

**TIBETAN POPULATION CONTROVERSY :
ANALYSIS OF CHINESE AND TIBETAN VIEWS**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY*

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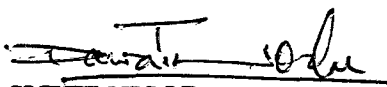
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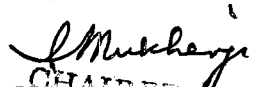
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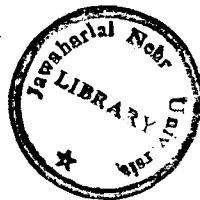
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled TIBETAN POPULATION CONTROVERSY: ANALYSIS OF CHINESE AND TIBETAN VIEWS submitted by DEEPAK ROY in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY of this University is a bonafide work and has not been previously submitted in part or full for any other degree or diploma in this or any other University.


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**..... to My Ma: , Babu
and Kuti**

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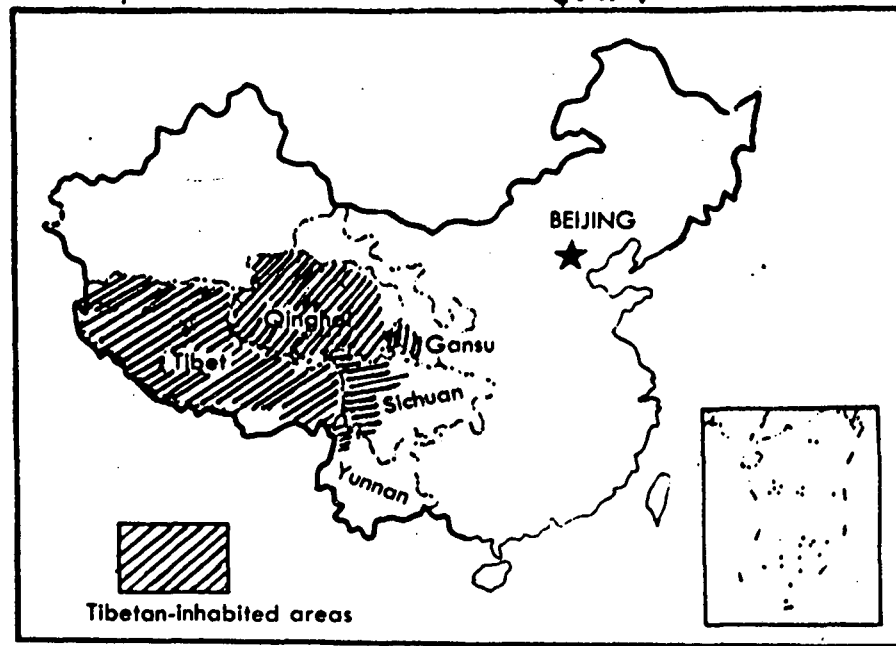
In brief, I would like to thank everyone who directly or indirectly helped me in finishing this piece of work.

DEEPAK ROY

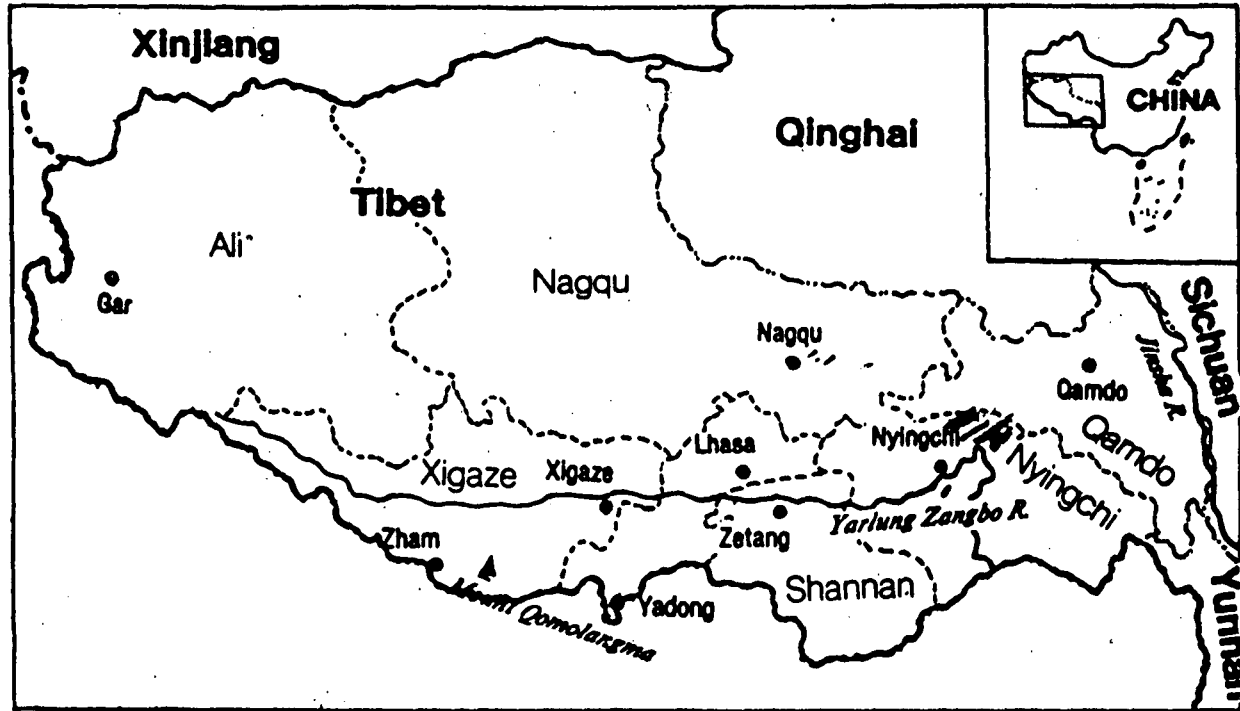
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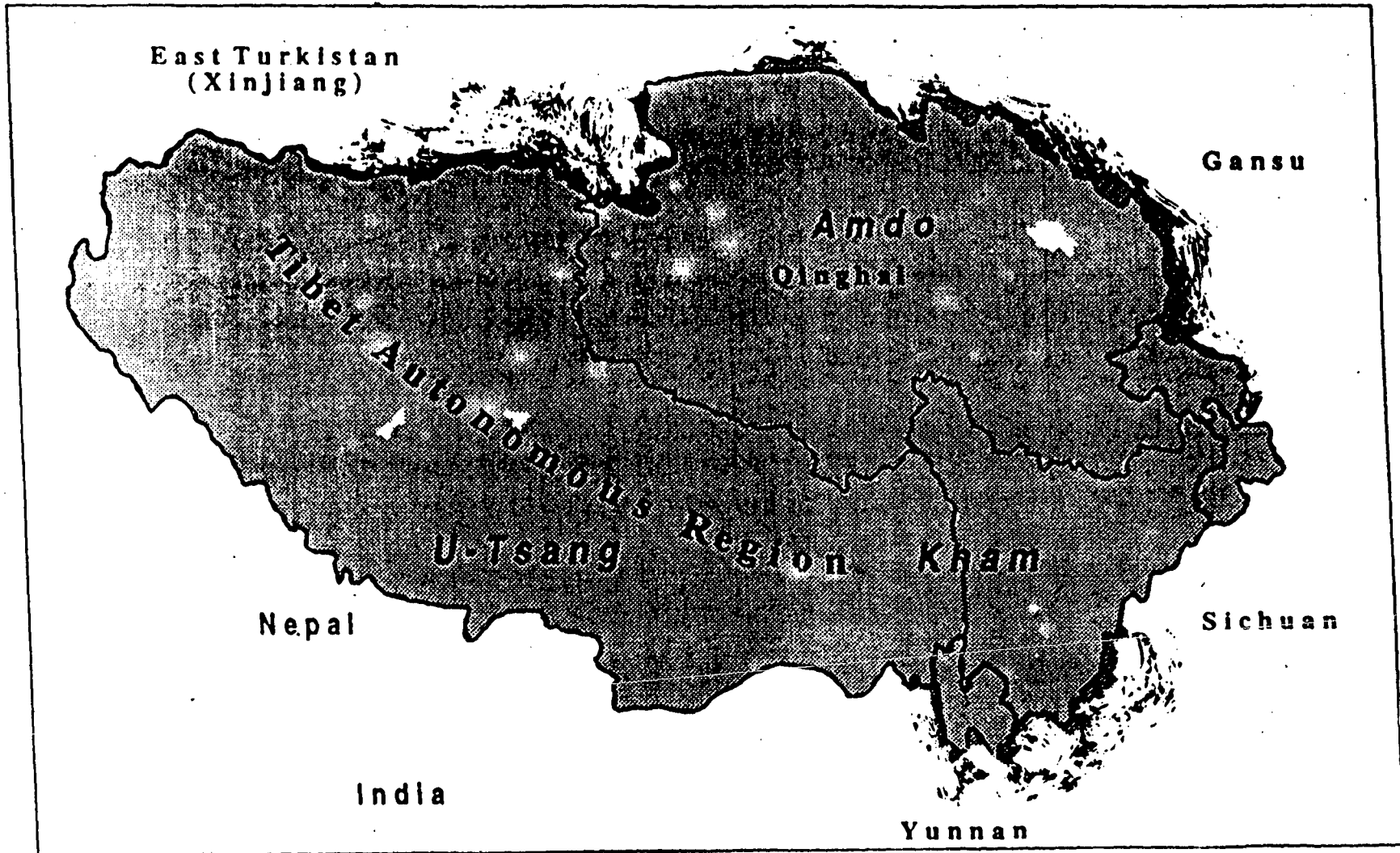
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Major Tibetan-inhabited areas in China (PRC)



China's Tibet Autonomous Region





Borders of Tibet Claimed by Tibetan Government-In-Exile

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

"The demographic aggression against Tibet through a policy of population transfer continues unabated escalating the marginalisation of the Tibetan people and the assimilation of the Tibetan way of life into the Chinese mainstream."

- His Holiness Dalai Lama

a) Statement of the Problem:

The statement of the problem is the **Tibetan Population controversy: Analysis of Chinese and Tibetan Views**. The problem of research at hand is the study of the population data on Tibet and the controversy pertaining to it. The issue here assumes greater significance arising to the political implications it has, as numbers themselves are important in voicing political opinion or demands and effecting changes.

b) Significance of the Topic:

The Peoples Republic of China (PRC) colonized the "roof of the world" Tibet nearly five decades ago. In addition to imperial China's policy of influxing massive numbers of Chinese population into Tibet resulting in extinction of the political, cultural and religious destiny of Tibet by

outnumbering them in their own land. And the world is maintaining sphinx silence knowingly the pathetic conditions of Tibet where Tibetans are merely, today a minority or a kind of artifact in Chinese museum called TAR as the result of Chinese population transfer policy. Tibet before 1950s had a Tibetan majority but soon after the Chinese occupation and implementation especially of the Mao zedong's brainchild "Population Transfer Policy" gradually Tibetans in their own country are reduced to a minority. Moreover this dissertation will be a fact finding piece of work based on the population data for Tibetans who are in the verge of extinction followed by the so called Chinese "worthy population transfer policy" regulating in the name of development and modernization of Tibetans. Data on Tibetan population is of course ambiguous and the first ever scientific population census was conducted by imperial China in the 1980s. It is very difficult to work out the exact figure of Tibetans in Tibet, besides that, there is obscurity over the political boundaries of Tibet as a result of Chinese occupation. 'Great Tibet' spreads into 8,00,000 square miles whereas political Tibet (1950) spreads into 5,60,000 square miles according to Dalai Lama. According to imperial China Tibet covers 1.22 million square kilometres and according to the Tibetan youth Congress the size of Tibet is 2.5 million square kilometres.

The main controversy is over the population of Tibetans in Tibet as according to the Chinese there are only 2 million Tibetans in TAR and 4.3 million Tibetans in all provinces of China but Dalai Lama claims that there are 6 million Tibetans surviving in Tibet. The crux of the dissertation is whether the population transfer policy of Chinese (Hans) outnumbered Tibetans in Tibet or not, if yes then in what manner and their painful experience. There is controversy from two camp that about 7 million Han Chinese have been already influxed into Tibet outnumbering 6 million Tibetans. What is the real motive behind the outnumbering policy of the Chinese.

There is a major debate going on the population of Tibetans in Tibet. Tibetans are now in the verge of extinction and have become an endangered community in their own land. The facts and exact population about Tibetans in Tibet are confusing, unclear and ambiguous. This dissertation will display the veracity and the authenticity about the data (sources) on the population figures of Tibetans in Tibet. If the present Chinese policy is successfully implemented, the Tibetans will, before long, be reduced to a small and insignificant minority in their own country in the same way as the Manchus in Manchuria, Uighurs in Eastern Turkistan and Mongolians in Inner Mongolia. This work will focus on the present condition of Tibetans in between Chi-

nese population. The type of treatment Tibetans are enjoying regarding housing, education, culture, language, human condition will be highlighted here. Finally the implication of this population policy will be adjudged on the Tibet and South Asia. The main focus will be on the strategical importance of Tibet for commanding South Asia as a whole. Whether Tibet is being used to serve mankind or threatening its neighbour by establishing an advance base at Chinese penetration to South and South-East Asia and a forepost of Chinese military power in Asian strategic heartland. China's command over Tibet is really a major threat to South Asia. In this way, this dissertation is of utmost importance to unveil the truth about the claims made by both camps, the Chinese official and the Tibetan government in exile.

c) Hypothesis:

In brew of a hypothesis, the following questions will guide this dissertation:

1. Whether with the current population transfer policy in operation will reduce the Tibetans into a minority and will it lead to social tension within Tibet.

