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Journeys into Exile:
Tibetan Women Refugees and the Migration
Experience

A thesis presented in partial
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Leesa Rachael Roy

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Abstract

Focusing on refugee theories and concepts, this study utilises a qualitative research approach to analyse the migration experiences of a group of Tibetan refugee women living in exile in McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala, India. The study examines the reasons why the women left Tibet, risking their lives to make the arduous journey across the Himalayan Mountains into exile, and explores their past, present and future hopes, the difficulties they have faced, and those that they are facing today.

Data for the study were collected through various methods, including in-depth interviews, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), and Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis (CVA), stimulus pictures, informal conversations and personal observations while in McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala, India.

The Tibetan refugee movement is examined within its own socio-political context through an exploration of the historical background of the Tibetan refugee situation, including China's presence in Tibet, and the ways in which this presence has affected Tibetan refugee movements. The Literature Review examines the various migration and refugee theories and concepts that have emerged within academia, and assesses the conceptual gaps that are present within the existing literature.

Focusing on contemporary Tibetan refugee movements, this thesis considers the question of why, after more than fifty years of Chinese occupation, Tibetans are still leaving Tibet to live in exile in India. The study then puts forward two models of refugee migration based on the patterns of migration expressed in the data.

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Song of Exile

Exile is the emptiness - for however much you bought
with you, there's far more you left behind.

Exile is the ego that shrinks, for how can you prove
what you were and what you did?

Exile is the erasure of pride.

Exile is the escape that is often worse than the prison.

Exile is xenophobe - for every single one who likes you,
you'll find ten in whom there is nothing but hate.

Exile is the Xanthippe nagging you for thoughts unthought
and for words unspoken.

Exile is the infinitive you can't help splitting -
the intention that is never equalled by the execution.

Exile is the invasion that can never succeed -
for you can never conquer your inhibitions -
it is the incubus riding your pillow.

Exile is the loneliness in the middle of a crowd -

Exile is longing never to be fulfilled,

it is love unrequited, the loss never replaced -

the listless, loveless, long wait for the train

that never arrives, the plane that never gets off the ground.

Exile is the end and never the beginning -

Exile is the eruption whose lava stream carries you away -

it is the eternity measured in minutes, the eyes

that never enjoy the familiar sight,

the ears that listen to alien music.

Exile is a song that only the singer can hear

Exile is an illness that not even death can cure - for how
can you rest in soil that cannot nourish you?

Exile is the warning example to those who still
have their homes, who belong.

But will you take heed of the warning?

From Tabori (1972: 9).

Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgments	ii
Poem	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Glossary	viii
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Historical Background	11
Part One: A History of Tibet	11
Part Two: Economic Development in Tibet	31
Chapter Two: The Evolution of the Refugee A Review of the Literature	55
Part One: Historical Perspectives	56
Part Two: Theoretical Perspectives	68
Chapter Three: Methodology	119
Introduction	119
Inception and Social Relations	134
Constraints	142
Discussion of Issues Raised from the Fieldwork Process	145
The Process of Data Analysis	150
Chapter Four: Discussion	153
Tibetan Refugee Migrations	153
The Three Stages of the Refugee Experience: A Discussion of the Respondents' Experiences	162
Chapter 5: Analysis	174
Analysis Part One: Practical Issues	174
Analysis Part Two: Theoretical Perspectives	199
Conclusions	221
Appendices	
Appendix One: Information Sheet	223
Appendix Two: Interview Guide	227
Appendix Three: Stimulus Pictures	231
Appendix Four: Additional Photographs of McLeod Ganj	239
References	243

