or educational materials from the schools in Greece were too difficult for the Greek-American students due to the students' lack of knowledge about the Greek culture. To solve the issue, the Greek Orthodox Church distributed some Greek teaching materials to the Greek Language School, which were edited by some Greek-Americans who were born and raised in the United States. The

³⁷ "Policies-and-Procedures-2015-2016.pdf." Accessed April 18, 2016.
<http://goannun.org/wpcontent/uploads/documents/GreekSchool2015/Policies-and-Procedures-2015-2016.pdf>.

textbook contains graphics and texts in Greek along with the English translation. I observed that the textbook makes it easier for the students to read and understand the content. However, some of the Greek teachers in the Greek Language School were not satisfied with the textbook, even though they value the editors' efforts. They found mistakes and misinterpretations of the Greek culture and language in the textbook. As a result, Despina Larenizos, one of the teachers, told me that she produces teaching materials by herself to use in the class. Despina feels comfortable using her material, as she knows what her students are interested in learning. The options of using different materials show the flexibility of the school's teaching style. The teachers are able to use their own preferred teaching materials that they think will benefit their students to improve their Greek language and cultural understanding.

Besides the educational material, I found the style of instruction to be crucial to attracting the students' attention so that they will actively participate in class. For example, during my observation in one class, the teacher depends highly on the text and there was less interaction with students. In another class, a teacher was less likely to depend on the text and asked the students to answer questions in Greek. The students were also encouraged to sing Greek songs and dance. In seeing these two classroom strategies, my observations suggest that active engagement makes the students participate more in class, and they enjoy the whole process. By varying the activities, teachers create more opportunities to interact with their students, which may encourage them to be proud of being Greek-American in the United States. It seems important that this type of cultural or language school needs to make students enjoy the studying environment.

I tried to understand how often the students, teachers, and parents speak the Greek language in the school and at home. Through my observation, I found that it was common for the Greek-American teachers to speak Greek most of their time in the school, especially those native Greek teachers who moved from Greece to the United States. The teachers talk to the higher-grade students in Greek. They could understand what the instructor said but it was hard for them to speak fluently in return. Sometimes, the teachers also speak to lower-grade students in Greek; probably few students understand because their Greek vocabulary is limited. The students in first grade to third grade speak English most of the time, and they use Greek to answer the teacher's questions in the class if the teacher insists they answer in Greek. The teachers need to use English to explain, especially when their students do not understand the absolute meaning.

According to two parents' interview, they use English to communicate at home, and English is the language their children prefer to speak. Ultimately, the Greek Language School becomes the only environment for them to speak Greek, but not ideally using Greek all the time. When I asked Ms. Faye if they have a rule to require students to speak Greek on campus, she said they used to have a rule, but that caused the students to be unwilling to participate, and some students even remained silent in the classroom.³⁸ Thus, the administration abandoned that rule because they did not want to lose the students. However, they still try to get the students to speak Greek at the school. I believe it is a big

³⁸ During the interview with Ms. Faye at Greek Language School

challenge for the Greek Language School and the students to learn Greek language if the students do not speak Greek in the public schools or even with their families.

Funding Resources

The Greek Orthodox Church funds the Greek Language School, and they collect a small amount of tuition from students to cover teachers' payments and office expenses. The tuition varies from each grade: \$450.00 for the first grade, \$400.00 for the second, \$380.00 for the third and \$360.00 for the fourth child, and plus \$30 book fee each grade. As the school is located in the church, they do not need to worry about renting the classrooms. The school's funding resource is highly dependent on the church; without the church's support, the Greek Language School would not be able to continue. As Ms. Faye claimed, it would be impossible to cover rent, teacher's payments, and office expenses if the church stopped funding them. The school is a non-profit organization and they do not have earned income to support the school. Furthermore, Greek is not a popular language and would be difficult for the school to run a business-oriented Greek language-training program. The funding resource plays a major role in running the organization and it is necessary to have multiple funding resources to sustain the organization.

Partnerships

Regarding the collaboration with the Greek Language School, Ms. Faye claimed that Greek Language School does not have a partnership yet. One possible reason for the school not having a partnership might be that the Greek Orthodox Church subsidizes the school and they do not have any financial pressures. Meanwhile, Ms. Faye indicates there is a group of Greek parents who organize small fundraising activities to support them. However, it seems the school does not identify these parents as a partnership.

Beyond the Greek Language School

As a nonprofit organization, the Greek Language School is not only teaching the Greek language, but it also functions as a platform to interact with Greek-Americans through their culture, history, religion, and things related to Greece. From the learning process, these students are more confident about knowing their homeland and learning to speak the native language. The students seem to ask more questions about Greek history, culture, and religion as they build more confidence in the school. The Vice Principal, Ms. Deuber said one of her grandchildren mentioned that she wants to learn the Greek language because she will be able to communicate in Greek when she visits Greece. Furthermore, the school also organizes different festivals and events related to the Greek community. The school celebrated the Greek Independence Day on March 25th. It demonstrates that the Greek-Americans remember their home country and the people who sacrificed their lives for

Greek independence. Thus, not only is the Language School involved in promoting awareness of Greece's cultural history, it is also involved in awareness of political events.

Conclusion

The Greek Language School works as a subgroup of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation in Baltimore, and it has one hundred years of history since it was founded. It works independently from the church to serve the Greek-Americans without the church's direct involvement, even though it receives funds from the church. The Greek Language School's management is less formal than the public school management system. The school offers Greek language courses. As a non-profit educational organization, it plays multiple roles in the Greek-American community. It is not only transmitting the Greek language, it also trains these Greek-Americans to be bilinguals; it creates the space for Greek-American children to recognize their Greek identity. Through the courses and activities, the school helps them to understand Greek history, religion, culture, and life in Greece. The school helps them to embrace their homeland.

Tibetan Sunday school

Context of the Tibetan-American Community

Tibetans are a native ethnic group who has lived across the Tibetan Plateau and Himalayan region. Tibetans have their languages and standardized writing system. As an ethnicity, the majority of Tibetans believe in Buddhism, which was infused in the Tibetan people's daily life. In 1950, the Chinese communist military entered Tibet and, under the name of "liberation," occupied its land. After several years of occupation, the Tibetans undertook an uprising in 1958. It ended with failure. As a result, 80,000 Tibetans followed the 14th Dalai Lama to exile in India, and even more Tibetans fled from Tibet to India seeking "freedom."³⁹ Being a refugee in exile in India was never easy for the Tibetans; they could not go back home due to fear of political persecution, so many of them were separated from families for many years.

In 1990, the United States decided to admit 1,000 Tibetan refugees into America as immigrants, not as "refugees" because U.S. did not want to displease Chinese government at the time. The Tibetan refugees settled across the United States, especially in New York City; Ithaca, N.Y.; San Francisco; Minneapolis; Madison, Wis., and Amherst, Mass. According to the U.S. official report only 500 Tibetans entered the United States in the thirty years before

³⁹ Yeh, Emily T. "Exile Meets Homeland: Politics, Performance, and Authenticity in the Tibetan Diaspora." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 4 (2007): 648-67.

1990.⁴⁰ After the resettlement program, Tibetan refugees in exile in India are able to apply for a US visa to travel, and the Tibetan population has started to grow in the United States, especially in Queens, New York City. By having conversation with some Tibetan residents in New York City, I learned that the majority of the Tibetan women work as nannies, and others are working in factories and stores to make a living. Through the years, these Tibetan-Americans faced the challenges to transmit their Tibetan language and culture to their children as they live in the western cultural environment, stated by three interviewees individually. One of the parents said, we Tibetans should maintain our Tibetan culture and language, and teaches younger generations within the Tibetan cultural context to keep their Tibetan identity.

New York Tibetan Services Center

New York Tibetan Services Center (NYTSC) is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, located in Queens, New York City.⁴¹ It is a large Asian neighborhood but culturally diverse within the community. Chinese and Korean restaurants, grocery stores, and other businesses mainly occupy the business market. NYTSC's office is settled in the third floor of a three-floor building. From the street, people can see "New York Tibetan Service Center" in both Tibetan and English on the outside wall of the third floor, which is the only visible Tibetan

⁴⁰ Howe, Marvine. "U.S., in New Step, Will Let In 1,000 Tibetans." *The New York Times*, August 21, 1991, sec. World. <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/08/21/world/us-in-new-step-will-let-in-1000-tibetans.html>.

⁴¹ NYTSC Address: 83-02 Broadway, Flushing, NY 11373 "NYTSC," accessed April 4, 2016, <http://pasguru.com/nytsc/>.

sign in the crowded Asian neighborhood. A Chinese kindergarten runs next to the NYTSC on the third floor, and a Chinese tutoring program is on the second floor. Some stores and restaurants occupy the first floor of the building. As I entered the NYTSC office, I saw the colorful walls and Tibetan Tangka hanging on the wall.⁴² The center has a medium dancing room with the mirror on its wall, three classrooms in different sizes, a music room, and a small office. The helpdesk is available next to the entering door, and it is convenient for visitors if they have any questions.

The NYTSC started in 2009 by Mrs. Tsering Diki as a free summer camp for Tibetan students from New York City,. Before Mrs. Diki started the NYTSC, she founded Diki Daycare in 2004, which was a business-oriented organization for taking care of the children.⁴³ Diki was able to develop the center quickly with support from her few Tibetan friends, and now it serves the Tibetan/Himalayan communities in New York City. NYTSC has its mission: “to preserve and promote Tibetan/Himalayan culture, to provide services required for a successful transition to America, and to promote the well-being and success of Tibetan/Himalayan communities in the New York City, communities that suffer from lack of access to language and culturally-appropriate services.”⁴⁴ NYTSC follows its mission to provide various programs, such as afterschool, Sunday school, ESL class, a translation program, Summer camp, childcare training, and parenting workshops to the targeted Tibetan/Himalayan community members in New York City. These programs are offered

⁴² A tanka/thanka is Tibetan Buddhist painting on cotton, or silk, usually depicting a Buddhist deity, scene, or mandala.

⁴³ “Diki Daycare Center.” Accessed April 8, 2016. <http://www.dikidaycare.com/>.