2. Whether population transfer policy will generate struggle for resources in Tibet.

3. Whether those South Asian countries sharing border with China will increase Chinese interference in the domestic affairs of their countries leading to a new strategic geopolitics.

d) Aims and Objectives:

1. To give various perceptions regarding the population of Tibetans in Tibet since history dates back to 148 B.C. (Yarlung Dynasty). ¹²⁷

2. To find out the actual and near exact figures of Tibetans in Tibet.

3. To find out the number of Chinese in Tibet for e.g. workers, military personnel, administration, businessmen.

4. To check the veracity and authenticity of the population figures given by the two camps e.g. Tibetan and Chinese government.

5. To evaluate the depth of impact of Chinese population transfer policy on the Tibetan community.

e) Methodology and Sources:

The methodology adopted will be purely analytical, empirical and descriptive. It will be solely based on data interpretation. Data analysis and data comparison will be

the crux of the dissertation. In addition to the collection of primary data and secondary data, it will also be accompanied by questionnaires and schedule. Sources can be classified into official and non-official for this dissertation. Official sources include the census, statements made by governments and non-official sources include the personal interview and schedules. Secondary data is prevalent for finishing this task. Moreover a range of literature have been consulted, written by Chinese and Tibetans but at the same time the neutral authors have also been referred to focus on the truth of the matter. Precisely statistical census has been used and many times personal interview reveals the truth about the condition of Tibetans in Tibet. In short, it is purely based on data, an empirical and scientific study of the Tibetan population in Tibet.

f) Scheme of Chapterisation:

I. **Introduction:** It will include the nature of disseration and the basic information and background of Tibet.

II. **Initial Population of Tibet: Pre-1950s:** This will include the description and population figures of Tibetans in Tibet right from Yarlung Dynasty in ¹²⁷148 B.C. to 1950 A.D. The population of Tibets before 1950 A.D. will be worked out from the descriptions given by different scholars and travel-

lers.

III. Chinese Statistics Versus Tibetan Government In Exile Data: This section will deal with the controversies that have come out in between Chinese and Tibetan authorities. As according to the Chinese government, the Tibetans in Tibet are only 2 million and according to Dalai Lama or the Tibetan government in exile, it is 6 million. It will check the veracity and authenticity of the figures given by the two camps.

IV. Population Transfer and its Implications to Tibet and South Asia: This chapter will include the nature of Chinese population transfer policy and the extent of population influx into Tibet which in real terms is violating human rights and international law. And finally, its implications in Tibet and South Asia which will be categorized into social, political, strategical, economical and cultural spheres.

V. Conclusion: It will explain the analysis and verification of data presented here to find out from this whole gamut of work and prove the hypothesis right or wrong.

Tibet is situated in the heart of Asia neighbouring India, Nepal, Bhutan, Burma, East Turkestan and China. It covers an area of 2.5 million square kms with Lhasa as the capital and having an indigenous Tibetan language which has

no resemblance with the Chinese language. Around six million and above Tibetans live in Tibet and some 1,40,000 live in exile. The Tibetan people are indigenous people inhabiting the 'land of snow' with their own rich cultural and spiritual heritage, language and way of life. Their history dates back at least two thousand years, when the Yarlung Dynasty was established in ¹²⁷~~148~~ B.C. The entire Tibetan plateau was unified and the greater Tibetan state created in the seventh century. Though Tibet has long been regarded as a mystical place by people all over the world, this sense of mystery is only a result of a few unusual facts. Tibet has long been isolated on the largest and highest intermontane plateau in the world. It is the home of Tibetan Buddhism (popularly known as Lamaism). It has its own unique traditional culture, its own social system and marriage customs. According to international law and by its distinct history, culture and national identity. Tibet was an independent country until it was invaded by China in 1949-1950. Though Tibet occasionally exerted influence over neighbouring countries and peoples and was itself at times subjected to varying degrees of influence by foreign rulers, namely the Mongols, the Manchus, the British and the Nepalese. The Tibetan State never ceased to exist and, unlike most states

in Asia, maintained its legal independence.¹

The Tibetans are facing an insidious threat. It has been more than four decades since the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) colonized and swept into their homeland, the 'roof of the world' 'Human rights' is a catch word now-a-days and Tibet is suffering from abrupt human rights violation. China, the culprit is using Tibet as a military cantonment because of its best strategic location. The Chinese also outnumbered the Tibetans by pouring in the Han Chinese (the overwhelming majority in China) into Tibet. Already there are an estimated 7.5 millions Chinese in Tibet, enough to make the six million Tibetans who have not gone into exile a minority in their own country (Tibetan source). And the world is maintaining sphinx silence knowingly the bare fact and conditions of Tibet. Tibetans and the rest of the world know that the Tibetan plateau provides a commanding position in Central and Southern Asia by giving access to the entire Indian subcontinent. Hence the power who will capture Tibet will rule South and Central Asia. This is the only motive of the Chinese behind the sinocisation of Tibet and ruins and omits its own indigenous identity from the world cultural map.

1. Michael C. Van Walt Van Praag, The Status of Tibet: History, Rights and Prospects in International Law, London, 1987.

This dissertation is about the Tibetan population, Chinese and Tibetan view point, controversy. Before dealing with the controversy it is of prime importance to define and look at the geopolitical boundaries of Tibet. The Communist China soon after its shameful act of occupying and capturing Tibet in 1959 immediately redrew the borders, redefined regions and rewrote the history and manipulated the records in such an appalling manner. Tibet was sliced up and much of it was merged into Chinese provinces. This demonstrated a total disregard for the historically based geopolitical integrity of the region. Consequently, terminology and descriptions used in Chinese propaganda are very ambiguous. The confusion generated by this ambiguity has served Chinese interests well.

CHAPTER-II

INITIAL POPULATION OF TIBET: PRE-1950S

The Tibetans are distinct people with their own rich cultural and spiritual heritage, language and way of life. Their history dates back at least two thousand years, when the Yarlung Dynasty was established in ¹²⁷148 B.C. The entire Tibetan plateau was unified and the greater Tibetan state was created in the seventh century A.D. Though Tibet occasionally exerted influence over the neighbouring countries and peoples and was itself at times subjected to varying degrees of influence by foreign rulers, namely the Mongols, the Manchus, the British and the Nepalese, the Tibetan state never ceased to exist and unlike most states in Asia, maintained its legal independence.¹

Tibetans are an indigenous tribe, having their own political system, experienced great rulers in their history. Tibetans were autochthonous and they did not come from outside. Their existence is evident from the present archaeological sites for e.g. Sure in southern Tibet, Luling in Central Tibet, Karub in eastern Tibet, that Tibetans were present in the 'land of snow' since the palaeolithic age. The first Tibetan King namely Nyatri Tsampo of Yarlung

1. Michael C. Van Walt Van Praag, The Status of Tibet: History, Rights and Prospects in International Law, Boulder/London, 1987.

dynasty in 127 B.C. had ruled Tibet and its natives. Since then the king or the ruler and his people flourished in their land.

For the study of the population of any country one should always try to specify the geographical entity. Here Tibet's border well defined property but for the sake of this study the outline of Tibet is already described early. They varied a lot during history and reached their greatest extension 1000 years ago. This century too, in 1914 at Simla Conference the political borders of Tibet were formally defined but soon after the Chinese occupation, the eastern (Qamdo) part of political Tibet was incorporated into a newly created province (Sikiang) along with a portion of Szechuan. When the Sikiang province was dissolved in 1955 the borders changed again. Since the Chinese define the extent of Tibet at will, their population figures will also vary according to the situation of the day.²

The Population of Tibet is at present in the midst of controversies e.g. the Chinese claims some 2.3 million Tibetans in Tibet and the Tibetans claim over 6 million Tibetan in Tibet. To check veracity of this issue, a glimpse of Tibetan population in the historical Tibet is essential. Indeed we can call this the demographic argument

2. Ibid.

when we are supposed to study the development of the Tibetan population during the centuries.

It seems very unlikely that the proposal to check how many Tibetans were there, a thousand years ago and how many were there in 1950. But to verify the present divided claim it becomes the part of my study and to have a glimpse of the historical Tibetan's population who are experiencing a major threat of their existence at present unlike the historical Tibet and Tibetans. Tibet and Tibetans since the past posed their own indigenous identity with their own territory, rich cultural and spiritual heritage, and own way of life. Tibet was a sovereign country until the Chinese occupation in 1951.

Before 1950, Tibet was populated virtually exclusively by Tibetans. It is very difficult to produce the exact numbers of Tibetans during historical point of time but few studies and interviews will help us to reach and rediscover the number of Tibetans in Tibet during historical time. The works are quite a few done by foreign scholars and travellers, who worked out the size of population of Tibet during historical time through little survey and investigation. But this is not the exact figure one can rely on for the sources are incredibly divergent. The kernel of my study is to investigate the various figures given in the

sources of different kinds examining how reasonable they are trying to relate them to one another. So here are some data for an evaluation of the 'demographic argument' - the study of the development of the Tibetan population during the centuries.

There was a swift decline in the Tibetan population in Tibet since the seventeenth century and Winnigton described it as the result of the reforms of Tsong Khapa, who forbade monks to marry or drink wine. Han Suyin in her book on Tibet, Lhasa, the Open City, advocated about the most terrifying exploitation and impoverishment of Tibetan people which kept them in total ignorance, terrorized them into total submission.³

Following are the number of Tibetans at various points in the history:

Ancient Tibet: 127 B.C. to 16th Century:

Chinese sources mentioned a figure at 10 to 12 million Tibetans ten centuries ago and ten million in A.D. 634 quoted in the Han Suyin's book Lhasa, the Open City. Although Han Suyin mentioned that her figure is 'according to records' but in reality no such record existed in the world and thereby it is a mere assumption. But the matter of the

3. Dr. Jan Andersson, "Tibetans: a Dwindling Population", Tibetan Review, October 1981, p.6.

fact is that since Tibet was militarily occupied at that period to a large extent therefore the population figures might not be of only ethnic Tibetans but also included Indians, Nepalese, Chinese, Mongolians and Turks.

Other figures existed for the early years when the king at Ladakh at Thoding asked Drumton (1004-1063) how many houses were in Tibet and how many tents in the pastoral regions, as Tibetans are considered to be nomad engaged solely in pastoral stock raising. According to Drumton there were 1,05,000 houses, 24,00,000 tents and 55 monasteries with a population of 30 million men, 40 million women and 40,000 monks.⁴ So during the eleventh century there were above 70 million people in Tibet.

During the Mongol period in 1267-68 a census was taken in Central Tibet (U-Tsang) which again included only the tax payers and excluded the monks, nomads and certain feuds. According to the Census conducted, it displayed only 2,23,000 souls in Central Tibet.⁵ It had the population carefully divided into different units and subunits and used a kind of statistical method. The basic unit was a house with supposedly six people and there were about 37,000

4. R.A. Stein, Tibetan Civilization, London, 1962, p.110.

5. Luciano Petech, "The Mongol Census in Tibet" in Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson, Warminster, 1980, p.233.

houses which resulted in approximately 2,23,000 souls.

In 1643 a census is said to have been taken in western Tibet by Dosi Sonam Chospel but, unfortunately, no details about it are given.⁶ Another attempt by the Fifth Dalai Lama in the mid 17th century achieved the conversion of Kargyu monastries to the yellow sect, he sent out officials to Kham to take a census of the population for tax purposes. Unfortunately, no details of this census seems to be available for comparative purposes. Chinese historical records relate that in 1287-1334 the Central government of the Yuan Dynasty sent officials to Tibet to check the population composition. These investigations produced that the U-Tsang had 130,000 households with a population of 6,00,000-7,00,000 in addition to that of the population of Sagya, Ngari, Qamdu, Mainyu and Loyu. Thus Tibet may be assumed to have one million Tibetans.⁷

The Mid-17th and 18th Centuries:

By this time the affluence of monks greatly increased especially as a result of the fifth Dalai Lama's efforts. As monks are known to by living in a more organized life in the monasteries than the laity, it is tempting to assume

6. Ibid.

7. 'The Tibetan Population - Past, Present and Future', News From China, Beijing, Aug. 1995, p.22.

that figures for them are inherently more accurate. In 1663 the Dalai Lama conducted a survey of the monasteries in his country and found all in all 1,800 of them with about 1,00,000 monks and nuns.⁸

During the 18th century, China started to interfere in Tibetan politics. The Chinese took interest in the population of Tibet besides sending army and representatives. In an attempt by the Chinese a census of 1737 showed 8,52,162 laity and 3,16,200 Lamas. Rockhill presumes that a large portion of the nomads was not counted and adds 50,000 to the total which then still comes below one and a half million people.⁹

It is very hard to believe that within 75 years the number of monks has tripled in spite of the fact that the Fifth Dalai Lama encouraged the expansion of the monastic system. It is nothing but a mere exaggeration to show the increasing number of monks in Tibet who always have a passive role in population growth of the country because they are restricted to marry. Hence, the Chinese data showed that there would only be 2.6 laymen per monk which is incredible and unbelievable.