List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of Tibet	4
Figure 2: Map of Main Chinese Linguistic Groups	5
Figure 3: Map of McLeod Ganj	159
Plate i: Mountain View from McLeod Ganj	160
Plate ii: View of McLeod Ganj	160
Figure 4: Map of Tibetan Settlements in India	161
Figure 5: Venn Diagram of Organisations in Dharamsala	181
Figure 6: Map of Lhasa City	209
Figure 7: Political Model of Salvadoran Migration to the United States	213
Figure 8: Joint Political-Economic Model	214
Figure 9: Segmented Political-Economic Model	215
Figure 10: A Political Persecution Model of Tibetan Refugee Migration	219
Figure 11: An Economic-Political Model of Tibetan Refugee Migration	220
Plate iii: Tibetan man and woman at the Chorten, McLeod Ganj	240
Plate iv: Altar at Amdo Café, McLeod Ganj	240
Plate v: Women Setting up Street Stalls on Jogibara Road, McLeod Ganj	241
Plate vi: Women selling “Luffi” at a street stall on Jogibara Rd, McLeod Ganj	241
Plate vii: Vegetable market on Jogibara Road, McLeod Ganj	242
Plate viii: Plastic Bottles	242

List of Tables

Table 1: The Tibetan and Chinese Populations in the Tibet Autonomous Region and the People's Republic of China	3
Table 2: Women's Socio-Political Profile Pre-Flight	185
Table 3: Women's Socio-Political Profile Post-Flight	185
Table 4: Women's Capacities and Vulnerabilities Pre-Flight	186
Table 5: Women's Capacities and Vulnerabilities Post-Flight	188
Table 6: Ways of Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building on Capacities in the Post-Flight Period	190
Table 7: Women's Practical Needs and Strategic Interests	193

Glossary

AFWIC	African Women in Crisis Umbrella Programme
Barkhor	The octagonal street encircling the Jokhang in Lhasa, a holy pilgrim circuit.
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
Chubsang	A nunnery in Lhasa.
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CVA	Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis
Drebu Lingka	The ground below the Potala.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Gutsa	Name of a prison in Lhasa, Tibet.
ICARA I	1 st International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa
INS	Immigration and Naturalisation Service (United States)
Jokhang	The holiest shrine in Tibetan Buddhism.
Lhasa	The capital of Tibet.
Norbulingka	“The Jewel Park”, the summer residence of the Dalai Lama.
NZ	New Zealand
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PLA	People’s Liberation Army
Potala	The palace and winter home of the Dalai Lama.
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRC	People’s Republic of China
TAR	Tibet Autonomous Region
TCV	Tibetan Children’s Village School
TIPA	Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts
Tsampa	The staple food of most Tibetans: pre-cooked barley flour, which is mixed with butter or tea to form soft balls.
TYC	Tibetan Youth Congress
TWA	Tibetan Women’s Association
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Programme for Women
Yuan	Unit of Chinese money, equal to approximately 4 Indian rupees.

Introduction

Migration, the movement of people across space and time, is part of the human experience. In contrast to the major migrations of the Nineteenth Century which were voluntary, however, most of the migration waves of the Twentieth Century were involuntary, or forced migrations (Kliot 1987: 109). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 10,000 people flee their home each day, and "...that out of the world population of 5.5 billion, roughly one in every 130 people has been forced into flight" (UNHCR in Cohen 1995: 1).

Although the literature regarding refugees is broad, the various studies regarding refugee migrations have not well represented the points of refugees themselves (Chambers 1986: vii). This study adds to the body of refugee literature by using a qualitative approach to document the migration experiences of four Tibetan refugee women living in Dharamsala, India, from the time of the exile from Tibet to their present-day lives. Using refugee migration theories to analyse the contemporary Tibetan refugee movements, this thesis considers the question of why, after more than fifty years of Chinese occupation, Tibetans are still leaving Tibet to live in exile in India.

Data for this exploratory study was collected through various methods, including taped in-depth interviews, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Gender Analysis Frameworks, stimulus pictures, informal conversations and personal observations while in McLeod Ganj, India from 23 April 2000 to 28 May 2000.

Background to the Study

It was originally intended that a clear focus of the study would be on women's changing roles since their exile from Tibet. The journey into exile would be seen as a catalyst of change for the women to be interviewed. However, as the research progressed, the topic developed to incorporate additional areas of importance to the lives of the women: the Chinese presence in Tibet and the issue of Tibet's independence.