⁴⁴ “Mission | NYTSC,” accessed April 4, 2016, http://pasguru.com/nytsc/?page_id=55.

based on the community's current situation, and such services were rarely available to the Tibetan/Himalayan communities in New York.

Mrs. Diki explained, some new arrivals from the Tibetan/Himalaya region are often unable to communicate in English and are not familiar American society. Thus, her institution aims to assist those vulnerable people for free to help them overcome the obstacles in the United States. The ESL class develops their English skills in the hope they will be able to communicate in the work environment. Their childcare training provides adults with the skills to take care of children as nannies; what their responsibilities are, and how to deal with an emergency situation during work, etc. NYTSC also organizes parenting workshop that addresses cultural, societal, and legal expectations about raising a family in the United States, in case the new immigrants broke the law because they are unfamiliar with the American law. The translation program provides help to anyone in the Tibetan/Himalayan community who do not know English yet and need to fill out a form, go to a hospital or attend to any difficulties encountered because of their communication level.

Mr. Nawang, the development director at NYTSC, said that some police officers appreciate the center's translation service because it makes their work a lot easier than before, when they met Tibetans who do not speak English. Mr. Nawang mentioned that he or his coworkers are called anytime in 24 hours to help with the translations if there was an emergency requiring Tibetan-English translation.

The afterschool program is what Mrs. Diki and her team is most proud of since it was the first city-funded afterschool program for the Tibetan students in New York City. The NYTSC

afterschool program has two sites allocated as middle school and primary school (includes preschool) at different places in New York City. The middle school is located at 30-81 Steinway Street, 2nd Floor, Astoria, NY, and the primary school shares the center's address at 83-02A Broadway, 3rd Floor, Elmhurst, NY. The students come to the program at slightly different times since they are not coming from the same public school.

Management System

NYTSC has a management system, and it seems that the staff are in current positions that fit their educational background and life experiences. Dr. Tsering Shakya, Kay Mccorkell, and David Truong are on the board, and their experiences relevant to Tibetan culture and language strengthen the institution at large. Notably, Dr. Shakya as a Tibetan, earned his Ph.D. in Tibetan Studies at University of London and his book *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet Since 1947* is a significant contribution to modern Tibetan history. However, he lives in Canada and it may be difficult for him to participate in the school's activities.

Tsering Diki is the Executive Director of the NYTSC who oversees the organization. Kelly Isham is the program director, and she is responsible for all the educational projects, except the Tibetan Sunday program. Nawang Gurung works as the development director, mainly focusing on the Tibetan Sunday School. Meanwhile, Mr. Nawang is involved in the translation program and other activities as well. Tsering Ghongpa has the title of office

manager, and his role is to maintain business records, strengthen relations with the Health and Education Department, and he also handles any office related issues at the center. Gaining further details of the organizational management was difficult, since I could not participate in any relevant meetings during my field research.

Tibetan Sunday School

Tibetans in New York City are like most of the minorities in the United States, that they also try to keep their native language and culture in the predominated western culture. As the younger generations considerably adapted into the American society, they prefer to speak English in the daily conversations, and their Tibetan cultural awareness and language ability was disabled. The situation threatens these younger generations lose their Tibetan language and identity. As a result, cultural organizations like NYTSC's Sunday school emerged and helped these young generations to study their culture and language.

The Tibetan Sunday school focuses on teaching the Tibetan language, culture, history, religion, arts, dance, and music classes to the Tibetan/Himalayan children of New York City. The class starts every Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm at the NYTSC. Mr. Nawang notes that Tibetan teachers flexibly taught these classes through the year. Currently, the students focus on Tibetan reading and writing in March because they spent more time on preparing the Tibetan New Year performance before February. After this period, the school will

follow the curriculum based on the school academic calendar. During this Tibetan New Year, NYTSC organized Tibetan New Year Celebration gathered many people and the students performed for the public. It was a great opportunity to promote NYTSC in the community, and it increases engagement within the community.

Most of the Tibetan-American students found it is difficult to communicate in Tibetan. As they prefer to speak English, they use English to communicate with their classmates at Sunday school. Some of the students start to learn the Tibetan alphabets from the first day they attended in this program, and it would be difficult for them to learn the Tibetan as a second language within an English speaking community. These Tibetan students spent most of their time in the public schools to learn the entire subjects in English Monday through Friday. If their parents did not try to speak with them in Tibetan at home, the Sunday school might be the only place to hear and speak the language for them. From the conversations with some Tibetans in New York City, I learned that majority of Tibetan immigrants in the community did not systemically receive a formal education, and their payments situation requires them make efforts. Therefore, they work hard every day to maintain the income and are unable to focus on their children's Tibetan education. There must be other reasons why some of them could not speak Tibetan at all. Diki Dolkel moved to New York City from India in December 2015, now she teaches Tibetan alphabets to the students at the Sunday school. Dolkel expressed that she was shocked at the first time saw these Tibetan children could not speak their native language, and they did not understand what she was saying. She believes that it is crucial for parents to involve in the program to improve these children's Tibetan language; without parents' cooperation, only attending

Sunday's class could not improve the situation. However, Dolkel takes a positive view on the future of these Tibetan children to speak Tibetan language and know their culture, because she noticed their progress in the school, she believes that gradually they will learn more Tibetan words and culture to continue their cultural heritage. The school and teachers measure the success by looking at if these students speak Tibetan fluently and understand the Tibetan culture when they are in twenties.

To prepare an appropriate Tibetan teaching material for these Tibetan-American students is an issue due to the fact that most of them learn Tibetan as a second language. The Tibetan teaching materials from Tibet and Tibetan exile community in India are too difficult for them. Yugang Wooser is a Tibetan teacher in the program. Currently, Yugang tries to design a new Tibetan textbook as they found the necessity. Yugang had twenty-year teaching experience in Tibetan Diaspora community in India. He showed me his ongoing work on his computer; it is for Tibetan beginning learners. The contents include Tibetan alphabet, vocabularies with the representative graphics, and English translations is also available in the texts. Yugang plans to design the textbook as a small pocketbook, which would be convenient for the students to carry around with them, and they would also be satisfied to finish read a book. From Yugang's explanation, I think his new creative textbook would visually attract the children to learn. However, the new book is not yet ready. He needs to find out the outcome after the students used it for some time. Currently, teachers prepare the teaching material individually and they do not have a unified textbook responded by Mr. Nawang.

Tenzin Wangmo is one of the Tibetan teachers at the Sunday school. She taught in Tibetan Diaspora in India for 14 years before she moved to America, and she taught Tibetan students at the NYTSC for one year now. I noticed that Tenzin Wangmo was teaching a group of students how to read Tibetan by using phonetic writing while I was observing her class. During the interview, I asked her teaching strategy, Wangmo explained that her students were struggling to pronounce the Tibetan words as they were only studying Tibetan on Sunday. For example, the students pronounce the Tibetan word འ “nga” as ན “na”, and ལྷ “lha” as ལ “ha”. It was a big challenge for them to learn Tibetan since they did not learn the language systemically like learning in the Tibetan schools. Therefore, she allowed them to write the Tibetan pronunciation in phonetic sounds to help them to study. They would look at both phonetic writing and Tibetan texts when they read it. However, once a week studying the Tibetan is not enough for them to learn Tibetan, and it is also crucial for the parents to speak Tibetan with them in the daily bases. Wangmo wishes that her students would have at least three times to study in the class each week, and that probably help their Tibetan language.

Funding Resources

Regarding the Tibetan Sunday school’s revenue, they do small fundraising work, and the student’s tuition of \$30/day, which was considered the main funding resource. Besides that they have no a specific organization or foundation to support them financially. Mrs. Diki also uses some incomes from her business company to the organization when it’s

necessary. However, the afterschool's space is available during the weekend, they use the classrooms for Sunday school for free, which saves part of renting classrooms.

Partnership

Currently, NYTSC has no a partnership with any institutions yet. Mrs. Diki realizes that many Tibetan organizations in the New York City are for the purpose of the religion and politics. Mrs. Diki wants the NYTSC follows its mission that aims to benefit the vulnerable Himalayan/Tibetan people in the New York culturally, socially, and educationally. Mrs. Diki indicates that she would look for partnership when she is ready.

Beyond the Tibetan Sunday School

NYTSC's Tibetan Sunday School plays a significant role in the Tibetan/Himalayan community of the New York City to promote Tibetan culture and language. As a cultural school, it provides an inclusive curriculum that introduces the Tibetan culture through various subjects, such as dance, music, opera, and Tibetan language, etc., in the best way; namely, the curriculum reaches the goal of cultural education be seeing the students' own culture—Tibetan culture—as a key resource that would help them to learn effectively. For example, in the music class, the students would be not only learning how to play

instruments and singing Tibetan songs, but they also have the chance to learn to produce new music with their music instructor. Their language teaching focuses on U-Tsang Tibetan dialect, which may be difficult for the people who want to learn Amdo or Kham Tibetan dialects.

On this platform, they talk about themes relevant to the Tibetan history, culture, and festivals, etc., to broaden their view. They talk about their identity and exchanges experiences with the friends and classmates in this school. Ultimately, the school creates the sense of belonging for the students, and they take care of each other like family. Nevertheless, it's not easy for them to be the first or second Tibetan-American generation in the United States. These Tibetan children were struggling with their dual-identity of being both American and Tibetan. They realize that they were culturally different from their American classmates in the public schools. They constantly need to explain the whole situation about China and Tibet when their classmate and teachers ask them where they originally came from.

Veda Shastri, a New York Journalist, reported on the Sunday school in December 2015. She interviewed the Tibetan students in the program about their experience with their Tibetan identity in the American school. I quoted the piece of her report here to demonstrate how they interacted with non-Tibetans when they were questioned about their identity.

“Our classmates don’t really know the Tibetan culture and where it is on the globe, because on the globe it just says Tibetan plateau, “ says Jamyang Wangmo, an 8th grader from Queens.

Her friend, fellow 8th grader, Tenzin Dechen, added, “Also we have to explain the whole thing about how China took over Tibet and how Tibet is now part of China, and we have to explain everything about it so that they understand that we are from Tibet but not from China.”

