
Tibetan migration to India

*Why, when, how
and with what consequences?*

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
LIST OF MAPS AND FIGURES	4
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	4
1. INTRODUCTION	6
1.2 PURPOSE	6
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	7
1.4 DELIMITATIONS.....	7
1.5 CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	8
1.6 METHOD AND MATERIAL.....	9
1.7 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS	9
1.8 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	11
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	12
2.1 WHAT IS MIGRATION?	12
2.2 WHY MIGRATION MATTERS.....	14
2.3 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS BEHIND MIGRATION.....	14
2.3.1 <i>Push and pull factors</i>	14
2.4 MIGRATION RESEARCH MODELS.....	15
2.4.1 <i>Macro-analytical models</i>	16
2.4.2 <i>Micro-analytical models</i>	18
2.4.3 <i>Developmental aspects</i>	19
2.5 REFUGEE OR MIGRANT?	20
3. EMPIRICAL STUDY	23
3.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	23
3.2 THE TIBETAN DIASPORA.....	25
3.3 LEAVING TIBET	29
3.4 NEPAL AS AN AREA OF TRANSIT.....	31
3.5 ARRIVING IN INDIA.....	33
3.5.1 <i>Reception</i>	33
3.5.2 <i>Settling in India</i>	34
3.6 REASONS FOR EMIGRATING.....	35
3.6.1 <i>Spiritual education</i>	36
3.6.2 <i>Secular education</i>	37
3.6.3 <i>Work opportunities</i>	39
3.6.4 <i>Other</i>	42
3.7 CONSEQUENCES.....	43
3.7.1 <i>Xenophobia</i>	43
3.7.2 <i>Internal conflicts</i>	44
3.7.3 <i>Cultural changes</i>	45
3.7.4 <i>Nationalism and sense of displacement</i>	47
3.8 RETURNING TO TIBET	49
4. RESULTS	51
5. LIST OF REFERENCES	57
6. APPENDIXES	60
APPENDIX 1: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: TWO STORIES	60
APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	62

LIST OF MAPS AND FIGURES

Map 1 Tibet and adjacent countries... <i>(not in electronic version)</i>	3
Map 2 Indian states.....	4
Map 3 Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)... <i>(not in electronic version)</i>	4
Map 4 Migration routes..... <i>(not in electronic version)</i>	5
Figure 2.1 Model of international migration flow.....	13
Figure 2.2 A longitudinal representation of the migration process.....	18
Figure 3.1 Occupations of migrating Tibetans, 1993-2001.....	28

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CTC	The Canada Tibet Committee
CTA	Central Tibetan Administration
DOI	Department of Immigration
IM	Individuell Människohjälp
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PLA	Chinese People's Liberation Army
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PRC	People's Republic of China
TAR	Tibet Autonomous Region
TCHRD	Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
TCV	Tibetan Children's Village
TIN	Tibet Information Network
TRTC	Tibetan Refugee Transit Center
TRWO	Tibetan Refugee Welfare Office
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**MAP 2
STATES IN INDIA**



Source: All-IndiaTravel.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Since China occupied Tibet in 1950 and claimed that Tibet was part of the “motherland”, more than 130.000 Tibetans have crossed the Himalayas and traveled through Nepal to arrive in the neighbouring country of India. Tens of thousands of Tibetans are also to be found in Nepal and Bhutan, as well as in other parts of the world. The reasons behind the decision to leave the homeland for a life in exile are many. Tibet’s spiritual leader by incarnation and Head of State, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, is said to be a strong motivational force as he is considered the living connection to a time when Tibetans exercised self-determination, and is thus regarded as a symbol of Tibetan nationalism. The Dalai Lama fled Tibet in 1959, after a Tibetan revolt in the capital Lhasa, which was brutally crushed by the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA). The Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-exile¹, or Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), reside in Dharamsala in the Indian northwest state of Himachal Pradesh. The oppression of religion by the Chinese rule in Tibet is another important factor behind the Tibetan migration. According to Communist ideology, religion is of evil and hindering a country’s development. Tibetan society has its core in Tibetan Buddhism, perhaps even more today, when the political struggle for an independent Tibet permeates the Tibetan exile community. (Anand 2002:20, Damm 2003 and Tiljander Dahlström 2001:60ff.).

Tibet is the highest situated country in the world, and also one of the emptiest and most inaccessible (Craig 1992:23). For centuries, Tibet was also much isolated from the outside world, thus making it vulnerable to intrusion. Had this intrusion never taken place, the Tibetan diaspora would not be at hand, engaging people, organizations and governments all over the globe. The Tibetan migration is unique in many ways; no other people in history have before had such a well functioning government-in-exile; the establishment of the Tibetan community India involves a complex net of interesting aspects: social, cultural, economic and political, to mention a few. In my study of the Tibetan migration, I hope to find out why it occurs, how it is undertaken, and what takes place when in the country of destination - India.

1.2 Purpose

My purpose with this study is to examine the Tibetan migration process with a starting point in more general migration patterns, focusing on *why* people migrate. I intend to study motivational factors behind different forms of migration, thus including push and pull factors but also hindering factors and the individual decision-making process. My case study is carried out from a spatial as well as a behavioural viewpoint. Thus I study the movements from origin (Tibet) to destination (India) and the country of transit

¹ The government-in-exile was originally a continuation of the pre-1959 Tibetan Government but has over the years changed into a more democratic political entity, with elected representatives. According to Tiljander Dahlström, the idea is partly to show China and the surrounding world that Tibet has a legitimate government that fulfils the standards of a ‘modern democratic’ nation, in contrast to China. (Tiljander Dahlström, 2001:60).

(Nepal). I would also like to know what the consequences of the Tibetan migration to India are, and how the Tibetan exile community in India works. As stated above, I hope to find out why the Tibetan migration occurs, how it is undertaken, and what takes place when in the country of destination – India.

1.3 Research Questions

The research question in my study of more general migration patterns is:

Are there any universal migration patterns to be observed in the Tibetan migration?

In my case study of the Tibetan migration, I ask the following:

What is the historical background to the migration?

Which groups in Tibetan society have migrated and are migrating?

Why are they migrating?

What routes are taken? Is the journey physically or mentally straining?

What role does Nepal play as a country of transit? What is Nepal's attitude towards the Tibetan migrants, and why?

How are the Tibetans received in India?

How do they settle in Indian society and how do they make a living?

What are the consequences of living in India?

As far as possible, I would also like to find out what goals the government-in-exile has for the future, and what attitudes the Indian government has towards the Tibetan migration.

1.4 Delimitations

Since I am dealing with two broad subjects, migration and the Tibetan migration, the need to limit the extent of the study is of great importance.

As for the theoretical part involving migration, I mainly focus on *why* migration occurs, not what can or should be done to prevent or promote it with regards to for instance state policies.

When presenting migration research approaches, I have chosen to disregard the more statistical aspects, most prominent in the macro-analytical approach than in the micro-analytical. This is because these are not at all applicable on my case, since I have insufficient material with regards to figures and statistics. Since I am conducting a qualitative study rather than a quantitative, I thus do not bring up analytical problems with migration surveys, operational problems with data analysis or the application of macro-analytical models such as gravity models² on my case.

In my empirical study I will focus on the Tibetan international migration to India only. I do not intend to bring up the internal migration within Tibet of the Tibetan or Chinese populations at all, nor the internal movement of Tibetans in India. The choice of

² See for example Zipf, G. (1949) *Human Behavior and the Principle of Least effort*, Hafner, New York, and Ravenstein, E. (1885) The laws of migration, *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. 48, pp. 167-227. (Jones, 1994:189,191-2)

not including internal migration is mainly due to the scarce material available on the subject. I limit my study further by confining the Tibetan migration to include Nepal only as the country of transit. I have further decided not to place an emphasis on the political aspects of the Tibetan migration, although politics can not be overlooked, most importantly from a historical perspective, when studying the Tibetans in exile. Thus the politics of China, Nepal as the country of transit, and India will only be brought up and mentioned when found necessary. Gender differences, in a broader migration context as well as in the Tibetan context, are another delimitation of mine. In addition, due to material scarcity, I will not include Tibetan Muslims in my study. They have lived in Tibet since the 14th century and were also persecuted by the Chinese, however, Tibetan Muslims do not often make themselves heard in the diaspora context. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:83).

1.5 Conceptual considerations

As I will refer to Tibet throughout my work, I would like to clarify what geographical boundaries I am referring to, since there is a difference between ethnographic Tibet and political Tibet (see map on page 4). *Ethnographic* Tibet has historically been comprised of three provinces: Ü-Tsang (with capital Lhasa), Kham and Amdo. Ethnic Tibetans lived mainly in the provinces of Kham and Amdo, which were outside direct political control of the Tibetan governments in Lhasa in Ü-Tsang province. They were instead under the rule of local lay or monastic chiefs in control of different districts. *Political* Tibet is the country we know as Tibet, which has been ruled by Tibetan governments in Lhasa from the earliest times. The provinces Ü-Tsang and western parts of Kham are included in political Tibet. In 1965, this area was renamed Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). Today, 46 percent of the ethnic Tibetans live in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and 54 percent live in former Amdo and Kham (now the west China provinces of Qinghai, Sichuan, Yunnan and Gansu). (Goldstein 1994:x-xi and Tiljander Dahlström 2001:47). When I refer to Tibet, I refer to ethnographic Tibet. I do this because my focus is not on the political events that have taken place in the TAR since the occupation, but on the Tibetan migrants, who come from all three provinces. Further, the government-in-exile also refers to Ü-Tsang, Amdo and Kham as Tibet. (Planning Council 1992).

Further, I will continuously call the Tibetans *migrating Tibetans* instead of *refugees*. In most part of the literature I have come across, Tibetans are repeatedly referred to as "refugees fleeing Tibet", although the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees do not grant them refugee status (but instead the status of "persons under concern") which makes this a choice of the writer. After having unsuccessfully searched the UNHCR website for more information, I wrote to the UNHCR in order to clarify why the Tibetans in exile are not considered refugees. The lady who got back to me said she did not have the answer and referred me to somebody else at the head office in Geneva. Unfortunately, they never replied. Thus, I feel I do not have enough knowledge to assume that all migrating Tibetans are escaping and that the migration is necessarily of forced nature. This does not mean, however, that I am taking sides. In addition, when I

say *Chinese* I refer to the ethnic Chinese population, and when I say *Tibetan* I refer to the ethnic Tibetan population. I find this important to explain, since I have encountered China naming Tibetan migrants *Chinese illegal immigrants*, to my understanding because they are Chinese citizens.

When dealing with issues relating to the Tibetan people, it is quite common to encounter the term *diaspora*. According to my dictionary, the term means the dispersal of religious groups in a foreign land where another religion is predominant. The Jewish diaspora is a known example. (Bonniers Compact Lexikon 1996:209). According to Tiljander Dahlström (2001:5), a diaspora is “a group of people with a common origin, now dispersed in a foreign land”.

1.6 Method and material

My research method in constructing a theoretical framework regarding migration consists solely of a literature study. I have brought forward the ideas of known scholars such as Jones (1994), Brown (1991) and Knox and Marston (2003) in the section on migration theory. To give additional and more perhaps more tangible perspectives on migration today, I have also chosen to include (forced) migration in contemporary Southern Africa to a certain extent. I believe this to be beneficial for my case study, since the African continent holds more than 45 % of the world's refugees and 35 % of the worlds displaced people (Sisulu 2001:3).

In the empirical part of the study, involving my case study of the Tibetans in exile in India, I have conducted a literature study as well. However, I have also carried out two semi-structured interviews with key informants. These persons are Ulla Thoresen, Ph.D. student in comparative religion at Lund University, and Erik Törner, Communications Officer at Individuell Människohjälp (IM) in Lund. Both of them have been in India and Tibet on several occasions, and they are at present working with matters concerning the Tibetan exile community. These interviews have been of great importance to this study. I have also visited Tibet Information Network (TIN) in London, where I was allowed to use their computerized BBC subscription service to look for relevant articles, as well as purchase and make copies of literature and documents found in their library. An informal conversation with Juan Carlos Gatica who have been to India on several occasions and worked as a volunteer with Tibetans in Nepal has also contributed to my empirical study, although to a very limited extent since his work was not done in India.

1.7 Material considerations

The greatest difficulty in this study with regards to the Tibetan migration is finding unbiased material. Only a few of my sources claim to be objective. Shakya (1999) and Goldstein (1997) have received recognition for their impartial statements and well

researched facts by using a *realpolitik*³ framework. However, since their focus is the politics of the Tibet Question from a historical perspective and mine is not, I have benefited from their work only to a limited extent. TIN is an “independent, news and research service specialising in Tibet, providing accurate, impartial news and information service for journalists, development agencies, human rights groups, governments, NGOs and international organisations as well as academics and other interested parties, balancing official statements from Beijing, Lhasa and Dharamsala with reliable first-hand testimony from Tibetans themselves.” (TIN 2003a).

The major parts of the material I have come across portray the Tibetans to be more or less helpless victims of communistic China’s violent oppression. The Tibetan people are also often pointed out to be an all-loving, non-violent, warm hearted and deeply religious people. I am not opposing this view, but it would be of interest to be able to do a comparative study covering different perspectives. However, Chinese publications are in my experience not as easy to find as Tibetan ones. Consequently it is very difficult for me to conduct an unbiased study as I have to work with the material (literature as well as interviews) available to me. Tiljander Dahlström mentions that it is problematic to obtain permission for research inside Tibet, why fieldwork conducted both inside and outside Tibet are quite uncommon, thus fuelling biased research in my opinion (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:39). Further, Törner believes there is a naivety among westerners in that they never question statements made by the Tibetan government-in-exile but think of all Chinese sources to be of evil propaganda. (Törner 2000:36).

I have found that it is anything but easy to find statistical data regarding the Tibetan migration to India. According to Ulla Thoresen, the Tibetans in exile have learned to understand the great interest of the West in figures and statistics, why “probably any figure desirable can be found depending on the researcher” (Thoresen, personal interview). Also, a lot of material I have found is quite old. For instance, the website of the government-in-exile states that it was last updated in 1996.

The work of Tiljander Dahlström (2001) has been of great use to me, since her field work in India has provided me with highly valuable information. However, I must say that her reference system is indeed weak and I believe figures found in her work to be somewhat unreliable. She also consequently put forward facts as to be of “today” when her sources are more than 10 years old without informing the reader. I further spotted at one occasion that she had completely misinterpreted a source (here mentioned on p. 27), as I was myself using the same one. With this in mind, her field work has still been very important.

Tiljander Dahlström concluded from her field work in India that Tibetan’s narratives are often constructed in a certain way when told to westerners or foreigners, as to suit the interviewer and thus the international audience. As I use a number of quotations in my study, I also think that this is important to be aware of.

³ *Realpolitik* means a policy that foremost takes into consideration the factual circumstances, disregarding theoretical and ideal grounds. Own translation from Swedish: ”**realpolitik**, politik som främst tar hänsyn till faktiska förhållanden och bortser från teoretiska och ideella skäl.” (Bonniers Compact Lexikon 1996:896).

1.8 Outline of the study

The study is divided into two main parts; a theoretical framework (chapter 2) and an empirical study (chapter 3). The theoretical framework aims at giving a theoretical background to what migration is, who migrates and why. I also present macro- and micro-analytical migration research models in order to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that might restrict or facilitate a person's or a family's possibility and/or decision to migrate. Lastly, I bring up the differences between refugee and migrant. I believe this is relevant, since the Tibetans in India are often referred to as refugees in the literature.

The empirical study starts with a brief historical background starting in 1950 when the Chinese occupation took place. I then give a background of the Tibetan diaspora up to the present state. Next, I follow the Tibetan migration process; starting in Tibet, going through Nepal as the area of Transit, and arriving and settling down in India. After having done this, I enter the field of why the migration occurs, bringing up both push and pull factors, which are often closely related. Following is the section of what consequences come with the migration. The empirical study ends with a short section on the issue of Tibetans returning to Tibet. Although I attempt to keep the mentioned divisions, motivational factors behind migration, political and historical aspects, to mention a few, are still likely to surface in many, of not all, of the sections.

My results are presented in chapter 4.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 What is migration?

