

**NATIVISTIC MOVEMENT
IN
SOUTH ASIA**

A GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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CERTIFICATE

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Dedicated to
*the eternal quest for knowledge,
the unending search for the ultimate truth*

And

*to 'His' earthly incarnation
Dear 'Mother' & 'Father'*

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PREFACE

"The law of the pleasure in having done anything for another is, that the one almost immediately forgets having given and the other remembers eternally having received."

SENEC

For the Completion of the present academic exercise I am grateful to my supervisors Prof. R.C. Sharma and Dr. S.S. Deora, for their guidance, assistance and encouragement from time to time. Further, I am also thankful to Dr. M. Mohanty for his advice and encouragement in this respect. For the Collection of research material I am indebted to the staff of J.N.U. Central Library, the CSRD Documentation Centre, Teen Murti Library and the American Library in New Delhi.

Some of the arguments in this dissertation were honed in discussions with my classmates and friends: Vinod, Amar, Puspita, Sushil, Dada, Naresh, Satish, Om Prakash and other whom I have no doubt inadvertently omitted.

The assistance of several persons has gone in completion of the work, especially Jayati, Preeti and Christina; Pawan for typing and Vimal and Anuj for map photocopying. Last, but not least important is the financial help provided by UGC.

Nativism or anti-migrant feelings are on rise owing to modernisation and subsequent movement of people across cultural, linguistic and ethnic regions. 'Sons of the Soil' demand upward social mobility and greater economic, political and cultural rights for indigenous population. With spread of education in equalities among the ethnic groups are no more accepted. The migrants on the other hand struggle to preserve what they have build over the decades, i.e., a living space in the 'alien' land.

The aim of the dissertation is to look into the origin, nature and future trends in the growth of nativistic movements. Further, with the help of four Case-Studies, the spatial pattern, of nativism in South Asia is studied. The analysis concentrates on two main aspects. Firstly, the nature and form of migration and its demographic and economic effect. And secondly, the resource scarcity and ecological unsustainability induced by these movements.

The migrations in the multiethnic low income countries of South Asia are in form of ethnic groups. So, the cultural or ethnic aspect is central to the nativistic movements. Ethnicity acquires even greater importance in the regions where nativism is pursued as a state policy.

Ethnic conflicts are difficult to resolve. As it is hard to judge the righteousness of group claims. Especially, if these groups happens to be from distinct cultural backgrounds, as is the case in nativistic conflicts. Nevertheless, few suggestions have been ventured into for resolving the confrontation between natives and migrants.

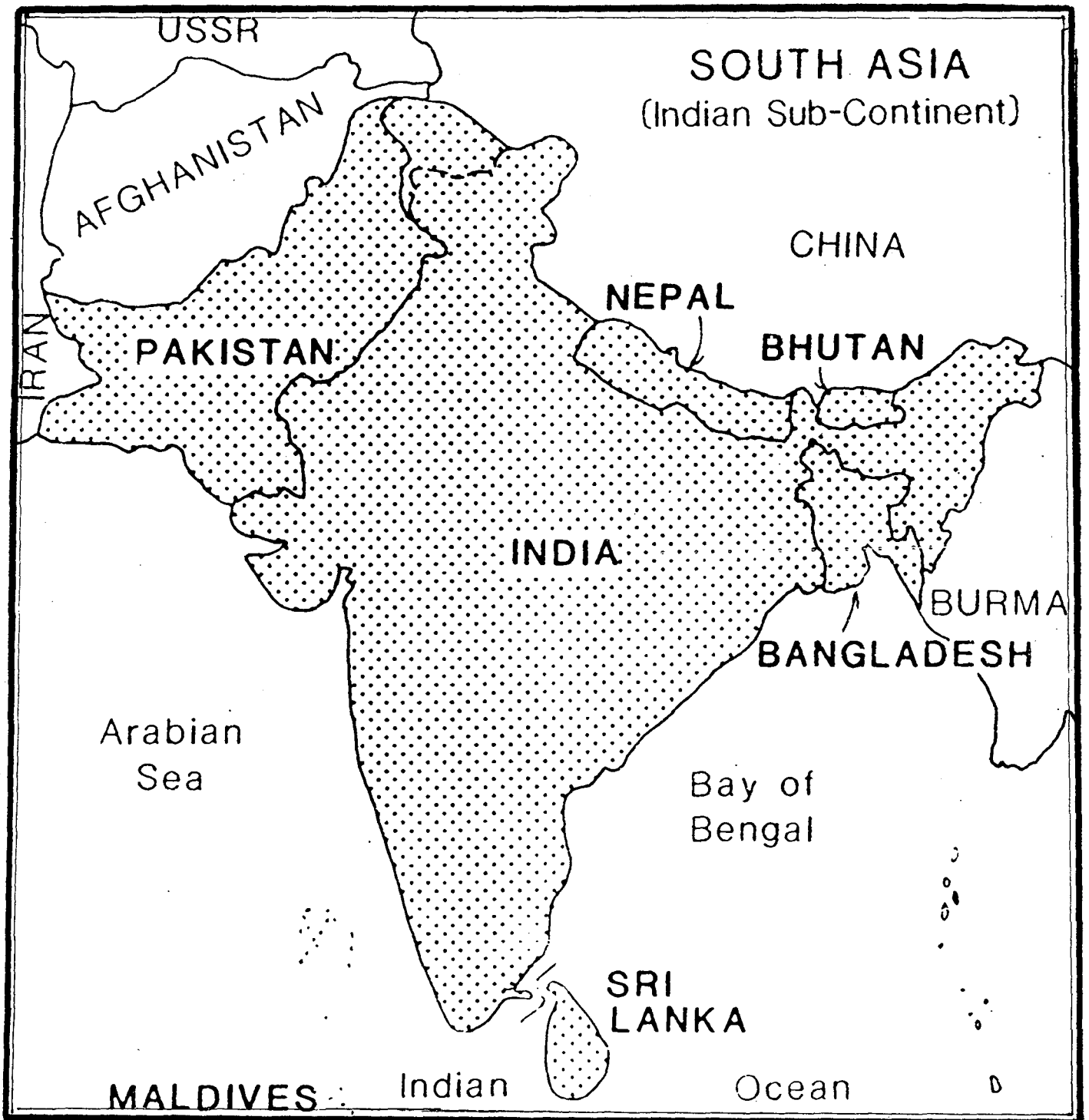
This dissertaion is a humble exercise for conflict resolution. For all research work aims towards a peaceful and harmonious social co-existence.

New Delhi,
July 16th ,1998

Jagbir Singh

CHAPTER - I

**Migration : The Resource Scarcity,
Ethnicity and Conflict Context**



SOURCE: DUTTA, ASHOK AND GEIB, MARGARET (1987), ATLAS OF SOUTH ASIA

Introduction

Conflict is a growing industry. It exists at all levels - viz., inter-personal, inter group and international. As regard Origin of conflict O.P. William Opines, "When the social access of individual or group to a particular resource or locations is blocked by action of another, conflict begins". Nativistic conflict is such a conflict between the indigenous people - 'son of the soil' and the migrants (aliens). "Modern" economic pressures and conflicts over scarce resources often lead to violent social conflicts among ecomigrant groups. (Homer - Dixon 1991).¹ natives thus, resent the intrusion of outsiders on their territory.

The present dissertation examines the nature, origin, and spatial pattern of nativistic conflicts in South Asia. It concentrates mainly on the two aspects. Firstly, the nature, the form and the socio-political consequences of migration in the South Asia. Secondly, it looks at the causal relationship between ecological unsustainability and nativistic conflicts. Meanwhile, also looking into the spatial variations and then seeking explanation in the South Asian context. Finally, the thrust is laid on observing the broad generalisations emerging out of the nativistic conflicts in South Asia.

Peoples are always on the move. These movements can be both voluntary or involuntary caused by better employment opportunities, marriages, natural disasters, economic compulsions, political instability and insecurity. In the recent times "Modernization" with better transport and communication facilities

1. William B. Wood: 1994 "Forced Migration : Local Conflicts and International Dilemmas", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 84(4), pp.607-634.

has provided greater incentives for movements. This has resulted in the increased migration at all levels viz. intra-state, inter-regional or trans-border and inter-continental. The number of forced migrants alone has increased sharply, from over 32 million in 1987 to over 42 million in 1993 (cerne, 1990; U.S. Committee for Refugees 1993).² Within South Asia itself "approximately 35 to 40 million people have moved across national boundaries in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal since 1947, some as economic migrants, more as refugees."³ Similarly the communist China's assertion of authority over Tibet in 1950 and the Lhasa uprising in 1959, resulted in about 40,000 Tibetan refugees in India, 7000 in Nepal, some 3,000 in Bhutan and 3,000 in Sikkim.

Migration at international level has played an important role in diffusion of cultural innovations and economic development. It has also affected the patterns of population distribution over the globe. Today, the government policies and widespread poverty in developing countries severely curtails destination options of most potential migrants in such countries. However, the number of forced migrants uprooted - by a wide range of political, socio-economic, and ecological factors is growing.⁴ Added to it are the ethnic problems these migrations create. The movement of Chinese in South East Asian countries of Malaysia and Indonesia, Indians in Uganda, Burma and Sri

2. Ibid.

3. Myron Weiner (1993) Rejected Peoples and unwanted migrants in South Asia. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Aug 21, pp.1737-1746.

4. William B. Wood, *op.cit.*

Lanka, Nepalese in Bhutan, Chakmas in India and Mohajirs in Pakistan has resulted into ethnic problems in the respective countries.

Such movements of people within India caused many antimigrant political movements. In Assam, western portion of Andhra Pradesh, southern most districts of Bihar and in the metropolitan cities of Bombay and Banglore, there is a shared feeling of restricting the influx of people there - migrants into, thereby, and increasing the access of local people to jobs held by migrants or by their disscendents.⁵ These reactions are mainly for refugees and forced migrations where the destination region doesn't have enough economic opportunities for the incoming millions.

The forced migration, when ethnic groups migrate en masse, results into a two-fold impact. Firstly, there is a cultural strain, as the two different cultures with different social values and norms, beliefs and practices are brought together. This results in groupings based on the ethnic lines with locals and migrants forming two different entities. Secondly, migration results into an ecological unsustainability of the ecosystem of the destination region. For example, the movement of Chakmas in the North East India, and Nepalese in Bhutan has put strain over the limited resource, resulting into the conflicts. The impact is more on the fragile ecosystems like hilly and forested areas. In these areas main occupation are hunting and gathering, shifting cultivation and primitive sedentary agriculture, which can't sustain the pressure of the incoming migrants. On the other hand areas with modern industry can sustain more

5. Myron Weiner (1978) *"Son's of the Soil - Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India"* Delhi, Oxford University Press, p.12.

migrants. Thus, nativistic conflict are mainly restricted to areas, where natives are engaged in traditional occupations.

South Asia, consist of low income, multi-ethnic third world developing countries, viz., India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan etc. Traditional group identities based on language, religion, habitat, region and caste are still important over a large part of the region. The most important such groupings on the ethnic lines have "Us against them" attitude. Migration of new communities in these areas has given a new dimension to these ethnic identities as "the synthetic communities created by migration and settlement in new territories or in search of the economic opportunities, and by the national entitles created in the wake of decolonisation, coupled with the emergence of new attitudes and aspirations of freedom and development, have created evolving pattern of synthesis and competition. Composite groups which stood together against alien powers lost their *raison d'etre*, and traditional groupings began to be asserted, even discovered."⁶ The conflict over resources is often outwardly manifested in ethnic form. As, ethnicity provides an easy means for identity and grouping. Thus, most of the ethnic conflicts are often conflict over the limited resources - with 'alien' migrants intruding over the 'territory' and resources of the locals.

Conflicts, cause a loss to life and property. In the developing, multi ethnic countries like India, there is on added threat to national integration and communal harmony. Societies have always striven for peaceful resolution of

6. The Problem of Ethnicity in the Asian Context, Theme Paper for Symposium held in January 1986, *Asian Studies* 4(1), 1986, pp.1-2.

such conflicts. The present work is aimed at such an understanding of nativistic conflicts. As the migrations are on the increase and so is the pressure on the limited resources. Hence, it become imperative to understand these migration related conflicts in the right perspective. For a mutually acceptable peaceful solution to such conflicts will prevent a lot of bloodshed. It will go a long way in making world a better place to live in.

Conceptual Framework

Ethnicity is an integral part of social conflicts. It is a relatively new term, substituting 'ethnic' after World War II. Ethnicity as Hobsbawn notes is a less demanding form of nationalism emphasising common origin and descent, and shared characteristics based on language, race, religion, place of origin, culture, values or history, but not a state.⁷ Ethnicity results into the formation of ethnic groups with group feeling and consciousness based on race, language, religion, region, caste etc. The ethnic group is seen to be, "composed of people who are bound together or they feel that they are bound together or they are thought to be so, by common ties of race, nationality or culture, living together within an alien civilization but remaining culturally distinct they remain aware of their separate identity through following unique rituals that range from ceremonies of life cycle to special ways of celebrating holidays, through their language, food and dress habits and such other cultural traits."⁸

7. Susana B.C. Devalle (1992) *"Discourses of Ethnicity Culture and Protest in Jharkhand"*, New Delhi : Sage Publications, p.31.

8. G.P.Chattopadayaya (1986) "Ethnicity and Identity : Basis of Conflict in India," *Asian Studies* 4(1), pp.3-7.

The major elements of an ethnic group can thus be summarised as (a) Historical antecedent, (b) Objective cultural markers, e.g., race, descent, language, religion, region or a combination of them (c) Awareness of belonging to a group provided by a cultural core (d) and the recognition by the others of the group distinctions (the we-they paradigm). A heightened sense of group awareness takes the form of an ethnic community.⁹

Ethnicity provides a basis for the grouping and on the bases of these grouping the respective ethnic community put forward their demands. Broadly, eight such demands can be identified. However, these demands are not always mutually exclusion:¹⁰

1. **Irredentism** : a group of people living outside the borders of a state, having same or similar cultural characteristics, and expect joining the state through annexation.
2. **Secessionism or Separatism** : involves a movement to disintegrate a country to form a separate independent state. For example, the demand made by Kurds, Croatians, Slovenians, Palestinians, Sri Lankan Tamils etc.
3. **Autonomy** : a territorially based group demands for greater self government, although agreeing over controls over its foreign relations, defence and currency.

9. Urmila Phadnis(1986) "Ethnic Conflicts in South Asian States". In *"Domestic Conflicts in South Asia"*, Vol.2, ed. Urmila Phadnis, S.D. Muni, Kalim Bahadur pp.100-119, New Delhi : SOut Asian Publisher.