It’s not merely about making others understand where and what it means to be Tibetan, but also about ensuring that their identity remains distinct from a Chinese-American one.

“Even after you explain, some people don’t understand, they think Tibet and China, it’s the same thing,” said Dechen Wangmo, an 11th-grade student.⁴⁵

This piece of interview indicates these Tibetan students were struggling not understood by their American classmates and teachers, as they rarely know about the complicated relationship between China and Tibet. They were unhappy when people confused their Tibetan identity with Chinese. However, the Sunday school is a place where they could be fully understood, shares the same cultural identity, they don’t need to explain as often do in

⁴⁵ “Dual-Identities,” *The New Americans*, accessed May 18, 2016, <http://projects.nyujournalism.org/thenewamericans/dual-identities/>.

the public schools, and they are comfortable to be with the similar cultural background. The Sunday school reinforces their Tibetan identity by learning the language and culture. The students also have the chance to learn Tibetan dance, song, and the festivals through the engaging in the community festivals, such as performing the Tibetan New Year performance.

Mrs. Yang Zom is Tibetan teacher and mother of Mrs, Diki. Mrs. Yang Zom said, some of these students were shy and not confident enough when they first time came to the Sunday school. After they knew other Tibetan children and became friends with them, they were more confident to do what regular American kids do. They were not afraid to speak out and answer teacher's questions. Some parents told the teacher that they were using Sunday school to "threat" their children by saying: "You can't go to the Sunday school", if they did not act well at home. They found that was an effective strategy since they love to the Sunday school where they can meet their friends and play.

Conclusion

The Tibetan Sunday school, as one of the programs at NYTSC, it offers the opportunity to the New York Tibetan/Himalayan children to learn their culture and language. Through my research, I learned that the Sunday program probably could not train the advanced Tibetan, as a native Tibetan speaker, due to the amount of limited study time, the English language environment, and the parents lack the awareness to use Tibetan in daily life.

However, the Tibetan Sunday school impacts the Tibetan students who came to study Tibetan language and culture. The school functioned as a community to bring all these Tibetan children together to involve in their culture, play with their Tibetan peers, and embrace their dual identity. They feel the sense of belonging and connection to each other in this space to share their experiences. They learn something about Tibet and its culture from teachers and classmates. Their connection to their homeland is tightening while they spent more time within this school. The Tibetan-American community in the New York City was developed in the past two decades, and it may take some time for these Tibetans to reinforce the Tibetan culture and language in the community, to achieve the sustainability of Tibetan culture and language.

Washington Japanese Language School

Context of the Japanese-American Community

Since 1639, Japan was isolated from Europe and most of its colonies, until Commodore Matthew Perry of the United States Navy forced Japan to open its door to trade with the United States in 1853. A massive Japanese social transformation occurred in the following years.

During the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the rapid urbanization and industrialization caused social disruption and agricultural failure. As a result, people sought a better life outside of their homeland. Ultimately, many of them arrived in the United States. It was not easy for them to cross the Pacific Ocean to the U.S. A group of contract laborers traveled to Hawaii illegally. However, the first Japanese immigration to the United States started in the 1880s. More than 400,000 Japanese left their country and immigrated to the United States between 1886 and 1911.⁴⁶

Some of the Japanese who lived near Washington, D.C. with their families are the officials who work at the Japanese Embassy and businesspeople for different organizations. They mainly lived in Maryland and Northern Virginia. It would be easier to categorize the Japanese into two major groups in the D.C. area: the first group is the Japanese-Americans who are the permanent American citizens and the second group is the Japanese ambassadors who live in the United States for temporary work requirements and will return to Japan. However, the Japanese families try to sustain their language and culture in the United States and wish their children to do the same. Therefore, some parents decide to send their children to the Japanese weekend schools to learn Japanese culture and language. In the following section, I am going to introduce the organization in depth.

⁴⁶ "Japanese - Introduction - Immigration...- Classroom Presentation | Teacher Resources - Library of Congress," webpage, accessed April 27, 2016, <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/immigration/japanese.html>.

Washington Japanese Language School (WJLS)

WJLS is a nonprofit educational organization founded by a group of Japanese parents in 1958.⁴⁷ It is the oldest Japanese school outside of Japan, and the Japanese government financially supports it. The first batch of the Japanese parents wished to have their children maintain the Japanese language and culture in the United States in addition to attending an American school. In the beginning, they rented a classroom at the Japanese Embassy with two teachers and 29 students. Some non-Japanese students also requested to study in the Japanese school, and the number of students increased. Therefore, they sought another bigger space to run the school, and they moved out from the Japanese Embassy. They moved the school around several times, and now they rent the classroom at Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart in Bethesda, Maryland to run the Saturday school. Before Stone Ridge, WJLS had three campuses at different locations in Maryland and Virginia. The WJLS encountered many challenges in managing the school due to limited staff and the race conflicts in the Maryland ten to fifteen years ago. Finally, they decided to combine the three campuses into one and make it manageable. On April 2, 2016, when I arrived in front of a teaching building at Stone Ridge School, I see some people were communicating in Japanese and people were walking around. I found several Asian looking men in yellow fleece vest were at the building entrance and I realized they are security men after I asked where I could find Mr. Chikara, the General Manager of WJLS. With one of their guidance, I

⁴⁷ “ Washington Japanese Language School,” accessed April 23, 2016, <http://www.wjls.org/>.

found myself in front of a crowded office room. I did not hear anyone speak in English but only in Japanese. I knew it was their first day of the new semester and they were busy with distributing the textbooks. The atmosphere at the moment gave me a feeling that teachers at WJLS were very busy.

WJLS provides the class to the students from kindergarten through twelfth grade on Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm, and half-days for kindergarten. The school has 41 class days in an academic year, which follows the Japanese academic calendar. This calendar starts in April and ends in the following March. The school follows the Japanese national school curriculum since the Japanese Government funds half of its expenses. The curriculum encompasses mathematics, Japanese literature, physical education, natural science, social science, music, and cultural activities in the context of the Japanese culture. The language instruction for the entire curriculum is Japanese, and the students must have a basic understanding of the language when they apply. Mr. Chikara Tasaki, the General Manager of the WJLS, explains that the staff would have conversations with students in Japanese to see if the students are qualified to study at WJLS or not. The students are unlike American students who only go to the school during the weekdays. In addition to going to school on weekdays, the Japanese students attend WJLS on Saturdays and complete a week's worth of work in one day. They also need to finish relevant assignments based on each subject. Some students dropped out from WJLS because it is intense and challenging as they also attend the public schools. It's necessary for the students to make extra efforts to work on the additional assignments besides the public schools'.

Currently, WJLS has about 700 students who regularly come to study on Saturdays, and they are mostly from Maryland, Northern Virginia, and Washington, D.C. metro area. The population of the students is diverse; most of the students are considered to be American citizen. Twenty percent of the students are children of Japanese officials or businesspeople who will temporarily study in the United States and will return to Japan within a few years after their parents finish the working period in the United States. Marriage is another factor that makes the students' population more diverse; one of the students' parents has a European or non-Japanese heritage that makes their physical characteristics look different from other Japanese children. Mr. Chikara estimated that would take at least fifty percent among the Japanese population in the community. Ms. Ae Soon Dorsey is the head teacher at WJLS who has taught at this school for 13 years. Ms. Dorsey indicates that the notable change at WJLS was that the student body shifted from few Japanese to major Japanese-American. Consequently, one of their parents can't speak Japanese, and that could be a challenge for the family to create a Japanese-based environment at home. Mr. Chikara explains that the Japanese still plays a role at their home even though one of the parents can't speak Japanese.

During my fieldwork, I focused on the language usage among Japanese parents, teachers, and students at WJLS. I did not hear anyone speak English, and I could not believe how they kept their language so well. Therefore, the Japanese language is essential for everyone who wants to study at WJLS. This language requirement at WJLS demonstrates that these students' mother tongue is far beyond the necessary conversation; they pursue to learn more than just the academic terms.

The teaching material at WJLS is a promising one, as the teachers ensure a formal Japanese education. The school receives the Japanese standardized textbooks from the Japanese government for free. The WJLS uses these books to teach their students, and they do not need to worry about not finding the teaching material. The schools in Japan also use these textbooks, so it benefits both groups. The textbook is a fundamental tool for the schools and it saves WJLS's energy and time to produce the teaching materials. It is the prestige of students who attend WJLS that they receive both Japanese and American education simultaneously.

The involvement of the parents who founded WJLS matters if the school wants to continue as a non-profit educational organization. Without the parents' active engagement, WJLS would not come so far and have so much to look forward to in the future. On Saturdays, the parents voluntarily take turns to improve the security on campus and avoid unnecessary incidents. Through my interviews with the parents, I learned that the Japanese community's support satisfied the teachers at WJLS. Meanwhile, some parents were also happy to see their children making achievements at WJLS, and they appreciate that their children have such a beautiful environment to immerse in the Japanese culture and language. However, other parents have different views on the current curriculum, and few quit the school, as they want their children to focus on something more related to the Japanese culture and language. Currently, WJLS focuses on the subjects to receive a Japanese education. Thus, they sent their kids to another Japanese-based program called the Japanese Heritage School, which is different from WJLS in the sense that its teaching

schedule is more relaxed, for example, they do not have intense class and homework as WJLS does. This suggests that WJLS is not for everyone, and some people may find it too intense for the children. Some parents want their children to focus on the culture, and some folks envision that their kids will have a better future if they study at WJLS. Nevertheless, the school organizes festivals and events relevant to the Japanese culture for the students and Japanese community. The WJLS holds an annual sports event on a Saturday; that is the time to build the community relationship and encourage the high school students to lead the lower grade students. Mr. Chikara views it as a way of practicing the students' leadership and to strengthen the community.