8. R.A. Stein, Tibetan Civilization, Faber and Faber, London, 1972, p.110.

9. Andersson Jan, op. cit., p.8.

It is true that in 17th century the monastic system was the fundamental to both Mahayana and Theravada Buddhist philosophies. Survey shows that there were 97,528 monks in Central Tibet and Khan in 1694, and 319,270 monks in 1733. Assuming a population in these areas, in 1733, of about 2.5 million, about 13% of the total population and about 26% of the males were monks. The population may be estimated about 4-5 million, of whom the majority live in the districts between Lhasa and Chinese border. The western half of Tibet supports a population of only about one human being per square mile.¹⁰ So during the mid 17th and 18th centuries two population figures arrived on the scene - one advocate 1.5 million (Rockhill) and other 4-5 million (Bell). It is very difficult to get an exact figure because of vagueness in estimation of population.

According to Chinese sources, in the reign of Qian Long Qing central government, during 1737, surveyed households in Tibet had claimed that Tibet had a lay population of 6,22,400-6,86,500 and 3,16,200 Lamas for a total population of 9,38,600-10,02,700.

Again in the 10th year of Dao Guant reign in 1830, the Qing central government surveyed the population of Tibet and

10. Melvyn Goldstein, History of Modern Tibet 1913-1951, London, 1980.

agreed that U-Tsang region had the population of monk and lay under the Dalai Lama and the Baingen Lama numbered 8,93,000-9,57,000. Including the lay population, monks and troops stationed at the Huoer 39th clan (present day Damxung county) and Bomi Prefecture, Tibet had a total population of 9,40,000-10,00,000.¹¹

The 19th and Early 20th Centuries:

Due to the aggressive colonialism in these centuries Tibet also was not spared off. Several market surveys were conducted and Rockhill, an American traveller generated some kind of a statistically based figure for the number of Tibetans. In his book Land of the Lamas, he presented many figures for the population of limited areas (eastern part) to which he had access, although it amounted to round figures for the number of families found in the districts. However, he also made interesting attempts to calculate the total population of Tibet by means of statistical methods.

Rockhill generated figures/population of Tibetan by the average consumption of tea. The Chinese tea was brought into Tibetan market through Tachienlu, where the duty was charged by the Chinese authorities. He said that about 13 million pounds of Chinese tea was brought at Tachianlu for

11. 'The Tibetan Population - Past, Present and Future', News from China, Beijing, Aug. 1995, p.22.

export into Tibet. From this he concluded that if the average consumption of tea at a Tibetan per year is 5 pounds, then the population of Tibetan would come to 2.6 millions. The same statistical method was used some years later by Charles Bell who assumed 15 million pounds of tea led to the figure of 3 million and further G. Tucci estimated 20 million pounds of tea exported from Tachienlu into Tibet gave a figure of 4 million Tibetans in Tibet, the western and central Tibet have been completely ignored by these foreign travellers which can add an additional 2 to 3 million Tibetans. In total, during the 19th century the population of Tibetans were above 6 million.

Rockhill in his book mentioned the figure of "35,00,000 for all Tibetans, out of whom about 2 million were supposed to inhabit the 'Kingdom of Lhasa', based on general impressions. In 1910, the Chinese official estimation was 64,30,000 Tibetans in Tibet".¹² One Russian explorer gave an account of one million Tibetans in Tibet but one should consider the fact that he never penetrated into any at the more densely inhabited areas of the country but surveyed only the barren northern plains. "This higher figure, around 6 or 6.5 million Tibetans, was to be the official figure through the Nationalist period in China and is still being quoted, for example, by the Statesman Yearbook 1972-

12. Andersson Jan, p.10.

73, where the total population is quoted as 63,50,000 (1953 Census). It is also the figure always referred to by the Tibetan government in exile."¹³

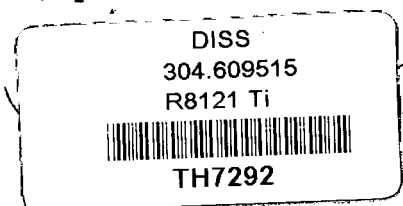
The population of Tibetans in Tibet also worked out by the method of monk-laity ratio. One of the important works done by Sarat Chandra Das, the Bengali explorer who went to Tibet for the British at the end of 19th century, gives an estimate between 5 and 6 million Tibetans, based on one man in every three is a monk or priest. In Bell's A Portrait of the Dalai Lama assumption has been "one man in every three is a monk or priest; one woman in every fifteen or thereabouts is a nun." Thus Bell estimated the number of monks between a quarter and half a million out of the total population of Tibet which resulted in approximately 4 millions Tibetans in Tibet.

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A Tibetan author W.D. Shakabpa gives the figure of 1.2 million monks and nuns which is 20 per cent of the total six million population of Tibet.¹⁴ Contrary to it, from quite recent Chinese estimate in early 20th century it appears that Tibet has 45,00,000 inhabitants for e.g., 10,00,000 Tibetans in Central Tibet, 60,000 agricultural serfs, 2,00,000 pastoral serfs, 1,50,000 monks, and 50,000 nobles,

13. Ibid., p.10.

14. Ibid., p.11.



merchants, craftsmen and beggars.

Finally there are some reliable and standard works by well-known authors on the population of Tibetans in Tibet which need to discuss. Father Orazio della Penna in the book by H.E. Richardson, Tibet and its History advocated 33 million Tibetans in the 17th century. Well known western author and genuine writer like Charles Bell also dwindled while projecting the population of Tibetans. The book published by him in 1924 Tibet Past and Present estimates 4 to 5 million Tibetans, but soon after four years in 1928 when he published his next book The People of Tibet, he estimated the number of Tibetans to 3 to 4 millions. Prince Peter recorded the figures of five million, out of which a million and a half lived in U-Tsang.¹⁵ Peissel gives the highest figure of everyone, namely seven million.¹⁶ Earlier authors were more conservative, so for e.g. the American ambassador to India in 1949 who stated the number of five million and about the same magnitude was recorded by Edgar (Geographic Control and Human Reactions in Tibet) in 1924-25 i.e. five to six million.

This is all about the population of Tibet during historical times by the Chinese, Tibetan and Western sources.

15. Prince Peter, Tibetan Review, April 1978, p.22.

16. M. Peissel, Cavaliers of Kham, London, 1972, p.8.

This survey and assumption have not been able to pinpoint or to present an accurate number of Tibetans. Lack of detailed censuses and general statistics contribute to a situation where some guess work will have to take the place of "hard facts". It is very difficult to work out the accurate and exact number of Tibetans in Tibet in different periods of time. Whatever statistics and figures discussed above are highly varied but it is quite clear that Tibet always is densely populated because Tibetans are indigenous and since 2000 years back they have had their own civilisation.

Different estimates of Tibetan population as given by authors, scholars and travellers given below. The population figures are totally mismatched highly varied. There is only one way to get authentic data of Tibetan's population, that is a proper census without political motives.

Here is the different estimates for Tibetans in Tibet;

- (1) Han Suyin (Chinese Sources) - 10 million Tibetans in A.D. 635.
- (2) R.A. Stein - 70 million in A.D. (1004-1063).
- (3) Luciano Petech - 2,23,000 in A.D. 1267-68 (Eastern and Western Tibet).
- (4) Przewalsky - One million in A.D. 1895.

he did not penetrate into the most populated area of Tibet.

- (5) Schulemann - 6 million in A.D. 1908.
- (6) Statesman Yearbook - 6.3 million in A.D. 1953.
- (7) MacDonald - 3.9 million in A.D. 1915.
- (8) Rockhill - 1.2 million in A.D. 1737.
- (9) Rockhill - 2.6 million in A.D. 1891.
- (10) Rockhill - 3.5 million after A.D. 1891.
- (11) Tucci - 6.51 million in early 20th century A.D.
- (12) Father Orazio della Penna in H.E. Richardson's book mentioned 33 million Tibetans in 17th century A.D.
- (13) Charles Bell in his book The People of Tibet estimated 3-4 million Tibetans in Tibet.
- (14) Charles Bell in his book Tibet Past and Present.
- (15) Prince Peter - 5 million in early 20th century A.D.
- (16) Edgar - 5.6 million in early 20th century A.D.

Lastly, Peissel estimated 7 million Tibetans in Tibet in his book Cavaliers of Kham in A.D. 1972.

So in brief it is very difficult to reach a consensus out of the available literature data and present a concrete number of Tibetans in Tibet before 1950s.

CHAPTER-III

CHINESE STATISTICS VERSUS TIBETAN EXILE GOVERNMENT DATA

Man is the single most important powerful geographical factor transforming the earth's surface at an unparalleled pace. Scientific and technological achievements of man have reached dizzy heights and nothing now seems to be beyond his reach. But in this present globe there is still a place called Tibet fighting for self-recognition and identity. Population is the strength of a country/nation. A nation without its own indigenous people really suffers major setbacks. Tibetans are suffering from the same kind of dilemma, imposed upon them by China, through its forceful occupation of China into Tibet whereby the whole thing took a new shape. Tibetans are now experiencing minority in their own country. As the matter of the fact, the Tibetans are in majority but the word 'minority' is the result of Chinese political game to gain access in the 'Land of Snow'.

Truly speaking, the exact population of Tibet is still unknown to the world. Chinese imperialistic attitude will never allow to know the exact population of Tibetans in Tibet. The population figures for Tibet are ambiguous. Geographically speaking, Tibet is made up of two type of population settled agriculturist and nomads. No settlement can survive without any economic base provided by agricul-

ture which has four basic requirements. They are (i) relatively low attitude, (ii) gentle slope, (iii) availability of water and thick soil cover to practise agriculture. Tibet is basically a plateau made up at glacio-geomorphic features. Population settled in valleys hence, distribution of settlements are haphazarded. Thus, this is the kernel why a proper census has not been an easy game. Some parts of Tibet are extremely fertile like the river valley and lowland areas e.g. Drichu river, Dzachu river, Machu river, while other parts, especially the northern plains (Chang-Tang) are largely uninhabitable and population residing there are basically pastoralist or nomadic in nature. The south, the east and the northeast at the country consist for the most part of agricultural land and the land along the numerous rivers and in the valleys is extremely fertile and includes large forests which is directly proportional to the population concentration. A very uneven distribution of population is enjoyed by Tibet hence, it is very difficult to conduct a proper official census.

Before we go for population estimates let us know the territorial extent at the Tibet e.g. geopolitical boundaries. "Since 1951, Tibet has been divided into numerous zones for the purpose of administration . Tibet's northeastern province of Amdo which incorporates the Kokonor region, has been renamed Qinghai and is administered as a separate

province of China. Relatively small areas of Amdo have been annexed by Chinese provinces of Gansu and Sichuan and Tibet's eastern province of Kham has, for the most part, been annexed by the bordering Chinese provinces of Yunan, Sichuan and Gansu. Within these provinces, the Tibetan areas are administered as "autonomous" prefectures and district (these are the Kanlho TAR, Kartze TAR, Mili TAR, Ngapa TAR and Dechen TAR) inhabited by up to four million Tibetans. Central and Western Tibet, comprising slightly more than half of the nation, including the entire province of U-Tsang, is administered as the "Tibet Autonomous Region". This area includes the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, and the major cities of Shigatse, Gyantse Chamdo and Gar."

Soon after the failure¹ of Tibetan revolt 1959 the Chinese regime began almost immediately to redrew borders, redefine regions and rewrite the whole history of Tibet. Tibet was cut into small pieces and been merged into Chinese provinces. This event shattered the geopolitical integrity of Tibet. The new names, new terminology and the new descriptions used in Chinese are very ambiguous. This ambiguity helped the Chinese and serve them well but to the rest of world it is still in the dark of what constitutes the

1. Dr. Michael C. Van Walt Van Praag, "Population Transfer and the Survival of the Tibetan Identity", Strategic Digest, January 1988, p.36.

nation of Tibet in precise historical geopolitical terms.

Tibet was originally and historically divided into three principal regions comprising about 2.5 million square kilometres. "Tibet's size is about six times England's, "Great Tibet" measuring 8,00,000 square miles, and political Tibet (1950) 5,60,000 square miles."² The three regions are Amdo (Dhomey), Kham (Dhotoe) and U-tsang. Kham and Amdo are characterized by fertile lands and most suitable for agriculture hence, the population density is high and unparalleled to U-Tsang (western part) which has a very low density. These regions are supported by river Dzachu (Mekong), Drichu (Yangtse), Machu (Hwangho) and Gyalmo Ngulchu (Salween).