10. Myron Weiner (1992) "Peoples and States in New Ethnic Order?" *Third world Quarterly*, Vol.13, No.2, pp.317-333.

4. **Interest Group Claims** : made by dispersed peoples with a shared identity but not always a shared territory, while seeking entitlements in employment and education on the basis of their ethnic and religious identities. For example, blacks and Hispanics in the USA, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled tribes and other backward classes in India, and Malays in Malaysia.
5. **Ethnic Corporatism** : relates to the acceptance of an ethnic group as a corporate identity by the state, including an acceptance of the distinctive and autonomous legal norms, procedures and institutions of the community. For example, demand of various sectarian groups in Lebanon and Muslims in India for maintaining customary divorce, marriage inheritance etc.
6. **Nativism** : a group claims that because of its indigenous character rooted in history, it has rights upon land, employment, political power and cultural hegemony. That these rights are greater than those for aliens or the migrants. The movement may also seek to exclude non-indigenous people from the territory under their control. Examples include Le Pen's National Front in France, various 'sons of the soil' parties in India, and official state policies by the governments of Fiji, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka on behalf of indigenous Fijians, Malays (or the Bhumiputras) and Sinhalese. nativism can be an ideology, a political movement, or a state policy.
7. **Hegemonic Claims** : gives right to dominate others owing to claimed racial or cultural superiority. It can be claimed by ethnic minority or

majority. For example, whites in South Africa, Jews in Israel, Sinhalese in Sri Lanka etc.

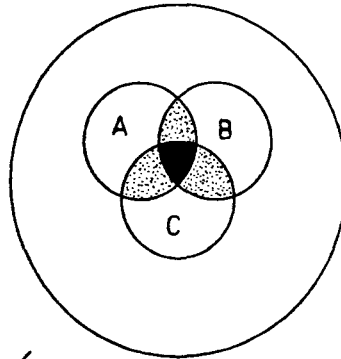
8. **Fundamentalism** : belief of a religious community that by returning to a set of 'fundamental' religion beliefs and behaviour society will revive its ancient glory. The other form of religious assertion besides fundamentalism include religious revivalism, religious reformism and religious nationalism.

Nativism and nativistic conflict is a form of ethnic conflict. Nativistic movement is a systematic and organized movement against migrants. The aim is more economic and political power. Nativism has been defined as "anti-migrant reaction to internal minorities of foreign origin."¹¹ It can be an ideology, political movement or a state policy. Nativism along with revivalism and other forms of social movements such as millenarism, cargo cults and utopian communities, is a part of 'rivialization movement'. Revitalization movement is 'a conscious, deliberate, organized effort on part of some members of a society to create a more satisfying culture". (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences). It is thus an effort to save a culture by infusing it with a new purpose and a new lease of life. In revivalism there is talk of returning to a former era of happiness, a previous condition of social virtue - restoration of a golden age. Nativism on the other hand, aims at removing unwanted aliens (migrants) from society or removing cultural elements of a foreign origin, or both. Often a movement is both nativistic and revivalistic. The tern nativism also refers to an

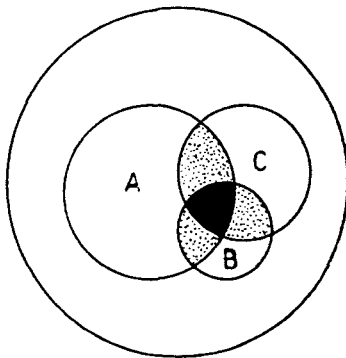
11. Susan Lewandowski (1986) *Migration and Ethnicity in Urban India-Kerala Migrants in the city of Madras*, New Delhi, Manohar, p.2.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL: ORIGIN OF NATIVISTIC CONFLICT

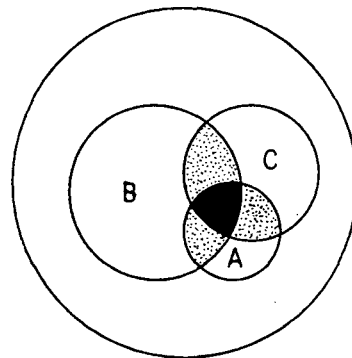
MIGRATION



VOLUNTARY MIGRATION



FORCED MIGRATION



AREA OF NATIVISTIC CONFLICT



GREY AREAS OF CONFLICT



ETHNIC DIVISION OF LABOUR AND NATIVE ASPIRATION FOR UPWARD SOCIAL MOBILITY



ECOLOGICAL UN-SUSTAINABILITY/ RESOURCE SCARCITY



PERCEIVED THREAT TO INDIGENOUS CULTURE

attitude of rejection of alien persons or culture, widely prevalent in the society. Here it doesn't refer to a social movement but merely a feeling against the migrants and their culture.¹²

Nativism, as a scientific construct, owes its origin to the American historical and anthropological research. Thus, many theories on the nativist phenomenon were derived from American experience. These theories can be broadly classified under five headings.¹³

1. **Economic Competitive Models** : the nativist movements are thought to rise owing to employment fears, especially on the part of the working class. This fear may be accompanied by rising "educated" class among 'locals'. This educated class has the competing and conflicting interests vis a vis the migrants, as the increasing skilled workers vie for limited jobs.
2. **Status Mobility Models** : Emphasize the threats posed by migrants to the social status of the upper and middle classes.
3. **Political Interest Model** : includes the fears of certain social classes to the threat by migrants to their political interests.
4. **Psychological Models** : portray the relationship between frustration and aggression and the importance of displacement in the background of hostilities among ethnic groups.

12. International Encyclopedia of the social sciences, the Macmillan company and free press.

13. Myron Weiner *op.cit.*, p.269.

5. **Demographic Models** : talks about the "optimum" threshold of tolerance by the native population. This threshold level is to be passed by migrant population before the conflict begins.

The present study into the nativistic conflicts is mainly centered around the 'Economic competitive model' and the 'Demographic model'. The former model deals with the economic unsustainability of the ecosystem of the region where in-migration is taking place. For it is the threat to 'economic sustainability' of regional ecosystem that leads to the nativistic conflict.

The 'Demographic model' on the other hand talks about migration and population pressure on the limited resources. It is the scarcity of the resources that results into the conflicts that outwardly seems to be ethnic. The other three models relate to sociological, Psychological and Political Science research. These models as a part of 'holistic approach' give deep insight into nativistic conflicts.

The present study confines itself to the Geo-political perspective on this demographic phenomena in South Asia. It looks at the spatial pattern and broad generalizations in the occurrence of nativistic conflicts. While concentrating mainly on ecological unsustainability and migration trends. This brings us to the phenomenon of migration.

Migration is a movement of people involving permanent change of residence.¹⁴ It is thus differentiated from mobility, which includes all kinds of

14. United Nations Multilingual Demographic Dictionary, ST/SOA/SER A/27 Population Studies No.29, New York, 1956.

territorial movements both temporary and permanent, over various distances. Migration can be differentiated into internal migration - migration within the national boundaries of a state, and external migration or international migration. The external migration which is between states is also known as trans-border migration.

Migration is dependent upon the human decision, i.e. on a leader of a family, clan or tribe. Socio-economic and political factors also affect the movement of the people. The movement is expected when the difficulties of moving are less than the rewards of the migration. It is similar to the movement of nomads for green pastures may it be Bedouins of Sahara or Tuergs of Arabia.

The process of migration is best explained by the push and pull factors.¹⁵ The 'Push' factors are the elements of stress at the source of migration. These factors which force people to move, could be loss of employment, racial, religious or political persecution, social, cultural or personal alienation from the community, social or natural disasters etc. The "pull" factors originate when the information from the destination region promises greener pastures. Even the migrants who are presently satisfied with their present condition decide to migrate for attractive opportunities. These factors could be better living conditions, political stability, better employment opportunities etc. The positive (encouraging) and negative (inhibitive) factors are present at both the place of origin and destination. The decision to move is the resultant of all these factors.

15. Kosinski, L.A. and Prothero, R.M., (1975), *People on the Move : Studies on the internal migration*. London, Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1975.

The decision taken is often affected by conditioning and bias-such as culture and environmental conditioning, group reaction, decision prompted by press etc.

The decision to migrate, however is different from the decision to choose destination. This can be understood through the concept of 'place utility', as defined by Wolpert' it is the net composite utility derived from the individuals integration at some position in space.' The 'perceived utility' of the 'destination' has to be greater than that of 'place of origin' for the migration to take place. In case a better alternative is not available migrant would remain, most probably, at the same place, as a 'latent migrant' i.e., migrant ready for movement with desired opportunity. 'Migrant elasticity' denotes the amount of stimuli necessary to persuades the potential migrant to make a decision

Migration can be classified differently depending upon the criteria chosen for classification. The various migration types that emerges are : on basis of time (temporary, permanent), distance (long, short), boundaries crossed (internal, external), areal units involved (between communities, countries, states), decision making (voluntary, impelled, forced); number involved (individual, mass), social organisation migrants (family, clan, individual); political organization of migration (sponsored, free); causes (economic, non-economic); aims (conservative, innovative).¹⁶ The most important migration from the point of view of nativistic conflicts are the involuntary or the forced migration. These results mainly from the 'push' factors and the destination region doesn't have enough demands for the migrants. These can be

16. Ibid.

further categories into three types - rejected peoples, political refugees from repressive regimes, and unwanted migrants.¹⁷

The nativistic conflicts is a complex research problem. It includes sociological, political science, psychological and geographical (including political geography) view points. The earlier research pertains mainly to sociology and political science perspective. The Geographical approach of looking at spatial patterns, spatial processes, spatial variations man nature relationship is a new field of research in the realm of social conflict. Also the interest in "spatial processes and spatial interaction is of more concern in modern geography than a concern with spatial patterns."¹⁸ This increasing interest in spatial movements (migration) and interaction is bound to throw a new light on the nature, origin and probable solution to the social conflicts including native conflicts.

GEOPOLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Geography is the social science of space. It is viewed as the study of the earths surface as the environment and space within which human beings live.¹⁹ According to a famous definition geography is 'concerned to provide accurate, orderly, and rational description and interpretation of the variable character of the earth surface.' (Richard Hartshorne, 1959). Geopolitics on the other hand

17. Myron Weiner (1993) Rejected Peoples and Unwanted Migrants in South Asia' *Economic and Political Weekly*, Aug. 21, 1993, pp.1737-1746

18. Kosiuski, L.A. and Prothero R.M., *op.cit.*, p.1.

19. Penguin Dictionary of Human Geography.

studies power relation among various states and regions. The essential elements in a geographical and geopolitical study are : (a) spatial analysis, with an emphasis on location, (b) ecological analysis, with an emphasis on man-environment relationships, and (c) regional analysis, with an emphasis on region building and areal differentiation.

The study of nativistic movements in the Geopolitical perspective will include firstly, the observance of spatial pattern in occurrence of these movements. This will include the study of movements over space i.e., migration. The aim is to answer the question as to why the nativistic movement are restricted to only few pockets? While other areas where migration took place remain unaffected. The generalizations emerging from such a pattern would also be looked into.

The second geopolitical aspect deals with ecological analysis. Ecology deals with the relationship between organisms and their environments.²⁰ The aim here is to study relationship between human groups and their natural resources. This to see the "ecological sustainability" aspect and to find out if the migration resulted into ecological or economic unsustainability in the region. Lastly, the ethnic and cultural aspects are looked into as these are unseverable part of social movements. Social geography and cultural geography covers the ethnic and cultural variations between social groups as well as between various region.

20. Ibid.

Political Geography is a branch of Geography. It has been defined differently as 'the science of political areas', or more specifically as "the study of the state as a characteristic of areas in relation to other characteristics of areas." (Hartshorne, 1935). Conversely in 1969, Kasperson and Minghi defined it as "spatial analysis of political phenomenon."²¹

The scope of political geography can be summarised in six points, as given by Pounds (1972):

- (a) The geographical coincidence of the state and the nation.
- (b) The resource at State's command.
- (c) The social cohesion of the population with reference to the focus of loyalties with the state.
- (d) Geographical pattern of the states alliances
- (e) Trade and commerce, carried on by a state
- (f) National attitudes and perception, the way in which citizens perceive their own and neighbouring countries.²²

The nativistic movements interact with Political geography on the following grounds. Firstly, these conflicts affect the internal cohesion of the population and their loyalties towards the state. This brings in the question of 'National integration', especially in the third world developing countries like India. So, the research in the nature, origin and causes of such conflicts become imperative. Secondly, political geography has been viewed as study of

21. R.D. Dikshit (1994) Political geography - A contemporary Perspective." New Delhi, Tata McGraw Hilly, p.17.

22. Ibid.

conflict resolution (Cox and Reynolds, 1974). Here possible redistribution of resources is suggested to avoid conflicts. Especially if these conflicts are of political nature. Nativistic conflicts are such conflicts emerging out of scarcity of resources and wish of indigenous people for more economic and political power vis a vis migrants. Lastly, the nativistic conflicts often involve trans-border migration. For example, Chakmas migrated from Bangladesh to North-east India, Tamils from India to Sri Lanka etc. This often produces tension between the neighbouring countries. Thus, the geographical pattern of states alliances may get affected. Also, this may affect the way citizens of a country perceive the neighbouring countries. All these factors, on the other hand have bearing on the regional geopolitics in South Asia.

CHAPTER - II

**Nativistic Movement in South Asia - Origin,
Nature and the Spread of the Idea.**

Migration brings alien people, alien cultures and a plethora of socio-economic stresses. The natives are often unable to adjust themselves to the changed circumstances. This inability to find solution to the migration pressures turns natives to messianic cults, separatist movements and radical politics. The nativist movements are one such response to the unwanted migrations of culturally distinct social groups. These movements have occurred in almost all the areas of primitive cultures known to social scientists, including, Amerindians, African Negroes and tribals of Europe and Asia. The only cultural area where such movements are absent is the aboriginal cultures of Australia and Tasmania.¹

At the international level, migration of Chinese to Malaysia; Indians to Burma, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Uganda and Fiji; Vietnamese to Cambodia and internal migrations in African Continent, have resulted into the Nativistic movements. Within South Asia such examples can be found in the movement of Muhajir to Sind (Pakistan); Nepalese migrants or 'Lhotshampas' in Southern Bhutan and internal migrations in the Indian states of Assam, Maharashtra, Bihar and Andhra. The origin of such movements is not a simple phenomenon. Rather it is controlled by multitude of factors.

The factors that are decisive in the origin of nativistic movements can be summarised, as follow. The first and foremost is the migration of culturally distinct ethnic group. The nature, the form and the causes of migration affect

1. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, the Macmillan Company and Free Press.

occurrence of Nativist conflicts. Second, is the ecology and the environment of the destination region. The question of economic viability of the resources and ecological sustainability in the region in the background of migration. Third, is the existence of dual labour market and ethnic division of labour. Fourthly, the impact of modernization process in the region. Especially, the spread of education among natives and their subsequently raised aspirations. Fourthly, the change in the power structure, with the 'locals' getting political resources for modifying the ethnic divisions of labour. And lastly, the developmental process itself affects the origin, nature and course of movement. For it decides the arenas within which migrants and locals compete.