The WJLS has more than 40 teachers with various backgrounds. There are teachers who are directly from Japan and have rich teaching experience in Japan or in the United States. They are passionate about teaching, and some enjoy being with children. As the class is text-based and follow the Japanese national curriculum, I found during my participant observation that the teaching methods are formal. The teachers have techniques to support their education, such as use PowerPoint. When I tried to explore how do they transmit the Japanese culture to the students, my participants claimed that the WJLS's curriculum and the textbook themselves are the Japanese culture. The participants also said that the students learn the subjects in Japanese. It inspired me that culture and language could be taught in many different ways, and we may not be aware we were learning when we are in the context of the learning process. Furthermore, Mr. Chikara mentioned that when third and fourth grade students encounter the challenges, the drop out rate tends to increase during that time. To solve the problem, WJLS started a program, "Course Approach" two

years ago that focuses on training essay writing and creativity. The program helps students to be more active and confident when answering questions.

Management System

The WJLS's management school system is different from the other regular schools or educational institutions. The Japanese government appoints the school principal and vice principal every two years who are directly from Japan to manage the teachers and instruct them on how schools in Japan work. The new head started his position this April, the beginning of the semester at WJLS. There is a board that consists of 20 local parents who are actively involved in the school and make important decision; for example, they actively make decisions of the long-term and short-term goals of WJLS. It suggests that the Japanese parents play a significant role in the management system in order to keep the school on track. Mr. Chikara, the school General Manager who manages the teaching materials and tools, works with three people at the Administrative Office to ensure everything is all set after they finish the day's class.

Funding Resources

The WJLS's revenues are from different resources, and they have enough funds to cover necessary expenses without concern. The Japanese government subsidizes fifty percent of the revenue. The students' tuition takes up around forty percent, and about ten percent of the income is from donations or through fundraisings. The Japanese companies also give discounts or make it free to deliver WJLS's teaching materials from Japan to the United States. The percentage of the revenue shows that the primary income is from tuition and the Japanese government. Mr. Chikara indicates that it's important for them to seek other potential funding resources in case the Japanese government stops subsidizing the WJLS. It might happen because seventy percent of the students are Japanese Americans who are American citizen, and the Japanese parents decided the important decisions.

Partnership

The WJLS works independently as an educational organization, and they do not have a partnership as Mr. Chikara said. However, they have collaborated with the Japanese parents and receive funding supports from Japanese government and some Japanese companies.

Beyond the WJLS

As a nonprofit educational institution, the WJLS benefits from the different groups of people in many ways. Its standardized Japanese education helps the students who are going back to Japan to prepare for the school successfully. The Japanese-American students whose knowledge of the Japanese language and culture might be limited and the American cultural environment might weaken their Japanese identity. Studying at WJLS would strengthen their identity by improving their Japanese language and cultural understanding. The school curriculum is ambitious, and it suggests that the students at WJLS have a higher expectation than the basic language and cultural component. The Japanese government's support ensures that the school is run successfully without financial pressures, and the Japanese government also envisions the future contribution of the students to the Japanese community. The students' potentials at WJLS will be visible as they obtain both Japanese education and American education. For example, the mathematic class at WJLS greatly benefits the students in American schools since the Japanese's mathematics is more advanced and they learn math ahead of the class.

In the future, the current educational background would serve the WJLS's students to work internationally, and it also may benefit their career extensively. These advantages would encourage the students, teachers, and parents to work toward their vision. It seems that this is a win-win situation. Because Japan is a powerful country, WJLS students would have the potential to achieve much more that's beyond the Japanese culture and language level. Such advantages may sustain the Japanese culture and language successfully. As Mr.

Chikara said, even though the success of WJLS will be recognized many years later when the students make significant achievements, the students will maintain their Japanese language and culture, and appreciate what they have learned at WJLS.

Conclusion

The WJLS is a nonprofit educational organization that is started by the Japanese parents and will continue to be managed by the parents. Its approach is to maintain the Japanese language and culture by adopting the Japanese national school curriculum. The Japanese government's financial and educational support keeps the school running. The classes are taught in Japanese language; learning a week's portion in one day in the class makes the learning experiences more intense for students. The school curriculum, textbook, and Japanese language instruction are part of Japanese culture practice at WJLS. The school makes it easy for students to access the Japanese education in the United States. The daily language usage at WJLS improves the students' ability to speak Japanese fluently, and receiving the Japanese education broadens their knowledge to understand their home country. As a learning community, WJLS creates the chance to learn Japanese culture while receiving Japanese education.

Jewish Religious School

Context of the Jewish-American Community

The first Jews arrived from Britain in the United States before American Independence in 1776. A group of 23 Jews stepped into New York City in September of 1654, and, back then, New York City was the Dutch city of New Amsterdam.⁴⁸ However, the Jewish community in Washington, D.C. started much later, and the Jewish population remained small. Isaac Pollock was the first known Jewish resident, arriving from the Savannah in 1795. The Jewish community was formed following the first German Jewish immigrants settling in Alexandria and Washington, D.C. in the 1850s.⁴⁹ The new arrivals were merchants and they fled to the United States because the harsh economic and political conditions in central Europe at the time. The number of Jews increased from 200 to almost 2,000 during the Civil War (1861~1865) as some Jewish soldiers decided to stay in Washington, D.C. after completing their service.⁵⁰ According to the particular census, there is an estimated 28,000 Jewish-Americans resided in Washington, D.C. in 2014, making up 4.3% of the population.⁵¹ While the Jewish community was expanding, Jews were making significant achievements in

⁴⁸ Hasia R. Diner, *Jews in America* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1999), 11.

⁴⁹ "Community History | Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington | Lillian and Albert Small Jewish Museum," accessed April 25, 2016, <http://www.jhsgw.org/history/community>.

⁵⁰ "Washington, D.C. Jewish History | Jewish Virtual Library," accessed April 25, 2016, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/vjw/DC.html>.

⁵¹ "Jewish Population in the United States, by State | Jewish Virtual Library," accessed April 25, 2016, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/usjewpop.html>.

education, economics, and other fields in the United States. They have established more synagogues, schools, and other Jewish institutions in Washington, D.C., as well as other places in the United States.

Adas Israel Congregation

Adas Israel Congregation was created like most community-founded institutions based on the communities' needs, and now it is located in Cleveland Park, Washington, D.C. In 1869, a group of Jewish immigrants from Europe arrived in the United States. They pursued sustaining the traditional Jewish culture in the context of the modern American community, and they founded Adas Israel.⁵² The Jewish people started their earliest services in a small loft above a carriage factory near the U.S. Capital. Finally, they joined the conservative movement and created a synagogue for the Jewish community in Washington, D.C. The current location of the Adas Israel was started in 1951. In recent years, it has been newly renovated and it includes some necessary space for its community, such as the Charles E. Smith Sanctuary, Biran Beit Midrash (House of Study), Gewirz Beit Am (House of the People), and the Dedication Ceremony Room. The classrooms and offices are in the building as well. The Jewish community owns the property and they gather here in prayer and to celebrate the festivals with the Jewish community.

⁵² Adas Israel means the community of Israel.

Adas Israel is the oldest and the largest synagogue in the DC area. It serves the Jewish people by allowing them to lead a way of Jewish life by practicing Judaism in the daily bases. Adas Israel offers various services to the Jewish community to strengthen the Jewish culture and religion. Regarding the education, they have Pre-School, Religious School, High School, Youth @AI, and Jewish Day School Families. To allow the Jewish community to lead their way of life, the Adas Israel provides various rituals, such as births, weddings, funerals and cemeteries, and community Mikvahs, etc.

It opened a library to the students and the general community to achieve the lifelong learning goal. Adas Israel also encourages active students to apply to summer scholarships and there are many other activities for youth and family.

Management System

The Jewish Religious School as a subprogram of Adas Israel. Rabbi Kerrith Rosenbaum is the director of education and she started the current position in the summer of 2014. Kerrith plays a significant role in overseeing all education-related activities at Adas Israel, such as curriculum designing, programming, holidays, and the celebrations for the family, etc. The school also has an office manager, board members, youth and family educator, and two new positions (religious assistant director, and youth & family educator) that will start in the next year. In addition, these stakeholders attend relevant activities that require collective thoughts, such as develop program or update curriculum.

Jewish Religious School

The Jewish Religious School works as a part of the Adas Israel; it started about the same time as the foundation of Adas Israel. The school was created in accordance with Jewish teachings and now it has over 150 years of history. Theoretically, the school aims to train younger Jewish generations to practice Jewish culture and to help the young generation to lead the Jewish life and have Jewish values. However, the school also welcomes anyone who is interested in learning the Judaism and practice Jewish culture.

The school provides classes from Pre-K to the Twelfth Grade, at different times according to the grades. The Pre-K to Seventh Grade has a class on Sundays at 9:15 am – 12:15 pm and the Eighth Grade to Twelfth Grade start the class from 4 pm – 6:15 pm on Tuesdays or Wednesdays. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays, students enjoy dinner from 6:15 pm to 8:40 pm.

As a religious school, the curriculum is designed around Judaism, and they annually update the curriculum with the stakeholders (board members, teachers, and parents,) to provide the most relevant content to the students. In the context of Judaism, the class contents are not repeated, and the different grades are instructed on knowledge based on the previous course. For example, there are several different levels of prayer in the Judaism, and the students need to learn each prayer according to their grades.

The class is not only about the religion, but it also teaches the Jewish culture, festivals, rituals, values, and numerous celebrations relevant to the Jewish community. The school tries to create the space to teach the Jewish culture from different sources in and out of the Jewish community.

The population of the students grew 20% in 2015, and now the school has over 300 students, according to the Ms. Kerrith. This achievement was something of which they were proud. They are especially proud because many other Jewish religious schools across the United States face closing their schools because of their population of students was shrinking as they are immersing in the modern culture. The students at the religious school have various heritages that they are not only European but also Asian and African cultures. The increasing diversity among the students suggests that the Jews also get married to other ethnicities or non-Jewish people. One of my participants states that Jews used to marry among the Jewish community through arranged marriages, but now it was changed and people get married to those they have chosen. However, marriage outside of their culture seems to not necessarily detract from the Jews' desire to have their children to pursue Jewish values and culture.