The inclusion of these topics of discussion was not without reservation, however, as initially I had sought to avoid collecting politically sensitive information regarding the Chinese presence in Tibet for two reasons. Firstly, I had purposely avoided the subject, as I was aware that there was already a large body of literature regarding the complex issue of Tibetan independence and Nationalism. Instead, I wanted to look at Tibetan life in exile. Secondly, I was concerned that my funding providers (Massey University, Asia 2000 Foundation) would have reservations regarding providing financial support towards a project that involved such a concept. Thus, I had relegated these issues to 'beyond the scope of my topic.'

However, during my fieldwork experience, I discovered that the development and culture of the Tibetan exile community in Dharamsala is inextricably linked to the inhabitants' previous experiences in Tibet. Without acknowledging these, only a fraction of their story could be told. Consequently, this thesis locates the women's stories within the context of the Tibetan refugee situation, examining the social, political and economic background from which their voices emerge. For as Rose (1981: 8) explains:

... refugees do not live in a vacuum. They are part of an intricate socio-political web that must be seen as a background against which any portrait of their travails must be painted and any dissection of their innermost thoughts and feelings must be paid.

In addition, investigating the historical background of the Tibetan refugee situation developed a more in-depth context for the women's flight into exile. Gaining an understanding into the context of China's presence in Tibet then enabled a greater understanding of how this presence has affected contemporary Tibetan refugee movements.

Tibet

It must be clearly noted that the use of the term 'Tibet' in this thesis refers to cultural and ethnic Tibet, an area that includes Tibetan areas that are now recognised as part of Sichuan, Gansu, Yunnan, and Qinghai provinces of China.