Migrations are central to the origin of social conflicts including Nativistic movements. As they bring two culturally distinct social groups closer. There are two aspects of migration that are important vis a vis nativist sentiments. The first is whether the movement was voluntary or forced. The second aspect is related to the nature of migrants i.e., whether they are skilled or unskilled, what are their attitude towards alien cultures and so on. The voluntary migration are generally in search for better jobs and greener economic pastures. These movements are mainly caused by pull factors of the destination point. As economic potential exists in the area of immigration oriinmigration, so there are little chances of conflict. However, over a long period of time there is chance of emergence of nativist sentiments. The natives may after getting educated, aspire for the same jobs that migrants are holding. Also, the increasing number of migrants may be perceived as demographic and cultural threat.

In Southern Bhutan, for example, the Nepalese have migrated from economically poor and populous eastern Nepal. The southern Bhutan provided 400 percent higher wages and high demand for labour as it was undergoing rapid development under modernization policy.² However growing number of Nepalese endangered numerical majority and cultural hegemony of Bhutanese. This resulted in violence and blood shed and consequent fleeing of Nepalese from Bhutan. The ethnic problem continues to endanger the national security and development programme in Bhutan.

Conversely, forced migrations have greater chances of nativistic conflicts. The forced migration consists of people forced to leave a locality because of persecution, violence or threats to their lives or property. Forced migratons can be in the form of movements to the other country or internally within the country. Often there is no economic demand at the place of destination. So, the forced migration, especially, to the neighbouring countries are associated with the nativistic conflicts. In South Asia, such conflicts have arisen out of the Indo-Pak refugee flow of 1947-48; the movement of Chakmas from Chittagoun hill tract in Bangladesh to north-eastern India; and the migration of Muslim Bangladeshi migrants to Assam., But not all forced migrations results into conflicts. If the economic condition are favourable to absorb the immigrating peoples, there are less chances of struggles among the ethnic groups.

2. Farzana Hossein (1993), "Bhutan's Ethnic Problem : A Case of a Fragile Ethnic Mosaic in South Asia" *BISS Journal*, Vol.14, No.1, pp.17-43.

The second aspect of migration includes the educational attainment and cultural norms, values and ethos of the migrants. If the migrants are skilled and take hold over high-wage formal sector of economy. The resultant dual labour market and division of labour on the ethnic lines will go a long way in perpetuating the conflict. As the newly educated native youth seeks the same high wage jobs. The attitude of migrants towards the native culture and their norms and value also has its bearings on the communal living. There is another aspect of migration related to mobility of native population. It has been observed that areas where rate of out migration are high, as in Punjab and Bengal, the immigrations have not resulted into the nativistic conflicts.

Migrations results in the increase of population in the region of destination. This brings in the question of ecological stress i.e., the question of ecological or economic sustainability. Ecology deals with the interrelationship of organisms with each other and with the environment.³ Every region has its own ecological setting and cultural landscape, depending on the interaction between man and nature. Thus, different areas have different economic activities viz, hunting and gathering, shifting cultivation, primitive subsistence agriculture, Intensive subsistence agriculture, plantation agriculture, and so on. These activities depends upon the available technology and the avenues provided by the natural environment. So, every region has limited capacity to sustain the demographic stress. If the number of people increases that critical limit, it will result into conflict. Thus, each area has its own ecological and economic

3. Penguin Dictionary of Physical Geography.

sustainability subject to given number of population at a particular point of time and the technology levels of the residing population. In other words, the migration may result into an increase in population to such an extent that the region becomes ecologically and economically unsustainable resulting into conflict. These conflicts can be nativistic if the migration happens to be in form of ethnic groups.

This brings us to two propositions regarding nativistic movement from ecological point of view. The first is, whether the natural environment and natural resources are able to withstand the migration pressure or not. If the migration are in the ecologically fragile areas like hilly forested areas, coastal marine ecosystems, coral reef ecosystems etc., there are greater chances of conflicts over resources. On the other hand economically developed areas, i.e. areas with fertile lands and developed modern agriculture, and industrially developed areas have greater capability of absorbing migrants. The second, proposition relates to the level of technology and skills that migrants possess. Resource potential can be increased with better technology. But if migrants lack requisite skill and technology there is every chance of eruption of conflict over the scarcity of resources. In Southern Bhutan, the Nepalese have been migrating for past hundred years converting thick vegetation and pastoral land into agricultural fields. This brought them into conflict with Bhotias, the tribals whose chief occupation is cattle rearing and dairying. Similar nativist conflicts have erupted with chakma migrations into the ecologically fragile areas of the north-eastern India.

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The cultural factor is also embedded in the migration of ethnic groups. The distinction of cultures is an important factor in the origin and perpetuation of nativist feeling. Cultures are developed over a centuries of living and interaction with the surrounding. So, the natives and migrants have distinct languages, different ways to eat, dress, differing behaviours, norms, values etc. Also many groups begin to recognise themselves with the space on which they live, i.e., they are 'rooted' in space. The migration of an alien cultural group results into cultural tensions and stresses. Both the migrants and indigenous social groups have a 'perceived superiority' for their own cultures. Indigenous population often complains about the cultural hegemony of outsiders. On the other hand, migrants being a minority group is conscious about maintaining their cultural 'identity'. The fear of loss of cultural identity is at the root of conflict. In Assam, the local Assamese claim that they were culturally subordinated by Bengalis. As a result there was movement against the Bengali as medium of education in schools. Further there were demand for acknowledgement of Assamese cultural holidays, Assamese historic heroes, and recognition of the great events in Assamese history.⁴

The dual labour market envisages two distinct type of jobs. On one hand are the jobs known to be "traditional", "marginal", "Unorganized", or 'Informal" employing low-skilled manpower at low wages. It includes jobs like house painting, car washing, rickshaw pulling and other low paid labour work. On the other hand, there is more "modern," 'developed', 'organized', and

4. Myron Weiner (1978) "Sons of the Soil - Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India" Delhi, Oxford University Press, p.112.

'formal' sector employing skilled manpower at higher wages. This includes jobs like, teachers, managers in industries, technical staff in mining etc. Often, this sector of economy is controlled by migrants. For migrants are better educated and skilled and have more risk taking abilities. Marwari community with its original home in Rajasthan and Gujarat, for example, dominates trade, commerce, banking and credit in many parts of eastern India including Assam. This is so because they have built up a network of trade and finance throughout northern India, which the indigenous populations lack.⁵ Similarly, the better skills to run the state machinery and ability of political manoeuvring allowed the 'Mohajirs' to take over economic and political power in Pakistan.⁶ The natives either predominate in the 'unskilled' informal sector of economy or they remain in the traditional occupation viz. primitive subsistence agriculture, hunting and gathering or shifting cultivation. This pattern of division of labour is visible in most of the migrations to industrially backward region viz. Muhajirs in Sind (Pakistan), Marwaris, and Bengalis in Assam, Nepalese in Southern Bhutan and Northern Bihari and Bengalese in Chota Nagpur.

The division of labour with migrants in the 'skillful' high paying, technical jobs and 'locals' occupying 'traditional', 'marginal', low paying jobs give rise to ethnic division of labour. Natives often lack vocational training and adequate skills to make full use of the opportunities created by developmental activities. Industrialisation and other modern development projects invite

5. Ibid, p.105.

6. Akbar S. Zaidi (1991) "Sindhi Vs Mohajir in Pakistan - Contradiction, Conflict, Compromise." *Economic and Political Weekly*, May pp.1295-1302.

managers and technical staff from outside and locals get the informal sector, low-wage, unskilled jobs. Infact a core-periphery relationship is established. The Central core consisting of industrialised/urbanised parts is dominated by the migrants. This core recruits its unskilled, labour from the peripheral region which is dominated by indigenous population.⁷ This ethnic division of labour is more strong in multiethnic societies where migration is ethnically selective. Migrants maintain this ethnic identity. They settle in close proximity in distinct quarters of the city, maintaining cultural and social solidarity. Such ethnically divided labour is characteristically visible in Assam, where Marwaris are monopolizing trade, Bengali Hindus are occupied in skilled middle class job while tribal labour from Bihar and Orissa is engaged in tea plantations. The native population is engaged either in traditional agricultural occupation or low-wage jobs in towns. However, this ethnic divisions of labour tends to get diluted among the second generation migrants. Many of second generation migrants from Bihar and Orissa have settled as cultivators or found job in Construction industries.

The ethnic division of labour is threatened with the spread of education among the natives. The educated youth among the local population strive for forbidden, white-collar', high-wage, lucrative jobs. This creates the situation of conflict as opportunities don't match aspirations. Also, migrants who hold sway over these jobs, despise the entry of indigenous people. They help each other in maintaining hold over the high-wage skilled jobs. It is this competition for

7. Michael Hecter, (1976) "Ethnicity and Industrialization : On the Proliferation of the Cultural Division of Labor," *Ethnicity*, 3, pp.214-224.

middle-class jobs that results into conflict. Inequalities were always there and were accepted and even welcomed, till there was no clash of interests. Thus, the nativistic movements or 'sons of the soil' feelings tend to arise in the communities where local population has recently produced its own educated class aspiring for jobs held by migrants, in the civil services, as teachers in the local schools, as clerks, managers and technicians. Migrants being perceived as blocks to the upward social mobility.

The nativist movements are often preceded by change in power structure of the region. Natives acquire the political power and are willing to use political power for transforming the ethnic division of labour. This they do by giving preferences to locals in government jobs and through reservations in technical institutes and state universities. In India Marathi in relation to Tamils and the Assamese in relation to Bengali migrants have used political power for changing the occupational structure. Similar examples at international level are Burmans against Indians, Malays against Chinese and Ugandas against Asians.

The situation is even more explosive when the geographical 'core' and the political 'core' are held by different ethnic groups. The geographical 'core' is dominated by ethnic migrant community which occupies important urban centres, often including the capital city. The political 'core' is controlled by economically and socially subordinated native groups. These groups although enjoying a numerical majority occupy the peripheral positions. Similar situation for example exists in Karachi, Pakistan ('Mohajir' Population); Rangoon (Now Yangon), Burma (Indian Population); Kuala Lumpur (Chinese migrants); Gauhati in Assam (Bengali and Marwari migrants) and Bombay (Tamil migrants).

Lastly, the development process itself has important bearing upon the origin and spread of nativist feelings. The basic conflict is over the upward social mobility, better jobs and better standard of living or in short over the access to regional resources. So, if the development strategy is such that there are ample skilled jobs for both migrants and natives, then conflict will be avoided. The development process has to be one where benefits of modernization and industrialization reach the indigenous tribal population and peoples engaged in marginal economic activities. This will ensure upward social mobility and better living standard.

In north-west India, i.e., in the states of Haryana, Punjab and western Uttar Pradesh, for example, the Green Revolution has provided economic and social mobility for the local farmers. Green revolution also aided in commercialization of agricultural and diversification of economic activities in the region. The introduction of high yielding varieties of seeds, better irrigation facilities, modern fertilizer and changed agrarian system aided economic prosperity of farming community.

As a result the region was able to absorb the influx of refugee from partition of India in 1947-48. This was because the regional economy was vibrant enough to withstand the migration pressure. The growth in agriculture was further aided by industrialisation in the areas surrounding the Delhi and consequent growth in trade. On the other hand nativist movements have arisen in the areas where development process has failed to take care of the aspirations of local population, for example, Sind in Pakistan, Assam, Chhotanagpur, and Bombay in India, Southern Bhutan and some pockets of north-east India.

Development process also defines arenas within which migrants and locals compete. Struggle is not against all class of migrants. Conflict is confined to that group of migrants, which holds the jobs for which the native population is aspiring.

Thus, development can be an aid for solving such conflicts over resources if it is ensured that the fruits of development reach to the local population. Otherwise the developmental activities can also accentuate the nativistic feelings. As has in Chhotanagpur. Chhotanagpur has witnessed a tremendous growth in mining activities and industries since independence. But it has been of little benefit for local tribal population. Rather more skilled people from 'outside' were called for better high-wage, technical jobs. The increasing industrialisation and increased contact with 'outside' resulted in the alienation of land for tribals making situation even more precarious. The tribals at the most were incorporated into the 'marginal' 'low-wage' informal sector jobs. This resulted into the conflict between tribals and non-tribals and a call for a separate tribal state.

The origin of nativist movements, thus is resultant of multitude of factors. It is a cumulative effect of migration, cultural factors, ethnic division of labour, changes in the power structure, ecology and environment of the region and the current development strategy being pursued; Once the movement has taken root, both migrants and 'ethnic local groups' organize new resources for struggle. The political resources may include new journals, literary associations and ultimately the political organization to stake claim for nativist aspirations. The other important characteristic is the development of various ethnic infrastructure

viz. ethnic restaurants, religious institutions, newspapers, neighbourhood associations, charitable organizations, welfare institutions, medical facilities, burial associations and educational centres. These institutions further give rise to ethnic leaders who spear head these movements.

Nature of Nativistic Movements

Nativistic movements represent the conflict between indigenous people and the migrants. The conflict is over the access to natural resources, maintenance of cultural hegemony and control of political power. Cultural, economic and political forces have a profound impact on the nature of Nativistic claims.

Nativism can be an ideology, a political movement or a state policy. In other words nativism can merely be perceived as a feeling of rejection of 'internal minorities of foreign origin.'⁸ Further, nativism can take form of a political movement with its aim to hegemonise a region politically, culturally and economically. In its extreme form the movement may turn violent and demand expulsion of migrants from 'native land'. Such political movements are visible in Burma against Indians, in Malaysia against Chinese and in Assam, Chhotanagapur and the city of Bombay in India. Thirdly, nativism can also be a consciously pursued state policy. Here state apparatus is used for gaining economic, cultural and political leverages for indigenous population vis a vis migrants. Nativism as a state policy, for example, has been pursued by Bhutan

8. Susan Lewandowski (1980), *Migration and Ethnicity In Urban India - Kerala Migrant in the City of Madras*, New Delhi : Manohar p.2.

government against Nepalese settlers in Southern Bhutan and in Fiji against Indians.

A desire of rejection of alien persons or culture is widely prevalent in traditional societies where recent immigration has taken place.⁹ The feeling of mistrust and even occasional hatred, against strangers is a basic instinct in the traditional tribal and rural societies. This is so because people live in close knit community with little outside contact. So, migrations to these traditional societies, give rise to suspicion, skepticism and cynicism against the migrants. But such feelings don't necessarily result into nativistic movements, as in the states of Punjab, Haryana and West Bengal. For, there are other socio-economic and cultural factors that convert these feelings into a political movement.