As opposed to mobility studies, for example of daily commuting, or cyclical seasonal movement of workers or nomadic pastoral groups, migration entails a long-distance move to a new location including change of residence and political jurisdiction. (Jones 1994:179-81 and Knox and Marston 2003:131). Although I found no answer to what "long-distance" exactly means in physical terms, I discovered that many scholars do not include intra-urban residential relocation in migration due to the short distance. Yet there are those who place no limit upon the distance of the move and thereby comprise residential movement within countries in the concept of migration⁴. However, the crossing of civil boundaries such as those of intermediate counties or districts, as opposed to the extremes of large provinces or regions or minor townships or parishes, is usually the mostly adopted migration defining boundary (Jones 1994:179-81).

According to Jones, a declared intention of permanent or long-lasting change in residence is necessary for the movement to be labeled migration. Knox and Marston do not bring this up as a prerequisite; they only state that "migration involves a permanent or temporary change of residence from one neighborhood or settlement to another." Jones does however describe migration to be hard to conceptualize and measure as it is a physical as well as a social transaction. The only explicit element in the process is "a person who travels". (Jones 1994:179-80 and Knox and Marston 2003:131).

Within the term of migration lie the notions of *emigration* (out-migration) and *immigration* (in-migration). The latter represents movements *to* another location, whereas the former represents movements *from* a certain location. Migration can be either voluntary or forced. *Voluntary migration* includes a conscious choice to move, whereas *forced migration* takes place against an individual's will. (Knox and Marston 2003:131-33). Although voluntary migration is far more common than forced migration, 20.5 million people all over the world are forced migrants or refugees according to the United Nations (UNHCR, 2003a).

When discussing migration, one will also encounter the notions of *international* migration and *internal* migration, signifying movement from one country to another, respectively movement within a nation or a region. (Knox and Marston 2003:131). The greatest difference between the two forms of migration is the extent of government intervention and control, as well as the often more profound change in socio-cultural environment in international migration. (Jones 1994:229).

Examples of *international voluntary* migration are the European migration to the United States in the early nineteenth century, temporary labour migration by, for instance, Philippine labour to Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan. Examples of *international forced* migration is the African slave trade starting in the seventeenth century by European colonialists, the purging of Jews from Germany and eastern

⁴ I have chosen to include examples of intra-urban residential movement in upcoming sections on migration research models because of their valuable exemplification of factors behind migration.

Europe prior to and during the Second World War, and the deportation of Armenians out of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War. (Knox and Marston 2003:132-34 and Jones 1994:230). According to Jones, international forced migrants often enter a new society at the lowest economic and social strata, although in subsequent generations they are thought to have opportunities for improvement. (Jones 1994:254).

Examples of *internal voluntary* migration are rural-to-urban migration as a result of, for example, the transformation of a country's economy (e.g. industrialization, goods-producing to service-producing) or suburbanization (growth of population along the borders of large metropolitan areas). Examples of *internal forced* migration is the movement of Native Americans (the Indians) in America during the nineteenth century, and civil wars, ethnic conflicts, famine and political repression in Sub-Saharan countries such as South Africa, Sudan and Zimbabwe. The Chinese Communist government relocated 10-17 million people by force in the late 1960s and 1970s in order to expand the communist dogma, and apartheid in South Africa forced approximately 3.6 million blacks to be relocated to homelands created by the government in the 1960s to the 1980s. (Knox and Marston 2003:135-41).

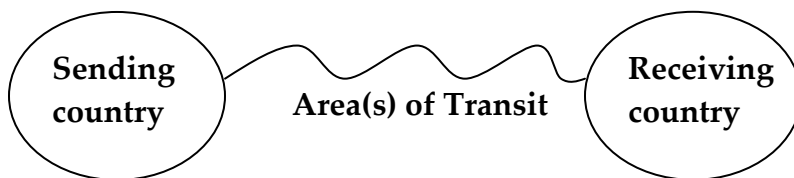


Figure 2.1 Model of international migration flow.
 Source: Pehrson, Charlotte (2003), adapted from Lee (1966).

Figure 2.1 above shows an international migration flow, but can equally be applied on internal migration flow. Migrants leave their area of origin, for instance a (sending) country or region within a country, in order to reach the receiving country or region. On their way, the migrants will inevitably cross different areas of transit; places or locations where they stay for a limited amount of time before they reach their final destination (if such a destination exists). The Balkans⁵ is for example a major transit region for Muslims and other refugees coming from countries or regions under attack (*Ibid.*:135). Foremost Nepal serves as transit regions for migrating Tibetans (Thoresen, personal interview).

⁵ The Balkans include Greece, Albania, Macedonia, Yugoslavia (Serbia-Montenegro), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria and parts of Turkey. Most part of the Balkans consists of mountains. The area is religiously divided into three sections: orthodox and catholic Christianity, and Islam. (Bonniers Compact Lexikon 1996:74).

2.2 Why migration matters

The demographic role of migration is manifest when one considers that a community can gain population only through births and in-migration, and can lose population only through deaths and out-migration.

Jones (1994:178)

As one of the three major components of population change (the other two being birth and death), migration plays a very important role in internal demographic changes all around the world. In the developed countries, where the reduction of mortality and fertility differentials and the establishment of almost zero population growth is taking place, in- and out-migration is even more the fundamental mechanism of spatial population redistribution than elsewhere. (Jones 1994:178-9).

An out-migration (emigration) consisting of a significant number of people, can be very unfavorable to the country of origin. Knox and Marston give the example of Cubans leaving for the United States of America. Many highly trained professionals left, leaving Cuba with a worsened situation with regards to political, economic and cultural conditions. (Knox and Marston 2003:131).

The countries receiving low-skilled in-migrants often benefit from lower labour costs, something which in turn may cause "social stress" among unemployed citizens. The immigrants are being blamed for swallowing the nation's jobs and welfare benefits. (*Ibid.*:131-2).

2.3 Motivational factors behind migration

Of course the reasons behind a decision to migrate differ substantially depending on whether we are looking at voluntary or forced migration. The factors leading to migration are, however, often complex, consisting of both push- and pull factors (see sections below). Push factors can lead to forced migration to a greater extent than pull factors, which dominate the motivational factors behind voluntary migration. In general, the main causes behind migration include strivings for an improved private economy or flight from difficult political conditions such as war or oppression. (Knox and Marston 2003:131-2).

2.3.1 Push and pull factors

Push factors are conditions that drive people to *leave* a specific area and move elsewhere. As stated above, push factors lead to forced migration to a greater extent than pull factors. In such case, the most common repelling factors include war, famine, governmental oppression, life threatening ecological decay, or terrorism. Other push factors such as economic disruption or an individual's dissatisfaction with the facilities available at home may be conditions leading to voluntary migration. (Knox and Marston 2003:132).

Since the terror attacks in the United States on September 11th 2001, terrorism has come to represent one of today's most powerful push factors behind migration. In addition, due to constrained asylum policies in receiving countries it has accordingly become much harder for refugees to reach safer and more promising places. (*Ibid.*:135).

Ecological decay, leading to "eco-migration", has for instance occurred in Bangladesh, where severe floods have forced huge numbers of people living in floodplain settlements to migrate. Governmental policies in Ethiopia favouring the urban population have left the rural population less resistant to environmental catastrophes such as drought and all of its consequences. Dams and irrigation projects annually force 1-2 million people to move from their homes. (*Ibid.*:141).

Internal revolutions and civil wars often lead to international forced migration. Historic examples are the French, Russian and Chinese revolutions. Modern third world cases involve flights from regimes in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, the flight of Chileans following the downfall of Allende in 1973, and of Cubans after the revolution in 1959. Ethnic conflicts and the partition of states are other factors behind international migration. (Jones 1994:237-9).

Pull factors are, contrary to the above, conditions that *attract* people to move to a certain area. These can be of a more personal nature, for example a wish for closeness to nature or nearness to relatives, but they can also be more structural including better wages and work opportunities and infrastructure. (Knox and Marston 2003:132).

2. 4 Migration research models

There is a marked division between two major branches in migration theory; namely macro- and micro-analytical models. Even though they have been subject to criticism for only providing partial explanations⁶ of migration and for their disability to integrate into one successful model, I still find them to be of importance for my work in understanding the motivational factors behind migration. (Jones 1994:189,205-7).

The following macro- and micro-analytical models are derived from studies of voluntary internal migration in developed countries. However, as Jones affirms, and I concur, many features of migration are common to internal and international movements, why internal migration cannot be overlooked in this matter. As mentioned earlier, the most significant differences between internal and international migration are the extent of government intervention and control, as well as the more profound change in socio-cultural environment in international migration. (*Ibid.*:229). According to Sisulu, developed countries have a much greater capacity, from an economic as well as human resources perspective, to conduct research of migration than developing countries, which might be one explanation for the application of the models on Western countries. (Sisulu 2001:1).

⁶ Jones states: "They deal with the proximate or intermediate determinants, rather than the fundamental determinants which lie in the creation of spatially uneven development in the first place. These models also fail to address adequately the pivotal role that migration has played – as cause, effect and integral component – in socio-economic formation and transformation." (Jones 1994:207).

The following presentations thus aim to give a brief overview of migration research models, from which I have picked relevant parts in order to further explain why migration occurs. Although the economic perspective is both macro- and micro-analytical in nature, I have put in under the macro-analytical section, since its main emphasis lie there. Finally, I include a shorter section on developmental aspects, in order to better understand migration in developing countries.

2.4.1 Macro-analytical models

Macro-analytical models stem from social physics and are descriptive in nature. Their clearly *deterministic* approach entails a specification of the relationship between migration and its explanatory variables. The models seek to describe patterns by looking for empirical regularities in aggregate data capable of mathematical expression, which is then interpreted in macroscopic analysis (for example regression analysis). Thus they give adequate statistical explanation for the volume, distance and direction of migration, but are on the other hand perceived to be impersonal and too mechanistic in nature of many researchers, who are beginning to rather lean towards micro-analytical models. (Jones 1994:189,199).

In early macro-analytical models, the so called "gravity models", emphasis was on population size and distance, and migration was thought to mirror the attraction powers of the places of origin and destination. Zipf's (1949) "P/D hypothesis" showing his "principle of least effort", showed the movement of people between any two communities as being directly proportional to the product of their populations and inversely proportional to the shortest transportation distance between them. (*Ibid.*:189,192).

In later and more modified gravity models, the most important independent variables are age, socio-economic status, past migration experience, migrant stock and areal attractiveness. (*Ibid.*:195-6).

Researchers⁷ have found that young adults, at least in developed countries, are more migratory than other groups. This is due to the phase in life they are in, considering family and career life as well as the degree of community attachment. Migration is facilitated when leaving the parental home or when getting married, but also by being detached from commitments such as job security, pension schemes and so on. If migrating with young children, a reluctance to disrupt secondary school has been proven to be a hindering factor. Increase in migration for the age group 75 and over is an outcome of a growing dependency on care provided by relatives and institutions. (*Ibid.*:196).

In studies of contemporary developed countries it has been shown that better educated and higher-income groups with subsequently larger labour and housing

⁷ Jones refers to, among others, Thomas, D. (1938) *Research Memorandum on Migration Differentials*, Social Science Research Council, New York, and Rogers, A. (1984) *Migration, Urbanisation and Spatial Population Dynamics*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, and Johnson, J. H., Salt, J. and Wood, P. (1974) *Housing and the Migration of labour in England and Wales*, Saxon House, Farnborough.

markets are inclined to migrate, especially over long distances, to a greater extent than other groups in society. However those included in the high-status group holding self-employed professions such as doctors, dentists, lawyers and accountants, who are reliant on their clientele and invested capital built up over time, have restricted mobility. Worth mentioning is that during the nineteenth century, the migration trend in then developed countries was the opposite. It was then the lower-status social groups who were more prone to move, without material possessions to restrain them and always with access to rented housing and lodging opportunities. (*Ibid.*:197).

It is widely recognized that past migration experience plays an important role in an individual's or a family's decision to migrate. As Jones puts it: "Migration is thus not unlike sinning – once done, it is easier to do again!" (*Ibid.*:198).

Migrant stock is another independent variable used in macro-analytical models. (*Ibid.*:198). Jones doesn't go any deeper in explaining this point, however it is of my opinion that he refers to the existence of migrants already at the final destination as facilitating the decision-making process among possible migrants. I found support for this by Brown's presentation of the "migration chain effect", in which current migrants follow the path of relatives, friends and acquaintances who have moved earlier. Migration chains in Third World settings seem to be of great significance for migration, reflecting the importance of one's community. In comparison to variables such as wages, job opportunities and other factors, the significance of one's community has proven to be statistically stronger. (Brown 1991:44). In addition, network theories suggest that the existence of a family, friends and acquaintances in a receiving country reduce the costs and risks of migration for those still in the sending country. A positive culture of migration also makes future migration more likely. (Keely 2000:53).

The environmental attractiveness of areas is also an important (pull) factor in migration. A study of inter-state migration in the United States in the 1970s showed that warm winters attracted migrants, especially retirees. But not only does the natural environment serve as a pull factor. As mentioned previously, meager employment forecasts discourage in-migration conversely encourage the younger, better educated workers to leave. (Jones 1994:198).

Neoclassical macroeconomic theory explains migration as individual's response to place differences in wage rates and job opportunities (measuring unemployment rates). (Brown 1991:44 and Keely 2000:51). However, the structural, macro-analytical approach is united with the micro-analytical perspectives of individual decision making. An individual's response to wage rates and job opportunities is assumed to depend on his or hers likely future conditions as well as present ones. The cost of migration and the probability of securing employment in each place also play part in the decision making. (Brown 1991:42-3,47).

2.4.2 Micro-analytical models

Micro-analytical models are *behavioural* migration models as opposed to the macro-analytical deterministic models. Focus lies on the behaviour of individuals, rather than the characteristics of places and populations, aiming to explain the processes behind migration. (Jones 1994:199). Migrant behaviour is thus seen as the manifestation of decision making that does not need to be economically or spatially rational. As Jones puts it:

A migration pattern is, after all, a composite expression of the aspirations, needs and perceptions of real persons; and mobility behaviour is one of several means by which individuals can seek well-being or utility maximization.

Jones (1994:199)

Jones presents a number of micro-modelling landmarks made by researchers during the twentieth century. As in the previous chapter, the theories are mainly exemplified by research done on voluntary internal migration in developed countries, which of course is necessary to bear in mind. Zolberg described this weakness of micro-analytical models as follows:

Micro-analytic theorists make no significant distinction between domestic and international migration. These theorists tend to treat barriers restricting exit or entry, deliberate recruitment efforts and forced departures, as mere error factors which mar otherwise elegant, value-free equations.

Zolberg (1981:4)

The migration process is believed to involve factors such as the characteristics of places of origin and destination, the relation between them, and intervening obstacles. These can be put in both a normative context, meaning the beliefs and values of society of origin, and a psychological context, referring to the individual's attitudes and expectations. Thus people are seen to act accordingly to the push-pull view of migration, in which people are being driven out of some areas and pulled to others with superior opportunities or characteristics. (Jones 1994:200-1).

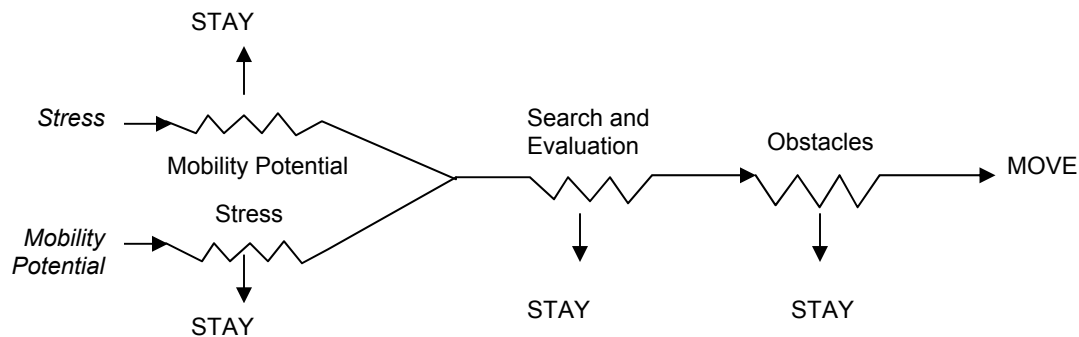


Figure 2.2 A longitudinal representation of the migration process.
Source: Jones 1994:202.