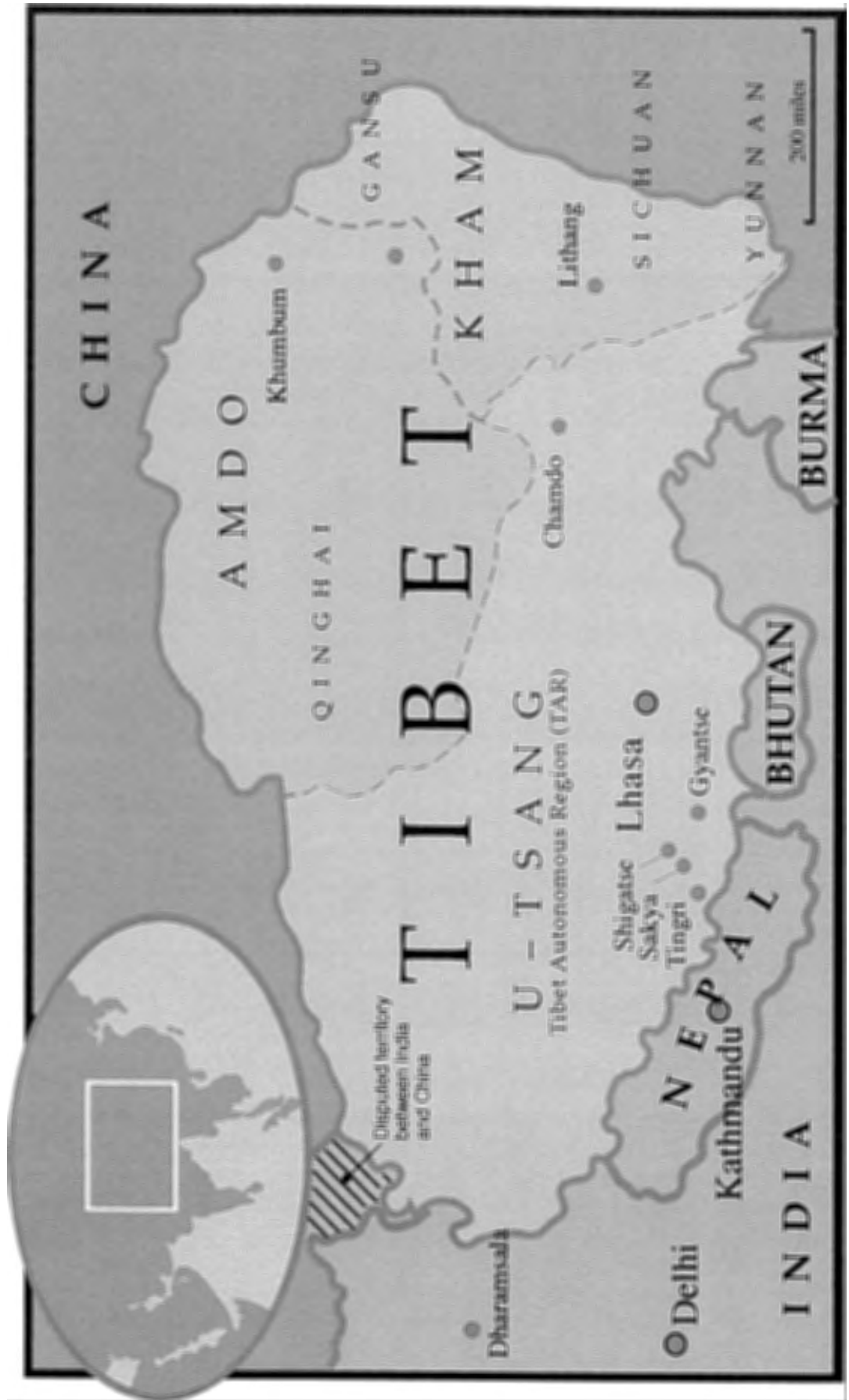
(See Figure 1, Map of Tibet, pp.4.) This is for two reasons, firstly, because Tibetans themselves use the term Tibet to refer to the three provinces of Amdo (now divided into the provinces of Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan), Kham (chiefly incorporated into the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and Qinghai), and U-Tsang. (U-Tsang, together with Western Kham, is known as the Tibet Autonomous Region). Secondly, the Tibetan exile community in India consists of Tibetans from all Tibetan inhabited areas of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and eastern Tibetan areas Amdo and Kham, (chol ka gsum), the “three provinces”, or (Bod chen mo) of “great Tibet” (Schwartz 1996:10). Tibetans do not only inhabit the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), the political area designated as Tibet by China in 1965, but in all three areas of greater Tibet that the Chinese incorporated into other areas of China.

In contrast, however, Chinese authorities use the term ‘Tibet’ to refer only to the TAR. The Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR), or Xizang in Chinese, is China's second largest provincial level administrative unit. Despite its size, the TAR has the lowest population of all China's provincial regions. For instance, in 1982 Tibet had an average density of just over one person per square kilometre (Kaplan & Sobin 1982: 56). The following population statistics for China from the 1990 Population Census and the 1992 China Population Statistical Yearbook show that 2, 096, 718 Tibetans live in the TAR. This figure, however, did not account for the other 2, 496, 354 Tibetans living in the other areas now incorporated into the People's Republic of China. This can be seen more clearly on the Map of the Main Chinese Linguistic Groups (see Figure 2, pp.5), which shows that Tibetan is spoken by those people who live in the Tibetan recognised area that makes up greater Tibet, not simply those in the Chinese designated area of the TAR.