While China's "Tibet" refers only to what is known to the world Tibet Autonomous Region, which spreads into 1.2 million square kilometres, is less than one-half the size encompassed by Tibet's pre-communist national borders. China renamed the Amdo as Qinghai and Kham as Sikiang.

(a) Chinese Estimates:

The population figures for Tibet are ambiguous. It is very difficult to speak out about the Tibetan population in Tibet. There is major contrast between the population

2. Dr. Dawa Norbu and Kesang Tenzing, 'Military Developments in Tibet: 1950-74', Tibetan Review, Sept.-Oct. 1975, p.17.

figures as given by the Chinese and the natives. However, the Chinese, in 1953, carried out the first National Population Census. To gain an accurate picture of the population of Tibet is quite difficult. So far Chinese authorities had conducted four National Population Census. The following statistics are said to reflect the Tibetan population in all Tibetan regions under China:

Year	Population (Tibetans)
1953	2,775,000
1964	2,504,000
1982	3,870,000
1990	4,590,000 ³

According to Chinese statistics from the first national census in 1953, the total Tibetan population in China was 2.77 million which has been increased to 4.59 million by 1990, according to the census at the time. It has been alleged that His Holiness Dalai Lama's claim of more than six million Tibetans in Greater Tibet is a wild exaggeration. "According to Chinese officials since no population surveys were conducted in Tibet before 1964, accurate figures are unavailable and there is a lack of knowledge of the Tibetan population. This largely accounts for the inaccurate population estimations. It is therefore groundless for foreign scholars and news agencies to refer to the Dalai

3. Lu Xiaofei, Renmin Ribao, (overseas Edition), March 3, 1992, published by B.B.C., Level 1, 66 of 179 stories, March 12, 1992.

Lama as the leader and spokesman of "six million Tibetans".⁴

According to a Chinese statesman, Tibetan-inhabited areas have the lowest population density with less than two persons per square kilometres. "In 1953, China carried out the first National population census, reported by Tibet local government headed by Dalai Lama to Chinese which reveals an estimate that Tibet (including Qamdo Prefecture) had population of 1.274 million. In 1964 when the Second National Population census was launched throughout the country, the preparatory Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region, busy with the preparatory work for the founding of Tibet Autonomous Region, could hardly find time to conduct the census. A population of 1.251 million people was estimated a decrease of 23,000 from the 1953 figure. This apparent drop may be the result of several situations. First, both figures are estimates; over reporting in 1953 would have been difficult to avoid. Second, after the failure of the armed rebellion launched a handful of upper-strata counterrevolutionaries in March 1959, more than 90,000 Tibetans were forced to go to foreign countries by rebels, among whom 74,000 were former residents of Tibets."⁵

4. 'China in Focus Tibet: Myth Vs. Reality', Beijing Review, Beijing, March 1988, pp.64-66.

5. China in Brief: The Tibetan Population - Past, Present and Future, New Star Publishers, Beijing, 1994, pp.3-4.

**The Number of the Tibetans in the
Tibetan Autonomous Regions**

Year	Population (in million)
1953 (estimate)	1.27
1964 (estimate)	1.25
1982	1.89
1990	2.19
1993	2.32 ⁶

For the first time in 1982 census for Tibet the Chinese employed direct registration system according to which there were 1.89 million Tibetans in TAR. "For the Fourth National Population Census in 1990 Tibet conducted direct registration. The items included in the census were the same in Tibet as elsewhere in China, with three exceptions: "the number of permanent residents who had left their resident country more than one year before", "residence prior to July 1, 1985", and "reason for moving to present residence".⁷ The census recorded a total population of 2.196 million for Tibet. By the end of 1993, the population numbered 2.32 million in Tibet. According to them from 1953 to 1990 the Tibetan population increased by 72.4%, with an annual growth rate of 1.48% and an average annual increase of 25,000 people.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., p.4.

(b) China's National Population Census: An Illusion:

The statistical system is poorly organised and poorly directed. There is a serious shortage of personnel capable of collecting, processing and analysing statistical data, as well as an inadequate programme for training and educating statistical workers. Before 1953 there was no uniform registration system in Communist China. "It was not until 1955, almost two years after the official date of the 1953 census registration and five months after the results were released, that a newspaper editorial proclaimed the need for a regular system of population registers."⁸

Fei Hsiao-t'ung, one of the foremost Chinese anthropologists and Chairman of the Minorities Institute in Peking, wrote that, "the registration of vital rates has not been established in China as yet (before 1965). Only a few large cities have been practising registration but their data are very doubtful from the scientific point of view. T'ien Feng-t'iao, a member of the Teaching and Research Office of the Academy of Advanced Study for Cadres at the Ministry of Public Health, pointed out that China still lacks data on birth and death rates for the entire nation and can only furnish the rates for selected cities.

8. Kuang-ming Jih Pao, April 2, 1955, Survey of China, Mainland Press (SCMP) (Hongkong: United States Consulate General), No.1040.

In 1990, there are 2.097 million or 45.6% of all Tibetans in the PRC registered in TAR, 1.088 millions or 23.7% in Sechuan, 912 thousand or 19.9% in Qinghai, 367 thousand or 8% in Gansu, 111 thousand or 2.4% in Yunnan. The remaining 19.5 thousand live in the other regions of the PRC (National Population Census Office, 1990).

Hence the total Tibetans in China is about 4.5 million.

Communist China has not published official population statistics for any date since 1 January, 1958. Before 1953 there was no uniform registration system in Communist China. "The efforts on the part of the Ministry of Public security to maintain a register of the population were limited primarily to the urban areas and even this coverage was incomplete and figures unavailable."⁹

The State Statistical Bureau (SSB) was established in 1952 and within five years had created an effective if limited system of gathering data in most areas of the country. A statistical law was introduced in 1984 in an attempt to restore some measure of accuracy, reliability and professionalism to the work of bureau although, under its provisions, no statistical data could be published without

9. Lee A. Orleans, "China's Population Statistics: An Illusion?", The Chin Quarterly, No.21, Jan.-Mar. 1965, p.169.

the express permission of the central authorities. Two main methods have been employed in the collection of data on the size of the population in the PRC-national census and an annual population registration system (based on the hukou household registration system). The second method has allowed the compilation of annual population statistics. At the end of each year, low level administrative units (such as towns and villages) compiled population data which were then passed up through the county and prefecture to the province or region and ultimately to the central authorities. This does not contain a number of shortcomings, the most significant of which are the likelihood of inaccuracies to appear in the data as it moves up through the administrative system and that such counts only include people with permanent residence status. There is therefore no mechanism for evaluating the number of temporary or illegal residents in a given location, nor the size of the floating population. Therefore we have to treat Chinese population figures with great caution. This is especially the case with Tibetan population in which Chinese have political motives to manipulate.

"Chinese authorities suggest the Tibetan population between 1982 and 1992 showed a steady increase of about 2.15% a year from 3,870,000 to 4,590,000 or 4,373,075, depending upon which Chinese source is consulted. For the

same period, the Chinese population is said to have decreased from approximately 3,398,000 to 3,387,300 (a change of 10,700). These figures reflect an incredible jump in Tibetan population of over half a million in eight years (using the lower statistics). This increase and the purported decrease of Chinese are both highly unlikely trends."¹⁰

The major reasons of the inaccuracy of the Chinese estimation and census are due to following reason. Firstly, the relative isolation of Tibet from the rest of the Peoples Republic of China and its scattered population and long-standing traditions of nomadism, have all made accurate counting troublesome. According to Zhang and Zhang in 1994. "In China's first census in 1953, in areas inhabited by the Tibetan nationality in Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan, the population was directly registered, but in Tibet and the Changdu (Chamdo) areas inhabited by some 46% of China's Tibetan population, because no direct survey was possible, the estimates of the Tibetan regional government then in power under the Dalai Lama which were relayed to the central government estimated the population of that area as 1,275,000. In the second Chinese national census conducted in 1964, the Tibetan autonomous region (including the Chang-

10. 'Strangers in their Own Country', Tibetan Youth Congress, 1994, pp.9-10.

du area) provisional preparatory government, then preoccupied with preparatory work for the establishment in the following year of an autonomous region, did not have time to conduct a census. The population figures provided were still only estimates. In the third national census in 1982, a full census survey, excluding the gathering of statistics for marriage, family, birth rate and mortality rate was carried out, but in areas where communications were difficult, no direct registrations were made and only estimates of household numbers, population, sex, age and educational levels were made."¹¹

Secondly, Tibet has been fragmented into pieces and now falls under the rule of four Chinese provinces and one autonomous region. There is also an increased likelihood at inconsistencies creeping into the interpretation of definitions in the questionnaires. The two counties of Shiyatse prefecture of Tibet Autonomous Region, with almost identical geographic, climatic and economic conditions recorded 5% and 40% of their households as "pastoral" in 1985 - the wide difference due solely to alternative interpretations of the terminology being used. Thirdly, it is because of the limitation of nationality classifications. On some occasions, the Chinese would attempt to acquire minority nation-

11. "New Majority", Chinese Population Transfer into Tibet, Tibet Support Group, London, 1996, p.165.

ality status in order to gain some of the benefits available to the minorities; and the children of mixed marriages would also be classed as pure "minorities". There are certain cases where ethnic Chinese who are born in Tibet might be able to achieve Tibetan designation in terms of their nationality registration.

Fourthly, it is the confusion created by the Chinese census sometimes including and vice versa the small groups of peoples indigenous to the region, such as Monba and Lhoba, while numbering Tibetans. Fifthly, during the fourth national census conducted in 1990, these questions were not asked of the residents in the Tibet Autonomous Region. As we know, direct registration was implemented throughout Tibet Autonomous Region but the 21 census items conducted in the rest of China were reduced to 18. The three deleted items were: (1) the number of registered persons in the household who have moved away from the country for a period of more than one year; (2) the condition of the place of permanent domicile prior to 1st July 1985; and (3) reasons for moving to this location. These three questions which might have revealed something of the extent of population transfer into the TAR were dropped from the census.

Hence, in gist, we can predict now how far the Chinese sources are authentic. It is clear that the official Chinese statistics on population are lacking in both accuracy

and reliability, especially in the case of Tibet. The Chinese figures are more comprehensive in referring to Tibet in a wider sense and with critical awareness of their limitations, it is still possible to make accurate comparison and build up a picture of changes. Official Chinese figures can reveal trends and developments even if they do not provide a picture of the actual situation on the ground. Chinese figures are characterised by deliberate misinformation e.g. the population figures for Tibet do not include armed forces personnel and the temporary floating population. Floating population means the 'floating' worker in Tibet. There are two types of floating population (workers) - (i) legal workers, brought in by the government for economic development projects, and (ii) "illegal" settlers consisting of individuals seeking employment or economic opportunities independent of the government. The deliberate hiding of entire categories of figures are also the part of official Chinese census e.g. neither the information on abortions gathered in the 1982 census has still not been published nor are the figures for the number of people who died from starvation in the famine of 1959-62. Lastly, the authorities have even refused to use the censuses to obtain information which might demonstrate the existence of extensive in-migration. Hence the fate of natives, the Tibetans, have been waned by the Chinese imperialistic rule.

Lacking of trained and reliable personnel and at all times under pressure to reflect the current political line, the State Statistical Bureau in Peking has been unable to establish a genuine census especially of Tibet, the data are very doubtful from a scientific point of view. The registration of vital statistics should be handled by qualified and trained personnel and should be free from political mishandling. Discrepancies exist in the statistics used by the Chinese themselves in different references. In one reference, the number of 4.59 million Tibetans may be used; otherwise it is 4.373 million, based upon the Chinese publication namely, Tibetan Population in China Today, a review of the 1990 Census of the Tibet Autonomous Region (1992), hence official census are often self-contradictory.

(c) Tibetan Estimates

According to Tibetan Head of the State the number of Tibetans in Tibet is over 6 million. "Already there are an estimated 7.5 million (Han Chinese) in Tibet, enough to make the six million . Tibetans who have not gone into exile are a minority in their own country."¹² The Chinese viewed in their own line that most of the Tibetans are out-migrating

12. Charles A. Radin, 'Keeping their Hopes alive', New York Times, News Service, New York, 1996.

to neighbouring countries but actually this is not happening at all. According to Li Li (Institute of Sociology of Beijing University), in-migration is still going on in the territory of Tibet Autonomous Region. Most of the centres of migration are political and economic centers and things remain unchanged but the directions of migration kept changing. "However, the directions of migration dramatically reversed in merely, on year; the net migration rate of the autonomous region changed from -1.82 per thousand in 1986 to 2.57 per thousand in 1987. The same types of change occurred in other areas and countries as well. This means that unlike before, more people were moving in their moving out."¹³ Tibet is a victim of the "Mathew effect".