Figure 2.2 above shows a longitudinal approach to understanding the migration process. Migration behaviour is explained as involving a sequence of different stages along a time-line. Stress and mobility potential serve as closely intertwined triggers in a possible migration. Unsatisfactory housing or employment, or environmental decay can lead to stress or dissatisfaction. Whether a person has high or low mobility potential is largely dependent on age and socio-economic status. Stress is filtered through the individual's mobility potential and vice versa. The so called "chronic movers" have been shown to possess high migration potential irrespective of stress level. "A sense of dislocation" has also proved to be distinctive among would-be migrants in a study by Taylor (1969) of out-migration from mining villages in Durham. (*Ibid.*:201-3).

If considering migration, the next step is to search for and evaluate relocation possibilities. Information gathering, or a person's "awareness space", can be split in two subgroups; "activity space" including information obtained through direct observation on a day to day basis, and "indirect contact space" where information is reached by communication with relatives, acquaintances or mass media. Access to the latter is of course restricted to low-status groups who do not have the same network or ability to travel or get around as high-status groups do. Even if migration does prove to be the choice, there are still obstacles to be overcome. Physical distance, family ties, institutional barriers, housing markets with its decline of private rented housing⁸ and the "gate-keeping" role of estate agents are examples of these barriers. (*Ibid.*:203-5).

2.4.3 Developmental aspects

Migration in Third World settings, as elsewhere, results when opportunities provided by geographic places are not commensurate with the personal need(s) and/or capabilities of their residents.

Brown (1991:80)

Of course, variables such as job opportunities, wage rates and information flows have a profound impact on migration streams, no matter where in the world we look. However, it is necessary to look a little closer at developmental aspects in order to better understand migration in developing or Third World countries. Important factors behind migration are for example communication and transport infrastructure development, labour market segmentation, land reform, agricultural change, and economic and social class distinctions. In other words, economic growth involves structural changes in society which in turn change the factors influencing migration (Brown 1991:74-5,81).

Development of infrastructure facilitate migration in many ways; with information available from other sources than the immediate family, people's value systems are

⁸ Jones refers to a study conducted in Britain. The decline of private rented housing to less than 25 percent of the housing stock (in 1985) has restricted mobility for low-status groups, as well as length of residence qualifications in the allocation of tenancies. Furthermore, there are often restrictions to movement *within* the public housing sector, which adds to difficulties experienced by low-status groups when considering migrating. (Jones 1994:204).

modified as well as social norms with regards to migration; the spread of economic activity is made easier, and the cost of traveling gets lower. (*Ibid.*:50). As Solomon explains, uneven economic inequalities do not in themselves bring on migration, however it is the *knowledge* of such disparities that generate population movement. An image of wealthier and safer conditions, especially in the West, is constantly transmitted to those in the most deprived regions of the world. For example, in Southern Africa, the awareness of economic disparities has been reinforced by the system of contract migrant labour. Thus, in both Lesotho and Mozambique, people in rural villages sing about the wealth of South Africa. In Zimbabwe, the spread of a South African soap opera has made Zimbabweans aware of differences in salaries, consequently putting in people's minds the consideration of migration. (Solomon 2001:83-5).

Land availability and income opportunities in rural areas are also affected by development and its high rates of population increase, technology diffusion and change in socio-political structures. Health related innovations due to modernization leads to a fall in death rates, leading to more children surviving adulthood and thereby increasing population pressure on agricultural systems. Also, when a contemporary society and a more modern sector are established, this leads to a decrease of informal and small-scale enterprising. Not having available resources is a significant push factor. (Brown 1991:46,49).

In a study of the Costa Rican rural-urban migration process, it was shown that most peasants leaving rural areas were forced to do so because of restriction of employment and land owning opportunities, not because they preferred the urban centre over the periphery. (*Ibid.*:46).

2.5 Refugee or migrant?

There are different types of migrants; self selected or forced economic migrants, "tied movers" who move to accompany or join family members, those who migrate for ideological reasons (including religious), and refugees. (Chiswick 2000:68-9). Modern migratory patterns can be extremely complex and contain a mix of economic migrants, genuine refugees and others. Governments face a challenging task in separating the various groupings and treating genuine refugees in the appropriate manner through established and fair asylum procedures. (UNHCR 2001a). In the 1990s, the majority of the world's migrants were motivated by economic considerations. The desire for an improved life is further the primary cause of the westward movement of people from former Eastern bloc countries, the movement of North Africans into Western Europe, and for migration in Africa. (Solomon 2001:81-2).

An economic migrant normally leaves a country voluntarily to seek a better life. Should he or she wish to return home, they would continue to receive protection from their government. Refugees flee because of the threat of persecution and cannot return safely to their homes in the prevailing circumstances. Millions of economic and other migrants have taken advantage of improved communications in the last few decades to seek new lives in other, mainly Western, countries. They should not be confused with

refugees who are fleeing life-threatening persecution and not just economic hardship. (UNHCR 2001a). The United Nations definition of a refugee is an individual who

owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country..."

UNHCR (2003)

The narrow definitions of what makes a refugee is problematic, according to Rutinwa at Oxford University, since it leaves out other categories of forced migrants. Today the majority of asylum seekers in the world are victims of gross violations of human rights, civil wars and other forms of communal violence. The present system of refugee protection was conceived in the 1950s, when most asylum seekers were from Eastern Europe, seeking refuge in post-war Western Europe, Canada, Australia and the United States. As many refugees fled communist policies in the east, for which no end could be predicted, the principal solution of host countries was local integration. Today, however, most refugees come from developing countries seeking asylum within similar countries whose protective capacity is very limited. Many states in the West have moved from permanent settlement to providing temporary protection pending repatriation. (Rutinwa 2001:14-5).

The 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol are the only global instrument on refugee protection. UNHCR is the principal agency that works with states of asylum on refugee matters, and its main function is to provide international protection to facilitate solutions. The Convention and the Statute of the UNHCR revolves around four core legal principles:

- 1) *Asylum*: Persons who are defined to be refugees have the right to seek and asylum in other states.
- 2) *Non-refoulement*: states cannot reject refugees at the frontier or return them to countries where their lives or freedom would be threatened.
- 3) *Non-discrimination*: refugees are to be granted equal treatment regardless of race, religion or country of origin.
- 4) *Protection*: refugees are to be treated in accordance with human rights law.

In addition to these four core principles, states have two additional principles, namely burden sharing and solutions. (*Ibid.*:16-21).

By signing the Refugee Convention or protocol, a government willingly binds itself to the legal obligations contained in the document. Today 140 states, China being one, have signed the 1951 Refugee Convention. India and Nepal have not. However, in 1991 the UNHCR opened an office in Kathmandu, Nepal, and began to monitor Tibetan migrants. (UNHCR 2001b and International Campaign for Tibet 2002:5). To my understanding, the UNHCR do not grant the migrating Tibetans refugee status, but

instead a "status of concern", which entails a lower degree of responsibility and protection. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:18-9). In India, the Tibetans are treated as refugees by the Indian government (Thoresen, personal interview).

3. EMPIRICAL STUDY

3.1 Historical background⁹

Tibet's history is extensive, to say the least, and indeed impossible for me to account for in a page or two. I will therefore leave the early history aside and only give a very brief summary of the events leading to the Tibetan diaspora, starting around the occupation in 1950. I am well aware of the fact that I am leaving out very important parts of history. I therefore strongly recommend any interested reader to the work of Tsering Shakya (1999) and Melvyn C. Goldstein (1997).

Over a century ago, Tibet was drawn into an alliance with Great Britain, who ruled India at the time. In exchange for protection against the Chinese, Tibet served as a buffer state between Great Britain's Indian colonies and China. But when the British rule in India ceased in 1947, China set its sights on Tibet. Communist leader Mao Zedong, leader of the People's Republic of China (PRC), claimed that Tibet has always been a part of China and occupied Tibet in 1950 with the aim of "liberating" the country to the Chinese "motherland". China has ruled Tibet as a colony ever since. (Shakya 1999 and Levinson and Christensen 2002:365).

When the PLA marched in to Lhasa in October 1950, Beijing's condition for a peaceful liberation of Tibet was that the Dalai Lama would sign the 17-point Agreement, which stated that the political system in Tibet would not be changed, that the Dalai Lama would keep his traditional role, but, that Tibet would "return to the family of the motherland – The People's Republic of China" (point 1). After hesitation, the Dalai Lama agreed to sign the Agreement (the only alternative being Chinese occupation to which the Tibetan army would never stand a chance). (Gudmundsson 1992:13-4 and Shakya 1999:450). However, China did not live up to their promises. Mao began to reshape Tibetan culture in accordance with his interpretation of Marxism. The socialist reforms and ideological education that were beginning to take place in Tibet led to food shortage and severe tensions between the Tibetans and the Chinese in the years that followed. After a massive demonstration by Tibetans against Chinese rule in Lhasa in 1959 where an estimated 80.000 Tibetans were killed ("Lhasa uprising"), the Dalai Lama fled to India, where he was given asylum and allowed to form a government-in-exile. This was the end of the attempt to forge a co-existence between Communist China and Buddhist Tibet. China was now starting to intensify the transformation of Tibetan society, which they saw as run by superstition and marked by economic backwardness. Young Chinese were indoctrinated with the image of Tibet as a hell on earth. (Shakya 1999:200-8,324 and Levinson and Christensen 2002:365). Almost the entire Tibetan army, plus many activists, monks and students, were arrested in the years that followed and dispatched to labour camps in Tibet and China. (Shakya 1999). About 110.000 monks and nuns were executed or killed during torture, while others faced imprisonment or were disrobed. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:75). When the Cultural Revolution began in 1966, the goal

⁹ The Chinese and Tibetan versions of history differ substantially. To demonstrate, I have enclosed two "versions" of the occupation in 1950. These are found in Appendix 1.

was destroy the “Four Olds”: old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits in order to establish the Four News and destroy Tibet’s separate identity. The Cultural Revolution was a mass movement against feudal traditions, and the ownership of production had to be transferred from the feudal lords to the masses¹⁰. (Shakya 1999:295,317-324). Mao’s 16-point Directive issued in 1966 included, among other, the following:

No one should recite prayers. People should not consult oracles and diviners. All photos praising revisionists, feudalism and reactionaries should be destroyed. All observance of religious festivals should be abolished. All feudal names of parks and streets should be changed [i.e. Norbulinka Park was named The People’s Park]. Feudal practices, such as giving parties, exchanging presents etc. should be stopped. All stray dogs in Lhasa must be destroyed and people should not keep dogs and cats in the house. All monasteries and temples apart from those that are protected by the government should be converted for general public use. The ‘Tibet Daily’ and Lhasa radio must use the language of the proletariat...

Excerpts from Mao’s 16-point Directive, in Shakya (1999:320-1)

Tibet’s monasteries and temples were destroyed by the ravage of China’s Red Guards. (*Ibid.*). China has admitted to having left only eight monasteries intact out of several thousands. (Gudmundsson 1992:16). The Communist regime was introduced and strictly upheld in Tibet, where any form of disagreement or loyalty to the Dalai Lama was severely punished. (Shakya 1999).

Mao’s death in 1976 lead to changes in Tibet, which was opened up somewhat to the outside world. The politics in the west began to be more concerned with human rights and the rights of indigenous people. Shakya says that “the Dalai Lama and the exiled Tibetans were promoted as the guardians of a 2000-year-old civilization, while the Chinese were portrayed as the destroyers of this unique culture.” (*Ibid.*:413). The support was growing around the world for the Dalai Lama, who was given the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. Ever since, the support of the Tibetan cause has increased all the more around the world. But, as mentioned earlier, Törner believes there is a naivety among westerners in that they never question statements made by the Tibetan government-in-exile but think of all Chinese sources to be of evil propaganda. (Törner 2000:36). According to Goldstein, the Tibet Question existed long before there was a People’s Republic of China, and long before the Western interest in universal human rights arose. “The Tibet Question is about control of a territory – about who rules it, who lives there, and who decides what goes on there.” (Goldstein 1997:x).

¹⁰ Preceding the Chinese occupation, Tibetan society was divided into nobility, a monastic community, commoners (farmers, nomads, day-labourers, traders) and outcasts. The nobility, or aristocracy, and the monastic elite ruled the local society together. A lay government serving under the Dalai Lama, mainly ruled political Tibet. The commoners were the largest group; the majority of the Tibetan population lived as nomads, foremost in Kham and Amdo. Day-labourers were peasants living and working on a landholder’s estates, which often resulted in serfdom. Tibet had between 4.5 and 6 million inhabitants, out of which 20 percent were monks or nuns. As different tribes inhabited different valleys or districts, there were heavy internal feuds between local leaders. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:60-1,75).

According to Grent, Tibetans did not have a "full-fledged" nationalism before 1950 due to the social structures of the Tibetan society, emphasis being on the dominant role of monasteries and its severe conservatism. The choice of the Tibetan ruling elite to keep Tibet isolated from the outside world prevented Tibet from a successful process of nation building. Nor was traditional Tibetan society a homogenous one. People were divided according to religious sect¹¹, socio-economic strata, region, gender and age. Tibetans rather felt as belonging to a district than to Tibet as a country¹². (Dreyfus 2002:38-9 and Grent 2002:124). Before the Chinese army challenged the existence of Tibet, the government in Lhasa had no real political power in remote parts like Kham and Amdo. The Chinese occupation made the notion of "homeland" important. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:41). Further, the first relevant document mirroring the Tibetan view of Tibet being a separate country can be traced to the 13th Dalai Lama's public statement made in 1913. The Dalai Lama concluded that Tibet was a distinct country, defined by its culture and history, dating back to the relations between China and Tibet from the Yuan dynasty. An earlier proclamation from 1901 shows that the Dalai Lama's major interest was rather in a Buddhist kingdom that happened to be in Tibet but might as well have been somewhere else. (Dreyfus 2002:40).

To this day, people die every year due to the Chinese presence in Tibet; from torture during interrogations and from single shots at demonstrations or at the borders. Many have also "disappeared" mysteriously since they have been killed and buried anonymously, or are imprisoned since twenty or thirty years back. (Amnesty International 1996a and 1996b).

3.2 The Tibetan diaspora

In the years just after the 14th (and current) Dalai Lama had fled to India in 1959, approximately 100.000 Tibetans followed in His tracks¹³. The Dalai Lama planned to make a fresh start for Tibetan society in India, since the "true" Tibet with its richness in culture and religion experienced a much greater autonomy in India than in their native country. A significant part of His administration, foremost those holding leading positions (whether of temporal or religious nature) within the Tibetan government, as well as the Tibetan aristocracy and the Buddhist elite from the monasteries and nunneries were the first to leave (along with a significant number of lay people). They were considered by the CCP to be the most influential groups in Tibetan society as well as the most critical, and subsequently most threatening, to the new Communist regime.

¹¹ The five major Buddhist sects of Tibet are Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu, Gelug and Bon (Central Tibetan Administration 1994a). The Gelug order is the official "church" of the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas. Approx. 60 % of Tibetan Buddhists belong to this order, translated to mean "the Yellow Hats" (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:54-5).

¹² Grent refers to, among others, Kolas, Ashild. (1996): Tibetan nationalism: the politics of religion, *Journal of Peace Research*, 33(1) pp. 51-66, and Smith, Warren W. (1997): *Tibetan Nation: A History of Tibetan Nationalism and Sino-Tibetan Relations*, New Delhi, Harper Collins, p. 17. (Grent 2002:124).

¹³ Prior to 1950, there were small Tibetan communities in India. These were mainly extensions of wealthy Tibetan families who either had businesses linked there or sent their children to get education in private, prestigious schools in eastern India. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:6).

(Thoresen and Törner, personal interviews). Many of them were from rich families although they could bring only moveable property; land, houses and cattle had to stay behind in Tibet. This first group of people who fled in 1959 or there years thereafter are referred to as "long-timers" by local Tibetans in India at present. Almost all of them originate in the Central-Tibetan province U-Tsang and therefore speak Lhasa dialect, which has become the "national" language in exile. (Grent 2002:113).

According to Craig, many more tried to escape than succeeded in 1959. She writes that: "those who lived close to the borders, where Chinese control was not yet complete, had to cross uncharted peaks 24-25.000 feet high. Other fought their way from Kham and Amdo into the teeth of the Chinese army; and their losses were enormous. Of one group of 4.000 which left Tibet in June, only 125 remained on arrival in India. Families were separated from each other or watched each other die. Without exception, the escape routes were strewn with bodies, bullet ridden, starved or frozen to death." Those who made it to India and did not die from tuberculosis or other illness there (Tibetans lacked the necessary antibodies and had difficulties adjusting to the climate), were moved to road construction camps in the Himalayan foothills, where India was building new military roads to its northern border with Tibet. Children, women and men were all working side by side; former nuns, farmers, monks and officials. They worked very hard. (Craig 1992:140-2, Saklani 1984:225-6 and Thoresen, personal interview). When the Dalai Lama realized that the Tibetans were not going back immediately and working on large scale construction projects was not a long-term solution, he transferred the gold, silver and ancient coins he had brought with him into currency and used it to fund self-supporting projects in India. Also, with the aid of foreign relief organizations, carpet-weaving centres were set up. (Craig 1992:142-3).