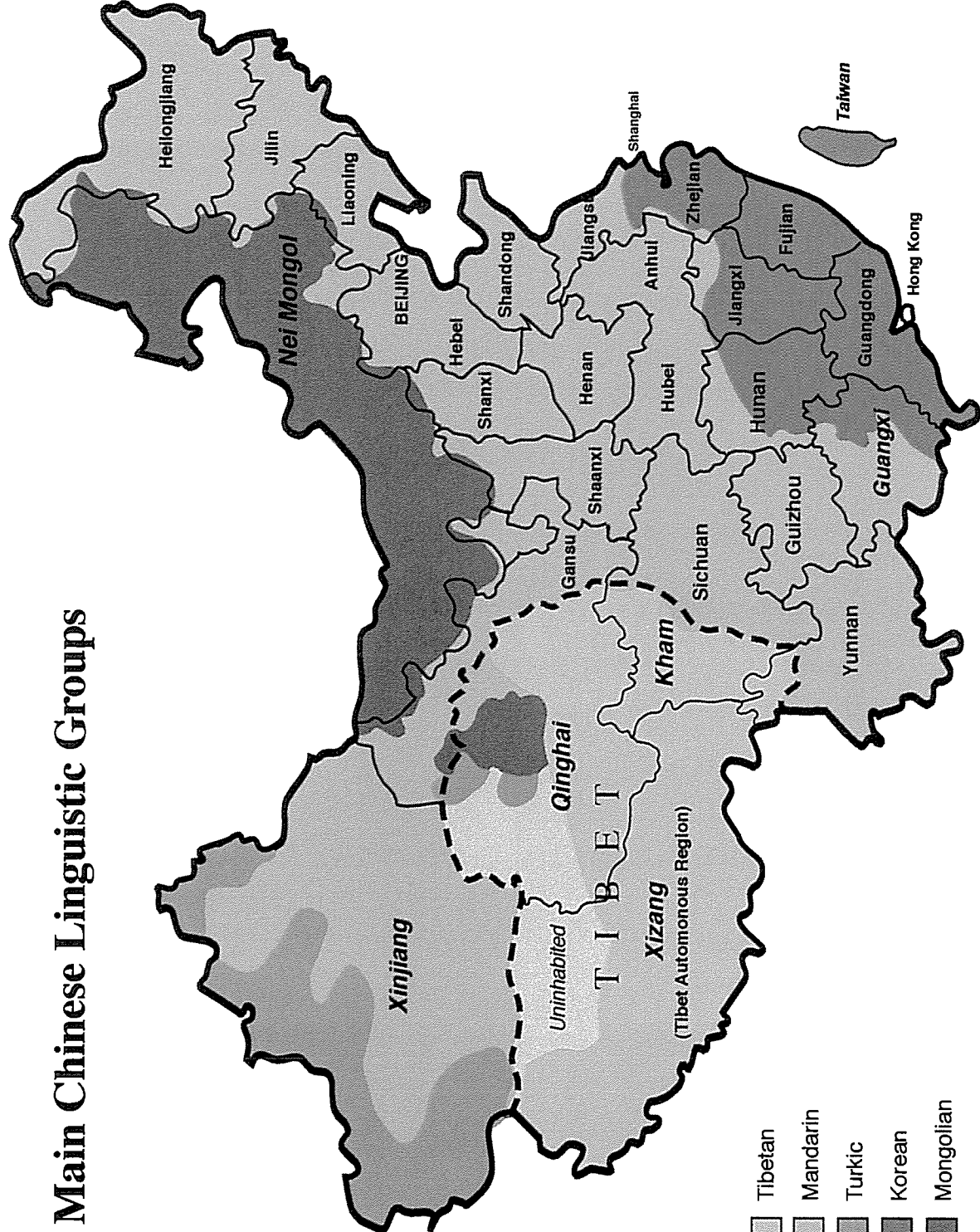
Table 1: The Tibetan and Chinese Populations in the Tibet Autonomous Region and the People's Republic of China

Administrative Area	Tibetan Population	Chinese Population	Other Ethnic Groups	Total	Total %
TAR	2, 096, 718	80, 837	18, 474	2,196,029	3.7
Lhasa	327, 882	44, 945	3, 141	375, 968	12.0
PRC Total	4, 593, 072	1,039,187,548	86,730,018	1,130,510,638	92.0

Source: 1990 Population Census and 1992 China Population Statistical Yearbook in Tibet Information Network.