The political movement as a nativistic claim aims for more power and better job opportunities for natives. The All Assam Students Union (AASU), or Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) in Assam; Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) in Chhotanagpur; Shiv Sena in its initial phase in Mumbai are examples of such political movements for fulfilling the desires of indigenous population. Once these political parties get hold over the political power they use it to provide governmental job and other economic opportunities to their followers. Often migrants come up with their own political alternatives, thus accentuating the conflict. In Sindh, Pakistan, the Mohajirs have come up with Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) in 1986, as an answer to Sindhi dominated Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). Sometimes these political movements take violent turn and become a threat to national integration, social peace and harmony. In Sind,

9. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, New York : Harper and Row.

members of the MQM and the Peoples Party have carried out brutal atrocities on each other.¹⁰ Similar terror tactics have been used by Bhutan Peoples Party (BPP) formed in 1990 and Students Union of Bhutan (SUB). The BPP and SUB were formed to fight for democratic rights of the Nepalese settlers in Southern Bhutan.¹¹ These violent nature of conflicts are of more concerns to the respective governments than merely the nativist claims themselves.

Thirdly, nativistic movements can be in the form of consciously pursued state policy. Here the state purposefully differentiates among the indigenous people and the 'foreign elements'. The discrimination in public services, in allotment of government contracts, In the establishment of factories, seats in the state assemblies and even in the purchase of land and other immovable assets forms important aspect of the government policy. In Fiji, for example, such restrictions were imposed on migrant Indians although numerically both indigenous and Indian population was almost equal. Nativism forms a part of state policy when the strength of migrants is substantial enough to endanger the power balance in the state. Added is the dangers to indigenous culture which till now was accepted universally as national culture.

In Bhutan, political, economic and cultural restrictions are imposed upon the migrant Nepalese population ("Lhotshampas") in the Southern districts. These restrictions became more severe after 1988 population census, which showed that out of the total population of 600,000 Bhutan Buddhist constituted 48 percent of the population and Nepalese Hindus 45 percent and others 7

10. Ibid.

11. Debamitra Mitra (1996), "Ethnic Issues in Bhutan", *Asian Studies*, XIV (2), pp.38-53.

percent.¹² The Bhutanese felt that they would lose their distinct Buddhist-Bhutanese identity to the growing number of Nepalese immigrants. Here nativist sentiments were pursued as a part of state policy. According to the 1985 citizenship act, no migrant who has entered Bhutan after 1958, would be given citizenship rights. This resulted in the expulsion of some 30,000 Nepalese.¹³

On the cultural front the policy of "Driglam Namzha" was followed. It was an elaborate code of conduct governing private and public life. The wearing of Drukpa Dress and for women the Druk hair style (Cropped hair) was made compulsory. Moreover, Bhutanese language was enforced as the official language and teachings of Nepal language was dropped from schools. The Bhutanese - Buddhist Culture was emphasized and restrictions were imposed on the expression of Nepalese Hindu Culture.¹⁴ Further government is blamed to target the Nepalese majority region for population control programmes, while the Tibetan ethnic groups are encouraged to have more children.¹⁵

Thus, Bhutan is characteristic case where Nativism is pursued as state policy. However, the pursuance of such a policy at national level is possible only in smaller states like Fiji and Bhutan. In larger multiethnic states like India and Pakistan nativism is a regional phenomenon.

12. Farzana Hossein, *op.cit.*, pp.17-43.

13. Ibid.

14. Dialogue, Dhaka, Oct., 25, 1991, Cited Ibid.

15. Asia week, Sept. 27, 1992, Cited Ibid.

The nativistic movements are also found to contain revivalistic elements. In revivalism there is talk of returning to a former era of happiness, a previous condition of social virtue restoration of a golden age.¹⁶ Revivalism gives a force, a purpose and uniting platform to nativist feelings. Underlying is the contention that reviving of old cultures can't be achieved without removing unwanted aliens (migrants) and their cultural elements.

Lastly, it should be emphasized that nativism as a mere feeling, a political movement and state policy are essential three different stages of the same phenomenon. The essential unity of nativistic movements should not be undermined. Depending upon the socio-economic and political conditions of a region, nativism may remain merely at ideological level or it may take form of political movement or a consciously pursued state policy.

The Spread of the Idea - Nativism in the Modern World

The nativistic movements are as old as the human need for mobility. In, the earlier times, a century or so before, these movements were restricted to tribal areas. Where people from the colonial power intruded for fulfilling their imperial desires. In past such nativistic movements include, the Ghost Dance among the plain India (Money 1896), New religion of Handsome Labe (Morgan 1851) and the Paliu movement in the Admiralty Islands. These movements were often responses to the intrusion by 'outsiders' who mostly came with

16. International Encyclopedia of the Social Science, The Macmillan Company and Free Press.

colonial aims. The Paliau movement in Admiralty Islands, for example, was nativistic to the extent it sought to secure for Melanesians a greater degree of economic and political sovereignty than they had till now enjoyed under either the Japanese or Australian administration. It was not for the expulsions of whites. Rather the movement dispensed with many of the traditional religious beliefs and observances, reorganized the settlement pattern and economy, and proposed new standards of family organization, political structure and economic activities.¹⁷

In the present times the nativism has spread to more developed parts of the world as a result of process of modernization and industrialization. Modernization with better economic opportunities provides more incentives for movement. This creates increased opportunities for internal migration. Modernization also helps in growth of 'ethnic identification' and 'ethnic Cohesion'.¹⁸ This is because migration promotes movement of peoples across cultural, linguistic and ethnic regions. This coming together of ethnic groups has resulted in the rise of nativism in South Asia viz. Sind, Assam, Chhotanagpur, Sri Lanka, Southern Bhutan etc. The nativistic movements in these areas differ substantially from earlier such movements in backward tribal areas. Today nativistic movements occur in areas where agricultural and industrial development is taking place under modernization policy. The struggle is mainly for the native right for high-wage middle class jobs that migrants hold.

17. Ibid.

18. Myron Weiner, op.cit., p.3.

The earlier movements on the other hand were more revivalistic and ethnic groups wished to return to the old way of life. Natives today want better job, modern facilities and better way of living.

Nativism is on the rise in the modern world. The scarcity of resources and the rising aspirations of the educated youth among indigenous populations, forces people to seek for ethnic explanations to the economic questions. In many places these aspirations even find national following, for example, in Bhutan, Fiji, Sri Lanka and Malaysia. The nativism is expected to be an emerging reality in the newly industrialized and urbanized areas. Especially where the local population fails to get benefit of development and industrialisation. And where migration is in ethnic groups and division of labour on ethnic line is found. If the nativistic feelings are to be kept in check for promoting national integration and notion of one nationhood. The emphasis has to be on the spread of technical education and benefit of industrialisation and modernization to the traditional tribal and rural areas.

CHAPTER - III

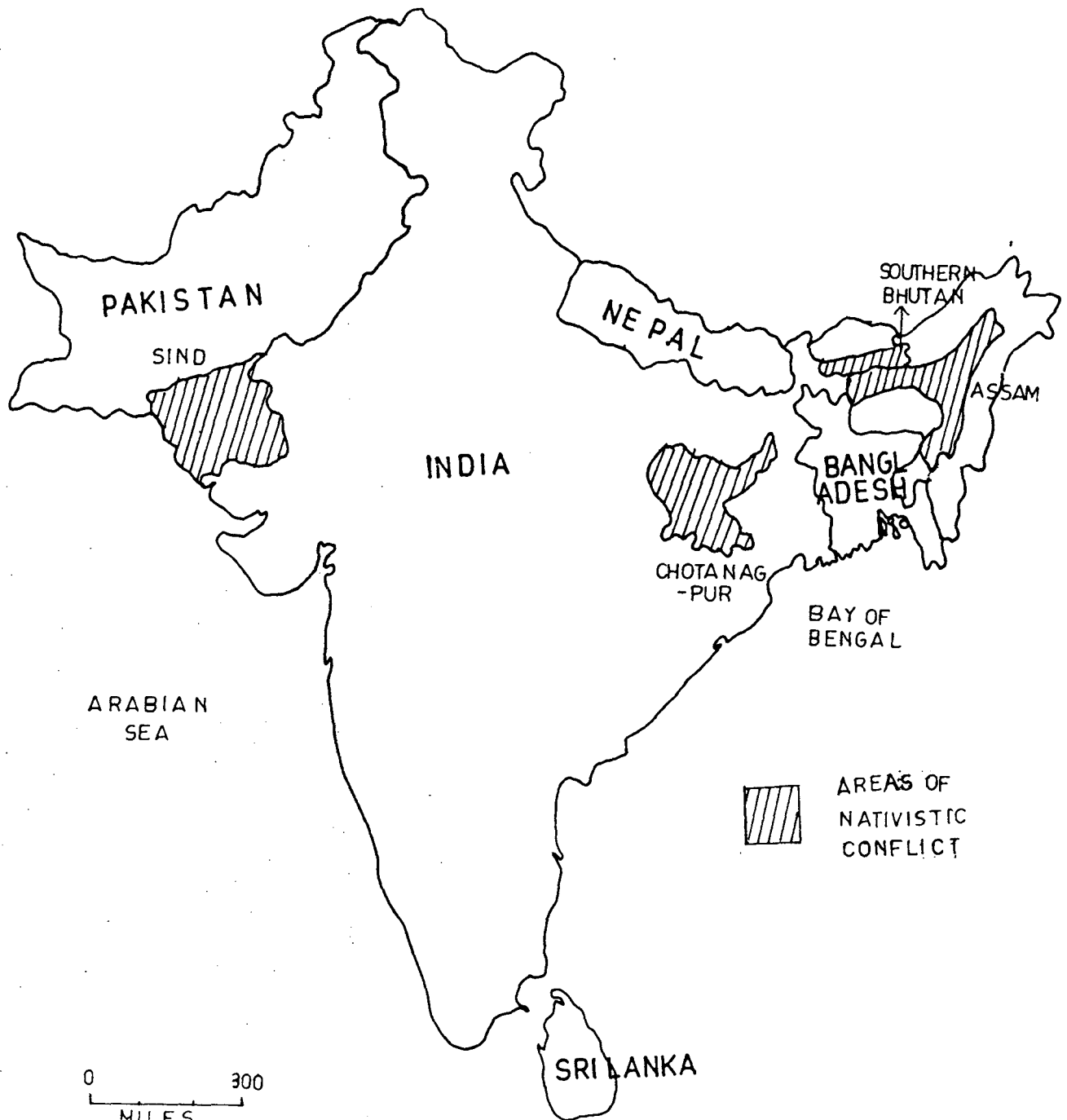
CASE STUDIES : Spatial Pattern of Nativistic Conflicts in South Asia

People migrate to selected locations. Also not all migrations result into nativist movements. There are cultural, socio-economic, ecological/ environmental and political factors, which play important role in origin of such conflicts. Thus, nativism has a spatial component. These anti-migrant movements are confined to few localities over the space. The analysis of these patterns and explanations to the same forms an important geographical question.

South Asia region consisting of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives have witnessed movement of people, since time immemorial. These movements include internal migrations and trans-border (international) migrations; voluntary and forced (in-voluntary) migration and short distance and long distance migrations. Some of these migration have resulted into organised socio-political movements against migrants. For the present academic exercise four such conflicts in South Asia have been identified. The first is between the local Assamese and migrant Bengali and Marwari population; The second is strife in Southern Bhutan between migrant Nepalese or 'Lhotshampas' and indigenous Bhutanese-Buddhist population. Here nativism is being pursued as a state policy'. The third case of nativist conflict is in form of a tribal upsurge against northern Bihari and Bengali migrant in Chhotanagpur and lastly the violent political struggle between refugees 'Mohjirs' and indigenous Sindhis in Sindh, Pakistan.

The conflicts in Assam and Chhotanagpur have resulted from the internal migrations. In Assam the clash is among the 'sons of the soil' Assamese and non-Assamese migrants. Here Bengali and Marwari Community has economic hegemony over trade, commerce and middle class jobs which 'local' Assamese

SOUTH ASIA
SPATIAL PATTERN OF NATIVISTIC CONFLICT



now aspire for. While in Chhotanagpur the movement is essentially viewed as collision of tribal and non-tribal interests. Here nativism has emerged in form of demand for a separate state of tribals. 'Jharkhand' as the new state is proposed to be known as, is viewed as an instrument for fulfilment of tribal aspirations.

In Bhutan and Sindh (Pakistan) the nativist conflict has emerged out of international migrations. In Southern Bhutan it exist as state policy, with state engaged in fulfilling the native aspirations. The main issue is the cultural/ethnic and political threat from increased Nepalese migrations and subsequent movement for democracy. Initially, however the migrations were voluntary economic migrations resulting from the developmental activities in Southern Bhutan. On the other hand the problem in Sindh resulted from the forced international migrations. Here nativism is in the form of struggle for political and economic power. Another Characteristic is the violent nature of the conflict. The four case studies cover different aspects of nativistic conflicts. Conflict at each place developed under different conditions and variations exists in the origin, nature and forms of the conflict. Nevertheless there are many commonalities in the circumstances under which these conflicts prevail.

Assam:

Assamese Vs Non-Assamese : Internal Migrations and Nativistic Conflict.

