

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften
Zentralasien-Seminar

Tibet & Himalaya Colloquium Lecture Series

Lecture No.8 - Monday 28.06.21 – 18:15 CEST via Zoom

Pema Choedon, University of Tartu:

Miss Tibet pageant in the Tibetan diaspora as a Representative of Tibet and its culture?



Since its inception in 2002, the Miss Tibet pageant has been a hotbed of controversy. On the one hand, it has been labeled as anti-Tibetan culture especially because of the bikini session, on the other hand it has been praised as representing the very same culture. However, over the years the pageant has integrated different cultural agendas such as the political struggle for a free Tibet and

women's empowerment. My talk will focus on the views of a cross-section of the Tibetan public, based on an on-line survey, as well as on interviews with the participants in the pageant. I shall discuss why the pageant is not only an arena of entertainment but also a reflection of larger social issues in the diaspora, such as ethnicity, nation, gender, and culture.

Pema Choedon obtained her MPhil in Inner Asian Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her MPhil thesis was focused on the political status of the Tibetan refugees in Nepal from 1989-2015. She is currently a PhD student at the University of Tartu, Estonia, in the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore Studies. Her research focus is on cultural developments in the Tibetan diaspora.



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