Main Chinese Linguistic Groups



(Adapted from: Chinese Linguistic Groups)

Tibetan Refugees

In 1950, the Chinese People's Liberation Army invaded Tibet. In 1959, as a direct result of the Chinese occupation and annexation of Tibet, the Dalai Lama, the temporal and spiritual leader of Tibet, and approximately 100,000 Tibetans fled Tibet in exile. Today, however, even after more than 50 years of Chinese occupation, relatively large numbers of Tibetans are still leaving Tibet for life in exile. According to Tibetan officials in India, more than 35,000 Tibetans have arrived in India since 1990, and about 2,900 Tibetans arrived in 2000 (Refugees Daily 15 Dec 2000). On average 2,400 Tibetans arrive in India via Nepal each year. The Indian authorities hold the official position that the Tibetans are "on pilgrimage" and refoulement is not mentioned (UNHCR 1999).

As a result of Tibetan refugee movements over the past 50 years, Tibetans in exile now form part of a recognisable diasporic¹ population. Dispersed from Tibet, Tibetans now live around the world in Switzerland, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, Canada, the United States, Taiwan, Japan, England, France, Holland, Germany and Australia, and there are now over 130,000 Tibetan refugees living in over 30 countries outside Tibet (The 1995 National Report on Tibetan Women). The majority of exiles, however, have remained in India.

Tibetan refugee communities have had to adapt a new ways of life, while simultaneously working in a pro-active manner to maintain their Tibetan culture and identity. The structural elements of modern Tibetan refugee society have altered significantly from their traditional forms in Tibet, as refugee 'communities' are made up of a conglomerate of refuge seekers from various Tibetan regional and class groups. Despite the diversity and differences in backgrounds, there are two elements that create a sense of unity within the Tibetan settlements; a strong feeling of common national identity, and the Dalai Lama, the central symbol of Tibetan religion, culture and ethnicity (Von Fürer-Haimendorf 1989: 55). The strong determination of Tibetan refugees to maintain their national identity,

¹ Once associated with Jewish, Greek and Armenian dispersion, the term Diaspora is now also applied to other communities that experience forced expulsion that results in scattering of the population to two or more foreign destinations (Clifford 1994; Cohen 1997; Van Hear 1998).

rebuild their communities and re-establish the culture and institutions is clearly demonstrated in The Tibetan settlement of Dharamsala in northern India.

Dharamsala

Dharamsala is located in the Kangra District of the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. The snow-capped Dhauladhar ranges in the Pir Panjal region of the Outer Himalayas create a dramatic backdrop for the town, perched on a hill overlooking the Kangra valley. In 1849, Dharamsala became the military cantonment of the British, and later a small but flourishing hill station and administrative headquarters of the Kangra District. The two main areas at the time were McLeod Ganj, named after Lt Governor of Punjab, David McLeod, and Forsyth Ganj, named after a divisional commissioner. In 1905, a severe earthquake resulted in collapsed buildings and the moving of residents to the safety of lower Dharamsala. When India achieved independence in 1947, McLeod Ganj became a quiet village of vacated houses and shops.

In 1959 the Dalai Lama accepted the Indian prime minister, Nehru's, offer of Dharamsala as a place of refuge for the Tibetan government in exile and the thousands of Tibetan refugees arriving on a daily basis from Tibet. When the Dalai Lama arrived at the remote an isolated village of McLeod Ganj it was little more than a 'ghost town' inhabited by a small Indian population with one small shop run by the Nowrojee family (Pema 1997: 72), which is still in existence.

Today, Dharamsala has developed into a centre of pilgrimage for Tibetan refugees and Buddhists from all over the world that wish to receive blessings and teachings from the Dalai Lama, and as a reception centre for Tibetan refugees arriving in India. Dharamsala is now divided into two distinct areas: Kotwali Bazaar and areas further down the valley known as Lower Dharamsala, and McLeod Ganj and surrounding areas known as Upper Dharamsala. The Tibetan refugee population is estimated to be approximately 10,000, with a smaller number of Indian and Kashmiri residents who run local retail and restaurant businesses catering predominantly for the tourist trade.