Tibetan settlements were the outcome of discussions between the Dalai Lama and the Indian government, although their locations were decided entirely by Indian central and state governments (Anand 2002:17 and Tiljander Dahlström 2001:16). For instance, the Dalai Lama moved from Mussoorie to Dharamsala on Nehru's¹⁴ advice in 1960. McLeod Gunj, a deserted resort for British rulers, in upper Dharamsala, was offered to the Dalai Lama and his administration. Unlike in Lhasa where the three largest monasteries of Drepung, Sera and Ganden, were close the Dalai Lama's seat; in India the monasteries were rebuilt in far off places, due to limitations of land available to them. (Anand 2002:17 and Grent 2002:112). However, in McLeod Gunj, the sacred geography of Lhasa, including for example the circular path surrounding the house of the Dalai Lama and his monastery Namgyal, has been rebuilt in a smaller scale. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:15).

After aggressions¹⁵ between China and India in 1962, the number of Tibetan migrants was reduced almost to zero, but when Mao Zedong died in 1975, another wave of

¹⁴ Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) was one of Mahatma Gandhi's closest co-workers in the struggle for independence from the British. From 1947 and until his death, Nehru was modern India's Prime Minister and Foreign minister. (Bonniers Compact Lexikon 1996:764).

¹⁵ The controversy about borderlines between China and India led to a war in 1962. The PLA crushed the Indian army completely, leaving India terrified of China. Using exclusively Tibetan labour, China built a railway over Indian soil and networks of roads linking the Chinese army on the Himalayan border. (Törner, personal interview and Craig 1992:149-151).

Tibetan migrants to India appeared. (Grent 2002:113 and Thoresen, personal interview). Also, the opening of the Tibet-Nepal border in 1980, and changes in China's policy allowed Tibetans, after more than 20 years, to make pilgrimage and visit their families in exile, has resulted in a steady flow of Tibetans from Tibet into India and Nepal. (Central Tibetan Administration 1994a). Those who arrived in the 1980's and 1990's after the subsequent loosening of Chinese control in Tibet are referred to as "newcomers". Many of them come from the more eastern Tibetan provinces of Kham and Amdo, and as a result of the Chinese occupation they generally speak Chinese and/or local Tibetan dialect. They dress and behave quite differently from the long-timers who describe them as "rough, uneducated, dirty, not modern". (Grent 2002:113 and Thoresen personal interview).

Nowadays, according to the CTA's Planning Council, an estimated 130.000 Tibetans officially live their lives as exiles in India (Grent 2002:106). However, this figure is doubted. Thoresen and Tiljander Dahlström believe the total number to be significantly higher due to the many "illegal immigrants". (Thoresen, personal interview and Tiljander Dahlström 2001:14). According to the CTA, 2.000-4.500 Tibetan newcomers arrive in India each year (CTA 1994a). Then again, this number is also subject to unreliability. Törner mentioned 3.000-4.000 refugees, but had also heard of sources stating that the annual figure adds up to 10.000. Thoresen believed the correct number to be 100-3.000. Irrespective of the accurate total, the composition of the new arrivals is varied with regards to age, gender and socio-economic status. According to International Campaign for Tibet, one third of all migrants are under the age of 18 (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:8). Lone mothers with infants come to India, as well as nuclear families, husbands leave their families behind in Tibet in search for work in India, and as said, Tibetan youth but also the elderly arrive in Dharamsala in northern India, where the reception center is located. According to Törner, a large part of the Tibetan migrants are monks or nuns, or people who want to join a monastery (Törner, personal interview). Figure 3.1 on the following page shows the occupations of migrating Tibetans (irrespective of country of destination). The figures show that a large majority of the migrants are monks. Note that the figures come from the Tibetan Refugee Transit Center (TRTC)¹⁶.

Tiljander Dahlström states that in today's (2001) exile community, 44 percent of all Tibetans are monks and nuns. As she is referring to the exact same source as I am, the CTA, which dates back to 1994 and only state that 44 percent of *all arrivals during a five year period* were monks and nuns, it is my opinion that her figure is misinterpreted and far too high. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:25).

Dharamsala is seen as the temporary capital of the "Tibetan world", partly because it holds the Tibetan government-in-exile and is thus a centre of power, but also because of the religious attributes ascribed. Dharamsala play many important roles depending on

¹⁶ It is my belief that the TRTC in Kathmandu is managed by the CTA, but I have been unable to confirm this. The CTA has a reception center in Kathmandu which is jointly supported by the UNHCR (CTA 1994b), and I believe that the TRTC is this center.

from which context it is seen. The Tibetan migrants see it as a place of asylum from oppression, while the Chinese government ascribes it as a centre for subversive activities. Many western tourists consider Dharamsala to be a spiritual refuge, while Tibetans also look at it as a centre of pilgrimage. (Anand 2002:15-20). Approximately 9,000 Tibetan refugees live in Dharamsala (Grent 2002:112).

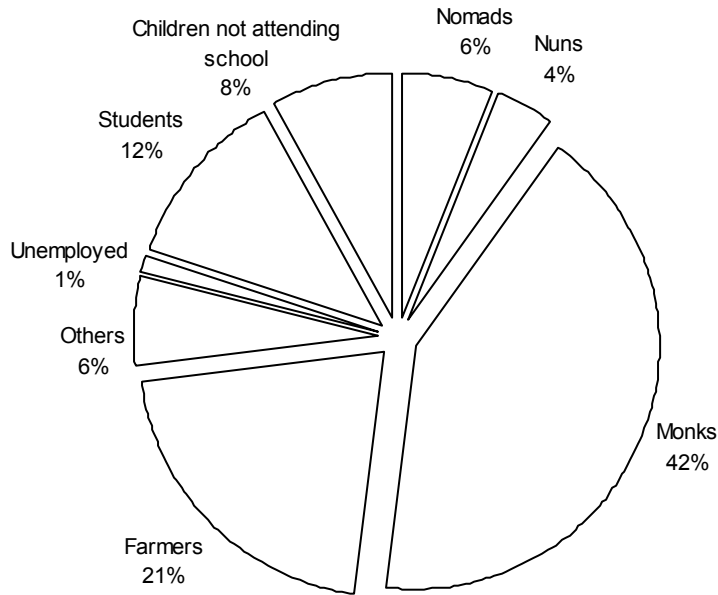


Figure 3.1 Occupations of migrating Tibetans, 1993-2001. The figures have been processed by the TRTC. Source: own adaptation from International Campaign for Tibet 2002:7.

The heavy inflow of new arrivals has become one of the most pressing policy issues confronting the CTA. (CTA 1994b). Because of India being a country with limited resources itself, as well as having tense relations¹⁷ with China due to the presence of the government-in-exile, the Indian government is not allocating any new land to the exile community and has urged the Dalai Lama to put a stop to the immigration. The Dalai Lama therefore encourages Tibetans to go back to Tibet. (CTA 1994b and Törner, personal interview). Residence permit is granted only to lay and monastic students since about ten years back (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:23). According to Tiljander Dahlström, the CTA's policy is that anyone who arrives to Dharamsala has to return to Tibet as soon as they have finished whatever business they might have; see relatives, seek audience

¹⁷ In the Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between the People's Republic of China and India, "the Indian side recognizes that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People's Republic of China and reiterates that it does not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India. (Xinhua Newsagency 2003a).

with His Holiness, apply for the Transit school or to get an education. The reason for this policy is claimed by the CTA to be that Tibet would be completely Chinese if every Tibetan left for India and stayed there. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:151)¹⁸. Tiljander Dahlström mention that lay people cannot stay legally in India unless they attend the so called Tibetan Transit School, and when their education is complete they have to return to Tibet. The Transit school serves as an extension to the reception centre, providing education to newly arrivals. The school teaches adult Tibetans how to read and write, and also gives vocational training such as tailoring, electrical and woodcraft classes. The students have to sign a contract saying that they will return to Tibet as soon as they have finished their exams for class 10. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:23,151 and Educational Support Tibet). People stay no matter what, but they face problems because they don't get any papers (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:151).

3.3 Leaving Tibet

First of all, it is important to make clear that it is highly illegal for Tibetans to leave Tibet. Though, due to high altitudes and overall very harsh and inaccessible terrain, the Chinese cannot possibly guard every mountain pass and keep frontier stations manned. (Thoresen and Törner, personal interviews). The high altitudes cause physical problems for the Chinese, for example pulmonary edema and cardiac insufficiency. (Thoresen, personal interview). Likewise, Tibetans leaving for India also suffer from the change in climate. A Tibetan migrant says: "When I came to India it was very difficult to adjust to the climate and I got many pimples and wounds. So I have suffered a lot also due to the climate." (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:125). According to Törner, the Chinese government does nothing to make Tibetans want to stay in Tibet, they only forbid them to leave. Permission to leave may however be granted if only visiting relatives in India for a short time. The bureaucratic process of such an application is quite extensive, though. (Thoresen personal interview).

To keep the Chinese from suspicion, Tibetans leaving for India must never carry too much luggage or wear too much clothes. Doing so would reveal a planned longer journey through cold and difficult weather, such as in the Himalayas. As a result, when asked by Chinese officials, Tibetans may for example claim that they are on a Pilgrimage to holy Mount Kailash or on their way to visit relatives. (Törner, personal interview).

Travel is undertaken by foot for the most part of the journey. Tibetans normally travel in groups of around 5-15 persons, many of whom are related. (Thoresen, personal interview and International Campaign for Tibet 2002:13). In order to avoid capture by Chinese border guards, many travel at night. Nearly two-thirds of Tibetans leave during fall or winter. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:11). There are several advantages with traveling in groups, foremost with respect to safety issues and economic aspects. (Thoresen and Törner, personal interviews). There have been rare incidents where

¹⁸ Tiljander Dahlström refers to "Information Office, 1998" but further information about this reference is lacking from the Bibliography of her dissertation. This is why my reference is to her work.

guides have abandoned the migrants or handed them over to the Public Security Bureau in Lhasa or Shigatse. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:14).

Almost all migrating Tibetans travel through Nepal, although a few go through Myanmar (formerly Burma) or straight to India's northeastern parts (Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim). (Thoresen and Törner, personal interviews). "The most common method of escape used by the refugees is walking and trekking through the high mountain passes across the Himalayas into Nepal. Thus they usually arrive in Kathmandu [Nepal], and from there they travel to Dharamsala in India via Delhi", where the transit camp is (CTA 1994b and Tiljander Dahlström 2001:122). Depending on which route they take, and where they leave from in Tibet, the journey to Nepal's capital Kathmandu can take several weeks. The trip includes many dangers, for instance risk of hypothermia, snow blindness, frostbite and injuries from falling or slipping as a result of heavy rains, snow and blocked visibility. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:9-11).

The most commonly used route is over the Nangpa-la mountain pass, 5.700 metres¹⁹ above sea level west of Mount Everest (see map on page 5). This journey includes the crossing of the frozen Nangpa-la glacier. Another way is through Dram, the most populated of the Tibet-Nepal border towns. The Nepal region of Mustang is another possible route, although only used by few, as well as via Mount Kailash in the western part of Tibet called Humla. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:9-10 and TIN 2001:23).

It is absolutely vital for a successful crossing into Nepal to have a guide lead you through the correct mountain passes²⁰. The guides are Nepalese mountain people, often of Tibetan heritage, so called Sherpas. However, the guides are not cheap. (Thoresen and Törner, personal interviews). A guide usually charges \$80-\$350 per person, which is often a year's salary for rural Tibetans. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:13). In the last couple of years, since the Karmapa Lama²¹ fled to Nepal in the year 2000, China has become more determined to arrest guides and chasing after migrants, thus making it more difficult for Tibetans to leave Tibet. (Törner, personal interview). The guides are considered by the Chinese government to be "people smugglers" and risk the longest prison sentences by Chinese Criminal Law if caught. Thus, those who dare to undertake the trip charge a fair bit. The guides work "underground" especially in the Tibetan areas of Gansu and Sichuan looking for groups of people who want to leave Tibet. After negotiating the price, they meet a couple of weeks later in for example Lhasa or Shigatse, from where they travel by local bus either to the town of Tingri, where the long journey by foot over the mountains begins, or continue by bus to Dram. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:10,13). Tiljander Dahlström believes that they follow ancient, orally

¹⁹ 19.000 feet (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:9).

²⁰ The guides work "underground" especially Tibetan areas Gansu and Sichuan looking for groups of people who want to leave Tibet. After negotiating the price, they meet in for example Lhasa or Shigatse, from where they travel by local bus to the town of Tingri, where the long journey by foot over the mountains begins. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:13ff).

²¹ The three highest leaders in Tibetan Buddhism are the Dalai Lama, Panchen Lama and Karmapa Lama. China had invested in the Karmapa Lama, who was accepted also by the Tibetan people, but when he couldn't fulfill his religious education in Tibet he fled to Nepal. (Törner, personal interview).

transmitted pilgrim maps of the landscape, in order to walk in the right direction towards India. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:120). International Campaign for Tibet state that Tibetans follow old trading routes still used today by traders and yak caravans. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:9).

Tsering, a 20-year old nun who has stayed at a nunnery in McLeod Gunj since a few years back, decided to leave Tibet because of her husband had drinking problems and often beat her up. She had heard of a man who was planning to walk from Shigatse with five children, whose parents had paid him to take them to Dharamsala, so she decided in silence to join him since she didn't know the way herself. The children were dressed in rags, because their parents had spent all their money on the guide. "We gathered in the night and started to walk right into the mountains /.../ I should have been scared but I was so sure that His Holiness protected us." The track from Shigatse to Nepal passes the Mount Everest Base Camp, which has come to serve as a landmark for Tibetans, telling them that they are on the safe side of the Nepalese border. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:150).

3.4 Nepal as an area of transit

Once the Tibetans have crossed the border into Nepal, they often employ local Nepalese to take them to Kathmandu, or at least get them on the right road to Kathmandu. These guides charge between \$50 and \$100. The goal is to reach the Tibetan Refugee Transit Centre (TRTC) in Kathmandu. If they encounter the Nepalese police on their way to the TRTC, which around half of the migrants do, abuse is not rare; incidents of forced deportation, robbing, beatings and rape have occurred. According to an unwritten agreement between the Nepalese government and UNHCR (a so called "gentleman's agreement"), Nepalese police who arrest Tibetan migrants are supposed to escort them to the Department of Immigration (DOI) in Kathmandu. However due to Maoist attacks on Nepalese police posts, the police have become less willing to make the journey. Sometimes they have even been handed over to Chinese border police (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:12-4,20-3).

At the TRTC in Kathmandu, they are registered, interviewed by the UNHCR in order to determine whether they fall under the "person of concern" status or not (most migrants do), get their transit passes by the DOI as well as vaccinations and medical treatment if necessary. The Tibetan Refugee Welfare Office (TRWO) also interview them in order to keep a record of their intended destination, such as school, pilgrimage or monastery. Tibetans normally stay less than a month in Kathmandu before continuing to India. Buses leave often, traveling to Dharamsala via Delhi. (*Ibid.*:12,14,20-2).

Through history, Nepal has had a generous attitude towards the Tibetans, and there are around 15.000-20.000 Tibetans living in exile in Nepal today. They are considered to be skilled business men and the driving force in Nepal's tourist industry. (CTA 1994a and Thoresen, personal interview). However, China's increased influence in Nepal from the 1960s and onwards, especially with regards to the growing foreign aid to Nepal and the financing of projects in Nepal, has no doubt been strategic moves in order to change

the treatment of Tibetans. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:17-8,24 and Törner, personal interview). For instance, a Nepalese newspaper recently reported about a TV centre building being another milestone in the development of the relations between Nepal and China. "The construction was completed....thanks to the friendly cooperation from the Chinese side. (Xinhua news agency 2003c). Further, during the Nepal-China Tibet Economic and Trade Fair in October 2003, Nepali Prime Minister Thapa said that "the relations between Nepal and China remain as stable as the Himalayan mountains. /.../ Nepal and China are close neighbours with traditional bonds of friendship based on mutual trust. We appreciate the economic and trade cooperation between the two sides especially Nepal's cooperation with the Tibet Autonomous Region of China." (*Ibid.* 2003b).