The Jewish Religious School has adapted unified teaching materials for all teachers to apply. The textbook was satisfying the students and teachers at the religious school. Their

primary teaching materials are from Behrman House, a publisher based in New Jersey.⁵³

The contents of the textbook were relevant to the Judaism and it took passages from some sections of the Torah.⁵⁴ Some Hebrew terms and vocabularies were introduced in English. The book contains a variation of activities to help the students understand the rituals and values effectively through the teaching. Perhaps, the way textbooks such as these are designed may help the students to study Judaism like as a subject of education in schools, and the cognitive pattern may help them to learn it systematically at the religious school.

Speaking of the Jewish native language, people probably would assume that Jews might speak Hebrew as their native language or they would promote the language within the community. However, the Jewish Religious School seems more focusing on the Jewish value and culture than the Hebrew language. The teachers at the religious school use English as the language instruction to teach their classes and the teachers did not use Hebrew to communicate at the school during my observation. The school offers the basic Hebrew language classes for the lower grades, but that is only for reading the Torah when they pray because the Torah was written in traditional Hebrew. Therefore, it's crucial for Jews to study classical Hebrew. Nevertheless, the students would learn some greeting words during the classes, although that does not help them to communicate in Hebrew fluently. As English is the first language of the Jews in the United States, they speak in English at home and among the Jews in the public.

⁵³ "Behrman House Publishing | Behrman House Homepage," accessed April 28, 2016, <http://www.behrmanhouse.com/>.

⁵⁴ The first five books of the Hebrew scriptures

Regarding the teaching methodologies, different teachers would have different ways of teaching. I visited a second-grade teacher facilitating around twenty students to draw pictures with a few other teenage student assistants. The students were drawing for a festival that was coming in the following two weeks and the students were using the arts to show their understanding of the festival. Such teaching methods improve the drawing skills and understanding of the Jewish culture simultaneously. More importantly, as the students were actively working on their pictures, they were enjoying the entire class. It's crucial to make the class more interesting and attractive since the Sunday school is different from the traditional school. In another classroom, a fourth-grade teacher follows the textbook to teach the Jewish prayer and value; He would give the lecture for some time, and then ask the students to work on the activities in the textbook. The students may ask any questions related to the teaching content while they work on the activities. It was fascinating to see how Judaism and Jewish culture was taught in this way in the classroom. In this case, it is important to have a comprehensive textbook that supports the teaching; otherwise, it would be challenging for the instructor to facilitate the entire class smoothly. Teaching at the school is dynamic, and the way teaching supports the cognition of the students may lead to their success.

From my interview with parents, I found the parents' involvement may help the school to improve the education. In the case of Jewish religious school, the parents were actively involved in the school activities and strengthening the community's relationships in general. Ms. Lauren Kolko stated that the Jewish culture primarily promotes the value of connecting with families, friends, and communities. The parents' involvement helps

themselves understand school holistically, and that may lead them to encourage the school and to improve it. The school invites some parents to contribute their knowledge to update the school curriculum as Mr. Daniel Traster mentioned, and he is one of them. This is a good example of parents' engagement in the school. It also suggests that the school is inclusive and they understand how to apply potential resources such as community knowledge to develop the school curriculum. At the same time, the school located at the synagogues, so it is convenient for parents to visit the school, as this is also a religious center.

Funding Resources

The Adas Israel Congregation subsidizes the Jewish Religious School, and part of the school's revenue comes from the tuition fees that cover some expenses relevant to teaching. The religious school does not need to be concerned about the financial issue as long as the congregation supports them and the students continue to come study with them.

Partnership

The Jewish Religious School as a one of the educational program at Adas Israel but it has no a partnership outside of the Adas Israel Congregation, even though there are many other small synagogues in Washington D.C. that could work as a partnerships. Ms. Kerrith said that the religious school only worked with programs in the congregation, but not with any outside organizations.

Beyond the Jewish Religious School

To transmit the Jewish traditional culture and promote Jewish values, the Jewish Religious School significantly works toward its objectives by connecting the Jewish community, particularly the parents to engage in the school development. Examples of this include annually updating the curriculum and encouraging the parents to provide ideas to improve the school. The school also teaches Jewish history, compassion, and moral issues relevant to the Judaism. Mr. Danile, a nine-year old's father, claims that it's the right place to immerse in Jewish education, as the parents' knowledge is limited so they could not teach what the students learn from the school. They learn something new each Saturday from the teacher and their classmates. Furthermore, Jews practice a variety of the Jewish rituals and celebrations at Adas Israel and it creates the opportunities for the students to see and feel Jewish culture besides their classes. It means a lot to the students to develop their value and cultural understandings throughout the years. In a general sense, the religion is

part of the Jewish culture so it makes sense that they also should practice their religious belief through maintaining their cultural identity.

Conclusion

The general conception towards religious school could be easily misled by the term “religion,” and people may often think this school heavily emphasized studying the religion and assume that the students would be more conservative. We might have many different assumptions before learning the reality of the school. However, by exploring the Jewish Religious School at Adas Israel, I have new understandings about the religious school’s role in the context of cultural sustainability. Regarding the Jewish culture, which was derived from Judaism, the daily teaching was well-connected with Judaism.

For example, the school practices daily prayers and values the connections between families and community. The Jewish Religious School emphasizes the Jewish culture and life in the classroom to reinforce the awareness for the younger generations. The students learn Jewish cultural values from classmates in the community. The school organizes Jewish festivals and rituals based on their calendar, which suggests that the school works as a more religious school. By studying in the classroom and personally participating the festivals, the students embrace their Jewish-American identity and their Jewish identity is strengthened at the same time. Furthermore, the school also tries to make connections to Israel in the class. The map of Israel is in the classroom and they considered Israel their

home country, even though they were born in the United States. It suggests that the Jews are connected by their Jewish culture, language, and beliefs, even though they were from different places. In addition to these things, they are connected by Israeli nationalism. Meanwhile, as I mentioned, Hebrew as a part of Jewish culture was not emphasizing in daily conversation but was taught primarily for reading the text in the Torah. It would be particularly interesting to undertake research on the relationship between the Jewish culture and language in the Jewish-American community. Regardless, the Jewish Religious School is growing and it has the potential to transmit and maintain Jewish culture in the community based on the current circumstances.

Chapter 5: Analysis of the Case Studies

The previous chapter offers a glimpse of each school by projecting how they function as cultural institutions to transmit their culture and languages in the United States. Each school works as a nonprofit educational institution, which indicates that they are not simply a regular school, but supported by public funding and constrained by government education standards. Thus, it is important to recognize their two fundamental

characteristics are: “nonprofit and educational”, it would help us to understand what kind of role they play in the field of cultural sustainability.

The Greek Language School and Jewish Religious School were founded by the religious institutions and they have more than one hundred-year history. However, their focus is different even though the church subsidizes them; Jewish Religious School teaches Jewish culture and values through Judaism, while the Greek Language school focus on the Greek language. The WJLS has about a fifty-year history and it was started by a group of Japanese parents. Ms. Diki, the director of the NYTSC, launched the seven-year old Tibetan Sunday School with her team at the New York Tibetan Service Center. Their starting time is relative to the time when they immigrated to the United States. However, having a longer history does not necessarily mean the school is highly advanced in the field of cultural education.

These four schools’ organizational structure is different from each other, and shapes how they function as a cultural institution to develop their cultural education, with the goal of sustaining the cultural heritage and reinforcing ethnic identify in the United States. As an example of different organizational structures, the Tibetan Sunday School, Greek Language School, and Jewish Religious School work as sub-organizations within their larger individual institutions. Unlike these sub-organizations, WJLS independently works as a nonprofit cultural organization and is its own entity.

To analyze the case studies, I return to the matrix I applied to approach these ethnic schools during my fieldwork. My matrix is mission statement, cultural policy, community

involvement, management system, curriculum, teaching materials, pedagogy, funding resources, and partnership. The matrix framed my analysis of these case studies.

Mission Statement

A mission statement “ is a written, formal document which attempts to capture an organization’s unique and enduring purpose and practices.”⁵⁵ The purpose of the mission statement is to communicate the organization’s identity with external and internal stakeholders to provide guidance, allocate resources, and motivate for the higher level of performance.⁵⁶ My studies of different cultural schools also illustrate that the mission statements have a positive impact on the sustainability of an organization, and that an effective mission statement may create successful communications with the stakeholders.⁵⁷

⁵⁸ The findings above suggest that the mission statement is significant and organizations

⁵⁵ Christopher K. Bart and John C. Tabone, “Mission Statement Rationales and Organizational Alignment in the Not-for-Profit Health Care Sector,” *Health Care Management Review* 23, no. 4 (1998): 54–69.

⁵⁶ Joseph L. Bower, Yves L. Doz, and Clark G. Gilbert, “Linking Resource Allocation to Strategy,” *From Resource Allocation to Strategy*, Eds. Joseph L. Bower and Clark G. Gilbert, 2005, 3–25. Robert E. McDonald, “An Investigation of Innovation in Nonprofit Organizations: The Role of Organizational Mission,” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (June 1, 2007): 256–81.

⁵⁷ Bart and Tabone, “Mission Statement Rationales and Organizational Alignment in the Not-for-Profit Health Care Sector.”, 25.

⁵⁸ Daniel S. Cochran and Fred R. David, “Communication Effectiveness of Organizational Mission Statements,” *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 14, no. 2 (Fall 1986): 108. D. Keith Gurley et al., “Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals: An Exploration of Key Organizational Statements and Daily Practice in Schools,” *Journal of Educational Change* 16, no. 2 (May 2015): 217–42.

should pay attention to the mission statement. Thus, it also inspires my research to approach the mission statement and to learn how each school practices it.

By interviewing the school managers, I learned that they believe their mission statement drives their schools. However, the condition of how they practice and the effectiveness of their mission statement is different from one school to the next. The Tibetan Sunday School's mission statement, which is included on the New York Tibetan Service Center's official website, is "to preserve and promote Tibetan/Himalayan culture and to provide services required for a successful transition to America."⁵⁹ This mission statement is understandable and delivers its message about what they do to maintain the culture and identity. Meanwhile, the Jewish Religious School's mission statement is embedded in the introduction of the school on their website, making it harder to discern. The introduction reads, in part: "to provide an education designed to inspire our students to lead their lives as identified, committed Jews and ethical human beings. Our purpose is to instill Jewish values and a sense of pride in our students for their Jewish heritage, customs, language and traditions by creating a learning environment that is warm, challenging and enticing."⁶⁰ Such mission statements require people to read carefully, and then consider what their mission is about because the mission is not separately identified as a mission statement. In addition, it seems the description contains a mixture of their vision and objectives, which is confusing even though I understand they teach Judaism. This observation is supported

⁵⁹ "Mission | NYTSC," accessed April 4, 2016, http://pasguru.com/nytsc/?page_id=55.