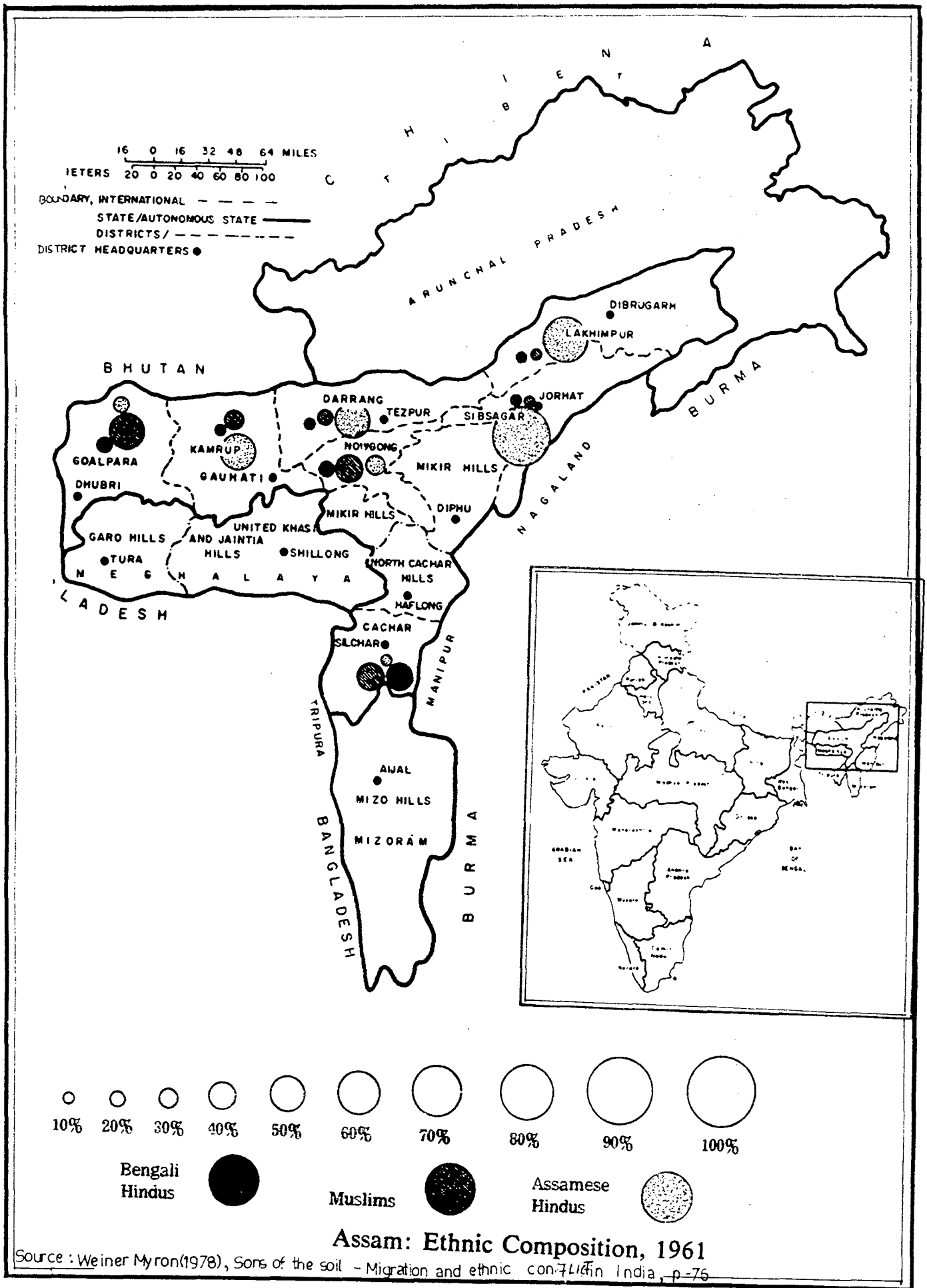
Assam is one of the twenty-five states of Indian Union and is located entirely in the north-east region. Physiographically, the state is dominated by two important physical regions viz. the Barak valley and the Brahmaputra

Valley. Brahmaputra Valley has drainage basin of 935,500 sq. km. with its own cultural and economic importance. The state is also economically important for mineral oil deposits and tea plantations. Agriculture however is the most important economic activity concentrated in the fertile plains of the Brahmaputra Valley, the Barak Valley and the Surma valley.

Migrations into Assam got impetus with British conquest and consequent end of Ahom rule, in 1820s. Migrants were mainly from Rajasthan, Bihar, Punjab, Nepal and most importantly from Bengal. Tribal labour from the Chhotanagpur region of Bihar and Orissa consisting of Santhal, Oraon and Munda tribes moved into tea plantations. While, Bengali Muslims from East Bengal district of Mymensingh, settled on land along the Brahmaputra and Surma valley. Marwaris, an entrepreneurial community from Rajasthan got engaged in trade, commerce and money lending. And the Bengali Hindus aspired for middle class jobs in Cachar district and towns of Brahmaputra valley. Others include, Nepalese working as herders, rubber tappers and cultivators and economically significant Punjabis working in the transport industry. By 1961 approximately 11.4 percent of the state population consisted of people from outside the state. Linguistically, only 57 percent of total population spoke Assamese while 17.4 percent people spoke Bengali.¹ The Migrations were mainly economic, in search for better jobs and other economic opportunities.

The new opportunities created by the opening of Assam and the extension of British influence, were exploited by migrant communities. For majority of

1. Myron Weiner (1978) *Sons of the Soil-Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India*, Delhi, Oxford University Press.



indigenous Assamese the new opportunities were of little interest. They were satisfied with their present condition. Also, 'locals' lacked requisite skills and education to take advantage of new economic opportunities. Meanwhile some migrants had special skills and required contacts for specific occupations. Marwaris, for example, have built up network of trade and finance throughout northern India. Assamese were no match to them in financial matters.

So, migrants held total control over the emerging modern sector of economy in Assam. Gradually they also penetrated into traditional economic sector. Between 1930 and 1950, some 1,508,000 acres, mostly in the Brahmaputra valley were settled by immigrants.² Many of the second generation migrants got settled as cultivators, either as land holders or tenants in land provided by the government, while others got employed in construction industries. Thus, for the people of northern and eastern India, especially Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, Assam was a land of opportunity, where one could find job, start a business, cultivate land and do better than at home.

The conflict between Assamese and non-Assamese arose after independence. The post independence period saw considerable improvement in education among native Assamese. Between 1950 and 1965 the number of students increased from 9,34,000 to 3,154,000.³ Increasing education resulted in the emergence of a large middle class among local population. Educated youth were now aspiring for middle class jobs, which hitherto were

2. *Annual Land Revenue Administration Reports of Assam*. cited by R.B. Vaghaiwalla, *Census of India 1951, Assam Manipur and Tripura*, Vol.XII, Part 1-A, Report, (Shillong 1954), p.72, cited *ibid*, p.98.

3. Myron Weiner, *op.cit.* p.111.

hegemonized by migrants. The natives thus, perceived Bengali and Marwari migrants as obstacle to upward social mobility and better economic opportunity. Secondly, Assamese complained that Bengalese, "have developed an irrational craze for cultural conquest."⁴ Bengali Hindus were seen as cultural imperialist treating fellow Assamese culture with contempt and sense of inferiority.

The nativism in Assam is characterized by the emergence of dual labour market and ethnic division of labour. The 'locals' found upward mobility difficult and at the most manage 'low-wage', 'unskilled' 'in formal sector jobs in urban areas. Migrants continue to hold sway over 'modern sector', 'high-wage', 'formal sector' jobs. These middle class jobs are too less in number to fulfil the aspiration of emerging educated class in indigenous population. Natives view this lack of opportunity for upward social mobility as an ethnic problem. Secondly, the political power or the political 'core' is in the hand of native Assamese, while migrants predominate in many towns and cities of the state. Thirdly, there is a perceived cultural threat to indigenous culture from the migrants. Locals view themselves as 'sons of the soil' with a duty to protect and preserve their own culture.

Lastly, the economic unsustainability exists so far as the increasing aspirations of educated Assamese youth is concerned. There are not enough jobs to meet the aspirations. Also, the local population is not mobile enough to seek jobs outside the state.

4. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, December 28, 1972, Cited *ibid*, p.120.

The rise of nativism or nativist conflict has seen many nativistic claims made on part of local population. In 1972 there were large scale anti-Bengali riots in the Brahmaputra valley accompanied by demand for better status to Assamese language. Further there was demand for recognition of Assamese cultural elements viz., Assamese language, historic personalities and events in Assamese history. On the employment front, the state government asked all industrialists in Assam to hire only 'local' people for jobs. Also, indigenous people were preferred in the administration. While Marwari who control trade & commerce were criticized for not providing employment to local Assamese. Thirdly, development process was envisaged that gives more benefits to local population through development of traditional sector of economy.

These nativist claims however didn't go unmatched. Non-Assamese feared that their own cultural identity would be threatened if natives succeeded in their demands. Also, there was fear of lack of opportunity in government jobs for the migrants. This only helped in accentuating the already volatile situation.

Thus, Assam is a typical case, where internal migration has resulted into nativist conflict on Assamese and non-Assamese lines. The 'sons of the soil' demand better economic opportunities, higher standard of living, and respect for indigenous Assamese culture. Migrants on the other hand are struggling to protect what they have achieved after decades of hard work i.e., hegemony over modern economic sector in Assam.

Bhutan:

Buddhist-Bhutanese Vs Hindu-Nepalese : International

Voluntary Migration and Cultural Nativism

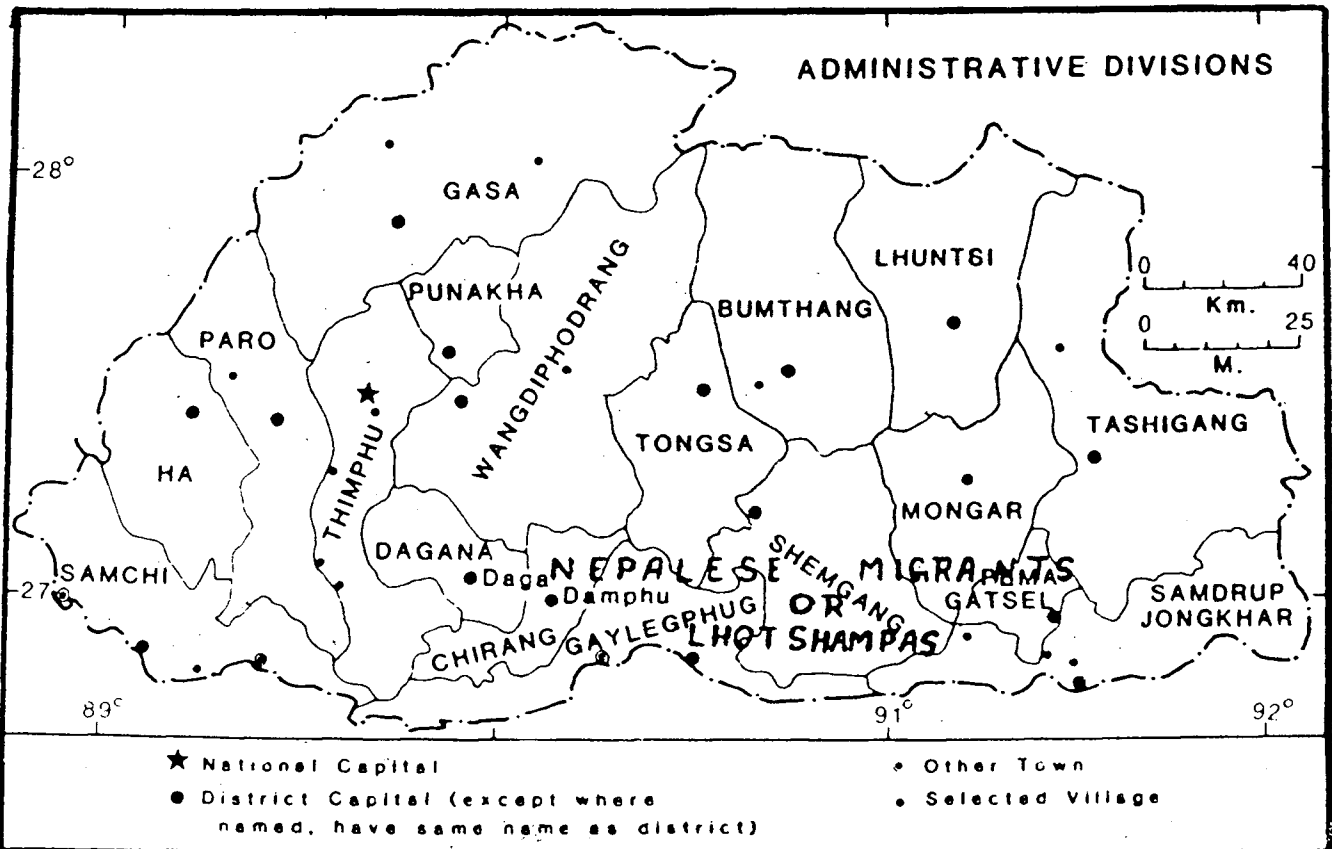
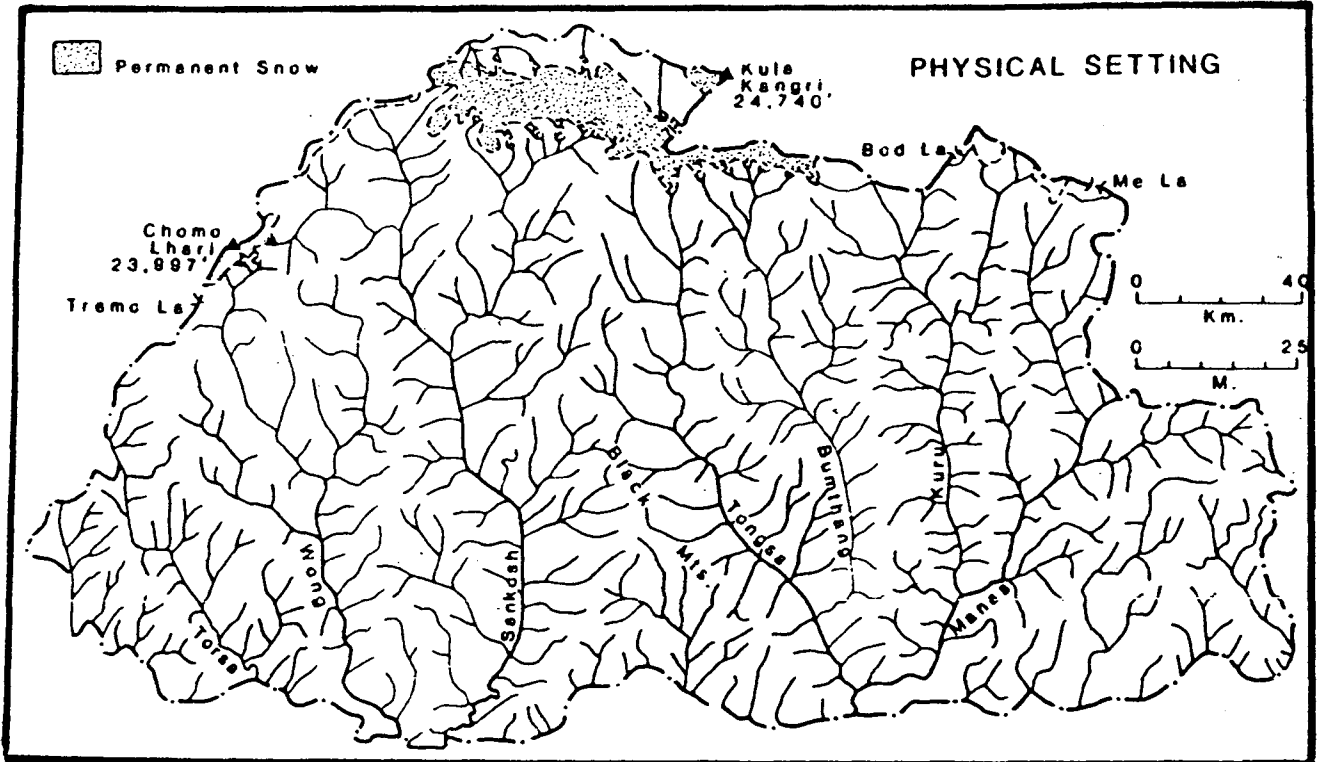
Kingdom of Bhutan or the land of the thunder dragon' lies in the eastern Himalayas bounded on three sides by India and in the north by China. The total area of Bhutan is 46,500 sq. km and population is 1.8 million (1997-1998).⁵ Physiographically the country consists of very high mountains, fertile valley and thick forests. Economy is largely a subsistence one, with people engaged in subsistence farming, pastoralism and hunting gathering. While still barter is practiced as means of exchange. By world standards Bhutan is economically, among the poorest countries.