The Nepalese government stopped granting legal refugee status to Tibetans who arrived from Tibet from 1989 onwards. In 1995, hundred of Tibetans were repatriated back to Tibet from the border and from Kathmandu. The repatriations reportedly began to happen shortly after a visit by Nepal's Prime Minister to Beijing. After a new government took over in Nepal, the repatriations started to decrease, but are still prevalent. (TIN 2001:23). China's pressure on Nepal has indeed worsened further in the last couple of years since the flight from Nepal of the Karmapa Lama in the year 2000. Several incidents of maltreatment tell of a change in attitude among the Nepalese people toward Tibetans. In that year, in total 60 Tibetan migrants were forcibly handed back to the Chinese. Also, a 27-year old monk was shot to death by Nepalese police. (Törner, personal interview, International Campaign for Tibet 2002:17-8,24 and TIN 2001:17).

There have been other occasions where Tibetans have been taken to prison and being released only against bail. Tibetans arriving sick and exhausted from a long journey across the mountains get no medical treatment or other help from the Nepalese police. (Törner, personal interview). In May 2003, Nepalese police were criticized for deporting 18 Tibetans, or "illegal Chinese immigrants", back to China. In June, there was another case, this time of 19 Tibetans in detention. The police said that they intended to go to Dharamsala in India to meet the Dalai Lama. (Nepalnews 2003 and Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency 2003).

Because of Nepal's change in treatment of Tibetans, Nepal has been subject to criticism from all over the world. For instance, the European Union decided in 1996 that no aid would be given to Nepal if the expulsion of Tibetans continued. "It seems that Nepal is in the wrong, no matter what they do", says Törner. (Törner, personal interview and International Campaign for Tibet 2002:18).

Tibetans in Nepal are ascribed "illegal immigrants" by the Nepalese government, which has not signed the UN Refugee Convention. Because of the UN's principle of *non-refoulement* (states cannot reject refugees at the frontier or return them to countries where they might face persecution) Tibetans do thus not enjoy refugee status. The unwritten "gentleman's agreement" between Nepal and the UNHCR allows Tibetan migrants to use Nepal as transit point, given that they leave for a third country (India) rapidly. However, the incidents mentioned above show that this agreement is not respected. The UNHCR are in Nepal since 1991 to determine the migrants' "status of concern" and thus

give them the protection that follows that status (low degree of responsibility). Note that the UNHCR does not grant Tibetans in exile refugee status. Further, the UNHCR does not provide Tibetans with identification cards, which would be very beneficial with regards to the protection Tibetan migrants would receive in such case. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:18-9). Tibetans who travel through Nepal *returning* from India also face problems, but I will return to that later.

3.5 Arriving in India

3.5.1 Reception

Officially all new arrivals come to Dharamsala in the northwest state of Himachal Pradesh, where the reception center and the government-in-exile are situated. As I found very limited information about reception centers in general, I would like to present the view held by Sisulu, member of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress. She puts forward the idea of reception centers as a positive element in hosting countries refugee policies. Reception centers can for a provisional period, with the help of NGO's, provide food, shelter and medical care for most refugees in transit. Another advantage of reception centers is that it allows governments to improve protection while asylum applications are being considered, as well as it speeds up the asylum process. It also makes it easier for NGO's to provide humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers. The UNHCR is unhappy about such a centre in South Africa, as they see it as refugees are being "herded to a camp". (Sisulu 2001:8).

The CTA's Office of the Reception Centers has its headquarter in Dharamsala, but has branch offices in Kathmandu and New Delhi. All branches provide free meals, lodging facilities, medical care and travel expenses for onward journeys for the new arrivals. The new arrivals are allowed to stay up to one month at the reception center, but as many do not have family or friends to help them, quite a few stay longer. At the reception center, the newcomers are being interviewed and registered, and long-term rehabilitation preparations are made by the reception center; children (below 18 years) into Tibetan schools, monks and nuns into monasteries and nunneries, adults into handicraft centers and the elderly into old people's homes. (CTA 1994b). When registering, all migrants get an Identification Certificate (IC), which is necessary for further travelling within and outside India. All registered Tibetans are treated as refugees by the Indian government. According to Thoresen, not all Tibetans register; a few go straight to live in India. Those who don't register and subsequently do not receive an IC still cross borders by bribing the staff. The general policy of border crossings is quite open unless there is political controversy at the time. However, if caught travelling without an IC by Indian police, there will be consequences. (Thoresen, personal interview).

The Dalai Lama meets with all new arrivals by giving large audiences. During my interview with Erik Törner, he recalled stories from Tibetans in India, telling about the Dalai Lamas phenomenal memory in remembering individual refugees: "All of a sudden He would recognize someone [by name or origin] and recall that person's

relative(s) whom he saw months ago at another audience!" The Dalai Lama asks the refugees where they come from and what they have endured in Tibet or on their way to India. (Törner, personal interview). Thus the new refugees are first stationed in Dharamsala, helped to meet the Dalai Lama, before they are relocated to a resettlement camp, in which there are monasteries or nunneries, or schools. (Anand 2002:20). Upon arrival in Dharamsala, Ulla Thoresen and Erik Törner believe that all refugees are allowed to state the settlement preferred, although due to land restrictions, not all wishes can be granted. (Thoresen and Törner, Personal interviews).

3.5.2 Settling in India

As mentioned, the locations of Tibetan settlements have been decided entirely by Indian central and state governments. There are 54 Tibetan settlements in India, located in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Orissa, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu (see map on page 3). In the 1950s and 1960s many Tibetans ended up in Assam, but the settlements there are now closed due to hard living conditions. Many of the first settlers had to begin with clearing forests and work hard in order to get cultivable land. The settlements are to a large extent situated far out in the countryside. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:16,112,131).

The settlements were not designed to be permanent homes for Tibetans coming to India, but rather as temporary residences where displaced Tibetans could secure food, shelter, medical care, traditional and modern education and a means of livelihood during exile; agriculture, carpet weaving and seasonal petty business. The communities were also established so that Tibetans would be able to preserve their distinct culture, religion and national identity, and prepare for the return to a free Tibet. (Planning Council 1992).

Because of the steady stream of Tibetan migrants arriving in India since the 1980s, overcrowding has become a serious problem for the settlements. The houses were designed for five member families, but now sometimes as many as ten persons live in them. The houses are built as temporary structures and have not been renovated since they were built in the 1960s. Because of this, many settlements suffer from poor sanitary conditions and inadequate water supply. This has in turn lead to more than 35.000 cases of tuberculosis discovered since 1959, and the prevalence of diarrhoea, dysentery, as well as skin and respiratory problems, with the latter also resulting from the change of environment when leaving the Tibetan plateau. (CTA 1994a).

Nearly every settlement consists of a Local Tibetan Assembly, a Settlement Officer and a Local Tibetan Justice Commission. The settlements also have camp leaders (the settlements are organized into different smaller camps), schools, monasteries, old people's homes, medical centers, agriculture, shops other services. (Planning Council 1992). Jobs and resources are limited in some settlements, while others are wealthier. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:23).

The more traditional structured Tibetan communities are to be found in South India, while the more "modernized" settlements are to be found in the north (Grent 2002:114).

A majority of the Tibetans live in Bylakuppe settlement in the South Indian state of Karnataka, where the majority of the population works with agriculture. Most youth aged between 7 and 25 live in youth hostels, which, as I understand it, are outside the settlements. This is due to the fact that the settlements often are in the countryside, when universities and colleges are in the cities, where few Tibetans live (an exception is the Tibetan settlement in Delhi). (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:12,111,131).

Every settlement has its own management, in which it is possible for Tibetans to make a career. Economists, assistants and secretaries are some of the positions available. However, due to the exile community's system of quota-based admission in order for settlement leadership to represent every region in motherland Tibet, consideration of one's origin and religious affiliation is taken. Furthermore, those in leading positions are allowed to hold the same position for a limited amount of time only, why a system of rotation is applied. (Törner, personal interview).

Even though the majority of Tibetans in India live in settlements, there is not room for everyone there. They instead live in so called "scattered communities" closer to the cities. Many of those who live there do so because of better livelihood and employment opportunities. Private trading and services are by far the most important occupations for those in the scattered communities accounting for almost three-quarters of total employment there. (CTA 1994a).

There are many Tibetan old people's homes in the Tibetan settlements in India, since the majority of the Tibetans in exile arrived forty or fifty years ago. The elderly "newcomers", aged 60 and over, can well be placed in such a home. (Törner, personal interview and Planning Council 1992).

3.6 Reasons for emigrating

Reasons for the departure of the newcomers from Tibet vary. Several Tibetans had to escape in fear of repercussions due to (presumed) prior political activities. Of the newcomers some came as pilgrims to see the Dalai Lama and/or to bring a child to receive Tibetan education in India. After a while these Tibetans return to Tibet. Others stay longer, seeking religious or secular education and therefore are forwarded to Tibetan monasteries and schools in other places in India. Quite a few come to join family or friends. Also, economic opportunities and freedom of speech, religion and education in general draw Tibetans to India...

Grent (2002:112)

The decision to emigrate from Tibet is often a complex one, with religious, political, educational, social and economic factors involved. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:6). Leaving to find work or to get an education might for example be an individual's step towards his or her liberation from Chinese rule in Tibet. In addition, a person can for example move because he or she wants to be closer to relatives, but once in India that person finds work in the carpet industry. The different reasons for migration surely often accompany each other and the chronology of decision making is

perhaps hard to make clear cut. However I have still chosen to make the following division.

3.6.1 Spiritual education

The lack of qualified religious leaders in Tibet is evident. According to Törner this is one of the most important reasons for many Tibetan refugees to emigrate to India, where Buddhist monasteries and nunneries have been (re)built and play an important role in society. (Törner, personal interview). Many of the convents and nunneries are situated in the settlements (CTA 1994a). The lack of religious leaders in Tibet has caused stagnation in the religious hierarchy, leading to no, or at least very few, religious examinations taking place in Tibet at present. The Buddhist notion of master and apprentice is namely critical to the ongoing and survival of Tibetan religion. A large part of the Tibetan migrants are monks or nuns, or people who want to join a monastery. (Törner, personal interview).

Further, the restricted access to monastic education in Tibet is another reason behind migration. Tibetan students who were interviewed by the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) in 1997 stated that Chinese authorities limit the number of students in the monasteries, but that in some cases it might be possible to be admitted if your parents can pay very high bribes to the authorities. However, if an application is granted, once in the monastery (or nunnery) the student is subjected to a forcible "patriotic re-education campaign" within the monastery. The child must for example acknowledge the unity of Tibet and China, deny that Tibet was or should be independent and agree that the Dalai Lama is destroying the unity of the People. (TCHRD 1997). The Drepung monastery in Tibet used to be the world's largest with more than 10.000 monks; nowadays it holds only 500 monks, who once a week must attend these re-education courses in order to dissociate themselves from the Dalai Lama. As a result, there are "illegal" monks in the countryside in Tibet, meaning that they are not officially registered and therefore not allowed to wear a monk's frock. (Törner, personal interview and International Campaign for Tibet 2002:7).

As a result of the Tibetan government-in-exile's refugee policy stating that Tibetans are to return to Tibet after they have finished their schooling, Tiljander Dahlström believes that many migrants are "putting on a robe" in order to stay longer in India. This is due to the fact that it is obviously easier to advance in a convent than in a regular school, and accordingly the chances of not being sent home increases. The monastic community in the diaspora as a whole (not only in India) doubled between 1980 and 1994, according to the CTA. Tiljander Dahlström mentions the fast growing monastic community to be a great problem for the exile community today. (CTA 1994a and Tiljander Dahlström 2001:25).

However, Thoresen is of the opinion that a great problem within the exile community is actually the decrease in recruitment of youth to monasteries and nunneries. She believes that young people are simply not as interested devoting themselves to religion anymore. Some convents and nunneries in India have adapted to

modern society by introducing non-traditional subjects such as language studies, philosophy, and debating, as well as teaching more natural science. It is also possible for the students to take correspondence courses at Indian universities. According to Thoresen it is easier to recruit women than men, because men have more alternatives to choose from career wise. Education possibilities have improved in the exile community for nuns. The image of the Tibetan people as deeply religious is vital to the support from the outside world, why it must be upheld. (Thoresen, personal interview). Thoresen's view is supported by Klieger, who states that "the traditional prestige of the monastic community appears to be declining." (Klieger 2002:151).

Three of Tibet's largest monasteries have been rebuilt in India. They are Drepung, Ganden and Sera, and are situated in the South of India. The large Sera monastery is rebuilt in Bylakuppe settlement and houses around 3.000 monks²². (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:77,111).

3.6.2 Secular education

A lot of children are sent to India by their parents in order to obtain proper education, while other youth leave by their own choice. The education system in Tibet is insufficient in more ways than one. Foremost, Chinese students are subject to significantly more investment than Tibetan students. It is further extremely difficult for Tibetan students to reach forms of higher education, as the compulsory examination which is needed in order to be admitted to higher education is in Chinese²³. Hardly any Tibetan students pass this examination. (Thoresen and Törner, personal interviews and Tiljander Dahlström 2001:24-5).

The TCHRD has interviewed Tibetan youth who left Tibet to go to India. I have chosen to present a few excerpts from the children's stories in order to clarify the education system in Tibet as a significant push factor behind migration.

I did not understand the Chinese language well enough so I had to ask the teacher again and again. If most of the Tibetans did not understand his explanation in Chinese he used to call us 'dirty Tibetans' or 'stupid Tibetans' because we did not understand Chinese. (19-year old girl from Amdo).

During the music lessons we had to sing more Chinese than Tibetan songs. We were made to sing texts like 'Long live Communist China' or 'The teachers are good people and they are here to help us'. Most of the Tibetan students did not sing these songs in class and we would be punished by

²² Note that I question the reliability of this figure, as Tiljander Dahlström states on page 77 that there are 2.000 monks at Sera monastery, and later, on page 111, states that there are 3.000. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:77,111).

²³ The vast majority of schools in Tibet use Chinese as the teaching language, except for primary schools sponsored by the local community and selected "special" secondary schools. Chinese and Tibetan are two completely different languages. Tibetan is developed from Sanskrit, which is based on the alphabetic system of scripture. Chinese is a much older language, in which each word is represented by a certain character. Thus, "Chinese is consequently very much a foreign language for Tibetan students". (TCHRD 1997:25).

the teachers, even the Tibetan teachers. They hit us on our backs and heads with wooden sticks. When Deng Xiaopeng died, the teacher put his picture in front of the class and told us that we had to mourn the death of the great Deng Xiaopeng. We were told that we had to cry in class, but when most of us did not cry the teacher hit us badly with a wooden stick. (14-year old boy from Lhasa).

We had one Chinese and one Tibetan class. If new books arrived the Chinese students were given the new books. We only received the old books from the Chinese. In class one and two the Tibetan class had no chairs and no tables to write on. We had to bring mattresses from home to sit on. The Chinese were given everything from class one on. (Details unknown).

The teachers punished us because we had visited a Tibetan monastery. They made us stand outside the school building from nine o'clock in the morning until six o'clock at night without any food or drink. It was very sunny and warm at that time so it was hard for us to stand in the bright sun all day... (21-year old boy from Amdo).

One time, on the way to the toilet, a Chinese student tripped over me accidentally. He went up to a Chinese teacher and told him that I made him fall. The teacher made me get some sand and he mixed the sand with pieces of broken glass and water. This muddy mixture was then spread out on the floor. I had to kneel for one hour in this mud. The glass cut into my knees and into my feet. It hurt very much and my knees were bleeding. /.../ I stayed in hospital for four weeks due to some infection. (12-year old boy from Lhasa).

The older senior student girls were treated differently by some Chinese teachers. I know of some cases where the Chinese teacher went into the bedrooms of the older Tibetan girls and sexually abused the Tibetan girls. In the classroom the Chinese teachers punished the girls differently from the boys. The girls had to take off their pants and stand half naked in the classroom so that the Chinese teacher could spank them on the lower half of their body... (13-year old girl from Kham).

Almost all students in the survey said that in Tibetan language class, they had only read stories about Mao Zedong, "great Chinese men" and the Chinese Revolution. According to the TCHRD, the use of indoctrination is an intrinsic part of China's plan to sinocise Tibetans. It is most effectively used on children who are more easily influenced by the opinions held by authoritative persons than adults do. (TCHRD 1997:26-48).