"Chinese population statistics in 1953 put the population of Tibet at 6.34 million distributed as follows; Qinghai (largely equivalent to Amdo), 1.67 million; Kham, 3.4 million; and the "Tibet Autonomous Region", 1.27 million."¹⁴ These figures are similar to those given by the Tibetan government. Since 1.2 million Tibetans died as a result of the Chinese occupation and the birth rate has been relatively low during 1960s and 1970s, but it is not clear what is the exact population today. Official Chinese statistics put

13. Li Li, "An Analysis of the Migration of the Tibetan Population in 1986 and 1987", Chinese Journal of Population Science, Vol.2, No.1, 1990, p.38.

14. The Statesman's Yearbook, 1972-73, p.815.

the number between 3.9 and 4.5 million, but that number does not include groups of persons now classified as belonging to other "minority nationalities" but traditionally considered Tibetans.

The Tibetan government-in-exile has estimated the Tietan population inside Tibet (the three regions: Amdo, Kham and TAR (Central Tibet and U-Tsang) at six million, whereas China claims of 2 million Tibetans in Tibet Autonomous Region (Central Tibet and U-Tsang) only where the density of population is just one to two person per square kilometres. Accoding to the Chinese census the Tibetan population in all Tibetan regions in 1990 was 4.5 million.

The breakups are the following. In 1990 there were 2.097 million or 45.6% of all Tibetans in TAR, 1.088 millions or 23.7% in Sechuan, 912 thousand or 19.9% in Qinghai, 367 thousand or 8% inGansu, 111 thousand or 2.4% in Yunan. The remaining 19.5 thousand live in the other regions of the Peoples Republic of China (National Population Census Office, 1990).

According to a Tibetan population studies scholar Tsering Wangchuk who justified 6 million Tibetan population in Tibet by giving six distinct views and interpretations. Amdo province where Tibetans are in majority had incorporated into Chinese Qinghai Province. In Yunan province there

are two Tibetan majority countries.

Here are the six point (interpretation) claims:

(1) 1000 years ago during the reign of King Trigongdetsen there were 70 million Tibetans in Tibet and Tibet enjoyed even larger territory.

(2) After the advent of Buddhism in Tibet during 7th century monks came into existence. Before that there were no monks but solely the population comprised of Tibetan tribes and it was more than ever.

(3) According to a compiled work of Goumintang, the nationalist Chinese scholar (Taiwan based) has revealed that around 25 million people speak Tibetan language.

In 1253 A.D., Sakya Dagon Choegyel Phagpa, the King of Sakyu clan was the first person to unite these three provinces into one unit. Mongolian King gave these unit to Phagpa. Since then the population was above 6 million.

Tsering Wangchok observes that in 1920, there were frequent military attack and Tibetan army were upgraded, and recruited more soldiers. For this reason Rs.2/- per head were collected from the eastern part of Drichu river (Kham area). Amdo was completely untouched when tax was collected.

Amdo and the large part of Kham was left untouched, and hence there came a conclusion that there were 4 million Tibetans in this part, whereas they excluded large part of Kham and Amdo. In this way if we add the rest of the population it would be well more or double of 6 million Tibetans.

(4) In November 1959, Chinese study published in China Daily the first census on whole China included TAR also, which displays the following breakups e.g. Kham (western part of Driчу river); 1.3 million Tibetans; Eastern part of Driчу river where the most fertile land is; 3.4 million Tibetans (also included Yunan, but the Chinese say it is their land); and Qinghai and Gansu put together total 1.7 million Tibetans. Therefore, the Chinese themselves gave a total of 6.4 million Tibetans in Tibet.

(8) T. Wangchuk observes China's own version on the population of Tibetans. In 1985-86, according to Chinese officials TAR (U-tsang + Changdang) had 2 million Tibetans, now they say it has 3 million Tibetan. In Amdo (Qinghai) there were above 1 million Tibetan and in Kham (Sichuan) were more than 1 million Tibetans, including 1.2 million Tibetan who died and excluding exiled 1.2 million Tibetans. Another sign of shrewdness shown by the Chinese officials is by excluding the indigenous people living along the border whose population size is above 8 lakhs (Monbas and Chobas),

giving them new names and new ethnic minority. The Chinese never considered these 8 lakhs indigenous people as Tibetans. So again we come to a conclusion that there are over all a total of 5.8 million Tibetans in Tibet excluding the exiled 1.2 million at present.

(6) Lastly, T. Wangchuk observes that the capital of Amdo (Qinghai) and four provinces of Kham Siling alone have 1 million Tibetans. There is an interesting example which reveals that the Lhasa and the adjacent areas only have a Tibetan population of 3 million. This observation is made from a Chinese effort in 1952-53 signature campaign against anti-Nuclear programme of USA confined to only Lhasa and adjacent areas. Here, the Chinese did not include people below 18 years handicaps, nomads people living in far flung areas and monks. Wangchuk says that where there was one person before, now there are seven persons, in Tibet.

In this way the controversy still exists between Chinese and Tibetan authorities. As according to the Chinese government, the Tibetans in Tibet (TAR) are only 2 million and according to His Holiness Dalai Lama, there are 6 million. Rather, we should give attention to the Tibetan figures as we know the Chinese to suppress, depress and repress the Tibetan movement might generate false data in order to proclaim full sovereignty over Tibet.

CHAPTER-IV

POPULATION TRANSFER AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN SOUTH ASIA

Population Transfer Policy

This section is dealing with the Chinese population transfer policy which is violating human rights and international law of migration and its implications to Tibet and South Asia e.g. Pakistan, India, Nepal, Burma, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

The immigration of Chinese into Tibet is reaching to its devastating heights causing a havoc and in the near future Tibetans, in their own country, will be reduced to a minority and they will be pushed out and outnumbered by the Chinese and will very soon lose their own indigenous and distinct national cultural and religious heritage and identity. As stated by Charles A. Rudin in "New York Times News Service" that the shift may not be big enough, or fast enough, considering the rate at which Han Chinese - the overwhelming majority in China - are pouring into Tibet. Already there are an estimated 7.5 million Chinese in Tibet, enough to make the six million Tibetans who have not gone into exile a minority in their own country. Mr. Lobsang Sangay (Tibetan born in exile) as interviewed by Charles A. Rudin says that "In 15 years, may be less, there will be so

many Chinese there that will be hard to get it back and call it Tibet."

In 1949, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) entered Tibet through easternmost border and established military garrisons at every strategic point. The Military occupation did not end here but caravans were sent and which comprised of administrators, staff and their families to this holy Buddhist land. The evidence indicates that the government of the Peoples Republic of China is solely responsible for it and deliberately encouraging Chinese nationals to settle down in Tibet from its most populated region, mostly from southeast of China as a part of its population policy. In the same time they are also advocating the policy of segregation to the Tibetan communities from the more affluent Chinese communities and through the assimilation of the young Tibetans with Chinese. "The object of this policy is to 'resolve' China's territorial claims over Tibet by means of a massive and irreversible population shift."¹

Population Transfer and International Law

The deliberate attempt of influxing Han Chinese into Tibet is the violation of human rights as well as interna-

1. Dr. Michael C. Van Walt Van Praag, 'Population Transfer and the Survival of the Tibetan Identity', Strategic Digest, January 1988, p.35.

tional law. "The occupying power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies" (Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949). China's policies are violating the prohibition against population transfer in international law. The transfer of civilians by an occupying power into the territory it occupies is a violation of fundamental rights of the people under occupation. This is a universally accepted principle of international law and one to which PRC is bound by treaty.

"The protection provided by the Fourth Geneva Convention, in particular, the provision of Article 49, clearly extends to the people of Tibet."² Hence deliberate attempt of populating Tibet by influxing non-Tibetans is the violation of human rights. "Tibet was invaded and forcibly occupied by the armies of the People's Republic of China in 1949-50. The so-called "17-point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet" was forced upon the Tibetan government following the invasion of the country by 80,000 troops and consequently never had any validity. Other attempts by the Chinese to annex Tibet were equally unlawful, so that today

2. Ibid., p.42.

Tibet is still a country under illegal occupation."³

Only in the case of hostilities the population of occupied territories are not protected but the Tibetans had already ceased much earlier than expected. As preached by His Holiness, "Ahimsa" is a kernel of Buddhist philosophy but of course never say die to hostilities and atrocities and never give up struggle. The Tibetan people have the right to be protected by the fundamental principle prohibiting the transfer of civilian population into occupied territory, codified in Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The PRC never considered itself as "occupying power" in Tibet but an integral part of China for centuries and its armies therefore neither invaded nor occupied Tibet in 1949-50. Tibetans are not protected by convention, the Chinese argue, since it is intended to protect only the 'legitimate sovereign' and Tibet was and is not a sovereign state. China denies the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the Tibet situation on the grounds that Tibet is "an integral part of China" and consequently, has not been "occupied". China also denies the applicability of the concept of human rights on the grounds that "human rights is

3. M.C. Van Walt van Praag, The Status of Tibet: History, Rights and Prospects in International Law, London, 1987, pp.142-188.

a product of historical development."

China's recognition or rejection of Tibetan claims to sovereignty are consequently irrelevant to the application at the convention or the rules of law codified therein. "Whether the PRC maintain its political stand that Tibet has always formed a part of China or modifies that attitude is irrelevant in this respect, for the convention and the principles of law it codifies should apply so long as the question of Tibet's status remains unresolved and China's presence in Tibet continues to be a challenge."⁴

Chinese Immigration into Tibet: Historical Perspective

China is well known for its expansionist and colonist policy beyond its borders. While Chinese political influence of varying strength has been felt in Tibet for several centuries, actual penetration by Chinese settlers into Tibetan areas is a relatively recent phenomenon. The Chinese population were present on the Tibetan plateau before 1940s also but that was small in size as compared to the rapid colonisation which has taken place since the founding of the PRC, especially in the border regions between Tibet and China.

4. M.C. Van Walt van Praag, "Population Transfer and the Survival of the Tibetan Identity", Strategic Digest, January 1988, p.43.

Historically, the Tibetans were isolated from the rest of the world geographically, climatically and culturally. "It was only after the introduction of crops from the Americans in the beginning of the nineteenth century that Chinese farmers began pushing into the hills on the border of the Tibetan plateau. On the other hand, trade, religion and politics (often in the form of warfare) have provided numerous opportunities for contact between the two peoples for centuries."⁵

Historically we can categorize the two types of migration into Tibet. Firstly, it was spontaneous and took place because of crop failure, flooding or military invasions of the yellow river valley and secondly it was a plan which was deliberately used to dominate and control other ethnic groups. The latter involved the occupation of territories with large armies, the slaughter of large numbers of indigenous peoples, displacing them, in other words pushing them to the marginal and deserted areas as the Indo-Aryan did with the indigenous people of India (Bharat).

It was only in 1983 when the brainchild of Mao Zedong,⁹ the infamous "Population Transfer Policy" was initiated in the name of development, as a result of which, Han Chinese started in-migrating in a full-fledged and pre-planned way

5. 'New Majority', Tibet Support Group, London, 1996, p.76.

into Tibet. Since then the Tibetans are suffering and their pains and agonies have been accelerated to a boundless limit.

Nature of Population Influxed into Tibet

Majority of the Chinese population influxed into Tibet are merchants, technicians, administrators, workers, agriculturist, educationist and illegal settlers. Except illegal settlers, the rest of them have been provided with incentive packages to settle down in Tibet. The Chinese government acknowledges the presence of "floating" workers in Tibet, but claims there is no way to stem the tide.

"There are two types of floating population in Tibet - legal workers brought in by government for economic development projects, and 'illegal' settlers consisting of individual seeking employment or economic opportunities independent of the government."⁶

The size of the floating population is much more than the Tibetans in Tibet. According to Chinese officials the size of floating population is insignificant. Official Chinese population figures consistently fail to include military personnel and such "floaters". Discounting the

6. "Strangers in their own Country", Tibetan Youth Congress, Dharamshala, 1996, p.12.

"floating" population in Tibet is tantamount to suggesting that these workers are temporary resident, but this is not the case for the most. Mainly Chinese settlers arrive here to make money and many come under government programme like "Giving Help to Tibet" or "Help Tibet Prosper". After some time, they bring their family and friends all of whom are provided with good jobs, ration cards and education. Most of these settlers take up permanent residence as they are provided with amenities unavailable back home and unavailable to the Tibetans - access to imported goods.

"Discrepancies in numbers, confusion regarding who is being counted and who is not, discounting of vast segments of the Chinese population in Tibet's three regions and ambiguous territorial designations and name changes, all serve to deflect understanding and knowledge of the conditions of Tibetan people under Chinese role."⁷

The Chinese Government Policy

"The object of this policy is to 'resolve' China's territorial claims over Tibet by means of a massive and irreversible population shift."⁸ The Chinese government officially denies the existence of a policy to relocate the

7. Ibid., p.13.

8. M.C. Van Walt van Praag, "Population Transfer and the Survival of Tibetan Identity", Strategic Digest, January 1988, p.95.