⁶⁰ "Adas Israel's Jewish Religious School," accessed May 16, 2016, <http://adasisrael.org/religious-school/>.

during my interview with a teacher at the Jewish Religious School. When I asked there are additional thoughts she would like to share, she suggested that I ask the administrator what is the mission of Jewish Religious School because it has remained unclear to her, as well as other teachers at the school. She wonders if Jewish Religious School's mission and congregation's mission support each other. When I asked Rabbi Kerrith Rosenbaum if the school works towards the direction of its mission, she said: "people feel last two years brought us much closer in line with the mission." Ms. Rabbi's statement seems not the case for Ms. Efrati and the teachers at the school. In contrast, Ms. Faye and Ms. Joy Kay Deuber claim that Greek Language School has no a clearly stated mission on paper, but they said that the mission evolves from the school's curriculum that they are currently teaching. However, according to the given definition above, the Greek Language School does not have a mission statement, even though they have a mission. Similarly, the WJLS's website does not include a clearly stated mission, although Mr. Chikara mentioned that their mission is to help the students be prepared to attend school in Japan for those who plan to return Japan, and to train global-minded young generations for future development in Japan.

This short review on mission statements demonstrates that the situation of the schools' mission statements is different. Tibetan Sunday School's mission is the most clearly stated among the four schools. If the school's teachers, parents, board members, and other stakeholders wonder what is the Tibetan Sunday School's mission, they always can visit the center's website to confirm if they agree with that mission. On the contrary, the stakeholders at Greek Language School, WJLS, and Jewish Religious School may encounter challenges because they technically do not have a mission statement. Without an effective

mission statement, it is difficult for the schools to communicate with internal and external stakeholders, such as teachers, parents, community members, board members, and organizations. For example, Ms. Efrati wonders how to prepare for her class; Ms. Faye and Ms. Deuber could not clearly state when I asked what is their mission; and in contrast to what most participants view as the mission of WJLS. Consequently, the schools would find it is difficult to manage their institution. These suggest that the mission statement is important to manage the non-profit cultural institutions and reinforce the cultural sustainability.

Management System

The organizational structure shapes the management system of organizations.

The Jewish Religious School and Greek Language Schools were started and funded by individual religious institutions. However, the schools have the freedom to manage their program independently. The Jewish Religious School requires more administrative support than Greek Language School. This may be because of the difference in the number of students and teachers; the Jewish Religious School has about 300 hundred students, but the Greek School only has about eighty students currently. Although the other three schools all have boards of directors, none board members hold as much power over their school as the one at WJLS to make important decisions. The benefits of having a board is that organization may access to more resources and able to sustain the organization by avoiding

potential risks. In brief, management system is fundamental for cultural schools to be sustained in order to achieve the purpose of cultural education.

Cultural Policy

Cultural policy is a challenge to understand by definition, because the word “culture” is such an abstract idea.⁶¹ Kevin V. Mulcahy’s critical discussion on the definition and theoretical approaches of cultural policy indicate that it is broader and even more complicated than arts policy.⁶² However, my understanding of cultural policy refers to any institutional policies, activities, and regulations that support maintaining and promoting minority culture and languages. I recognize that cultural policy exists in different forms and is systematically integrated in the actions of organizations.⁶³

The purpose of exploring cultural policy is to understand the schools’ knowledge of the cultural policies from the U.S. government and if they apply those policies in the school to improve their work. When school officials were interviewed from each institution, none disclosed whether the governmental cultural policy was integrated into their school; it may be the U.S. authority does not have a holistic cultural policy for individual communities as

⁶¹ Michael McKeon, review of *Review of Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, by Raymond Williams, *Studies in Romanticism* 16, no. 1 (1977): 128–39.

⁶² Kevin V. Mulcahy, “Cultural Policy: Definitions and Theoretical Approaches,” *Journal of Arts Management, Law & Society* 35, no. 4 (Winter 2006): 319–30.

⁶³ Toby Miller and George Yudice, *Cultural Policy* (SAGE, 2002), 1.

the U.S. Department of Culture and Arts encourages the communities, organizations, and counties to establish the cultural policy.⁶⁴

However, Mr. Chikara said that one of their current challenges is more non-Japanese students also want to attend WJLS and it is difficult to manage as the school is expending. If the new students met the WJLS's requirements, the school has to accept them because it is illegal to reject according to the laws of the Federal Government. This could be a reason why the other three schools are also open to anyone who is interested in learning instead of only focusing on their targeted community. Furthermore, because I see cultural policy as a way to maintain and promote minority culture and languages, I also looked at the school's regulation on practicing native language in these schools. As David Harrison states, language is not simply a communication tool, but it contains the culture and knowledge transmitted by the ancient ancestors.⁶⁵ Therefore, the significance of language drives me to explore the frequency of native language usage at the schools, and particularly to learn if they have any about policies in regards speaking their mother tongue.

Mr. Nawang states that the Tibetan Sunday School used to have a rule to make the students only speak Tibetan during the school time; if someone broke the rule, he or she would be fined with dollars. As time went by, more students broke the rule and, it turns out that the result of the policy was to fine the students; it did not help them to speak Tibetan. Thus,

⁶⁴ "Cultural Policy," *U.S. Department of Arts and Culture*, accessed May 6, 2016, <http://usdac.us/cultural-policy/>.

⁶⁵ K. David Harrison, *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

they stopped it, but they still encourage students to speak Tibetan at least in the classroom. Likewise, Greek Language School experienced the same situation. They asked the students to communicate in Greek, as Ms. Faye said, but the students stopped being active because they could not speak Greek. Consequently, some students quit the school so the school abandoned the language policy. In the case of WJLS, students learn all the subjects in Japanese so it would not be that difficult for them to speak Japanese. WJLS did not have a stated policy to make the students speak Japanese. Mrs. Jun Hogan mentioned that still some students speak English; she would try to encourage them to communicate in Japanese by asking why she/he was at WJLS on Saturday, and that helps solve the problem. In contrast, the Jewish Religious School's language focus differs from the other three schools; they learn Hebrew for praying while they read the Torah because it is written in traditional Hebrew, but to communicate in Hebrew is not their main purpose. Therefore, they do not have any policies requesting students to speak Hebrew at school. Language priority depends on the institution's interests, which inspire them to use certain strategies to encourage students to employ their native language.

Community Involvement

The community is a significant resource for cultural knowledge beyond the schools, as it contains the traditional knowledge transmitted from generation to generation, and it also

practices a variety of cultural activities, which are rarely performed in the public schools.⁶⁶ Community knowledge also refers to indigenous knowledge, which is often typically neglected by formal educational institutions. Thus, the students assume indigenous knowledge is unimportant.⁶⁷ Such an assumption illustrates the educator and students' lack of understating regarding the indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge refers to "a cumulative body of knowledge and beliefs handed down through generations by cultural transmission about the relationship of living beings, (including humans) with one another and with their environment."⁶⁸ However, as demonstrated by Linda Deafenbaugh, the ways of learning or knowing are different; a school's way of learning is text-based instruction by the teachers, and the community way of knowing is to transmit the cultural knowledge among the cultural groups to maintain the traditions, for example orally and through participation.⁶⁹ This suggests that a combination of different ways of knowing would benefit the students to gain cultural knowledge. As Mr. Danile explains, his child learns Jewish values and culture from the teachers and classmates, as well as the situated broader Jewish community. The teachers at the other three schools also mentioned that their students have the similar experience of learning.

⁶⁶ Deafenbaugh, "Folklife Education: A Warm Welcome Schools Extend to Communities." Paddy Bowman, "I Didn't Know What I Didn't Know": Reciprocal Pedagogy," *Through the Schoolhouse Door: Folklore, Community, Curriculum*, Ed. Paddy Bowman and Lynne Hamer, 2011, 19-46.

⁶⁷ Ladislaus Semali, "Community as Classroom: Dilemmas of Valuing African Indigenous Literacy in Education," *International Review of Education* 45, no. 3-4 (1999): 305-19.

⁶⁸ Madhav Gadgil, Fikret Berkes, and Carl Folke, "Indigenous Knowledge for Biodiversity Conservation," *Ambio*, 1993, 151-56.

⁶⁹ Deafenbaugh, "Folklife Education: A Warm Welcome Schools Extend to Communities."

Community engagement may sustain such cultural schools by using the community knowledge and power. I discovered that in these cases, the community is involved differently from others. The Japanese community is the most active group among the four. First, the Japanese parents founded WJLS and that explains their support is fundamental. Second, a group of twenty parents are the board members of WJLS, and they make important decisions. Third, the parents voluntarily offer necessary assistance on Saturdays, such as to be responsible for security. In addition, some Japanese business companies financially support WJLS. In the Jewish Religious School case, some Jewish parents participate in the curriculum designing and updating process, to offer their insight to improve the school curriculum.

The Tibetan and Greek parents appreciate what the school is doing for maintaining the culture and language and in participate in the school's events. Nevertheless, no specific examples of involvement, such as participation in the curriculum design or on the board were mentioned during my fieldwork. In some circumstances, it is a challenge to learn if the community is supportive by interviewing the people at the organization because they may try to avoid the topic to not offend anyone if the community is not involved. It takes time to explore how often and in what ways they engage in these cultural schools. The active community involvement shows that local people value and care about for the school's work, and many more benefits would emerge from such actions.

Community involvement has impacts to sustain the school by offering financial support, valuable feedback, and resources to improve the school. Such community engagement also

demonstrates that the community values the school's work and that would motivate the school to achieve more. In other words, the sustainable cultural school has more potential to succeed in cultural education. Therefore, it is vital to recognize the advantage of the community involvement for sustainable cultural education.