The CTA put a lot of effort into the education system, secular as well as spiritual, in India. "Since rebuilding of future Free Tibet depends on the quality of the youth, who will become the leaders, it is necessary that proper material, spiritual and education facilities are provided to them" (CTA 1994b).

All schools are under the supervision of the Indian Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and follow the Indian school system, which in turn is based on the British²⁴. There are three types of schools for Tibetans in India:

²⁴ The Indian school system which is based on the British include 1-2 years of Kindergarten or preparatory courses from the age of five, thereafter follows compulsory classes 1-5, which end with common exams which the student need to pass in order to continue on to classes 6-10. Another exam in class 8 has to be passed as well. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:23).

- 1) Tibetan day schools and boarding schools situated in the larger settlements. These are autonomous schools administered solely by the CTA. Teachers speak Tibetan only.
- 2) Indian day schools in the settlements, sponsored by the Indian government. Teachers speak both Tibetan and English.
- 3) There are fifteen schools which go under the name Tibetan Children's Villages (TCVs) located in various parts of India (CTA, 1994a). Some are residential schools. The TCVs are managed by the CTA, and are renowned for their high quality education. Teachers speak both Tibetan and English. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:23).

According to Tiljander Dahlström, the majority of the students at the TCVs get scholarships from the CTA. The scholarships are supposed to cover half the expenses and the parents have to pay the other half. A child can also have a sponsor who pays for the other half, but in order to get a sponsor an Indian residence permit is needed. Only rich Tibetans and government officials can themselves afford to send their children to these schools. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:134,163). It was not made clear if all forms of education are included in this statement or if only scholarships are given only to students with a particular age or at particular schools.

Schooling is not restricted to Tibetan youth; for example many older people go to India to learn Tibetan. After the Cultural Revolution, Tibetan was in large replaced by Chinese in schools in Tibet. Although many can speak Tibetan, few of them know how to write and read in Tibetan. (Törner, personal interview).

3.6.3 Work opportunities

Many Tibetans leave for India in order to find work. The Chinese economy in Tibet puts demands on the Tibetans that can seldom be met; education, work experience and language barriers are significant hindering factors. The Tibetan society has historically been comprised of farmers and nomads, not a qualified workforce for a modern society. Thus, the attractive jobs are assigned to the Chinese, with the obvious consequence of the profits ending up in Chinese pockets, leaving the Tibetans poor and struggling. (Törner, personal interview).

The construction of the "Qinghai-Tibet railway"²⁵, which began in 2001, is an example of the Chinese superiority, according to Törner. As a part of the Party's Tenth Five Year Plan, the development of areas of high tech industry and the Western regions

²⁵ The railway is considered by the Tibetan government-in-exile to be a great threat to Tibetan environment, as well as Tibetan culture and religion. The CTC refers to an article published in the British newspaper The Telegraph on 15/01/01: "Recent statements from Beijing have made clear that the main reason for the project - due for completion by 2010 - is strategic. The Qinghai Daily described the railway as "the political front line" in consolidating border defenses, particularly in the wake of India's nuclear tests, and as a means to subdue unrest by the "Dalai clique" within Tibet. Beijing is also keen to exploit Tibet's vast untapped natural resources, increase migration from China's over-populated cities, and accelerate Tibet's "assimilation into the motherland". (The Telegraph 2003).

of China including TAR, involve goals of quadrupling the area of urban Lhasa and increasing the urban population by 30 % by 2005. 12 million US dollars are poured into the construction of a railway station only in Lhasa, connecting Lhasa in TAR with the Qinghai province. (People's Daily 2003). The project has caused a flood of Chinese people seeking work in Lhasa. Reports from Lhasa indicate that Tibetan farmers have had to move away from their land and settlements to make way for the new development. (TIN 2003b). Fears of Tibetan marginalization are expressed from several sides. A Tibetan former official from Qinghai told TIN:

Many new hotels and restaurants will be constructed, and many people from China who have lost their jobs will come to find work. There may be some short-term benefit for Tibetans in the construction of shops and restaurants for local people, but the influx of more and more Chinese people with education and skills means that local Tibetans may only be able to hold onto these jobs for a couple of years, and will gradually be marginalized. After the construction of the railway station at Xining (in Qinghai province), local people got jobs as cleaners and ticket sellers and so on, but gradually many of them lost these jobs due to competition from more skilled Chinese migrant workers.../ When the Chinese are in charge of construction [on projects such as the railway] it is possible that some Tibetans may find work, but the main benefits go to the Chinese private companies and the authorities.

TIN (2003b)

According to Törner, the Tibetans are treated as "guest workers" in Tibet. They are almost solely being given low paid jobs including hard physical labour, whilst the Chinese take care of the "brain work", including working as engineers, electricians or working the machines. The construction of dams and establishment of mining districts in Tibet is requiring Tibetans to move from their land, as with the building of the railway. It is hard for farming Tibetans to just "pick up and move" since the natural landscape in Tibet is so barren and hard to cultivate. "Where are they to move?" asks Törner. "Only poverty welcomes them in Lhasa, where the risk of becoming a beggar is evident." (Törner, personal interview). Thus, due to economic marginalization, which is also a result of increased taxation, fines for not paying taxes and state-imposed market controls such as price fixing, hundreds of impoverished Tibetans leave their homeland each year. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:8). Because of India's meager resources, migrating Tibetans will encounter difficulties with finding qualified jobs even in India. Although many Tibetans in exile are officially unemployed, many still have found ways to make a living. Among those who really are idle, prostitution, begging and stealing occur. (Thoresen, personal interview). According to Tiljander Dahlström,, The unemployment rate is about twenty five percent (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:23).

Tibetans in India have found several economic niches in Indian economy: farming new types of crop, sweater business, handicrafts such as for instance carpet weaving, and tourism. Other sources of income are being generated from military services, Tibetan government jobs, and private services such as restaurants, repair workshops and shops working for Tibetan organizations (Grent 2002:112-14). The education system

plays an important role in employing Tibetans-in-exile, for example as teachers, as well as Tibetan NGO's (Törner, personal interview).

Nearly thirty percent of the total working population is dependent on agriculture, including animal husbandry, a proportion that rises to nearly half of the working population in the settlements (CTA 1994a). Agricultural communities are most common in the Southern parts of India (Grent 2002:112-14). The "sweater industry" and handicrafts are other major employment sectors (CTA 1994a).

A great number of Tibetans in India are seasonal workers, meaning that they leave Tibet for quite long periods of time, but then return. Tibetans in India thus commute a great deal and often live in several places due to their mobile jobs. For instance the "sweater industry" is most profitable during the monsoon. (Thoresen, personal interview).

It seems making a living through commercial processes has come to characterize the exile community, foremost in Dharamsala, but also throughout India. The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Department board reads: "Welcome to McLeodganj, the little Lhasa in India". The Tibetan government-in-exile promotes the whole of Dharamsala to be "little Lhasa", as Tibetan establishments are spread throughout the area of Dharamsala. The role of tourism is quite clearly intentional here, apparently not only by the Tibetan government-in-exile, but also by the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Department, since the region as a whole has developed to be still another tourist destination. The desire to appeal to outsiders' idea of Tibet is evident by simply observing the names of establishments in McLeod Gunj; Snow land restaurant, Heaven Art and Rising Horizon Café are examples of attracting names, helping to promote the "Mythos Tibet". Yoga classes and meditation schools are other ways of promoting the latter in Dharamsala and thus secure the continued support from outsiders (Anand 2002:18,24,30). Exoticised representations of Tibet seem to be of vital importance for the tourist trade. Everything with a "Tibet-stamp" sold by a Tibetan sells well to tourists in India. According to Törner, the souvenirs are not made by Tibetans anymore. Large Indian factories mass-produce Tibetan prayer wheels and rosaries, to mention a few. (Törner, personal interview).

The "sweater business" is one of the largest industries for Tibetans in India, employing one third of the settlement population seasonally (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:23). The thick, handmade Tibetan sweaters are known for their good quality, and are mainly sold to the Indian population by Tibetans traveling around the country. Traditional Tibetan hand woven carpets are sold primarily to tourists, although there has been a decline in sales in recent years due to the global discussion of child labour. The global trends have had affect, even though the Tibetan society in India has not applied child labour in such a sense. (Törner, personal interview).

Tibetans in India also join the Indian army, although this is not something that the CTA would speak loudly of. Tibetans are usually assigned to Special Forces in the mountains, because of the fact that their physique allows them to endure high altitudes much better than Indians. (Törner, personal interview). For example Tibetan divisions

have been, and still are, used in the Kashmir conflict²⁶ between India and Pakistan. Parachute troops are another division in the Indian army in which Tibetans enroll. Joining the army gives an assured source of income and is not looked down upon. (Thoresen, personal interview).

3.6.4 Other

Some leave Tibet because their family and relatives are in India (Törner, personal interview). Going to India to reinforce one's cultural identity may be yet another reason for migrating. The Dalai Lama is considered the unifying force for all Tibetan groups. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:60).

Many of the older migrants (60 years old and over) go to India not in hope of starting a new life, but with a strong desire to meet with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This "last wish" is common among the elderly. (Törner, personal interview). In fact, nearly every migrant, irrespective of age, gender and social status, mention in the interview process at the reception center in Dharamsala, that to have an audience with the Dalai Lama is an important factor behind the decision to migrate. However, this does not mean that they for that matter are labeled religious pilgrims. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:6). Furthermore, the residence of the Dalai Lama makes Dharamsala a place for pilgrimage for many Tibetans (as well as non-Tibetan Buddhists). Earlier Pilgrims used to visit Lhasa. To go on pilgrimage is actually one of the most important religious demonstrations by lay people. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:69).

Political prisoners, mainly monks and nuns, often try to escape from Tibet when released from Chinese prisons. Their religious background and regularly manifested inner strength and religious conviction have caused them to frequently become the primary subject to China's violence, why freedom in India is all the more attractive. (Törner, personal interview). Tiljander Dahlström (2001:115) asked a 23-year old monk (who remains anonymous) at Sera monastery in the settlement of Bylakuppe, about his story. He answered, and also told of a gruesome experience of a friend of his:

I stayed in a monastery in Lhasa, at the age of 16 I took on the robe. The money offered by the people to the monastery, was collected by the Chinese government. We did not like that the Chinese took all the money so one day we decided to go out and demonstrate against the Chinese. At the 15th day of Losar [the Tibetan New Year] this demonstration started. The Chinese Came and half the monks and 6-7 nuns were caught. We were taken to prison and I was severely tortured. /.. / During the winter he had to kneel on the ice and stand on all fours on the ice, for one hour. His hands and knees froze and stuck to the ice. And suddenly the Chinese kicked him away from the ice, and the skin got remained on the ice. They were laughing over the fingerprints being left on the ice.

²⁶ The mountainous Indian state of Kashmir is the only state in India with Muslim majority (60 %). Since the partition of India and Pakistan into two separate countries in 1947, (when they received independence from the British) the region of Kashmir has been the reason for constant conflict between the two nuclear-capable powers. Two wars; 1947-8 and 1965, have taken place, and since 1989 violent separatist movements fighting against Indian rule have armed forces in the mountains. For more information on the Kashmir conflict, visit for example the BBC website. (BBC 2001).

3.7 Consequences

3.7.1 Xenophobia

Xenophobia, fear or hatred of foreigners, is quite common in forced international migration issues. Xenophobia can be seen in the Tibetan exile community, as well as in other parts of the world, for example South Africa. (Sisulu 2001:6).

Because of the historic isolation of South Africa, the South African people's perceptions are narrow-minded, making them very susceptible to xenophobia. South Africa had no experience of hosting refugees; African society had not been educated on refugee issues. It is a natural phenomenon for people living in economically depressed areas or in times of job scarcity to resent the "intrusion" of foreigners and to look upon them as a threat to their jobs, food, education and all the other amenities provided by the government. There is often confusion in people's minds between foreigners who come illegally and refugees. These two groups often occupy the lowest economic stratum in the South African society. (*Ibid.*). The fact that South Africa automatically upon arrival gives asylum seekers a permit to reside and work in the country as to provide relief to the inconvenience of waiting, fuels the resentment against refugees even more. (Sisulu 2001:6-7).

As mentioned initially, the Indian government doesn't want any more Tibetans to arrive in India, and have urged the Dalai Lama to put a stop to the immigration. India's relations with China are at tension due to the presence of the Tibetan government-in-exile in India, why the Dalai Lama encourages Tibetans to go back to Tibet out of benevolence. Furthermore, India is a country with limited resources itself and the risks of social disturbances are increasing. (Törner, personal interview). In mid 1990s there was a fight in Dharamsala where a young Tibetan boy stabbed an Indian boy in the leg. This incident gained a lot of attention and even caused the Dalai Lama to consider moving from McLeod Gunj. (Thoresen, personal interview). Anand concludes from his fieldwork in Dharamsala, that although it is rare for tensions between Tibetans and local Indians to burst out in physical violence, the local resentment against "wealthy" Tibetans is still evident. (Anand 2002:18). Tibetans in India are indeed becoming more affluent. (Grent 2002:127). The envy among the local population is not so hard to understand. The Tibetans receive a lot of support, they have a good education system, the Western world takes a great interest in them, and they are generally treated as "VIPs" in India²⁷. (Törner, personal interview).

²⁷ The reasons for treating the Tibetans in exile as "VIPs" go back a long time in history. For example, Tibet has always been thought of with great respect as the mythical country beyond the Himalayas. Buddhism historically originates from India, why the world's foremost Buddhist leader, the Dalai Lama, is of great significance to India. Furthermore, the Hindu goddess Shiva comes from the holy Mount Kailash in Tibet. The Dalai Lama is considered a part of modern India; it was Independent India's first Prime Minister Nehru who permitted the Dalai Lama to reside in Tibet, and as the "father" of modern India his decision has been honored. When India celebrated 50 years of independence in 1997, the Dalai Lama was presented as one of India's front figures. (Törner, personal interview).

3.7.2 Internal conflicts

For more than four decades, the Tibetans in India have been able to exercise democracy and strengthen their democratic commitments. According to Dreyfus, this has come to cause tensions within the Tibetan settlements in India on a number of occasions.

Renowned Tibetans who have expressed ideas believed to oppose more traditional Buddhist values have been condemned, threatened and even physically abused by their communities. (Dreyfus 2002:54).

The Tibetans who were the first to arrive in India in 1959 and the years thereafter, including their children (even if they were born in India), the so called long-timers, quite often look down on the newcomers, who are considered by many to be a burden to the exile community. The newcomers are often uneducated and thus with a greater need of being taken care of. They are considered a burden to infrastructure as many of them do nothing for a living but yet are assigned a place to live in one of the settlements. (Törner, personal interview). They lack good manners; they steal and fight, and are therefore described as being "backwards" by the long-timers who have had plenty of time to acclimatize. The long-timers are of the opinion that those who stayed in Tibet and migrated later were Communist fellow travellers, while the newcomers believe that those who left first are cowards because they didn't stay and fight. (Thoresen, personal interview). Another dichotomy to cause internal conflict is between the "hardies" and "softies". "Hardies" are those who were born in Tibet and who have personally experienced hardships. According to Tiljander Dahlström, they would most likely present themselves as full of fighting spirit and being willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of liberation. The "softies", on the other hand, are born in India and more interested in getting a well-paid job and a good life. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:26).

An ongoing democratisation project is another cause for internal conflict within the exile community. The aim is to modernise the representation system, which in Tibet traditionally has been based on geographical belonging, and remove the Dalai Lama from power, something which has been subject to much criticism since he is regarded as "God" to many Tibetans. This project is initiated by the CTA, and many students and other intellectuals support the idea of separating the Buddhist doctrine (*chos*) and politics. According to the Constitution, written by the Dalai Lama and his closest co-workers, he can be removed from office by two-thirds majority decision. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:7,21). The Dalai Lama has proclaimed that after his death, only in case it is the wish of the vast majority of the Tibetan people, will he reincarnate. This will happen outside of China, as the Dalai Lama states: "I would never come into the hands of the Chinese". (Garratt 2002:98). The Dalai Lama is personally of the opinion that the power-holding succession of the Dalai Lamas will die out with him, and that there is a need for democratization. However, some scholars see this only as a game played for an international audience in order to gain legitimacy and attention to the claims of independent Tibet, and to be used as an ideological weapon against China. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:22).