Bhutan can be geographically divided into three regions - Southern Bhutan, Central Himalayas and Northern Bhutan.⁶ Each region has its own distinct ecological setting and cultural identity. Southern Bhutan is inhabited by peasants of Nepalese origin who immigrated from the end of the 19th century until about 1950s. They are full Bhutanese citizens, officially designated as Southern Bhutanese. They cleared natural vegetation in the region and settled as cultivators. Central Himalayas is further divided into Western and Eastern parts. Western Bhutan is inhabited by 'Drukpa' people. They follow 'Buddhist religion and speak 'Dzongkha' - 'language of the Dzong' (Fortress) which is also the official language of Bhutan. Eastern part of central Himalayas is inhabited

5. UNFPA, World Almanac 1997 and Statesman's Year Book 1997' 98.

6. Farzana Hossein (1993)," Bhutan's Ethnic Problem: A Case of a Fragile Ethnic Mosaic in South Asia" *BISS Journal*, Vol.14, No.1., pp.17-43.

BHUTAN



SOURCE: DUTTA, ASHOK AND GEIB, MARGARET (1967), ATLAS OF SOUTH ASIA.

by the 'Sharchopas' (people of east), and semi-nomadic ethnic group called 'Dakpas'. The northern region is inhabited by semi-nomadic Yak traders.

The nativist conflict arose in Southern Bhutan where Nepalese have migrated from Eastern Nepal and surrounding Indian territories. These migrations were promoted by the signing of the treaty of Sinchula in 1865 by which the duars war between India and Bhutan came to an end. Also, Bhutanese officials, especially Kazi Ugyen Dorji, the administrator of the region believed that industrious Nepalese who had brought about economic transformation in Sikkim, Darjeeling and Kalimpong district would do same in Southern Bhutan.⁷ These migrations were into an ecologically fragile area. There was immediate conflict with Bhotias. Nepali migrants cleared thick vegetation and natural pasture land for cultivation. This had adverse affect on Bhotia economy as grazing ground for Bhotia cattle got diminished.

The present conflict, however, was caused by the latest stream of migration (in 1960s) following the policy of rapid development of the Southern districts of Bhutan. The demand for labour here, was high and wages paid were 400 percent high than those paid in adjoining areas of Nepal and India. Also, the government provided free health and education facilities. But the increasing number of migrants worried the indigenous population. Bhutanese felt that they would loose their distinct Buddhist - Bhutanese identity to the growing number of Nepalese in migrants. These fears were accentuated by 1988 population census, where in Bhutanese - Buddhist comprised 48 percent, Nepalese Hindu 45

7. A.C. Sinha (1991) *Bhutan : Ethnic Identity and National Dilemma*, Reliance Publishing House, New Delhi, p.37.

percent and others 7 percent of total population.⁸ The Nepalese majority was threat not only to culture but also to Bhutanese hold over political power and administrative apparatus.

The nativism in Bhutan is pursued as a state policy. State is fulfilling the nativistic aims. For the protection of indigenous culture, the state is pursuing the policy of "Driglam Namzha." It is an elaborate code of conduct governing private life and public behaviour. The Drukpa dress and Druk hair style for women has been made compulsory. Moreover, Nepalese language was dropped from schools and Bhutanese language promoted as official language. As a whole Bhutanese - Buddhist culture is emphasized through all possible means and expression of Nepalese - Hindu culture is stifled. Secondly, for checking the inflow of Nepalese, government came up with 1985 citizenship Act. According to it non-Bhutanese who had entered Bhutan after 1958 would have to leave the country. The Nepalese who settled in the Kingdom before 1958 were granted Bhutanese nationality and special Residence Identity Card. As a result some 30,000 Nepalese were forced to leave the country. Thirdly, it is alleged that government population control programme is directed towards regions where Nepalese are in majority. Also, the migrants complain that they have always been treated as aliens and Bhutanese policy was to isolate them by confining them to Southern Bhutan.

The migrants responded through demands for greater democratic rights for Nepalese migrants. This included freedom of expression and cultural rights,

8. Farzana Hossein, *op.cit.*, pp.17-43.

greater participation in political and administrative apparatus of state and greater economic mobility for migrants. Year 1990, saw the formation of Bhutan People's Party (BPP) and with it the democratic movement became more organized. The BPP and Students Union of Bhutan (SUB) have also used terror tactics. 'Ngolops' (anti-nationals) as these outlawed migrants are called are accused of destruction of schools, agricultural centres, veterinary centres, post offices, forest range offices, revenue and custom offices, shops and houses.⁹

Thus, in Bhutan the Nativistic conflict is between the state and the migrants. The state representing the indigenous Bhutanese population protects their cultural/ethnic, political and economic concerns. Meanwhile migrants are fighting for greater say in overall power structure of the country.

Chhotanagpur

Tribals Vs Non-Tribals: Internal Migration and

Search for A Tribal Identity

Chhotanagpur is a plateau region located in southern Bihar. It is historically, a backward region covered by scrub jungle and forest and inhabited by Munda, Ho, Santhal, Oraon and other tribes. Soil is poor, 'badly leached and deficient in organic material, nitrogen and lime.'¹⁰ People are engaged in traditional economic activities, primitive subsistence agriculture and shifting cultivation.

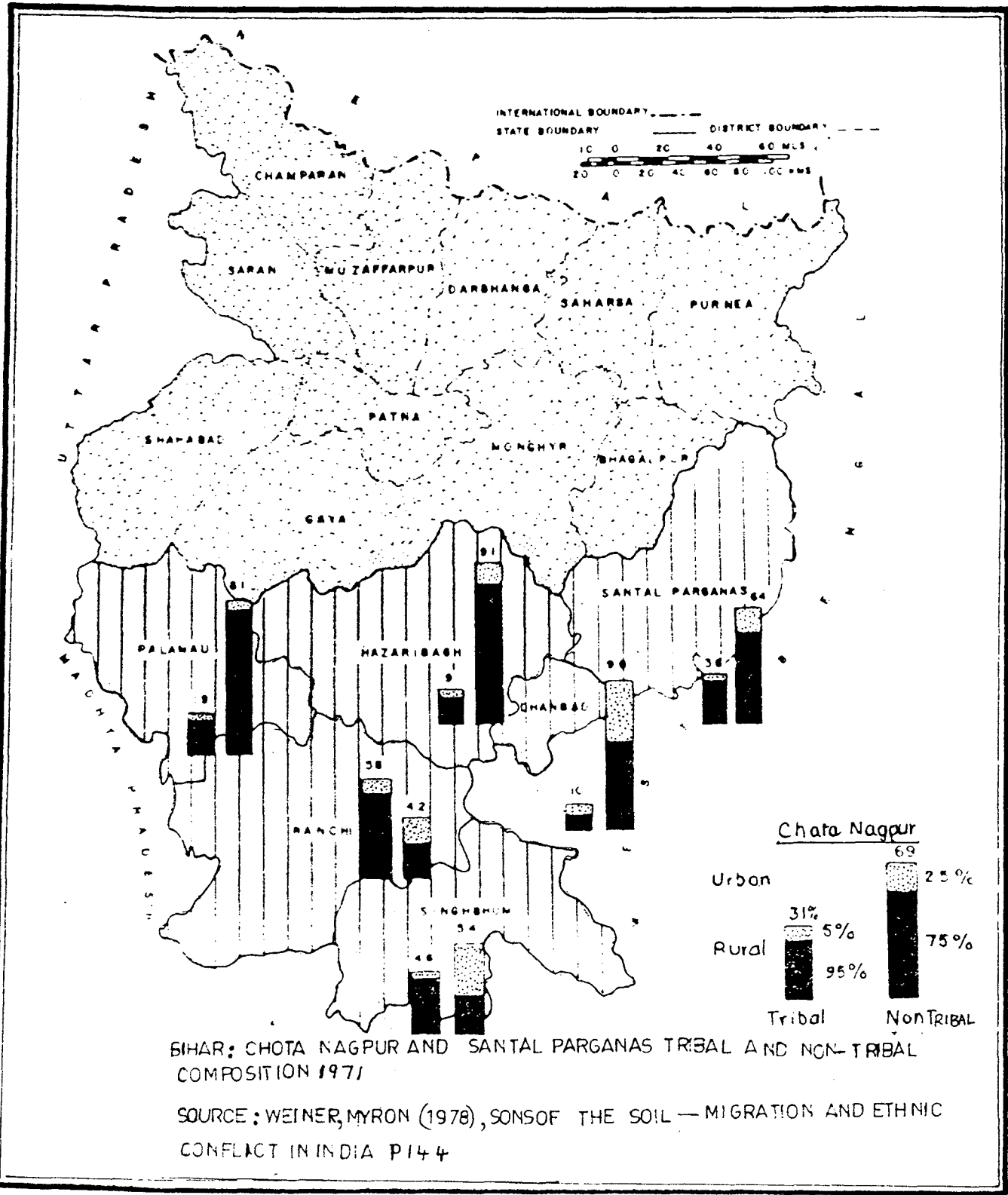
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9. Debamitra Mitra (1996), "Ethnic Issues in Bhutan": *Assam Studies* XIV (2), pp.38-53.
 10. O.H.K. Spate (1954), *India and Pakistan: A General and Regional Geography*, London, Methuen, p.586.

The development in the region picked up after 1856 when coalfields were developed at Jharia, Bokaro and Karanpura. Over the time other minerals like copper, bauxite, limestone, chromite, Asbestos, graphite and mica were exploited, making it one of the most important mining areas in India. Accompanying was the industrial development. Iron and steel industry at Jamshedpur and Bokaro and state fertilizer plant at Sindhri marked the beginning. This Industrial development induced migrations from adjoining areas of northern Bihar and Bengal. By 1961 the two district of Dhanbad and Singhbhum alone had more than half million migrants.¹¹ The migrants occupied skilled and technical jobs in industries, mining and state and private institutions. The local tribals had little education to occupy these jobs.

The 'modern' development in trade, industries, mining etc. benefited indigenous tribals little. Only a small number of tribals got employment in industry. It is generally agreed that relatively few Munda, Ho and Oraon tribesmen were employed by industry, while many Santals from nearby Santal Parganas did substantially better in industrial employment.¹² Also, there was no improvement in the traditional agricultural sector of economy. 'Modern' agriculture was no where to be seen. Tribals used same traditional techniques, poor quality seeds, with no improvement in irrigation facilities and no chemical fertilizers. Worst still the migrations accentuated the problem of alienation of tribal lands.

11. Myron weiner, *op.cit.*, p.165.

12. L.P. Vidyarthi (1970), *Industrialization in India : A Case Study of Tribal Bihar Ranchi* : Department of Anthropology, Ranchi University, Cited *ibid*, p.148.



Tribals lost land to the new industries, especially Heavy Engineering Corporation, through sale of land to migrant land-lords and due to the expansion of the urban centres. In the decade 1951-61 Jamshedpur grew by 42 percent, Ranchi by 82 percent and Dhanbad by 116 percent. The towns of Ranchi, Dhanbad, Jamshedpur and Singhbhum have all physically expanded into the countryside.¹³ The means adopted for purchase of land by migrants were also not always legal. Thirdly, few tribals were employed by the expanding bureaucracy. The colleges and universities grew but initially few local tribal students attended.

Thus, it was the migrants and not the locals, who primarily gained from the development of Chhotanagpur region. Migrants from north Bihar and Bengal entered colleges and Universities, occupied most of the position in the state administrative services and took away high wage, skilled jobs created by the new mining, industrial and commercial activities.

The conflict between tribals and non-tribals emerged from the land alienation problem. The earlier tribal uprisings against 'outsiders' include Kol insurrection in the beginning of the nineteenth century, anti-diku agitation in the 1880s known as the Sardar movement and Munda Uprising of 1899-1900. While, Tana Bhagat movement among the Oraon from 1905 to the 1920s was in form of no rent agitation against the diku landowners. Many of these movements were reformist and revivalist and talked of returning to old way of

13. Myron Weiner, *op.cit.*, p.165.

life. The usurption of land by migrants and accompanied agrarian changes also forced the out migration of tribals onto tea plantation in Assam and Bengal.

The present conflict relates to the demand for a separate state of tribals - 'Jharkhand': which 'local' believe would safeguard the tribal interests. The 'Jharkhand movement' as it is known as began in 1930s when 'Jharkand party' was founded. However the movement got impetus after independence, with spread of education among tribals, especially non-Christian. Between 1960 and 1965 for example, secondary school enrollment of tribal in Bihar increased by 130 percent."¹⁴ The creation of new state would mean transfer of political power to tribals. This political power can then be used for transforming the ethnic division of labour. More government jobs could be provided to the tribals. Also, agrarian reforms can be brought out with modernization of agriculture and solution of land alienation problem. Also, better vocational and technical education for tribals can be arranged.

Today, Chhotanagpur is among the most industrialized and mineral rich regions of India. Tribals however, have failed to find a place in this process of modernization in Chhotanagpur.