Introduction to the Respondents

Deyang was born in a small village very close to Lhasa. Like other Tibetans, she does not know her exact date of birth but believes she is now around 26 years old. Her family consists of her mother, her father, her two sisters and one younger brother, and herself, the daughter of farmers. The family raised yaks, oxen, goats and sheep. Her home community was mainly Tibetan with a few Chinese inhabitants. She considers herself to be from an 'average' family of good 'caste' grouping. She had no education in Tibet because she had to take care of the animals and work in the fields. Although there was a very small school near where she lived, she was unable to attend, as her family required her productive labour on the farm, as there were not enough people to do all the work that needed to be done. She has never been married and has no children.

Lhamo was also born very close to Lhasa. She has no idea of her date of birth but thinks she's around 24 years old. Her family were farmers who had yaks, cows, goats, sheep and horses. There are 10 children in the family. The community she lived in was of average wealth but wide ranging. There were about 800 people in her village, (which was quite big); all were farmers. Her mother died when she was 13 years old. She was unable to attend school, as she was responsible for taking care of her siblings. At the age of 15 years, her parents arranged her marriage. Unhappy in the situation, (because the marriage meant she had to stay with the husband's family, and she couldn't help her siblings with their "bad" stepmother), she escaped after only one month and went to Lhasa for one month by herself, aged 16 years old. Upon her return, she stayed with relatives back in her village. Her parents don't know she escaped. She describes her stepmother as "too young" and consequently was "bad." As her stepmother had her own two children, she was not nice with her father's children. Coming to India meant for her a way to help her relatives with money. She has no children.

Sonam was born in Kham in eastern Tibet. She has no idea of her exact age though she believes she's around 29 years old. Her family are farmers with horses, goats, cows, yaks, and donkeys. She comes from a large family of 16

members; she has one brother and two sisters. In Tibet she stayed with her brother who has eight children and her sister-in-law, and a nun. She had no schooling in Tibet, as there was no school in her village. She says her parents would have liked to send her to school but it was too far away.

Ani was born in Lhasa on the 25th of June 1976. She is 25 years old. The family consists of her father, her mother, four sisters and one brother. Her parents are retired now; they used to work for the Chinese government service. She lived in No 3 community in Lhasa, near the Jokhang temple, in what she described as an averagely wealthy community. She spent 11 years at a “good” Chinese school where she learned English for a year. Then went to Chubsang nunnery in Lhasa at the age of 15.

Outline of the Study

Chapter One sets the context of Tibet in the Twentieth Century, and the subsequent exile of Tibetan refugees after the Chinese invasion and occupation in the early 1950s. Divided into two parts, part one discusses the history of Tibet up to the middle of the twentieth century, and includes a brief discussion of Tibet’s political status. The second part then continues with an historical overview of the development of Tibet under Chinese rule, outlining the historical, political and economic situation. The chapter will conclude with a critique of Chinese development in Tibet; examining the economic development of Tibet and the effects some of the policies have had on Tibet and the Tibetan people under the control of the Chinese Communist Party.

Chapter Two, the Literature Review, is also divided into two sections. Part one will begin by giving an historical overview of the evolution of the refugee in the Twentieth Century, and focus on the evolution of refugee definitions during this period. Part two will then concentrate on theoretical perspectives of refugees, including theories of migration and refugee migration, and the causes of refugee flows. Various aspects of refugee migrations will also be examined, including Third World refugees, development and migration, and gender and migration. In addition, it will briefly discuss the benefits of the ‘refugee’ label and the

consequences of labelling for refugees. The discussion will conclude by looking at the decision-making involved in refugee migrations.

Chapter Three, the Methodology, begins by outlining the approach used for the data collection, the ethical considerations involved in the collection of data, and the tools and methods used to collect the data. The chapter then goes on to discuss the researcher's inception and social relations with the host community and respondents, including the constraints experienced in the research environment. The chapter then concludes with a discussion of the issues raised from the fieldwork process and the subsequent process of data analysis.