Curriculum

Traditionally, the curriculum refers to the coursework provided or required by the educational institutions to complete a degree or reach certain qualifications.⁷⁰ It is the core of school teaching and deciding what students are going to learn. Hence, it is critical for cultural schools to take the curriculum seriously to serve their goals. At the same time, alternative schools can be flexible as they design and develop their curriculum. This is rarely practiced in the public schools as they more often follow the national school curriculum. Moreover, if the cultural school takes advantage of designing the curriculum that would help them avoid the "hidden curriculum" of the mainstream culture, as Stanley Aronowitz and Henry Giroux describe. "Schools legitimate dominant culture through the hierarchically arranged bodies of knowledge that make up the curriculum as well as the way in which certain forms of linguistic capital and the individual (rather than collective) appropriation of knowledge is rewarded in schools."⁷¹ Generally, such hidden curriculum

⁷⁰ Antonia Darder, *Culture and Power in the Classroom: A Critical Foundation for Bicultural Education* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1991).

⁷¹ Stanley Aronowitz and Henry A. Giroux, *Education Under Siege: The Conservative, Liberal and Radical Debate Over Schooling* (Routledge, 2003), 148.

refers to the national curriculum as the dominant cultural group controls it and ignores the minority culture in the public schools.

In researching the curriculum, my goal is to understand the inclusiveness and flexibility in the contexts of cultural schools and ask questions, such as who participated in the curriculum design, what courses are included, and how they developed the curriculum. Greek Language School aims to teach Greek language; specifically, they teach reading, writing, and grammar in Greek. Ms. Faye creates the curriculum and the other teachers contribute upon her draft. The Jewish Religious School's curriculum focuses on Judaism, which includes the practice of different prayers, Jewish values, and the Hebrew language. At the Tibetan Sunday School, Tibetan language and folk traditions, such as Tibetan music, dance, tangka painting, and opera are in the curriculum. It sounds fun and enjoyable, as it is not highly text-based teaching. In contrast, WJLS follows the Japanese national school curriculum, which covers mathematics, social science, and natural science; Japanese is the language instruction for the entire subjects. When I asked if their curriculum includes any Japanese culture-related content, the participants at WJLS believe that the curriculum itself reflects Japanese culture, plus the students learn everything in Japanese. It brings back the question of how we perceive the term "culture" and it is not question to answer here, as it is a complicated word. Nevertheless, I found from these four schools that the curricula encompass their ethnic culture in different ways, and these examples would help me to develop a curriculum in Tibetan community that is more inclusive within the local Tibetan culture.

Teaching Material & Pedagogy

Undoubtedly, the teaching material relies on the school curriculum. Using teaching material in opposition to the curriculum would not benefit the pedagogy and learning. For example, at Jewish Religious School, teachers use a textbook that is relevant to Torah because their curriculum focuses on Judaism, and the pedagogy follows the content of their textbook. It demonstrates the interrelations between the curriculum, teaching material, and pedagogy. Also, it illustrates the significance of the teaching material, which needs to support the school curriculum to achieve the educational purpose.

Access to appropriate teaching materials is different for each school. Tibetan Sunday School and Greek Language School point out that they could not find suitable textbooks for their students; the textbooks from Greece are too difficult for the Greek-Americans, and the teaching materials from Tibet or from the exiled Tibetan community do not suit Tibetan Americans in New York City. Consequently, some Greek-Americans of the church produced Greek language textbooks to fit the current Greek students, but the new textbook does not satisfy some teachers at Greek Language School because they found some errors and translation issues.

Similarly, a Tibetan teacher is designing a new textbook for the Tibetan-American students at the Tibetan Sunday School, but it will take some time to see the results of the new book. In contrast, it seems that the Jewish Religious School and WJLS do not have any serious

issues with the teaching materials they use. The Jewish Religious School uses a majority of teaching materials from Behrman House, a publisher in New Jersey. I saw one of the teachers applying that textbook in the class and he expressed his satisfaction with the textbook. Because WJLS follows the Japanese national school curriculum, the Japanese government donates the textbooks from Japan and they fit with their curriculum. I did not hear any comments among the participants about those textbooks.

Overall, I learned the importance of suitable teaching material in such cultural schools. If they do not have a teaching material that supports the curriculum, it means that their curriculum will fail even if it is holistic, and teachers may be challenged without reasonable teaching content. Consequently, the school would lose trust from students and parents, and ultimately that will influence the sustainability of the school.

Funding Resources

A nonprofit organization requires funding resources to maintain its organization. Because alternative schools do not receive funding from state or federal departments of education (as public schools do), so I was curious about the funding situation in the four schools. A common finding is that part of their revenue comes from tuition, yet the required tuition fee must remain affordable for the average families. Beyond the tuition fee, the source of income for each individual school is different. For example, Jewish Religious School and

Greek Language School do not have additional funding resources; this may be because the larger institutions subsidize them. Ms. Faye explained that it would be difficult to sustain the Greek Language School if the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation did not support them. In the same fashion, Tibetan Sunday School has no additional revenue except the tuition; nevertheless, Mrs. Diki said if the budget runs out she would take income from her business, Diki Daycare, to subsidize the school's expenses. Different from the schools stated above, the Japanese government covers fifty-percent of WJLS's revenue, and some Japanese companies support the school financially. WJLS also does fundraising activities in the Washington, D.C. area to ensure they have enough money in their budget. Mr. Chikara is aware that they need multiple funding resources in case the Japanese government quits funding the WJLS. Regarding the external funding, WJLS has the highest ranking among the four schools according to the current information. Meanwhile, it is difficult to measure the external funding of other three schools because they are sub-organizations within their individual institutions and subsidized by them.

Cultural Partnership

One thing in common is that the schools claimed they do not have any partnerships, which triggered my curiosity about why. It is possible we do not have the same understanding of partnership. Partnership is defined as the “process by which organizations with a stake in a problem seek a mutually determined solution [pursuing] objectives they could not achieve

working alone.”⁷² In this case, the objective of collaboration at these cultural schools is to transmit their culture and language by developing cultural education. According to my observations based on this definition, they do have partnerships: the Jewish Religious School invites parents to update the curriculum; the Tibetan Sunday School works with local Tibetan artists; the Japanese parents voluntarily support WJLS; and some Greek parents organize fundraising activities. However, it is possible that their perception of partnership is only to collaborate with more formal organizations.

As Mrs. Diki indicates, there are Tibetan organizations in New York City which are religious and politically-centered, but NYTSC wants to avoid those topics and focus more on serving the New York Tibetan community according to its mission statement. Comparatively, the other schools did not give a reason to explain why they do not have any partnerships. What makes an organization decide to have or not have a partnership? The motivation may be different according to their situation. For example, Greek Language School and Jewish Religion School are subgroups of their church or congregation, and they do not need to worry their funds as long as they are still associated with the current organizations. However, how can we understand the relationship of WJLS and the Japanese government? As we learned that WJLS is an independent school, but the Japanese government not only supports the school financially, but also with the curriculum and textbooks. Is this a sort of partnership? I think this fits the definition and my understanding of partnership. Similarly, cultural schools could build the partnership with different cultural institutions, business

⁷² David W. Sink, “Interorganizational Collaboration,” *The International Encyclopedia of Public Policy and Administration*, 1998, 118–1191, 1188.

companies, scholars, foundations, and communities to achieve a sustainable cultural education.

Additional findings

The schools empower the students through active learning and interacting, according to my observation and interviews. The students feel the sense of belonging while they getting along with classmates in the same cultural context. They become more confident as their ethnic identity is reinforced, and they are comfortable to accept their dual identity.⁷³ It is crucial to understand that the Cultural Schools may not be able to train the students' to speak their native language fluently because the limited class day is not enough for them to learn in the current situation, but the situation differs from each school. For example, most Japanese students speak fluent Japanese language at WJLS, the Greek Language School and Tibetan Sunday School's students found it hard to speak in their mother tongue, and Jewish students focus on reading the text, but not speaking in daily life.

All in all, comparing and contrasting the cases may give some perspectives about what their motivation is to start such schools, how they offer cultural education in the alternative school settings in the United States, how languages and cultures are maintained within their communities, and many more. Moreover, an important lesson learned from these cases is to take advantage of the community as a resource, because it has the potential to

⁷³ Some parents and teachers mentioned this during the interviews.

benefit the cultural school, not only financially, but also by providing, reinforcing and valuing indigenous knowledge.

Chapter 6: Practical Application in my local Tibetan community in China

My primary purpose is to look at cultural education at different cultural schools in the United States to understand how culture is transmitted through cultural education to achieve cultural sustainability. And my secondary purpose in studying this topic is to apply what I have learned in the schools of other communities to the Tibetan community in my home, with the goal of contributing to sustaining Tibetan culture and language in China. The research process was meaningful for me and I was inspired to emulate the kind of programs I studied for the sake of my cultural heritage and the Tibetan future. To apply these results and to consider the viability of local language and culture, I will focus on Hualong County as the location to apply this program. I was born and raised in Hualong and I know this place better than other places. My firsthand knowledge of the community allows me to access necessary resources.

Hualong is a Hui Autonomous County located in the eastern part of Qinghai Province, and Hualong has six towns, seven townships, four Tibetan autonomous townships, and a total of 362 administrative villages. There are twelve ethnic groups in Hualong, such as Hui, Han,

Salar, Tibetan, Tu, and so on. The population of Hualong is about 220,000, among whom more than 60,000 people are Tibetan according to the census in 2010.

As I discussed, an effective mission statement is crucial for an organization. It helps the internal and external stakeholders to understand the organization, and improves communication with the individuals and groups. Thus, here is my mission statement: To transmit and sustain Tibetan culture and language by offering cultural education that fits local Tibetan cultural contexts to the Tibetan younger generations. I think this is a good mission statement because it contains my goal and how I am going to accomplish that by focusing on the particular community. Especially, this is established based on my research with the mission statement of my case study.