Another conflict is that of the liberation struggle in the fight against the Chinese for a free Tibet. The Dalai Lama has been known all over the world for his non-violence

policy, which is established in the exile Tibetan Constitution. However, other groups, both in Tibet and India, try to pursue armed struggle, often with reference to Yassir Arafat and the PLO as the model. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:8).

The education system in India is yet another issue of debate. Should the main objective be to plan for a life in India, or in a liberated Tibet sometime in the future? Teachers criticize Tibetan students of being lazy due to a comfortable exile life, while the students in turn disapprove of the education system as they find it to "Indianised". (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:8).

The mentioned increase in wealth among migrated Tibetans may be another reason for the internal split. Gatica believes many of the Tibetan migrants to emigrate from Tibet just to get a better life; that far from everyone are refugees fleeing from persecution. When working with Tibetans living in Nepal, he found that many of the ambitious and well-off Tibetan business men were not particularly keen on helping other, poorer Tibetans. Gatica believes that this "greed" for the sake of one's own profit also exists in India, since he found it evident in Nepal. Further on, he observed that all Tibetans "in a robe" are not always genuine monks. "Some lay people put on a robe and went out in the street to beg. Sometimes they recited a prayer to make themselves more trustworthy. It seemed an efficient way to make easy money." (Gatica, personal conversation). As mentioned, the traditional prestige of the monastic community appears to be declining. Klieger found this to be especially true in his field study of Tibetan settlements in Old Delhi, where the monastic community was not much respected. Tibetans had heard of homosexual practice in monasteries and in Tibetan regiments of the Indian army. Comments like: "Fifty percent of our monks love money", "they are pretty corrupt", "They do a lot of things that aren't needed for them" were said about the monks. (Klieger 2002:151).

These internal splits are not something the government-in-exile would officially recognize, as Tibetans should be portrayed as a unified people to the outside world. (Törner, personal interview).

3.7.3 Cultural changes

In their struggle for living, Tibetan refugees in Dharamsala and elsewhere in South Asia negotiate with popular culture of India and therefore it should come as no surprise that Bollywood has a very significant influence on the lifestyle of many Tibetans. /.../ The Dharamsala establishment often expresses anxiety over this dilution of Tibetan culture especially amongst the new generation of Tibetans. /.../... but [they] do not hamper their politicisation. On the contrary, the ability to simultaneously negotiate and resist varied cultural practices makes the common Tibetans well placed to carry forward their political movement in a rapidly changing world.

Anand (2002:27)

Several scholars are of the opinion that the Tibetans in India have acclimatized well into the Indian society, with regards to the Indian language, culture, customs, laws and regulations. The longer the Tibetans live in India, the more acculturated they get. Coming from their isolated homeland to a modern, multicultural and global society certainly puts its mark on them. Tibetan youth, to a greater extent than adults, are drawn towards the temptations of Western society at the same time as they are being pulled back to Tibetan traditions. Ideal behaviour and actual behaviour may therefore often differ considerably. (Grent 2002:124-6).

Klieger found when doing a field study among Tibetan youth in India, that young Tibetans have come to segregate themselves from senior refugee generation(s) in terms of engaging more in activities without parents or relatives present. Smoking in secret, behind their parents' back was also something he observed. (Klieger 2002:151). Also, since large groups of young Tibetans are actually living by themselves in youth hostels closer to the cities, or at boarding schools, without any accompanying adult relatives (parent's or other relatives may stay in other settlements in India, or in Nepal or Bhutan), the elder's traditional role of decision-making is subsequently challenged. This has led to the emergence of a so called "Youth Hostel Culture" in India. Characteristic of this culture is the creation amongst Tibetan youth of new, fictive, kin networks. It is supposedly quite common at the TCV boarding schools to do this; to "adopt a friend", normally younger, and support or help him or her through life. The students who live at the Youth hostels, or boarding schools for that matter, may be second or third generation migrants and many have stayed there for many years. The lack of guidance poses many problems to young Tibetans. Parents seldom have an education themselves and therefore have trouble relating to the education of their children. "Tibetans do well already but they can do better. Our parents are not educated, so we can make a change" says a Tibetan boy in a south Indian settlement. Further, the lack of role models causes concern among the youth about family making and child rising. Students also express a longing for their families and feelings of depression at times. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:106,131-6).

The custom of polyandry (one woman marrying two or more men) has always been a rare but at the same time a characteristic feature of Tibetan culture²⁸. Through history polyandry has been practiced in several cultures around the world, at present involving around 40 million people. In present day Tibet polyandry is forbidden by Chinese law. Since the houses are much smaller in India than in Tibet, polyandry is far more difficult to practice in exile (where the nuclear family replaces the extended). Women's limited productive role and the harsh environment in Tibet, causing an imbalance in the male-female ratio and thereby encouraging men to marry polyandrously, are a few thinkable reasons behind polyandry in Tibet. In India these underlying factors have changed enormously. When Tibetans escaped after the occupation, many wives with small

²⁸ Only Buddhist Tibetans practice polyandry: Muslim and Christian minorities forbid this form of marriage. Buddhism promotes putting others above oneself in the quest for enlightenment. It is for this reason polyandry is allowed; group survival and family union may increase by not exerting exclusive rights on one wife. (Grent 2002:122-3).

children were left behind, thereby fuelling the disproportionate number of low-fertility women. According to Grent, almost no third generation Tibetans in Dharamsala practice polyandry anymore. She believes polyandry has become associated with shame and that it does not fit in with the presentation of Tibetans as modern, global citizens. In her field study, young people in Dharamsala either refused to talk about it, or gave answers such as: "We are modern now" or "No! No! We don't do that anymore!" (Grent, 2002:105-27).

Love marriages are starting to replace arranged marriages. Although preference is to marry a Tibetan, marriage to Westerners has become an exile phenomenon. In a study of marriage in refugee settlements Majnukatilla and Rohini in Old Delhi, Klieger found that marrying a Westerner is considered mostly a positive act, whereas marrying an Indian is looked down upon. Going abroad was also looked down upon, although Tibetans in Dharamsala (with a heavy western tourism support) were of opposite opinion. Further, the family vision of the young seems to be more influenced by Hindi movies than by models from traditional Tibet. (Klieger 2002:145-146 and Tiljander Dahlström 2001:105-6). Further, in Tibet people normally marry at a very young age and often the marriage ends in divorce. Divorce is thus accepted in Tibet, while it is looked down upon among Tibetans in India. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:143).

The economic role of Tibetan women has grown substantially in the exile community. Nowadays wives do not stay at home all the time; they also travel to big cities all over India to sell sweaters or do other kinds of business. (Grent 2002:117). Life as a single woman in the exile community is highly possible and much respected, however Tibetans that live in close contact with the Indian society are influenced by the Indian view of women as unprotected unless they are either married or stay with their children. (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:107). In the more modern settlements such as Dharamsala, both husband and wife take part in the household chores, both men and women have paid jobs and both take care of the children. (Grent 2002:121).

3.7.8 Nationalism and sense of displacement

Tibet is a somewhat unreal place, always located somewhere else in time and space.

Tiljander Dahlström (2001:140)

As mentioned before, Tibetans did not have a "full-fledged" nationalism before 1950, nor was traditional Tibetan society a homogenous one. (Dreyfus 2002:38 and Grent 2002:124).

Today, the political context of occupation and coercion is always present in the exile community. Tibetans have politicized the myth of Tibet, with for example Tibetan artwork itself constituting a political act or statement. The entire category of culture has to be understood as political, according to Anand. Souvenir dolls with "Free Tibet" badges and stickers and posters reading "Boycott Chinese goods" are clearly visible in for example McLeod Gunj, which Anand describes as a clear "geography of resistance".

An important part for Dharamsala in particular, but also for the exile community as a whole, is the many festivals and other events occurring throughout the year; for example Tibetan Uprising Day (March 10), Dalai Lama's birthday (July 6), Democracy Day of Tibet (September 2), and the commemoration of the awarding of Nobel Peace Prize to Dalai Lama (December 10). The ritual performances and commemorative ceremonies are important in building up a collective memory, which in turn is crucial for the development of a sense of home and togetherness. (Anand 2002:26-7).

As mentioned before, the vast majority of all migrants mention in the interview process that to have an audience with the Dalai Lama is an important factor behind the decision to migrate. The Dalai Lama is considered the living connection to a time when Tibetans exercised self-determination, and is thus considered a symbol of Tibetan nationalism. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:6).

The central aim of the Tibetan government-in-exile is to preserve Tibetan culture, with the ultimate goal of returning to a free Tibet (Grent 2002:124). The memory and the ideal image of Tibet have been a strong force in the struggle for national recognition, although Anand believes it at the same time to be naïve to regard Tibet as a timeless construct. According to Anand, this is common to exiled communities, observable among for example the Palestinian people, for which the longing for certain villages has changed over time to the longing for a collective national return to the more abstract homeland. (Anand 2002:31). Further, The western world's ideal and preferred image of the Tibetan people, which is of course fuelled by the upholding of the same by the CTA, have a restraining effect on change within the exile community, and contributes to the keeping secret of for instance Tibetans working for the Indian army, homosexuality, internal conflicts and the possible decline in youth wishing to join monasteries or nunneries. (Thoresen, personal interview). When asked by Klieger (2002:147) what picture of Tibet he would give to a foreigner, a young Tibetan boy replied:

In my mind I give a very turquoise sea, with clear air, green park, with a snowy mountains and all, like something like equal to heaven, which I haven't been but my parents keep on talking about. Such things during my childhood.

In studies of "the Tibetan identity problematique", the original homeland of Tibet is often found to be imaged as the final destination, leaving Tibetans in exile waiting for something that is yet to come. Dharamsala, meaning "temporary home" in Hindu, is considered to be just that; a temporary stop on the way to somewhere else. (Anand 2002:28). In Tiljander Dahlström's field study among students at youth hostels in south India, she found that Tibet was represented only by darkened pictures of relatives and some family memories. "You never hear about Tibet on the news. I don't even know what it looks like!" said one girl. However, the thought of keeping the nation Tibetan by staying together, even if in crowded youth hostels with many frustrations, seemed to ease the suffering. One girl, who had chosen to return to her family in Tibet, met such differences in the way of living and thinking, that she returned to India. "When I was happily back in India it felt like coming home. I realized Dharamsala is home for me."

Another student said: "If Tibet ever becomes liberated our problems have just started. That's what it's like to belong in 'Nowhere land'..." (Tiljander Dahlström 2001:140-5).

3.8 Returning to Tibet

Many of the new refugees choose to go back after seeing the Dalai Lama and getting his blessings, meeting their relatives, or leaving their children behind for education. However, the vast majority of the new refugees are unwilling to go back to Tibet because of the repression there. (CTA 1994b). According to Törner, freedom of religion is of far more importance to them than just simply being able to make a living, since religion permeates Tibetan society and culture. But freedom of religion is not available in Tibet. There, they are persecuted for their political opinions and can easily get into trouble with the Chinese authorities. The classical Communistic system of informers is conspicuous in Tibet. Informers are found in every village, even monks in monasteries work for the Chinese government. The least suspicion of participating in antagonistic activities can mark a family for life. Therefore, the suspected family member(s) sometimes chooses to leave his or her family in order to relieve them of the hardships of being under Chinese scrutiny. (Törner, personal interview). Thoresen is also of the opinion that the situation in Tibet is intolerable for Tibetans; they cannot speak their own language nor have their own religion. (Thoresen, personal interview).

Further, the Indian government has started to put pressure on the Dalai Lama and the CTA in recent years, demanding them to put a stop to the seemingly never ending inflow of Tibetan refugees to India, why the Dalai Lama is urging new arrivals to go back to Tibet. (Törner, personal interview).

Returning to Tibet involves many difficulties. Tibetan migrants encounter problems in Nepal also when transiting to back to Tibet. According to Nepalese Criminal Law, those who try to enter (or leave) Tibet without the appropriate papers are breaking the law and can therefore be held for a period of temporary detention and interrogation. Nepalese authorities are seeking to gain information about the migrants' contacts in India and the operations of the Tibetan government-in-exile, considered by China to be a "foreign hostile element". It has been reported that Tibetans who have been to India are commonly put under surveillance, and once back in Tibet they are subject to harassment and interrogation by the authorities. Their families and friends can also be questioned or get to experience house searches. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:28 and TIN 2001:17). Tibetans are allowed to re-enter Tibet only if they have not been too involved in the government-in-exile (Törner, personal interview).

Once back in Tibet, many encounter difficulties with finding work. In some areas of Tibet, regulations prohibit monks and nuns who have been abroad to rejoin their monasteries and nunneries. Finding other employment may also be difficult. For instance, only the "good business men", not the "politically soiled", are allowed to start up businesses such as restaurants, hotels or travel agencies in Lhasa. (Törner, personal interview). Many Tibetan tour guides who have received their education in India also face difficulties when they come back. Chinese authorities suspect them of providing

tourists with propaganda, why many are not getting their permits renewed. Also, in the year 2000 new requirements for tour guides were introduced, involving a Chinese middle school certificate and a political examination, in which they have to “endorse China’s position over Taiwan, accept that all of Tibet’s resources belong to the Chinese state, and abide by a “voluntary code of conduct” which involves ‘defending the interests of the country and the honour of the nationality’.” One of the questions included in the political examination is: “Capitalism and socialism are here to stay – true or false?” (the correct answer is: true). (TIN 2001:17-9).

Tibetans who return from India after having finished courses in English and Tibetan culture, have been able to do so in secret until tightened border controls were introduced a couple of years ago (1997, I believe). Now, police in Tibet identify almost every returnee, and most are detained and interrogated for up to three months on their return. (TIN 2001:18).

When they leave their homes in Tibet, the Chinese replace them and their land, and businesses. The return of Tibetans to Tibet is indeed a very difficult issue for the CTA. (International Campaign for Tibet 2002:28).

4. RESULTS

Tibetan society is, and has always been, characterized by a deep religious belief and strong cultural affiliation. When China occupied Tibet in 1950 in order to “liberate” Tibet from its “economic backwardness” of feudal and religious traditions, the effects were devastating. Tibetans were dispatched to labour camps, monks and nuns were executed or imprisoned, thousands of monasteries and temples were destroyed and communist propaganda was forced upon the Tibetan people. Tens of thousands fled over the Himalayas to seek refuge in India, where Tibet’s spiritual leader by incarnation, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, had been granted asylum and allowed to form a government-in-exile after fleeing in 1959.

The first to leave in 1959 and for a couple of years to follow were the Tibetan aristocracy and Buddhist elite along with those holding leading positions within the government. Quite a lot of lay people left Tibet as well. It is estimated that around 100.000 Tibetans fled around the time that Dalai Lama escaped. However, many died on the way to India due to gunshots, starvation or unbearable weather conditions. Due to aggression between China and India in 1962, the number of Tibetans daring to leave Tibet was decreasing. After communist leader Mao Zedong’s death in 1975 and the opening of the Tibet-Nepal border in 1980, there has been a steady flow of Tibetans from Tibet into India. One third of all migrants are said to be under the age of 18. A large majority of the Tibetans coming to India are monks. Others are farmers, nomads, students, nuns, elderly, unemployed and students, all whom come in hope for a better life in one way or the other. Many come alone, why there are a lot of split families in Tibet. An estimated 130.000 Tibetans are living in India today. The annual figure of newcomers is around 3.000, but figures and statistics are somewhat unreliable as they tend to vary depending on the source. Tibetans die every year due to the Chinese presence in Tibet; from torture during interrogations and from shots at demonstrations at the borders.

The decision to emigrate to India is often a complex one, with religious, political, educational, social and economic factors involved. Push and pull factors are in my view closely intertwined in the Tibetan migration, meaning that what they cannot obtain in Tibet (push), are offered in India (pull). The poor education possibilities in Tibet for Tibetan youth is indeed one of the most important reasons for parents to send their children to India or for young Tibetans themselves to make the choice to leave. Spiritual as well as secular education in Tibet involve unfair treatment imposed on Tibetan youth and restricted admittance of Tibetans to higher education as well as to monasteries and nunneries. Tibetans are not taught their own language or culture and are further being indoctrinated with a positive image of communism and a frightful image of the Dalai Lama. The presence of prominent religious leaders in India is a powerful pull factor for monks and nuns. Quite a few Tibetans come to India to join family or friends, and many come as pilgrims to Dharamsala, where the Dalai Lama and the government-in-exile reside. Elderly might come to see the Dalai Lama as a “last wish”, others in order to strengthen one’s sense of cultural and/or national identity. In fact, nearly every migrant

mentioned in the interview process that to have an audience with the Dalai Lama is an important factor behind the decision to migrate. Dharamsala is seen as the temporary capital of the “Tibetan world”.