Chinese in Tibet and the same time refer to government encouragement for the settlement of Chinese nationalities in Tibet. The urgent need for Chinese personnel to help develop an economically and culturally "backward" Tibet is generally cited as the justification for this policy. The need to relieve excess population and unemployment in China is also given as a reason. The most recent evidence of a planned population transfer is the leaked report of the May 12, 1993 secret meeting on the issue of Tibet. At this meeting, as noted earlier, it was decided that, to meet the growing political resistance in Tibet, China should intensify its population transfer."⁹ In 1952, Mao Zedong himself stated his intention to transfer large numbers of Han Chinese into Tibet. "By about 1986 China had surpassed its goal. There were 6.2 million Chinese civilians in Tibet, 2.5 million in Amdo, two million in Kham and 1.7 million in U-Tsang. In addition, there were 5,00,000 troops in Tibet."¹⁰

Chinese settlers are attracted by the incentives introduced by the government like the raised pay for those graduates who work in the remote areas and countryside. The Chinese government promised further favourable treatment in

9. "Strangers in their own Country", Tibetan Youth Congress, Dharamshala, 1994, p.13.

10. Ibid., p.14.

pay and home leave "to those who go to work in Tibet, Qinghai and other (Tibetan) plateau areas for a long time. In order to encourage them to stay in Tibet, the government announced that "those who wish to stay on after 8 years enjoy, further pay raises and those who have worked there for more than 20 years and stay on after retirement will have their pensions increased by 10 percent. Currently, a special effort is also being made to retire Chinese army personnel and their families in Tibet. An editorial in Beijing Review explained the central governments policy in terms of the need to revitalize the economy of Tibet and overcome its economic and cultural backwardness."

Annual wages are 87 percent higher in Tibet than in the Chinese provinces, and Chinese personnel who elect to stay beyond their term of service receive handsome pay increases, receive long paid leaves, their family members are guaranteed employment, and there is a relaxing of the one-child policy. Chinese entrepreneurs receive numerous economic incentives which are not available to local Tibetans, including low taxes and land use rates. "The swamping of Tibet with non-Tibetans people has spread from the Sino-Tibetan border, regions in Kham and Amdo, areas largely merged into Chinese provinces in the early days of occupation, to the U-Tsang Region. In its most recent policies toward the Central Region, China contradicts its own claims

of permitting "autonomy" to the Tibet Autonomous Region."¹¹

In announcing these new policies, the Chinese made no secret of the objectives of the policy. It was to develop Tibet and strengthen control over the region to put an end to 'splitist' activities. The policy and practice of the population transfer is basically violative of the Fourth 1949 Geneva Convention, which prohibits the population transfer of civilian population into occupied territory. Basically the main aim of the Population Transfer Policy is to reduce unemployment and congestion in China.

Removal of restriction on migration and the promotion of agriculture and private enterprise are part and parcel of Chinese transfer policy. Building of roads, relaxation of the administrative controls on migration (in TAR travel restrictions between the autonomous region and neighbouring provinces had been relaxed to Chinese from December 1992) to encourage the private enterprise and regional and international trades are the pre-planned programmes to influx Chinese into Tibet. At present, there are about 42,000 private enterprises registered in Tibet alone run by the Chinese. Besides that, in the name of promotion of agriculture and grain production a large section of the Chinese was drained in.

11. Ibid., p.15.

Benefits are available to immigrants and according to the population policy, the 'skilled personnel' and 'technical experts' working in Tibet get higher wages, hardship allowances, reduction of or exemption from some forms of taxation and improved pension opportunities. Social benefits like Chinese cadre and staff living in the Tibet Autonomous Region are eligible for better housing, improved access to educational facilities and longer period of vacation and leave whereas the Tibetan condition is deteriorating. In Karze autonomous prefecture in Sichuan Chinese farmers are allowed to have two children per couple who is there in Tibet for 8 years and above but Tibetans are never allowed to have two children. This shows the veracity of the biasness towards their own people who are in certain conditions by excluding them from the stern population policy of one couple one child whereas for Tibetans this policy is imposed upon very strictly.

Recent government statements were given by the government on migration as a part of 'Goldrush Plan for Tibet'. Tibet has been projected as a region of vast untrapped reservoir of rich minerals and resources waiting for exploitation. The impression that Tibet is a land where fortunes can be made is particularly aimed at boosting gold and silver extraction in Tibetan regions.

The main objective behind this inhuman population policy is to swamp Tibet with an influx of the Chinese population making it "demographically impossible for the Tibetans to rise up and revolt" and to open Tibet wider to the outside, which in real sense, is a dirty political move to grab the 'roof of the world'. In short, the main motive is to activate and dominate the Chinese leadership in the Tibetan region.

Population Transfer in Tibet

Tibetans from the north-east and east already engulfed in a sea of Chinese reign. In a real sense in Tibet the Chinese are dominating. "Before 1949, there were only a few Chinese businessmen at Labrang Tashikyil in present day Gansu province. Now approximately 75 per cent of the population of this traditional bastion of Tibetan culture is Chinese. The Dalai Lama's birthplace, Taktser, consists of 40 families, of whom only eight are Tibetan, and rest Chinese. The delegates found a distant relative of the Dalai Lama, a young man in his mid-thirties. He, his wife and children spoke no Tibetan. Sinicization had taken its toll. In Lhasa the Chinese outnumber the Tibetans."¹²

12. Dawa Norbu, Tibet: The Road Ahead, Harper Collins, New Delhi, 1997, p.289.

In the mid-1950s Chinese settlers from Sichuan were sent to the Kham area and those from the Gansu were sent to Amdo to settle. They were allotted plots of land by the Chinese authorities for farming. The number of Chinese settlers in Kham and Amdo was probably over two millions by 1959. "Tibet is a vast territory, measuring approximately 6,00,000 sq. miles. This vast territory is not just a mountain desert; there are number of relatively fertile valleys and arable areas, especially eastern Tibet (Kham and Amdo) and southern Tibet. In other words, while the whole of Tibet is obviously not suitable for Han settlement, there are considerable tracts of Tibetan territory much warmer and more fertile which attract the Han settlers. This is basically what has been happening in Amdo and Kham since 1959 - the Han appropriation of Tibetan lands for agriculture. In central and western Tibet (U-Tsang) the pattern of Han settlement is different. Here, the Hans outnumber the Tibetans in the urban areas such as Lhasa and Tsethang where the colonial administration and the new industries are located."¹³

The current policy began in 1983 as the final solution to China's Tibet problem. The encouragement to the Chinese civilians to settle in Tibet was admitted by Deng Xiaoping

13. Ibid., pp.283-284.

and other Chinese government officials. As a result of the implementation of this policy, today 6 million Tibetans are outnumbered by 7.5 million Chinese. In Tibetan Province of Amdo which is now turned into a Chinese province called Qinghai, out of the total population of 4.95 million in 1990 (according to China's own statistics) only 20% were Tibetans and rest are Chinese. The situation is even worst in Kham province where all the major towns like Dartsedo, Darge, Kanze and Markham are reported to be inhabited by 95-100% Chinese. Today, the Chinese population in Kham alone is reported to be well over 3.6 million. The situation in U-Tsang (in so called Tibet Autonomous Region) in the central Tibet is comparatively better. However, even in U-Tsang, Chinese have outnumbered the Tibetan in all the major towns and cities. The Chinese population in U-Tsang is estimated over 2 million.

The situation is further deteriorating, as Beijing is accelerating the population transfer by shifting more Chinese civilians, this time to central Tibet. In 1992 alone thousands of fresh Chinese civilians have settled in central Tibet. The Tibetans in Tibet fear that over a million Chinese displaced by the massive three Gorges Project will be re-located in Central Tibet, Economic Projects are initiated in Tibet mainly to entice Chinese immigrants to move to Tibet rather than to benefit the Tibetans.

"To this day, the Chinese have probably sent over 7 million civilians into Tibet, in addition to which they maintain at least 4,00,000 troops in the country (2,50,000 of them in TAR). Since the Tibetan population is, at most, six million, the Chinese have already outnumbered the Tibetans on the Tibetan plateau. Recent reports from Tibet and from China show a steady and alarming increase in the transfer of Chinese into the so called TAR. The principal difficulty in assessing the extent of the Chinese influx into Tibet results from the Chinese authorities' use of the population statistics. Only the Chinese who have formally registered as residents in Tibetan areas are included in official immigration figures. Yet most recent settlers in Tibet have not registered and consequently, do not figure in China's Tibet statistics. This problem is most pronounced in the TAR, where large numbers of Chinese settlers have arrived since 1984."¹⁴ The first wave of settlers were sent to Amdo in 1950s and the second wave on 1980s. According to International Herald Tribune in January 1983, Beijing was encouraging young Chinese to move to Qinghai by appealing to their patriotism and by offering higher wages.

14. Dr. M.C. Van Walt van Praag, "Population Transfer and the Survival of the Tibetan Identity", Strategic Digest, New Delhi, January 1988, pp.37-38.

Chinese Official Statements and Responses

According to Chinese official statements a large number of Han Chinese in Tibetan Autonomous Region are public servants, doctors, teachers and technicians, who, after a few years of employment in Tibet, return to the inner (Chinese) provinces. They also claim that there has been no sharp decline in the Tibetan population since the so called peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951. Han population in Tibet is in minority. According to the Chinese Census of 1953 there were 1.5 million Tibetans, 4,30,000 Hans and 2,20,000 Mongolians, Qiangs, Lis and people of other national minorities in the 10 autonomous prefectories in Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces.

Hans in Tibetan Inhabited Areas

(Unit 10,000)

Region	Years		
	1953	1964	1982
i) Tibet Autonomous Region (including Qamdo)	-	3.7	9.2
ii) Six Autonomous Prefectures in Qinghai	4.0	30.6	50.4
iii) Haixi Autonomous Prefecture	2.7	8.7	21.3
iv) One Autonomous Prefecture and one Autonomous country in Gansu	15.5	23.7	37.5
v) Two Autonomous Prefectures and one Autonomous country in Sichuan	20.3	36.6	52.0
vi) One Autonomous Prefecture in Yunan	2.8	3.3	5.0
vii) Total	42.6	97.9	154.1

(Source: National Census of China 1953, 1964, 1982.)

The number of Hans in various Tibetan inhabited areas increased from about 4,30,000 in 1953 to 1.54 million in 1982. While the number of Tibetans increased from 2.77 million to 3.87 million. In TAR, Tibetan made up 94.4 percent of the total population in 1982, Hans only accounted for 4.8 percent and the remainder comprised other ethnic groups. According to 1986 statistics, the total number of Tibetans in Tibet Autonomous Region was 1.93 million. The Han population was only 73,000. Most of the Han Chinese were sent to help develop the local economy and stimulate scientific, educational and cultural advancement. According to the Chinese official Dalai Lama's accusation that more than seven million Hans have moved into Tibet is an unreasonable misrepresentation of the true situation.

Extent of Population Transfer in Tibet: Regionwise

Tibet in its pre-Communist history was divided into three principal regions comprising about 2.5 million square kilometres. Tibet comprised three regions e.g. Amdo (Dhomy), Kham (Dhotoe) and U-tsang (TAR). In 1949 and even before that Chinese People's Liberation Army started pouring into Tibet from easternmost border areas and established military garrisons at every strategic point. Military occupation was not where it ended but a contingent of civilians arrived shortly thereafter administrators, staffs and their families paving the way for more civilians to estab-

lish themselves in force in larger towns.

1. Amdo:

Most of the urban centres and main economic activities have been dominated by Chinese. According to 1990 statistics, Chinese people outnumbered Tibetans by more than two and a half times. For every Tibetan in Amdo, there are about 2.6 Chinese, of the 4.5 million people in the Amdo region (Sichuan and Gansu provinces), 60 percent are Chinese and 20 percent are Tibetans. According to official Chinese sources in 1984, Amdo (Qinghai) had a population of 3.8 million, of which more than 2.5 million were Chinese and only 7,50,000 were Tibetans. Less than a year later, the total population had increased to 3.9 million of which still only 7,50,000 were Tibetan. The increase rate of Chinese population is too high compared to the Tibetan population which is stagnant.

The infamous world's largest prison camp complex so called 'Qinghai Gulag' has several million inmates. After release from the prison the prisoners are not allowed to return to the mainland but are enforced to settle down in Tibetan prefectures only. So Tibet serves as human store-houses for victims of successive Chinese atrocities. These prisoners are employed in various factories run by prison authorities.

2. Kham:

As Kham was incorporated into Sichuan, China's most populous province, it is likely that the newly occupied land was used to alleviate the overcrowded conditions of Sichuan province through population transfer.

The current total Tibetan population for the Kham region according to Chinese statistics is about 1.5 million. This number is in dispute. The Tibetan government-in-exile estimates three million Tibetans in those regions comprising Kham. The reason for the discrepancy, the Tibetan government in exile suggests, is that China has not included in its census those Tibetans living in areas now incorporated into non-Tibetan prefectures, and has underestimated the nomadic population.