Sindh

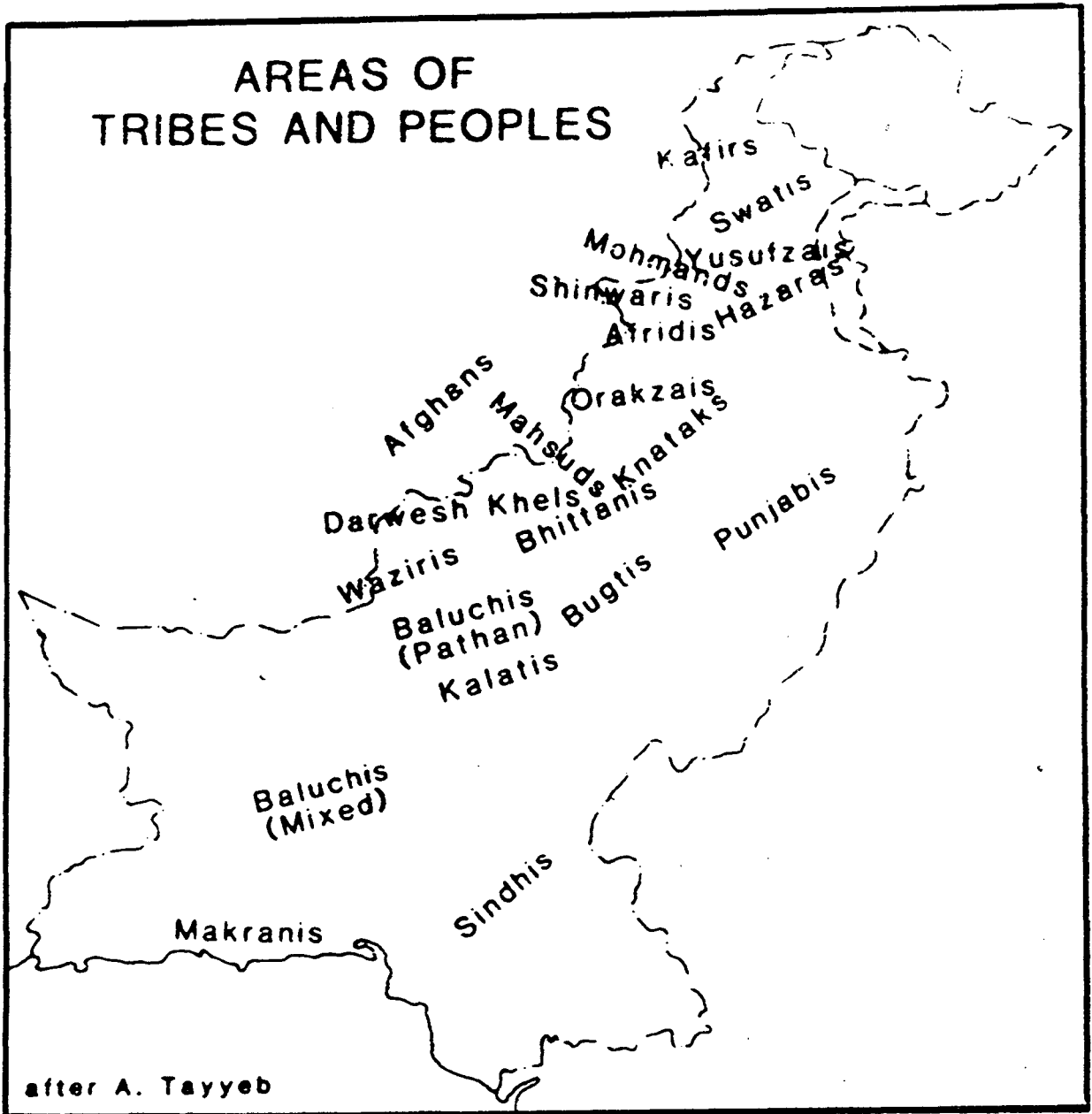
Sindhis Vs Mohajirs : Forced International Migration and Nativism

Sindh is southern province of Pakistan. It is physiographically a plain area watered by Indus and its tributaries. Economy is mainly agriculture based,

14. Ibid, p.175.

PAKISTAN

AREAS OF TRIBES AND PEOPLES



after A. Tayyeb

SOURCE: DUTTA, ASHOK AND GEIB, MARGARET (1967), ATLAS OF SOUTH ASIA

although industry and trade has grown in recent times. The nativistic conflict here involves migrant Mohajir community and the native Sindhis. Although conflict arose in 1970s but the seed were laid during the partition period.

Sindh economy at the time of partition was mainly agricultural and feudal with some trading centres and market towns with very little industry. The bourgeois and petty bourgeois class among Sindhis was still in its embryonic form. Before partition, there was a small urban bourgeois class of Sindhi Hindus, but it migrated to India. It was the Sindhi Muslim who had not ventured into trade and industry.

The partition of India saw influx of refugees into the region. The refugees who were mainly urdu speaking settled in the cities of Sindh Karachi, Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas and Sukkur. Mohajirs as these migrants were collectively called were linguistically, culturally, politically, socially and economically distinct from indigenous Sindhis. Infact, Sindh was under sway of an alien culture which soon began to dominate Sindh as well as the entire country.¹⁵ It was because Mohajir belonged to more advanced urban capitalist culture which they brought from the towns and cities of northern India. They were more adept at political manoeuvring and had the required skills to form and run the state machinery. Gradually, migrants took over economic and political power in Pakistan. Under the leadership of M.A. Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan their influence in administration and state institutions grew manifold.

15. Akbar S. Zaidi (1991) "Sindhi Vs Mohajir in Pakistan - Contradiction, Conflict, Compromise." *Economic and Political Weekly May*, pp.1295-1302.

Over the time refugees has emerged as the ruling ethnic group in Pakistan, especially Sindh.

The conflict arose with Sindhis seeking to assert themselves politically, economically and culturally. This happened with increasing education among feudal Sindhis and subsequent movement towards the cities. Political assertion got a welcome beginning in early 1970s when first Sindhi prime minister was elected to power. This also marked the rise of Sindhi nationalism. In 1972 attempt was made to make Sindhi the official language. The newly emerging Sindhi bourgeois and petty bourgeois class was asserting its identity which had taken many years to concretise. But the rising Sindhi nationalism confronted Mohajir aspirations and their world-view. The clearest expression of this diverging identity came in 1986 when Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) was officially launched. This was the culmination of the conflict between the two communities.

The factors that aided in the rise of the conflict were cultural, economic, and politico-developmental. Firstly, there was cultural distinction between the Sindhis and Mohajirs. For Mohajirs Sindh was culturally and economically backward. Refugees on the other hand represented a more progressive social order but it was one which had been imposed upon an alien land rather than an order which has evolved from within.¹⁶ Secondly, the migrants were able to dominate the economy of the country, aided by the economic programme of the Ayub regime. Colonial legacy also helped Punjabis and Mohajirs to get access to the high-wage, technical jobs in the government as well as the private sector.

16. Ibid.

While Sindhis along with other educationally backward ethnic groups, were left out of higher jobs in industries, trade and administration. So, there existed ethnic division of labour and dual labour market. Once Sindhis got education and requisite political power they were fighting to transform this ethnic division of labour.

Thirdly, the technological changes brought striking changes in rural landscape. Modernisation resulted into changed professions, values and social relations in the rural society. Introduction of new technology to agriculture rendered thousands jobless and all these happened to be Sindhis. So, natives now headed for cities dominated by Mohajirs. Fourthly, the political 'core' shifted from Mohajirs to Sindhis. Earlier, Mohajirs had control over economy as well as the political apparatus. But, now Sindhis had acquired the political power to challenge Mohajir hegemony.

The city of Karachi had special significance in this struggle for greater access to economic resources. Mohajir had unquestionable authority over Karachi ever since independence. But now more and more educated and professional Sindhis are migrating to Karachi for employment. Not only this, for the Sindhis, Karachi has become an important source of funds and provides money which is channelled back into the rural economy. So, Karachi is central to the ensuing nativist conflict. While Mohajirs are demanding a separate Mohajir province along with Karachi city. Sindhis on the other hand increasingly making their presence felt in the city.

Thus, Sindh is a case where nativism arose from forced international migration. These migrations doesn't cause immediate resource scarcity because

the movement of people was two way. Also, refugees came with better skills and education and were successful in developing industry and trade. However, in the long run the conflict arose because the ethnic division of labour existed. Meanwhile native Sindhis were able to get control over political 'core' and newly educated Sindhi youth were too eager to use this political power for transformation of ethnic division of labour. Conflict was with 'refugees' because it was they who were hindering the upward social mobility. Thus, natives are fighting for better middle - class 'high-wage' jobs and greater share in the process of modernization and industrialization. While migrants are fearful about their identity and are demanding a separate state to protect their cultural, economic and political interests.

The Emerging Spatial Pattern :

The nativist conflict is highly localised over the space. There are vast areas untouched by nativistic feelings. This includes areas where migrations, both forced and voluntary, have taken place. The Punjab province in Pakistan, and Punjab, Haryana, West Bengal, Bombay. Vadodra industrial belt in India have experienced large scale migration of people. But nativistic conflicts are absent here.

The conflicts in Sindh, Chhotanagpur and Assam emerged out of special circumstance that existed there. Firstly, the natives in these places are in the feudal stage of development. They are engaged in primitive subsistence agriculture and haven't participated in the industrialization process. Secondly,

there is recent development in educational facilities among the natives. So, they now aspire for better jobs in cities and higher standard of living.

The resource potential of the region doesn't have the ability to take care of these rising aspiration. The jobs are few and aspirants more. Mean while, as migrations were in terms of ethnic groups and ethnic division of labour exists with migrants engaged in better jobs. So, the conflicts over economic resources took ethnic colour as natives felt that their upward social mobility was hindered by migrants.

Thirdly, the indigenous population in these regions is not mobile. In the regions like Punjab and West Bengal where native population is out migrating the immigrations haven't caused nativist conflicts. Lastly, the developmental process in these areas is lopsided. There is no modernization of agriculture sector. The benefits of development in industries and trade are accrued by migrants. The development of agriculture can provides the upward social mobility which natives seek in movement to cities. This will reduce pressure over the middle class jobs in cities.

The exception to this process of growth of nativism is the conflict in Southern Bhutan. Here, the conflict is more of ethnic/cultural and political nature, than economic. Migrant Nepalese or 'Lhot shampas' are threatening the Bhutanese numerical majority and their hold over polity and administration. So, here nativism is pursued as a state policy to preserve the Bhutanese - Buddhist identity.

CHAPTER - IV

**The Political Dimension : The State Policy and
The Resolution of the Conflict.**

Political system deals with power and use of power for maintenance of social order, peace and harmony. The resolution of conflict is thus, unseverable part of national polity. Conflicts are endemic in the society. Most of the conflicts are over the limited economic opportunities. These conflicts leads to disruption of the normal social functioning. In many cases the national integration and developmental activities are negatively affected. So, the state adopts policy measure to avoid conflicts, and for peaceful resolution of hostility as an alternative.

Nativistic conflict is one such confrontation between natives and migrants, along the ethnic lines. It can exist variably as an ideology, as a political movement or consciously pursued state policy. The policy measure for avoiding nativist conflicts is affected by the fact whether nativism is pursued as a state policy or it is merely a regional political movement. When nativism is part of state policy, the state protect the interests of indigenous population through various policy resolutions. This means reservation or preferences in government jobs, restriction on the flow of migrants and stress on indigenous art and culture. This has been the case in nativist confrontations in southern Bhutan, Fiji and Malaysia. Here the state through various policy measures is protecting interests of Bhutanese, indigenous Fijians and Malay population.

On the other hand when nativism is in form of a regional political movement it is relatively difficult to restrict political and cultural freedom of migrants. In India, right to move and reside in any part of Indian territory is protected as a fundamental right. No state government can thus restrict

immigrations for furthering the interests of 'sons of the soil'. Nevertheless, here other means are devised for achieving nativist claims. 'Local' for e.g., get preference in the state and even private enterprises for jobs. Also, violence, riots and physical threat is used for serving the nativist interests. The terror tactics have been invariably used in Sindh, Assam, Fiji, Malaysia, Bombay metropolis etc. The Nativist claims could be of preserving cultural identity (or superiority), gaining economic benefits and/or breaking migrant's political hegemony. In Assam these were large scale anti-Bengali riots in the Brahmaputra valley in 1972. While in Sindh violence has been used by both Sindhis & Mohajirs, for protecting their respective interests.

The nation-states strive for national integration and nation building. The nativistic movements on the other hand are divisive force. So, various policy measures have been suggested to tackle the problem of nativistic movements. Most of these aim for concessions and better opportunities for natives. While others dwell on the idea of confidence building measures endeavouring for greater co-operation and understanding among locals and migrants. Still these are few policy measures for benefits and concessions to the migrant community, especially in the areas where migrants have taken to the violent course.

The possible state policy measures can be summarised as follows first, are measures relating to restriction of movement of 'outsiders' or controlling the migration streams. Especially in case of trans-border or international migrations. Second, is the transfer of greater political power to natives. But such transfer of power, leads to increased tensions. Thirdly, the reservations for 'locals' in government jobs and educational institutions can go a long way in

meeting their aspirations. Fourthly, greater partnership among natives and migrants have been suggested for building a more cordial environment. And lastly, an alternative strategy for development of rural areas can be suggested for creating greater economic opportunities for natives within the traditional rural sector of economy.

Human population are by and large mobile. In past mobility was caused by war, famines other natural calamities and need for fertile agricultural lands. Today migrations are on increase necesstated by expansion of modern industry, growth of a national market, establishment of national educational institutions and building of multipurpose projects in distant backward areas. Migrations to these areas have brought economic and demographic changes. It is these changes which give rise to nativistic feelings. So, restriction on streams of migrations is thought as an alternative for preventing ethic conflicts. Such restrictions are usually applied on international migrations. In Southern Bhutan, for example, the state policy is to discourage the immigration of Nepalese. The 1985 citizenship act declared that Nepalese or "Lhotshampas' who have entred Bhutan after 1958 would not be given citizenship rights. This policy resulted in the statelessness for some 30,000 Nepalese.¹ Migrations may also be restricted because of agressive attitude of natives towards outsiders. Violence and riots act as a deterrance to choice of a place as destination region. The restriction on the internal movements are however, not possible. Usually, the state constitutions protect the individual right to more unhindered within the country. In India the

1. Farzana Hossein (1993), "Bhutan's Ethnic Problem : A Case of a Fragile Ethnic Mosaic in South Asia", *BISS Journal*, Vol.14, No.1.

right to move within Indian territory is guaranteed as a fundamental right. The article 19, specifies that all citizens "shall have the right to move freely throughout the territory of India" and also right "to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India". The constitution also provides cultural and educational rights. Whereby, one can conserve his language and culture and obtain education in language of one's own choice. So, restrictions on migrations is a solution to nativism arising out of international migrations but not for internal movements.

The conflict can be assuaged, secondly by transfer of political power to natives. Political power can give them authority and a feeling of responsibility. Also, with the help of political means local population can have better access to vocational and technical education, economic resources besides fulfillment of cultural aspiration.

Political power can also be used to transform the ethnic division of labour. The natives can now be preferred in administrative jobs. So, in many areas demand for political power, is integral part of nativist demands. In Chhotanagpur, for example, tribals are demanding for a separate state as this will give a new political meaning to tribal identity. In some cases, however, acquisition of political power precedes the occurrence of nativistic conflicts. Especially when political core is held by natives and geographical 'core' by the migrants. The political power is then used for gaining economic and cultural leverages vis a vis migrants.

Thirdly, reservations have been suggested as a protectionist strategy for tribal (read 'native') upliftment and prevention of social conflicts including

nativistic conflicts. The reservations include fixed quota in educational institutions, employment opportunities and fixed number of seats in the state and central legislative bodies. So, reservations cover educational, economic and political arenas. Recently there are suggestion for extending reservations to the private sector. Till now reservation as a policy has been preferred in administration but not in industry. Reservations have also been used to tackle other problems of tribal areas, especially the problem of land alienation. In the Chhotanagpur tribal area, Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act, has been passed to prevent alienation of tribal lands. Similarly, constitution of India, 1950, reserves certain areas for the tribals and within these areas non-tribals can't purchase lands.² Reservations, thus is a political tool to bridge gap between developed and underdeveloped sections of the society. More so, if such sections exists on ethnic lines as is the case in nativistic conflicts.