Considering the organizational management from the various cases, I understand there are possibilities for me to work in a subgroup of a nonprofit organization or to work in monasteries in Hualong. However, I would like to set up an independent organization that is not within another institution. Because they could influence the program based on their management views, the monasteries might ask me to follow the monasteries' way to manage the program. Starting as an independent organization, I could establish my own management system based on the local context and can choose to apply what I have learned from the cases. I will have five board members as part of the organization to advise our work. They would be from the local community and would be people who have expertise in the field of cultural education, fundraising, and organizational management, etc. I also would have an office manager, a program assistant, and would include other

management positions as the organization grows. From my previous nonprofit work experience and trainings, I understood it is important to allocate tasks according to others' ability and skills to allow them to make meaningful contributions.

To register an organization, I will take the time to learn the current situation of the local policies and ensure what type of organization best fits cultural education. I think it would be something like educational service center. The government's view on nonprofit organizations is fairly negative and it is hard to predict what would happen if I registered a nonprofit. Moreover, the Chinese government established a new policy this year to announce what types of organizations would be acceptable to the government. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the new policies that would influence the work both directly and indirectly. Moreover, it will be crucial to undertake research on the current alternative Tibetan schools in Qinghai Province to study their experiences of developing the schools. Meanwhile, I can learn if there are any cultural or educational policies that would benefit their schools, from the local level to the national level.

Regarding the curriculum, I want to have the students enjoy the program and actively participate in the class. So, the curriculum will be designed to focus on the students' interests that suit the local Tibetan cultural contexts. To be inclusive, I will invite some teachers, board members, artists, parents, and student representatives to participate in the curriculum design; this will be part of the organizational policy. I realize it is necessary to update the curriculum annually to fit the current learning environment. To do so, I would explain to teachers how each individual's experience is unique and encourage them to

share their teaching experience, and suggest ways that the curriculum could be developed further.

I will look for and help teachers produce teaching materials that the students and teachers feel comfortable to use. Most importantly, I would like to include materials that are locally relevant and help the students to understand their living environment. I understand there are different Tibetan teaching materials available, but few would be qualified to be included in the program because of the established curriculum and the general nature of many of the materials. The curriculum and the teaching material directly influence the pedagogy and I am aware that teaching in the local Tibetan community is currently more lecture style or teacher-centered. However, in this program I want the students to be central and to encourage them to actively participate in the class. At least sixty percent of the class activities will allow the students to learn the topic by experiencing it, or, in another words, it would be a participatory learning experience.⁷⁴ Meanwhile, I understand that teacher and parents will take some time to accept such learning experience, but I will convince them by sharing my findings from my capstone research project.

Like many nonprofit organizations, the funding, people, supplies, classrooms, and textbooks are a hugely important consideration for this program. To be successful, half of the revenue should come from the tuition fee. However, the general Tibetan perspective is

⁷⁴ Paddy Bowman, "I Didn't Know What I Didn't Know": Reciprocal Pedagogy," *Through the Schoolhouse Door: Folklore, Community, Curriculum, Ed. Paddy Bowman and Lynne Hamer*, 2011, 19–46. Ladislaus Semali, "Community as Classroom: Dilemmas of Valuing African Indigenous Literacy in Education," *International Review of Education* 45, no. 3–4 (1999): 305–19.

that learning Tibetan language and culture should be free and most people do not realize the resources required to fund the program's expenses and the work. Thus, it is important to communicate with the community members and ask a local lama to explain the situation. Sharing this information through a respected community member would be effective and would show the program to be acceptable in a Tibetan cultural context. Without this, community members might think that the purpose of the program is solely for profit.

Meanwhile, I will encourage local business people to make donations and let them know what our work is and why that should contribute to it. These fundraising activities may run during the festivals as I can reach more people in person at the same time, and the organization could also launch an online campaign to raise funds for the program. I think this would be practical because such campaigns are becoming popular on social media in the Tibetan area. In addition, I believe there are possibilities to receive funding support from Tibetan companies when the cultural school gains trust and reputation in the local Tibetan community.

Community involvement is essential and necessary for developing this cultural education program. From the case studies, I found the community brings indigenous knowledge, ideas, and resources that benefit the cultural schools profoundly. Because the program is inherently relevant to the culture and language of the community, their involvement will help sustain this organization. As I mentioned above, the community will participate in designing the curriculum, and the program is for the local people. Furthermore, the more

involved the community is in this program, the more communication there will be. This will help them to understand our work and value what this program does.

Noticeably, developing such a program needs resources from different aspects, such as funds, teaching materials, experts, and community knowledge. Thus, it is vital to build partnerships with individuals and organizations. I will collaborate with the publishers, cultural organizations, cultural specialists, local teachers, and monasteries. I will visit them one by one to express my passion to sustain the Tibetan language and culture, and also share the school's mission. Local respected lamas would lend authority and legitimacy. Local business would provide, funding, etc. These partnerships will help sustain the program by providing the necessary resources, and addressing my concerns regarding the shortage of teaching materials, funds, and community support.

All in all, the key lessons I have learned from the case studies are important and practical to apply in the Tibetan community in order to develop a local educational program. To manage the program, it is equally important to understand the culture of the community, in terms of the policies, community perspectives, and potential resources. Many things will need to be adjusted while developing the program, and it will be more stable when it fits the local needs. I believe this model of the program also can be applied in other places in Tibet. With the support from many local contributors, I believe that this program will be able to sustain the Tibetan culture and language.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Culture and language are two key components of identity formation for any group, and my research suggests that this is particularly important when looking at Tibetan education. Tibetans recognize the significance of cultural heritage for Tibetans as an ethnic group. However, the current situation of Tibetan culture and language faces challenges to survive in contemporary society. Tibetan culture is not only threatened by globalization and urbanization, it is also oppressed by the dominant group through various tactics and, as a vulnerable group, Tibetans struggle to maintain their culture and language.

I believe this is a critical moment to rethink the sustainability of Tibetan culture and language, as globalization, urbanization, and Chinese education increasingly influence Tibetan cultural heritage. With this in mind, I undertook research on the situation of Tibetan culture and language within modern schooling. My literature review shows how Tibetan culture is not taught in the curriculum and how language is diminished in the Chinese national curriculum, which is currently widely practiced in Tibetan schools. I realized that the hegemonic activities in the Tibetan schools decrease opportunities for the Tibetan students to study their native culture and language.

To explore solutions to this problem, I conducted case studies in four cultural schools in the United States to understand how they practice native cultural heritage within the dominant society, in order to investigate what I could apply to the Tibetan community for my

purpose of sustaining Tibetan culture and language. I conducted an overview of individual schools based on the following matrix: mission statement, management, cultural policy, teaching material, pedagogy, curriculum, community involvement, funding resources, and partnership, to learn how these cultural schools work, as well as how they impact the local community's efforts to maintain their culture and language. By analyzing the programs, I discovered they are not only transmitting culture and language, but also functioning as cultural communities to reinforce ethnic identity, create a sense of belonging, and build confidence by learning native cultural heritage. Meanwhile, such programs would not necessarily be able to train every student to become fluent in their native languages, as the class format is limited. The findings suggest that it is important for families to communicate with their children in their mother tongues to be fluent. However, the significant advantages of the cultural schools motivated me to develop such a program in my home county, Hualong, by employing the important lessons I have learned, such as curriculum design, community engagement, and fundraising. To develop such a program I understand it needs to fit the local cultural context, be recognized by the community as valuable, and be enjoyable for the students.

Through this research process, my knowledge of cultural education is transformed from the formal education to less formal education, and from exclusive curriculum to inclusive curriculum after I undertook my field research at these different ethnic schools. At the same time, my initial cultural gap within the targeted research community was decreased and I felt more comfortable to approach these cultural schools toward the end.

Furthermore, my understanding of cultural sustainability is changed through the program

by strictly thinking there is only way or two ways to achieve cultural sustainability until discovered a variety of possibilities. By working on this capstone project, I understand that cultural education may not be the only way to accomplish the cultural sustainability but I believe this will have significant contributions on cultural sustainability, especially in Tibetan community.

In brief, this study provides practical knowledge to maintain Tibetan culture and language by developing a cultural educational institution in the Tibetan community. Such an institution requires an effective mission statement, familiarity in cultural policy, nonprofit management skills, holistic curriculum, suitable teaching materials, funding resources, partnerships, and community involvement. I also recognize that these elements are interrelated and missing one of them may affect others. By carefully managing the cultural school with these elements, I believe the institution and cultural education may improve simultaneously.

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Appendix A:

Interview Questions for individual participants

Questions for the school principal or program manager include (but are not limited to) the following:

- 1) Could you please introduce yourself and your role in the school/program?
- 2) Could you please share how this school/program was developed?
- 3) How do you see the mission shaping the classrooms and experiences of the students?
- 4) Do you see this program is working toward the direction of its mission?
- 5) Who are the targets of this school/program?
- 6) Could you please share your school's curriculum?
- 7) Who participated to develop the curriculum and how is the curriculum designed, and updated over the years?
- 8) What kinds of achievements have been made since the start of this program until now?
- 9) What kinds of challenges would someone wanting to do something similar to this school face?
- 10) How do you measure success of the school?
- 11) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Questions for teachers include (but are not limited to) the following:

- 1) Could you please introduce yourself and your work in this program?
- 2) What does it mean to you to teach/work here?
- 3) Who are the teachers of the program?
- 4) How does the native language and culture was transmitted through school curriculum?
- 5) Do you see the changes in the perspectives of the younger generation since participated in this program?
- 6) How do you measure success of your teaching?
- 7) How does the community support this school/program to teach the culture?
- 8) How does this program impact the community specially?
- 9) Could you share your experiences teaching traditional culture in this school?
- 10)Is there anything else you would like to talk about?

Questions for the parents include (but are not limited to) the following:

- 1) Could you please introduce yourself?
- 2) How would you describe the school/program?
- 3) Do your children like to be in this school/program to learn cultural heritage?
- 4) What value do you think this program has in your community?
- 5) What languages do your children prefer? How often do they speak native language at home or elsewhere?
- 6) What do you think is the current condition of the traditional culture in your community?
- 7) Do you have anything else you would like to share as parents related to teaching

culture and language in your community?

8) How do you measure the success of your school?

9) What does it mean to you to have your children in this school?

10) Is there anything else you would like to add?