"The number of Chinese settlers in Kham at the present time is conservatively estimated at over 2 million, but less than half of them have registered. According to Chinese publications, 1,68,118 Chinese have registered in the Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, 71,278 in the Mili Tibetan Autonomous District, and 4,22,000 in the Ngapa Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures. No figures are available for the Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Currently these are close to 3 million Tibetans in the region. The highest concentration of Chinese is found in the cities and towns

where they constitute the majority of the population. In some places, the percentage is as high as 75%."15

3. U-Tsang (TAR):

Comparing to other two regions TAR has the lowest Chinese population concentration. In U-Tsang however dramatic changes in demographic characteristics have been evident for the past decade. The past 18 months, since June 1992 when China announced its "open door" policy, ostensibly to enhance economic development in the region, have witnessed even more disturbing trends in the region. Chinese settlers, opportunists, government workers, businessmen, craftsmen, fortune-seeker and vagarants, have taken advantage of this 'open door'.

Chinese government sources give the Tibetan population of TAR as 1.99 or 2.1 million and the number of Chinese registered colonizers as 76,000. But independent observers report that at least 1,00,000 Chinese live in Lhasa alone, outnumbering Tibetans two to one. In the entire Lhasa Administrative Area, Tibetan sources put the Chinese population at 6,30,000. Chinese settlements have been constructed alongside all major Tibetan cities and towns while poor Tibetans are made to move into peripheral areas or the high-

15. Ibid., p.38.

lands and barrenlands which are almost barren and unproductive Tibetans and western tourists report that there are some 85,000 Chinese in Nagchu, 3,20,000 in the Chamdo area, 1,70,000 in the Shigatse area, 93,000 in Lhoka and 1,50,000 in Ngari. Almost every corner of the countryside virgin forests have been cleared to house exclusively Chinese communities. Thus, in Powo and Kongpo so 2,80,000 Chinese Hans have settled.

"The Chinese are dominating not only the administration but are also dominating the economy as well. For example, in Lhasa market there were 756 Chinese businesses and only 305 Tibetan ones. Similarly, Tsethang had 277 Chinese businesses and 120 Tibetan ones by 1994. Thus, even Chinese statistics admit that the total number of Chinese immigrants in Tibet and the total Tibetan population are more or less equal: 4.34 million Tibetan and 4.2 million Chinese."¹⁶

Through its economic development policies more and more Chinese are coming to U-Tsang, many with no intention of returning to China. They view U-Tsang, and Lhasa in particular, as a 'Land of Gold'.

16. Dr. Dawa Norbu, Tibet: The Road Ahead, New Delhi, 1997, p.284.

Population Policy and its Implications on Tibet and South Asia

Population transfer of Chinese Han population is adversely affecting the position of Tibetans which is going to be a minority in their own country. Its implications on Tibet and South Asia is really threatening. If the present Chinese policy is successfully implemented, Tibetans will, before long, be reduced to a small and insignificant minority in their own country in the same way as the Manchus in Manchuria, Uighurs in Eastern Turkistan and Mongolians in Inner Mongolia. "Early this century, the Manchus were a distinct race with their language and culture; today, only two or three million Manchurians are left in Manchuria, where 75 million Chinese have settled. In Inner Mongolia, the Chinese outnumber the Mongols by 8.5 million to 2.5 million. It is true that Manchuria and Mongolia are more suitable climatically for the Chinese settlers."¹⁷

Its implication on South Asia is really threatening. As occupied by China the most suitable strategic location, Aksai Chin provides a direct link and access to Pakistan which is a major threat to India as earlier Tibet served as a buffer zone which is no more favourable to India, and India's frontier is open from two sides, thus facing major security threat. Trade route to Central Asia with India has

17. Ibid., p.283.

been blocked by China by capturing Aksai Chin. Moreover, militant cooperation with Pakistan both China and Pakistan checked India strategically to hinder its entry to Central Asia. Land access for trade is hindered. Now with the immediate border with India and other small countries like Nepal, Bhutan, South Asia is no more safe as it is evident from the forceful occupation of Tibet by China. China is also backing the military operations in Myanmar to military Junta which is again a cause of concern. China's command over Tibet is really a major threat to South Asia.

Population Transfer and its Implications on Tibet and Tibetans

By injecting Chinese into Tibet in a large proportion Beijing is making it demographically impossible for the Tibetans to rise up and revolt for their right and their independent country. The logical justification behind this systematic and deliberate population transfer is to suppress, depress and repress the Tibetan community as a part of political move. "The ambitious programme for national reconstruction with its attendant population transfer, was vital on strategic and demographic grounds as well economic ones."¹⁸

18. "New Majority - Chinese Population Transfer into Tibet", Tibet Support Group, London, 1997.

The immediate objective behind this inhuman population transfer policy is to strengthen the Chinese leadership in Tibetan region, so that the Tibetans will never be able to raise a voice against China. And if they do so, within a short duration be swept away. The process of decentralisation has not had much of an impact in Tibetan regions. Decentralisation has not allowed the full expression of genuine Tibetan concern. Decision making is fully in the hands of the Chinese and for the Tibetans there is no one to listen to their cries.

With the arrival of the Chinese, the distinct Tibetan identity is being destroyed, discrimination is practiced openly and unemployment among the Tibetans is becoming a serious problem. Immigrants to Tibet are dominating new market opportunities, encroaching on agricultural land and marginalising Tibetans in their own country. Threats come frequently enough, as Chinese press their efforts to move millions of non-Tibetans into the land of snow, to control Tibetan religion and above all to repress the voices of dissent and to repress Tibetan's reverence for their much loved leader, His Holiness Dalai Lama. In announcing these new policies, the Chinese authorities made no secret of the objectives of the policy. It was to develop Tibet and strengthen control over the region to put an end to splitist activities.

Tibetan identity and culture are being destroyed and ruined gradually. "None of the delegates failed to report the destruction of the monasteries. One of the difficulties is that there is no consensus about the number of monasteries and temples in Tibet before 1959. The Dalai Lama estimates the number to be 6,200 and his sister around 4,000. The number of the monasteries is known only in certain well localities. For example, in the Lihang Valley, there used to be 118 monasteries and temples of which only one remains. In Sakya there used to be 108 monasteries and temples out of which only one remains. In other words, the Chinese sought to destroy religion as a way of life but left some ten famous religious institutions connected with imperial China intact."¹⁹ To this day Tibet has been culturally uprooted.

Economically for Tibetans in Tibet the situation is worse. Tibetans are among the poor and lakhs are unemployed, no housing facilities to them, no proper education and above all the Chinese practice racial discrimination. The government invites even unskilled Chinese to come to Tibet to work in factories on construction sites as road workers and so forth. The authorities thereby actively take job opportunities away from the Tibetans. The number of farmers who have become unemployed because their land has

19. Dr. Dawa Norbu, Tibet: The Road Ahead, New Delhi, 1997, p.285.

been confiscated for construction purposes is also increasing. The Chinese in general prefer to employ Chinese immigrants and that is the only reason why Tibetans in large numbers are unemployed.

"In Lhasa, out of the total of 31,493 shops and business establishments, only 3,706 less than 20 percent, were owned by Tibetans during the year 1991-92. The breakup of ownership according to the type of business is as follows:

Type of Business	Numbers	
	Chinese	Tibetans
1. Restaurants	12,496	2,190
2. Hair dressing saloons	3,491	28
3. Tailors	3,891	1,460
4. General shops	4,689	2,014
5. Carpenters	1,220	14
6. Total	25,787	5,706 ²⁰

Source: Tibetan Refugee Account.

In this way economic conditions of Tibetan in Tibet are dismal.

Not only economically but in Tibet there exists housing discrimination and shortages for Tibetans. Tibetan villages are very often not facilitated by the provision of basic sanitation, water and electricity and in urban areas, only

20. "Strangers in their Own Country", Tibet Youth Congress, Dharamshala, 1996, p.31.

Chinese government offices, settlements and military garrison are provided with these services. Many Tibetans have no proper housing, residing in the streets in shacks or tents. "Tibetans have been displaced and deported. Eighty percent of occupants of new buildings in Lhasa were reportedly Chinese, including the People's Liberation Army and People's Armed Police."²¹

As far as education is concerned, in Tibet, the denial of educational opportunities has continued for four decades. This will have far reaching and devastating effects on the Tibetan society. In simple terms, the Chinese are eroding Tibetan ability to earn a living. In the TAR, the illiteracy rate is 44.63 percent as compared to the rate in China of 15.88 percent. The school fees are too high to be afforded by poor Tibetan families; besides that, higher education is limited for Tibetans because even if they successfully compete for a seat the Chinese students receive the preference. The Tibetan language has been given secondary importance in the job market, even in U-Tsang, where official policy is to use the language of the "indigenous" people. "The new preferential policies designed to attract Chinese to Tibet include promises to provide Chinese settlers with school places for their children. This move further dis-

21. Ibid., p.33.

places Tibetans from the educational system. In 1992, 781 Tibetans and 918 Chinese or other non-Tibetans applied for admission to Tibet University. A total of 312 were given places, of whom 173 (55%) were Chinese and 139 (45%) Tibetans. These situations should be seen in the light of official admissions that as many as 70% of Tibetans are illiterate. The percentage of "educated" women among Tibetans in the PRC was only 16.9% in 1990, which was a decline from 19.4% since 1982."²²

Very few Chinese immigrants ever learn Tibetan and they generally insult, abuse Tibetan culture and put forth themselves as a superior race with superior cultural qualities which lack in the Tibetans. Not only Tibetans are disgraced but they are barred from expressing their thoughts freely, the negative attitudes of Chinese immigrants towards Tibetan are encouraged directly by statements in the state-controlled press describing Tibetans as "backward" and having a "psychology of idleness". The cultural shock that have been suffered by Tibetans are unparalleled. Prostitution today becomes widespread and is allowed to flourish despite official denunciations. The government might think that a wide range of entertainment facilities is necessary to encourage Chinese immigrants (of whom young males constitute a large

22. "New Majority", Tibet Support Group, London, 1997, p.121.

proportion) to stay in Tibet. Lack of educational opportunities combined with the denigration of Tibetan culture and identity through the pre-planned and deliberate forms of racial discrimination, is seriously posing a threat to the integrity of Tibetan culture and identity, among it at a fundamental level.

Tibetans in general are considered as "backward" by the Chinese and of "low quality". They view that the cultural levels of minority population (Tibetans) are low, making development and contact with Chinese settlers a high priority. Both official and unofficial Chinese sources claim that "the Chinese settlers are sent to Tibet to help 'civilise' the backward Tibetans and their culture. In a gist, the Tibetan culture has been already uprooted by the Chinese in real ground and Tibetans are a mere artifacts in the Chinese owned museum called Tibet Autonomous Region for the visitors from outside.

Environmental degradation in Tibet is the result of Chinese population transfer policy. As the ratio between the resources and the man is totally mismatched now. As population transfer fulfils China's primary political aims, and there is little likelihood that environmental considerations will significantly alter the course of the Chinese policy. There are at present so many developmental projects that are taken in Tibet but the disastrous effects of these projects

are experienced by Tibetans and its natural environment.

Today, under the Chinese rule, the systematic destruction of the environmental of Tibet is unprecedented. The rich wildlife, forests, plants, minerals and water resources have all suffered irreplaceable degradation and Tibet's fragile ecological balance is being seriously disturbed. The Chinese authorities denuded some 54 billion dollars worth of timber at the end of 1985 from the rich forests reserves of Tibet. In Amdo province alone, nearly 50 million trees have been felled since 1955 and millions of acres of forest area amounting to at least 70% cleared. A similar condition prevails in other parts of Tibet, particularly in eastern and southern Tibet. The massive and unchecked deforestation in Tibet is causing irreversible soil erosion and also increases the deposit of silt in the rivers, which in turn causes landslides and reduces potential farming land. The large influx of Chinese population in Tibet has compelled the Tibetans to restrict their grazing land and thus in turn encourages overgrazing the available pasture land. The continuing practice of overgrazing results not only in dramatic reduction in the grass yield but also accelerates the desertification of Tibet. The systematic and large scale mining in Tibet began in the early 1960s and has been continuing till today. The unrestrained exploitation of mineral resources in Tibet poses serious threats to

the survival of the remaining rain forest in Tibet. Lastly, imperial China is utilizing Tibet for chemical warfare exercise and dumping of nuclear waste from other countries which is going to damage Tibet's soil and Tibet within a few years will be like Sahara desert or no man's land.

Militarization of Tibet is another aspect of China's population policy to suppress Tibetan voices against them as well as to command South Asia especially India. China has turned the once peaceful and buffer zone called Tibet into a vast military zone. China's occupation forces serve to keep Beijing's control over the Tibetan people and to further China's strategic aims in the region. The militarization of Tibetan plateau profoundly affects the geopolitical balance of the region and cause serious tension in South Asia. Today Chinese military presence in Tibet includes an estimated 3,00,000 to 5,00,000 troops, of which 2,00,000 are permanently stationed in central Tibet. China had already established its nuclear station in Tibet to meet the dangers from the south. In short, the militarization in Tibet will check Tibetans indirectly from any tinge or iota of revolt. The transfer of large numbers of Chinese into Tibet, if allowed to continue, will result in permanent losses to the Tibetan people and destruction of Tibet's national and cultural heritage. In this way the Chinese may quietly but definitely complete the integration of this region (Tibet -

the land of snow) with the rest of China. Precisely the survival of the Tibetan and national identity is being threatened by Chinese policies which deprive the Tibetans of the right to exist as a people.