Working together and sharing of each others experiences solves a lot of problems. So, development of partnership among natives and migrants is thought of as a policy measure to check violent conflicts. Growth of partnership ensures that 'outsiders' and 'locals' will work together for overall development of the region. Migrants with their better skills can help in the growth of trade and industry in the rural areas. Natives can also gradually learn those skills and participate in modern sector of economy. In Chhotanagpur region there is talk of partnership between the Hindu and the Christian tribals as well as also between tribals and non-tribals. This partnership is sought under the institutional

2. Article 244, of the constitution of India, identifies, scheduled areas in fifth schedule and Tribal areas in Sixth Schedule. In these areas tribal have special economic, political and customary cultural rights vis a vis non-tribals.

framework of the Chhotanagpur Development Council. The council makes demands upon the central and state government for additional resources for the development of the region, including the construction of roads, development of irrigation potential, spread of education especially vocational education and other programs that would benefit the rural population.

Lastly, the nature of development process in the region itself can affect origin and spread of nativist conflicts in the region. Generally, core-periphery relationship exists in the areas of nativist confrontation viz., Assam, Sindh (Pakistan), Chhotanagpur & cities of Bombay & Hyderabad. The industry, trade and commerce is restricted to the urban areas and are controlled by migrants. The high-wage, modern-sector of economy is thus hegemonized by migrants. On the other hand natives occupy periphery locations in underdeveloped rural areas. They are either employed in the traditional agricultural occupations or the low-skilled jobs in towns and cities. There is ethnic division of labour. Even the new emerging class of educated skilled youth among natives fails to find appropriate jobs in the cities.

However, a new developmental strategy can prevent the conflicts emerging out of such core-periphery relations. The strategy has to be aimed at modernization of traditional agriculture so that locals could find ample opportunities for upward social mobility within rural areas. Secondly, the need is to develop forward and backward, economic linkages between rural and urban areas. Rural areas can provide raw material for urban industries and also act as large markets for the finished products. Also, many agro-based industries could ideally be established in rural areas. Similarly if the modern technical education

is provided to rural youth, they can occupy managerial positions in new industries. These positions are often filled by people from outside. And are major cause of confrontation between natives and immigrants.

Resolving the Conflict ; Quest for a Truce :-

The ethnic conflicts are as complex as the human behaviour. It is very difficult to find solutions to these conflicts. Both natives and migrants are confident of righteousness of their demands. However, this doesn't mean the nativistic conflicts defy solution. There are five aspects that help in perpetuation of these conflicts. So, these factors become very crucial for any attempt to resolve conflicts between migrants and 'Sons of the Soils'. The first aspect is the relative backwardness and primitive stage of 'native' economy; secondly the native aspiration of social mobility especially among newly educated youth has to be taken care off; thirdly the development of social, economic and political institutions is needed where indigenous and non-indigenous sections of the society could meet; fourthly the stress has to be on cultural assimilation by all means, while understanding the need of preservation of cultural elements of all ethnic groups and lastly, violence has to be discourage and strictly dealt with.

The developed economy has the greater capacity to absorb the increasing number of aspiring middle class educated youth. It raises standard of living of indigenous population as well as also provide opportunities for upward social mobility. As the competition over few high-wage skilled jobs is one of the major cause of origin of nativistic conflicts. So, enhanced modern development in industries and trade and especially in the traditional agricultural sector can

prevent nativistic movements. Also, reservations in jobs for native youth will serve the same purpose. But reservations in private sector have not been feasible so far and it cannot be an alternative to development. The 'outsiders' can make some concession in this regard.

The concerted efforts are needed to evolve such social, political and economic institutions where locals and migrants can regularly meet and discuss their problems. This will not only increase co-operation among them but also auger an over-all prosperity in the region. Many new areas of 'mutual interests' could be identified. Employment opportunities can also be improved by developing forward and backward linkages between rural and urban economy.

Cultural differences for long have been cause of misunderstanding and mistrust. Wherever, two or more ethnic groups reside stress and tensions develop. The indigenous as well as migrant population fear loss of cultural identity. The only solution to this is attempts for cultural assimilation. But this doesn't mean undermining any ethnic group. Full scope has to be there to allow individual to get educated in his or her own language, and practice of one's religions and celebrate festivals of one's own choice. However, the efforts should be to develop a regional culture over the time. Economic co-operation and integration of rural & urban economy can help in cultural assimilation and development of a regional way of life.

Lastly, violence is the most detrimental aspect of all conflicts. It not only undermines the process of nation building, but also adversely affect the economic development in the region. Moreover violence begets violence. So, violence has to strictly dealt with. In fact it is violence that has worried

governments where ever nativistic movements are in progress viz. Pakistan, India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Fiji. In Bhutan where nativism is part of state policy the king has been forced to seek a restrained approach in view of rising migrant sponsored terrorism. He has granted amnesty to large number of southern Bhutanese detained by the security forces. Also, he has ordered developmental activities in the region to mitigate the recent conflict between Bhutanese and minority Nepalese.

Thus, nativist conflicts can be resolved peacefully if the economic, political and cultural factors, that causes these confrontations are properly looked into. If the aspiration for upward social mobility are fulfilled, there are little reasons for the natives to take to the course of struggle and violence. The economic factors are the most important in the origin of nativism. The political and cultural factors although having their own importance are used only to justify the economic claims.

CHAPTER - V

CONCLUSION

Human needs are unlimited and so are the desires. But resources are often scarce and there are conflicts between individuals or social groups over the access to limited resources. This resource scarcity may be caused by sudden increase of population owing to migration. Present dissertation deals with migration induced social conflicts known as Nativistic conflicts or nativistic movements. Here, mainly two aspects have been considered in the background of multiethnic low income countries of South Asia. The first is the internal and international migrations and their socio-political consequences. Second, is the aspect of ecological or economic unsustainability caused by these migrations. Both these aspects have been dealt with the help of four case - studies covering various aspects of nativism, viz., Sind in Pakistan (Mohajir vs Sindhi); Chhotanagpur (northern Biharis and Bengalese vs local tribals); Assam (Assamese vs Non-Assamese) and Bhutan (Nepalese or 'Lhotshampas' vs Bhutanese).

Nativistic Conflict : The Concept and the Process:

Nativism represents anti-migrant feeling among the indigenous population. While nativist conflicts represent movement against the migrants for greater socio-economic and political power. Nativism can be an ideology, a political movement or a state policy.

Migration is central to the occurrence of such conflicts. The chances of confrontation are more in multi-ethnic low income societies like India where migrations often are on ethnic lines. Migrations can be both voluntary or forced. The forced migration may cause immediate resource scarcity (ecological

unsustainability) and resultant conflict with the local inhabitants. As the resources are not sufficient enough to withstand the migration pressure. The resource potential can however, be increased with better technology and skills. In that case there will be no immediate nativist movement. The migrations of Nepalese to southern Bhutan and Chakmas to the north-eastern India induced resource scarcity for local inhabitants resulting into situation of conflict. In Bhutan, 'Lhotshampas' (Nepalese migrants) cleared pastureland of Bhotia tribesmen for agriculture purpose. Bhotias resented as their economy was adversely affected, Voluntary migrations on the other hand result from the demands at destination region and there are few immediate economic problems.

The migrants are often more skilled and educated than indigenous population. So, over the time, they control the industry and trade in the region. Also, high-wage, technical and managerial, middle-class jobs are held by migrants while natives continue with their traditional occupations. Geographically the concentration of migrants is in the cities while locals reside mainly in the rural areas. Thus there exists ethnic division of labour and differences in locality, economic pursuits, culture and outlook between natives and the migrants. Often the division of labour is along class relationships with high conflictual potential viz. as between landlords and peasants, grain merchants and agricultural producers shopkeepers and consumers and industrial managers and workers.

The conflict surfaces when the education spreads among the indigenous population. Educated native youth strive for middle class jobs which until now are held by migrants. The spread of education and modernization of rural

landscape is also often accompanied by unemployment and subsequent movement to cities. In the cities natives have to face antagonism from 'outsiders' who hegemonize cities - culturally economically and politically. The natives now demand 'sons of soil' right over the regional resources. Nativist conflicts often takes shape of political movements as new political parties emerge. The examples include Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) dominated by Sindhis in Pakistan; Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) dominated by tribals in Chhotanagpur and Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) in Assam. The political power is generally in the hand of indigenous population as they form a numerical majority. This power is used as a tool to change the ethnic division of labour. The native youth are preferred in administrative jobs and reservations are introduced in state educational institutions.

The conflict is accentuated when there is mismatch between the political 'core' and geographical 'core'. The political power is controlled by natives while geographically migrants dominate important towns and cities including the capital city. As is the case in Karachi (dominated by migrant Mohajirs); Gawhati (Bengali and Marwari migrants), Rangoon, now Yangon (by Indian migrants) and Kuala Lumpur (by Chinese migrants).

The cultural differences are necessary for the origin of conflicts. But actual confrontation is over the access to resources and desire for better standard of living. The cultural distinctions, however, provides grounds for groupings on the ethnic line. Thus conflicts which are essentially economic, gets cultural colour.

The assertion of indigenous identity by natives is followed by a similar exercise on part of migrants. They form their own political groupings with aims of safeguarding their own economic, political and cultural interests. The characteristic example is the formation of Mohajir Quami Movement (MQM) in 1986, by Mohajir refugees in Sind, Pakistan.

The Contemporary South Asian Milieu :

South Asia consists of the developing third world countries viz, India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Srilanka and Maldives. There are many areas within South Asia where migrations have induced nativistic conflicts. The examples that come to mind include the conflict between Mohajirs and Sindhis in Sindh (Pakistan); Nepalese or 'Lhotshampas' vs Bhutanese in Southern Bhutan and problems between natives and internal migrants in Assam, Chhotanagpur (Southern Bihar), and cities of Bombay and Hyderabad in India.

In Sindh, nativism has emerged out of forced international migration. Mohajirs who migrated during partition of India soon dominated the region economically, politically and culturally, with their better skills and political acumen. Conflict emerged when newly educated Sindhis demanded their share in the modern economic sector. There was struggle for the middle class jobs. Similar desires for upward social mobility caused conflicts in Assam and Chhotanagpur. Here the conflict originated from the internal migrations. In Assam the demand was for greater share of natives in government as well as private jobs. It was accompanied by assertion of indigenous Assamese culture.

While in Chhotanagpur the natives demanded for a separate tribal state of 'Jharkhand'. 'Jharkhand Movement' as it is commonly known was perceived as transfer of political power to the tribals. This political power can be further used to accrue economic, educational, cultural and other benefits for the tribals.

The conflict has reached violent stage in Sind, where both indigenous Sindhis and Mohajirs have killed each other's supporters. In Assam there were riots against Bengali in 1972 and also a militant outfit ULFA exists United Liberation Front of Assam. But here migrants haven't taken to the violent course. While Chhotanagpur has remained more or less, a peaceful area.

The conflict in Southern Bhutan is altogether different from the three case-studies discussed above. Here, nativism is pursued as a state policy. The state is engaged in preserving cultural identity of indigenous Bhutanese - Buddhist population. The immigration of Nepalese is being discouraged to maintain the political and cultural hegemony superiority of indigenous Bhutanese. This on cultural front has been followed by the policy of "Driglam Namzha". It is an elaborate code of conduct governing public and private life of an individual. The code is based of indigenous Bhutanese - Buddhist culture. While the expression of Nepalese - Hindu culture is discouraged.

Emerging Generalizations : Spatial Pattern of Nativism in South Asia

Migrations doesn't always lead to nativistic confrontations. There are many regions within South Asia where movement of people have occurred without conflicts. These include for example, the state of Punjab in Pakistan; Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, the Bombay - Vadodra industrial belt and the state of West Bengal in India.

The areas where nativistic conflicts occur share some common characteristics. First, there exists a migrant ethnic group with different cultural background. Secondly, the migrants have better skills and more risk taking abilities than the native population. Also, initially the aspirations of natives are low and they doesn't compete with migrants for middle - class jobs. There is dual labour market and ethnic division of labour with migrants occupying high-wage, skilled, 'technical' formal sector' jobs. Thirdly, the recently educated youths among natives aspire for the middle-class jobs till now held by migrants. Fourthly, ecological or economic unsustainability exists vis a vis the growing aspiration of natives. The demand for better jobs is high and opportunities are limited. In other words the regions haven't gone through rapid industrialisation and modernization of traditional agriculture. The local population is also not outmigrating. Locals doesn't benefit from economic opportunities in the surrounding regions. Lastly, there is blockage to the aspirations of local for social mobility. The migrants are only too willing to maintain hold on the economic and political power they have amassed over the decades.

The above generalizations are applicable to the nativistic conflicts in Assam, Chhotanagpur and Sind. The case of Southern Bhutan is characteristically different. Here, as already mentioned, nativism is a state policy. There are no economic conflict over middle-class jobs among natives and migrants. The struggle is for the maintenance of cultural hegemony of native Bhutanese - Buddhist.

In Search for Peace:

All societies and all wise men of all times have tried for peaceful resolution of conflicts. Nativistic conflicts are no exception. There are various methods and measures by which nativistic confrontations can be resolved peacefully. Firstly, the migration streams can be restricted to a particular region as is being done in case of southern Bhutan. But this is feasible only in case of trans-border international migrations. It is difficult to restrict internal movements. Secondly, reservations in middle - class jobs and state universities and technical institutions can be provided to natives, ensuring their upward social mobility. This is to be followed by prevention of exploitation of 'local' at the hand of better skilled and educated migrants. As Tribals are often exploited and their land alienated by 'outsiders'. The need is for proper implementation of existing laws and formulation of new rules and regulations if so needed. Thirdly, partnership among natives and migrants has to be encouraged by building social, political and economic institutions based on mutual co-operation. This will also help in cultural assimilation and development of regional culture. Lastly, a development strategy is to be envisaged which takes care of traditional agricultural sector of economy along with the modern industrial sector. Modernisation and necessary agrarian reforms in indigenous agriculture can raise standard of living and provide better employment opportunities for natives. This along with development of industry and trade can solve the unemployment problem.

The nativistic conflicts are a complex phenomenon and defy easy solution. However, a proper development strategy with other measures, for fulfilling aspirations of local population can help in ushering in an era of peace and harmony. It is only then that nativism can be an incident of past. Precisely that is why the present study was focussed on the spatial pattern emerging out of the demographic process and resultant socio-economic changes in different and diverse parts of South Asia.

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