Economic opportunities are also a large pull factors in the Tibetan migration. The scarcity of work for Tibetans in Tibet is due to the fact that the Chinese are favoured and that most profits coming from development go into Chinese pockets. This is leading to economic marginalization of Tibetans, who can be said to be treated as “guest workers” in Tibet. I believe this inferior position serves as a serious push factor. The Chinese economy’s demands on work experience, education and knowledge of the Chinese language, can seldom be met by a people who has historically been comprised of farmers and nomads. In India, nearly thirty percent of the Tibetan working population is dependent on agriculture, including animal husbandry. The “sweater industry”, carpet industry, tourism and working for the government-in-exile are other ways to make a living. Joining the Indian army is another one, but that is spoken quietly of by the government-in-exile. However, far from everyone have employment. Among those who are really idle, prostitution, begging and stealing occur.

It is illegal for Tibetans to leave Tibet, why they journey in secret and often travel at night. The vast majority travels to India through Nepal, but a few go through Myanmar (Burma) or straight through India’s northeastern parts. Travel is undertaken mostly by foot, and in groups of 5-15 persons because of safety issues and economic reasons. It is vital for a successful crossing into Nepal to have a guide lead you through the right mountain passes, of which there are two that are most commonly used; the Nangpa-la mountain pass and through the border town of Dram. However, the guides are not cheap; each person has to pay around the sum of a year’s salary for a rural Tibetan, but the price can be negotiated depending on the size of the group. When in Nepal, they usually go to Nepal’s capital Kathmandu, where the Tibet Refugee Transit Center (TRTC) is located. I believe this is managed jointly by the UNHCR and the government-in-exile. Here they are interviewed by the UNHCR in order to determine whether they fall under the “status of concern” or not (most do, but they are not granted refugee-status), taken care of, and helped to reach India. The high altitudes in combination with little food and clothing in the cold and snowy weather of the Himalayas include risks of snow blindness, frostbite, hypothermia and injuries from falling. Nearly two-thirds of all Tibetans leave during fall or winter. Once in India, it is often very difficult for Tibetans to adjust to the new climate. Concluding from this, the journey must certainly be mentally straining too.

Nepal has always had a generous and friendly attitude towards the Tibetans, but it seems that as Nepal’s relations with China grow tighter, Nepal’s hostility toward Tibetans increases. China’s influence goes via economic aid to Nepal, who stopped granting legal refugee status to migrating Tibetans in 1989. Now they are ascribed “illegal immigrants” and are only allowed to use Nepal as a transit point, given that they leave for a third country (India) rapidly. Because of the UNHCR principle of *non-refoulement* Tibetans do thus not enjoy refugee status. In the last ten years, hundreds of Tibetans have been repatriated or deported back to Tibet. There have also been

occasions where Tibetans have been beaten and raped and taken to prison by Nepalese police, released only against bail.

Once in India, Tibetans are normally granted refugee by the Indian government. Officially all new arrivals go via New Delhi to Dharamsala in the Indian state Himachal Pradesh, where the reception center is located. After being given necessary care and an audience with the Dalai Lama, they are placed in schools, monasteries, nunneries, old people's homes and for example handicraft centers in Tibetan settlements. There are to my knowledge 54 settlements in India, many of which are found in the southern parts of the country where agriculture is a common way to make a living. Not all Tibetans stay in settlements; quite a few also live in so called "scattered communities" closer to the cities due to better employment opportunities and overcrowded settlements. Most youth between 7 and 25 live in youth hostels, which I believe to often be situated outside the settlements and closer to universities. Many settlements suffer from poor sanitary conditions and as the fragile houses are also often overcrowded, illnesses follow.

The heavy inflow of new arrivals has become one of the most pressing policy issues confronting the government-in-exile. As India has limited resources and its relations with China are tense due to the presence of the government-in-exile, the Indian government is not allocating any new land to the exile community and has urged the Dalai Lama to put a stop the immigration. The Dalai Lama is responsive to this; the policy of the government-in-exile is that anyone who arrives to Dharamsala has to return to Tibet as soon as they have finished whatever business they might have. As Jones (1994:178) stated in chapter 2, migration plays a very important role in internal demographic changes. This is said to be the reason for this policy by the government-in-exile: Tibet would be completely Chinese if every Tibetan left for India and stayed there. The fact that it is illegal for Tibetans to leave Tibet has less to do with this, I believe, and more to do with the risk of "loss of face" by China to the outside world. As stated in chapter 2, "an out-migration can be very unfavorable to the country of origin." (Knox and Marston 2003:131). However, Knox and Marston do not include "loss of face" as one of the reasons.

The consequences of the exile community in India are several. Because of India being a country with limited resources itself, there are prevalent risks for social disturbances between Tibetans and the Indian population, partly due to the fact that the Tibetans are doing quite well and have gained a lot of attention from the international community in recent years. This is referred to by Knox and Marston (2003:131-2) as "social stress" among unemployed citizens when immigrants (Tibetans) are being blamed for swallowing the nation's jobs. The local resentment against "wealthy" Tibetans is evident in some places, although it is rare for tensions to burst out into physical violence. But also internal conflicts exist in the exile community. To mention some, there have been conflicts between Tibetans starting to oppose more traditional Tibetan values and those wishing to uphold them; there is a clash between the long-timers (those who came around 1960 including their children) and the newcomers (who came around 1980 and onwards), who are considered to be "backwards" in that they lack good manners and are looked upon as communist fellow travelers for having stayed in Tibet for so long.

Further, there are also controversies between those who were born in Tibet, the so called “hardies” and those who were born in India, the “softies”. The latter are claimed to only want a well-paid job and a good life in India, whereas the “oldies” portray themselves as full of fighting spirit and being willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of a liberated Tibet. Another conflict is that of the liberation struggle for a free Tibet between those who want to pursue armed struggle and those who support the Dalai Lama’s non-violence policy.

Many scholars are of the opinion that Tibetans in India have acclimatized well into the Indian society with regards to language, culture, customs, laws and regulations. But coming from an isolated homeland to a modern, multicultural and global society certainly has had its impact on Tibetan culture, especially in the younger generations, where Bollywood and popular culture in India play a significant role. For instance appears the traditional prestige of the monastic community to be declining. Young Tibetans have also come to segregate themselves from senior refugee generations in terms of engaging in more activities without parents or relatives present. As many young Tibetans are living by themselves in India, the elder’s traditional role of decision-making is subsequently challenged. The lack of role models further causes concern among the youth about for example family making and child rising.

A “sense of displacement” is also noted among the Tibetans in India. Tibetans did not have a “full-fledged” nationalism before 1950, but attention from all over the world has helped in making the notion of “homeland” and Tibetan nationalism important, since westerners preferred image of “mythos Tibet” needs to be upheld for continued support. The Dalai Lama is considered the living connection to a time when Tibetans exercised self-determination and is thus considered a symbol of Tibetan nationalism. Also, the political context of occupation and oppression is always present in the exile community; from souvenirs with “Free Tibet” badges on them to somewhat stereotyped answers given to foreigners to fit their preferences. Many Tibetans living in India (second and third generations) have never even been to Tibet, which makes them feel that “Tibet is a somewhat unreal place, always located somewhere else in time and space.”

The aim of the government-in-exile is to preserve Tibetan culture with the ultimate goal of returning to a free Tibet. Another goal is also to modernise the representation system. The Dalai Lama is personally of the opinion that the power-holding succession of the Dalai Lamas will die out with him, and that there is a need for democratization. Only if it is the wish of the vast majority of the Tibetan population will he reincarnate. This will in such case happen outside of China, as the Dalai Lama states: “I would never come into the hands of the Chinese.”

Knox and Marston (2003:131-2) say that pull factors dominate voluntary migration, whereas push factors to a greater extent lead to forced migration. I believe there are more push factors than pull factors in the Tibetan migration. The political oppression in Tibet and the role of being almost second class citizens and not having freedom of speech or religion is push factor enough in my opinion, and in many others’, to label the Tibetan migration as forced. Certainly, the climate is not as it was in 1959 and the years

thereafter, with thousands of Tibetans dying in the Himalayas on their way to India, but what happened then is still, and will always be, the reasons for the present state of around 3.000 Tibetans arriving to India annually. Undoubtedly time has its toll on new generations; they simply cannot be as full of “fighting spirit” as those who have experienced Chinese oppression at its worst. I would also very much like to know why the UNHCR does not grant the Tibetans refugee status.

Further, Jones’ (1994:200-2) presented theories about stress and mobility potential on page 18 can be applied on the Tibetan migration. Stress triggers are in this case for example unsatisfactory employment opportunities, unsatisfactory housing (if for instance Tibetan farmers have had to move away from their land in order to make way for new the development), lack of education opportunities, religious oppression and so on. A person’s mobility potential might be higher if he or she has got the money to pay for a guide and other expenses needed when going to India. This economic aspect likely serves as an intervening obstacle in the migration process as well, as do the many dangers that are involved in crossing the borders. Age is also an important factor in mobility potential; one third of all Tibetan new arrivals are under the age of 18, perhaps indicating that their parents do not have the same mobility potential. Brown’s (1991:44) presentation of the “migration chain effect”, in which current migrants follow the path of relatives, friends and acquaintances who have moved earlier is also highly applicable on the Tibetan migration.

Further, “a sense of dislocation” proved to be distinctive in would-be migrants in a study by Taylor (1969). I believe the Tibetan students’ quotations on pages 37-8 clearly tell of this feeling when in Tibet among Chinese students. It is probably also present among lay people in Tibet who are treated as “guest workers”. According to figure 3.1, the migration process is believed to involve the above factors put in a normative context, meaning the beliefs and values of society of origin. The fact that it is illegal for Tibetans to leave Tibet speaks for itself in that matter. The barriers that Jones discuss such as physical distance, family distance and institutional barriers can all be applied on the Tibetan migration.

Brown (1991:81) states on page 19 that important factors behind Third World migration are for example communication and transport infrastructure development, labour market segmentation, land reform, agricultural change, and economic and social class distinctions. In other words, economic growth involves structural changes in society which in turn change the factors influencing migration. This is exactly what is taking place in Tibet. Solomon (2002:83-5) also explains that economic inequalities do not in themselves bring on migration, but that it is the *knowledge* of such disparities that generate population movement. I do not know about the Tibetans’ access to international media in Tibet, but I believe it is likely for those still in Tibet to be aware of the better life in India due to friends and family telling about it. However, as Jones states, it is necessary to put this factor in a psychological context, referring to the individual’s attitudes and expectations. Therefore, it is important to clarify that not all Tibetans *wish* to leave Tibet.

The answer to my research question regarding universal migration patterns is that these can be found in the Tibetan migration, as shown above. Macro-analytical models with independent variables such as age and, socio-economic status and migrant stock are applicable on the Tibetan migration, as well as micro-analytical models including the individual's decision making process. Developmental aspects, which were lacking in the macro- and micro-analytical models as they were based on field studies in developed countries, is highly relevant to consider in the Tibetan migration, as Tibet is undergoing fundamental development affecting land availability, income opportunities and so on.

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Interviews

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6. APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: Historical background: two stories

Tibet's story

In October 1950 the Chinese People's Liberation Army invaded the heartlands of Tibet. With outdated arms and equipment, the tiny Tibetan army resisted bravely but was soon overcome. The nations of the world looked away, and by May 1951 Tibet had been transformed into a western province of the newly established People's Republic of China. (cover) /.../ [The goal was] to liberate [Tibet], they said, from its feudal oppressors and from Western imperialists. Tibet's tiny army has about as much chance as an ant against a rhinoceros... (p. 17)./.../ Nationalist China's aims were no less imperialist than its predecessor's (p. 38).

In the years of the Chinese occupation, more than a million Tibetans – 20 % of the population – are believed to have perished, by starvation, execution, imprisonment and in abortive uprisings. Many thousands more, including their spiritual and political leader, the 14th Dalai Lama, were driven into exile. (Cover).

The country has been systematically colonized and sinicized, so that the indigenous inhabitants are now a second class minority. The rich mineral resources have been plundered and the delicate eco-system devastated. Over many years Buddhism, the life blood of Tibet, was ruthlessly suppressed. By 1965, out of more than 6.000 temples and monasteries which were known throughout Tibet, only a handful remained standing. (Cover). /.../

The entry of Chinese Communist forces into Tibet...was the first step in a campaign of outright assault on an independent peace-loving people... The Tibetan people have been humiliated and impoverished in their own land./.../ Nowadays, young people come out of Tibet unable to read or write their own language and so are cut off from their natural heritage. (p. 15).

The Chinese disregard for the Tibetan people has been compounded by the insidious policy of population transfer. As huge numbers of Chinese settlers are added to the already substantial occupying forces, the threat of the Tibetans becoming a minority in their own country is very real. Even now, poorly educated, unemployed and denied basic human right, they are treated as second-class citizens. (p. 15). /.../ One way or another, time is running out for Tibet; it may soon be too late to save her. Pressure must be brought to bear on China now. Impossible? It would be well to remember, as Lord Grimond recently reminded us, "Appeasement did not work with Hitler. And it will not work with China." (p. 22).

(Craig, 1992)

APPENDIX 1

China's story

Tibet has been an inseparable part of China from time immemorial (p. 12)./.../ Since Tibet formally came under the control of the Yuan court in the mid-13th century, China has seen changes of dynasty and many change-overs in the central authority, but Tibet has always remained under the Chinese central government's jurisdiction. (p. 15)/.../ In 1949 the People's Republic of China was founded. Proceeding in cognizance of Tibet's history and present reality, the Central People's Government determined a policy of peaceful liberation./.../ The Tibetan people's custom's would be respected and their religious freedom protected. The reform of Tibetan society would be decided after consultation with Tibetan leaders. /.../ In 1956, the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region was founded with the Dalai Lama as its chairman. (pp. 17-8).

In March 1959, the majority of the kaloons in the Tibetan local government joined with the reactionary clique of the upper social strata launched a comprehensive armed rebellion [the Lhasa uprising] with the aim of splitting the country, preserving the feudal serf system and opposing democratic reforms./.../ As a result, the million serfs and slaves in Tibet stood up and came into their own, instead of being treated as the private property of serf-owners...The Tibet Autonomous Region was formally founded in September 1965. (p. 19). The economy and transportation in old Tibet were very backward. There was no modern industry, only animal husbandry and a little agriculture and handicrafts. After the democratic reform in 1959 economic construction quickened... (p. 32).

Tibetan Buddhism has its own distinctive qualities and practices. A well-known example is the recognition of reincarnating Living Buddhas, a belief alien to Chinese Buddhism. /.../ After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, institutions at various levels earnestly carried out the policy of freedom of religious belief. Currently, under the protection of the Constitution and laws, the people of Tibet enjoy fully the freedom of developing normal religious activities.

(Zangwen, 1995)

Serfs and slaves accounted for 95 percent of the Tibetan population [before 1959] (peasants 60%, herdsmen 20%, lower class monks 15%). They were owned by serf-owners, just like the means of production. They had no political rights or personal freedom. They and their children were freely given away as gifts or donations, sold or exchanged for goods. /.../ The main form of land rent was forced labor. [Manorial lords] forced their serfs to accept usurious loans. The rates charged by the manorial lords were so high that many debtors were unable to discharge their debts, and even their children were unable to do it, so the debts became "descendants' debts". /.../ If the serfs stood up against the manorial lords, violated the law or could not pay rent in time, the lords would punish them according to the Thirteen Laws or other laws. They used such inhuman tortures as gouging out the eyes, cutting off their feet or hands, pushing down the condemned person from cliff, drowning, beheading, etc.

(Hui, Yinong and Naihui, 1995:66,70,74,78)

APPENDIX 2: Interview questions

Name, title

Who are leaving, and have left, Tibet; in 1959 and at present?

What can hinder their migration?

Can anyone choose to leave?

Why do they leave Tibet?

What are they dissatisfied with in Tibet, if anything?

Is China doing anything to make them want to stay in Tibet?

Nepal as an area of Transit;

Do they encounter obstacles in Nepal?

Which routes do they take?

Arriving in India;

How does the reception center work?

How are they placed in the settlements?

What do they do for a living in India?

How long do they stay in India?

What are the consequences of the Tibetan migration?