Population Transfer and its Implications on South Asia

"For nearly a century the British maintained the security of India from the north by supporting the neutrality of an autonomous Tibetan state. If the British acknowledged a tenuous form of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, it was entirely for the purpose of thwarting a bigger danger from Czarist Russia than what weak China could pose to the Indian frontiers at that time. With a neutral Tibet on independent treaty relations with the British and British outposts thrust deep into the Tibetan plateau, the northern frontiers of India remained dead frontiers, completely insulated from any danger from foreign aggression. With the British in predominantly strong position in Tibet, other Himalayan Kingdoms or states like Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, etc. continued to remain firmly within the British sphere of influence. Not only the British power in Tibet protected the independent existence of these territories but they in turn provided an effective barrier against the predatory Chinese and kept them away from the heartland of British India. This balance of power has now been upset. The

struggle no longer is in Tibet but has been pushed forward to the Himalayas, that is to India's doorsteps and at many places within Indian territory." - B.N. Mullik²³

Before the advent of Tibet by imperial China, the roof of the world was serving as a buffer zone between India and China. With the Chinese occupation of Tibet, Indian and Chinese troops face each other on the Himalayan border for the first time in history. The 1962 war was really a bad instance that have ever been experienced although 'Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai' slogan at that time was prevalent. Tibet since that time has become the bone of contention between India and China. As Chinese have occupied Tibet and established military garrison over there it has direct threat to Indian northern security system stretching over 3,200 km.

"Tibet looms large in Sino-Indian relations and politics, even after 45 years of Chinese occupation, because of its intimate connection with the strategic Sino-Indian strategic rivalry in inner Asia and the Himalayas. Mao's strategic considered Tibet as China's back door, and some of India's elite still consider it as a buffer between India and China."²⁴ Nuclear threat from China is alive and real

23. Cited in Dawa Norbu and Kesang Tenzing, "Military Developments in Tibet: 1950-74", Tibetan Review, Sept.-Oct. 1975, p.15.

24. Dr. Dawa Norbu, "Tibet in Sino-Indian Relations", Strategic Digest, Vol.XXVIII, No.4, April 1998, p.545.

to South Asia, as China has deployed nuclear missiles in Tibet. Tibet has been considered as an extraneous element by India. As China does not endorse the McMahon treaty that was signed with British India in 1914. China does not recognise Sikkim's merger with India and China does not recognise Arunachal Pradesh as the legitimate boundary between the two countries.

China has consciously sought to tie India as down south of Himalayas to prevent its rise as a rival. This involved the building of Pakistan as a counterweight to India, employing Myanmar as a strategic observatory (Coco Islands just 40 km north of Andaman Islands) and gaining a foothold in India's other neighbours - Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The Chinese are also interested in Bhutan, signalling a willingness to settle the border issue on Thimpu's terms if they are allowed to open an embassy there.

After eliminating the historical buffer between the Indian and Chinese civilisations by gabbling up Tibet. Mao Zedong began financing and arming Naga and Mizo tribal insurgents while rendering "Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai" serenades to lull India into a false sense of security. China's three largest arms clients are in South Asia namely Pakistan, Myanmar and Bangladesh. Pakistan is the lynchpin of China's strategy to bog India down on the subcontinent. At present,

there is arms race going on in South Asia and the country responsible for it is China. Each time India makes a technological advance, China rushes to blunt it by transferring similar technology or weapon system to Pakistan. Pakistanis had secretly started the construction of medium range missile factory using blueprints and equipments supplied by China (ahft and Ghauri), the objective being to give Pakistan the ability to match the Prithvi missile.

Beijing is supplying nuclear capable M-11 missiles to Pakistan, and giving assistance in setting up a 40-megawatt nuclear research reactor that is nearing completion at Khushab in Pakistan. China already supplied 5,000 magnet rings for enriching uranium and giving close military cooperation with Pakistan in developing Al-Khalid, the main battle tank and jet trainers. They also increased naval presence in the Indian ocean region and military cooperation with Burma to destabilize the Indian sub-continent. Assisting military infiltration in India and persistent assistance to the military regime of Burma. It is also helping Burma modernising two ports and construct a naval base giving rise to fears of enhanced Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean for the first time (Coco Islands).

China's presence in Tibet with its artillery, army, airforce at its best, new aerodromes that are only under the army's control and command and their foremost nuclear weapon

facing towards south and nuclear research centres pose a serious threat to South Asia. They are using Tibet as a military cantonment or garrison. Chinese second line of defence is a highly nuclearised Tibet, littered with nuclear weapons at Nagchuka and Amdo with a major centre of nuclear weapon research and missiles and bombs that are facing towards south. Tibet is no more a plateau with glaciers but it represents an advance base of Chinese penetration to South East Asia and a forepost of Chinese military power in the heart of Asia. In gist, Chinese presence in Tibet put the South Asian countries into a dilemma. Imperial China is playing a role of predator as it had already grabbed Tibet into its control forcefully.

Since 1983 the Chinese government has been pursuing the most and almost brutal efficient annihilation of the Tibetan identity as a people. This is being done by turning Tibetans into a minority in their own nation, by injecting through governmental policy Chinese population in large numbers. This swamping of the geographical area of Tibetans is the cause of agony.

Unfortunately, this policy of Chinese government has been successful in achieving irreversible population shift and hence endangering the identity of Tibetan people and their very nation. This policy has invariably turned the

Tibetans into a minority and hence a community under assault.

It has been an issue of survival for the Tibetans to maintain their uniqueness as a means of maintaining their very cultural and social identity. By the process of being outnumbered in their very own home in the longer run their distinctiveness would be blurred into a formless and amorphous name. Their language, for instance, would pick up influences in the beginning and intermixing over the decade their own native language itself and the indigenesness itself might be left to a mere influence. This can be applied to various other cultural practices. The traditional Tibetan houses and settlement while existing under the shadows of the newly created edifices of modern amenities over the Chinese might turn the traditional buildings into mere bookmarks of once a great and unique people.

Politically as well, the idea of number is significant to influence and effect any political decision. By slaughtering, shattering and outnumbering the Tibetans in various provinces the Chinese government has sought the most direct countering of any murmurs of protest and voices of dissent.

It is in the policy of population transfer of Chinese that the most generous weapon of cultural murder of Tibetan nation is to be famed.

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSION

Research shows that population of Tibetan before 1950s in different stages since Yarlung Dynasty is ambiguous. We cannot rely on this figure because of its vagueness and very different opinions about figures. The figures and assumptions that have been presented by foreigners, travellers, Tibetans and Chinese by using different criteria have not been able to present accurate number of Tibetans. Lack of detailed sources and censuses and general statistics contribute to a situation where some guess work will have to take the place of "hard facts". It is very difficult to work out the accurate and exact number of Tibetans in Tibet in different periods of time before 1950s. The figures are highly varied and very difficult to reach consensus. But it is quite clear from the literature that Tibet, being the follower of expansionist policy always has been a densely populated country in the past because Tibetans are among one of the oldest civilisations as Tibetan origin dates back to 2000 years, when they had their own civilisation.

China's population transfer policy in reality reduced Tibetans into a minority in their own country as the Chinese government facilitates and encourages migration to Tibet. Tibet Autonomous Region is the only sparsely populated

region under the occupation of China. And China is deliberately and consciously injecting massive population (Han Chinese) from the most densely populated provinces of south-east China to Tibet. As a result, every sphere of the Tibetan life has been dominated by Chinese only. Tibetan culture identity has been almost lost in the shadow of millions of Chinese.

Most of the Chinese are either government officials and recruited for so called development in Tibet or the illegal settlers consisting of individuals seeking employment or economic opportunities independent of the government. The Chinese government acknowledges them as the floating population. According to them they are temporary settlers and will go back after finishing their task. The migration of non-Tibetans can be classified into two categories of involuntary and economic. Most of the Chinese who have been sent to Tibet are basically administrators, military personnel, workers (skilled) and technical experts. The government has introduced specific measures and general guidelines which are responsible for much of the current influx of Chinese to Tibet.

Population transfer policy generated struggle for resources in Tibet. As employment opportunities for Tibetans in their own land have been shattered and dismal because many Chinese settlers have been drawn into Tibet by the incentives provided by the Beijing government, the Chinese

workers influxed into Tibet also caused food shortages and joblessness for Tibetans. Most of the businesses and government jobs have been dominated by the Chinese only and the Tibetans are sidelined by them. More Tibetans were put out of work with the arrival of Chinese trades people. Tibetans are far away from the basic needs like sanitation, water and electricity and in urban areas, only Chinese government offices, settlements and military installations are provided with these services. Tibetans have been displaced and deported as a result of Chinese encroachments. In Tibet, the natives are denied of basic educational opportunities and the rate of illiteracy is more than three times higher than that of the Chinese. The reasons behind this are the unaffordable fees and limited access to better schools and higher education. The large influx of Chinese population in Tibet has compelled the Tibetans to restrict their grazing land and thus in turn encourages overgrazing the available pasture land. The pressure on the land is twenty times higher than before 1950s. The unrestrained exploitations of mineral resources in Tibet put a question mark on the very existence of rain forest in Tibet.

South Asian countries sharing border with China is in real dilemma and in pain by the Chinese indirect and direct interference through the firm position in Tibet. Tibet now represents an advance base of Chinese penetration to South-

East Asia and a forepost of Chinese military power in Asia's heartland. The instability in South Asia is the gift of China's indirect influence. China began financing and arming Naga and Mizo tribal insurgents. China has consciously sought to tie India down south of the Himalayas to prevent its rise as a rival. This involved the building of Pakistan as a counterweight. India is employing Myanmar as a strategic observatory and gaining foothold in India's other neighbours - Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The Chinese are also interested in Bhutan, signalling a willingness to settle the border issue on Thimpu's terms if they are allowed to open an embassy there. Besides this China is the largest arms supplier to South Asian countries, which are all India's neighbours - Pakistan, Myanmar and Bangladesh. China's direct influence over South Asian countries is another nuisance. China refuses to accept Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh as parts of India. China's interference in spiritual matters in as much as they relate to various appointments of Buddhist Lamas, is characterized by political monopoly over South Asia.

Population transfer to Tibet is very much evident from the Chinese own official statements. The population transfer to Tibet is clearly a breach of international law and the right of the Tibetan people to self determination. Furthermore, there are identifiable breaches of economic,

social and cultural rights; the right to work, to education, the principle of non-discrimination, housing rights, the integrity of culture and control of natural resources. The consequence of the policies of population transfer by the Chinese authorities is to consolidate Chinese control over Tibet through the assimilation of the Tibetan people into the Chinese majority. It also contributed to a worsening of the already strained relations between the Tibetans and Chinese inside Tibet. The problem of survival is more important than the racial discrimination practised by the Chinese. There is a clear cut demarcation between these two ethnic people.

The policy of the Chinese government has been successful in massive influx of Chinese in Tibet as a result of which Chinese leadership in Tibetan region has dominated and a kind of demographic check already been established which will not allow the voices of dissent to rise up. Moreover Tibetan culture and identity have got a major shock instead of maintaining their indigenoussness losing gradually everything including ownness of culture, tradition, language and personal identity. In a gist, Chinese government by influxing massive Chinese Hans into Tibet are making it demographically impossible for the Tibetans to rise up.

This study confirms the unreliability of official Chinese statistics for Tibet. In 1984, for the first time, a scientific census was carried out before which the population figures given for Tibet were a mere estimation. Overall data are inaccurate and incorrect and are not authentic. The Census of Tibet is characterised by deliberate misinformation through the withholding of information. The omission of the temporary floating population and the military from the official data combined with regional inconsistencies between provinces effectively discredit the statistics. The Chinese presence is far more extensive than what the official Chinese statistics suggest. Immigrants to Tibet are dominating new market opportunities, encroaching on agricultural land and marginalising Tibetans in their own country. The current strategy of the development of Tibet is by integrating the Tibetan economy, culture and habits into that of China. This development strategy is creating opportunities for the increasing numbers of Chinese settlers and placing the Tibetan population under the control of Chinese administration which is based against them.

Tibetan population in Tibet Autonomous Region are 2.11 million according to the Chinese census. Whereas total non-Tibetan population is to be in between 250,000 and 300,000 but the Chinese claim that non-Tibetan population (Hans) is only 67,000. The total Tibetan population for ethnographic

Tibet including Amdo and Kham according Chinese statistics are about 4.59 million. Amdo for centuries had had significant Chinese population as the result of its proximity to South-East populated China. Tibetan estimates of the non-Tibetans total rises to between five and 5.5 million but the Chinese on the contrary claim only 4.2 million non-Tibetans in Amdo (Qinghai).

Tibetans are in every respect - demographically, ethnically, culturally, linguistically, historically and religiously suffering particularly severely from the extremist policies and the depredations of the Red Guards. At this juncture the world should not be quiet like the sphinx but should take international action to prevent the future damage being done to Tibet as a result of Chinese population policy.

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