Chapter Four focuses on the discussion and analysis of the data, using the three phases of the refugee experience (pre-flight, flight and post flight) as a framework for analysis. In conclusion, Chapter Five presents possible options for ameliorating the situation in Tibet, which in turn may assist in preventing further refugee flows.

As a final note to the reader, I would like to add that reading the women's stories in the following thesis is only part of the process of gaining an understanding of the Tibetan refugee experience. What you do not read about are the silenced voices of those who did not survive the arduous Himalayan journey, nor those who remain silenced in Tibet. Again, I would like to thank the respondents for their stories. These are stories of women who did take risks, who did leave it all behind for the hopeful chance of freedom. May these women have their voices heard for the sake of others left behind.

Chapter One: Historical Background

Introduction

This chapter will begin by discussing the history of Tibet up to the middle of the twentieth century, when China invaded Tibet in 1950. Following on from this will be a brief discussion of Tibet's political status. The second half of the chapter will then continue with an historical overview of the development of Tibet under Chinese rule, and the effects some of the Chinese policies have had on Tibet and the Tibetan people.

A History of Tibet

Introduction

The recorded history of Tibet starts from the Seventh century AD (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7), when Tibet made its first documented appearance as a political entity; the foundation of which was located in the region of today's capital, Lhasa (Nakane 1978: 35). It was during this period that Tibet evolved into an entity that resembled a state with a single monarch, Emperor Songsten Gampo; a state-sponsored religion, Buddhism; and a written language (Grunfeld 1999: 291).

To write about Tibetan history today becomes a difficult exercise in objectivity, as there exist conflicting versions of events over the centuries. As Mullin (in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7) states: "What view one takes of these competing claims depends on where one opens the history book." As an academic researcher, I sought to write an 'impartial' account of Tibetan history. Yet, after living amongst Tibetans during my field research, I realise that in the face of my experiences, this is perhaps no longer possible.

Therefore, while I have attempted to profile the two distinct views of Tibetan history, from both the Chinese and Tibetan perspectives, this account primarily reflects Tibetan history from the Tibetan viewpoint, and is intended to be read as a Tibetan history; a history for Tibetans, by Tibetans, a history that unites Tibetans in their call for a 'Free Tibet'. While certain historians may hold varying opinions of the events outlined in the following pages, it must be remembered that it is through the Tibetan perspective of Tibetan history that many Tibetans understand and make sense of their lives. Moreover, this account demonstrates the context of historical understanding within which the research respondents, as Tibetans, centre their lives.

The Status of Tibet Prior to the Chinese Invasion

Tibet first came into significant contact with China as a result of Tibet's rise to a great Asian empire. From the Second to Ninth century AD, Tibet extended its territory into Central Asia, Nepal, Upper Burma, and over large areas of Western China, even occupying the then Chinese (Tang) capital of Chang'an, and forcing the emperor to flee (Nakane 1978: 35; Norbu 1998: 4).

The political relationship between Tibet and China was established in the Seventh century when the King of Nepal and the Emperor of China offered their daughters to the Tibetan emperor, King Songsten Gampo, in marriage.¹ Not only were these imperial marriages of particular importance at the political level, but they also had religious significance, as these princesses were instrumental in the spread of Buddhism in Tibet (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c). The Chinese princess, Kongjo, brought with her a large golden image of the Buddha, the Jo, which remains to this day in the Jokhang temple in Lhasa, and is regarded as the

¹ Legend has it that King Songsten Gampo was an emanation of Avalokiteshvara; the Nepalese Princess, Tritsun was manifestation of the goddess Bhrikuti; and the Chinese Princess, Kongjo, was an emanation of the goddess Tara (Kunzang Lama I Shelung in Alam 2000: 29).

most sacred idol in Tibet (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). In later years, the ties between China and Tibet were further strengthened by similar marriages.

Commencing around the Twelfth century, the Mongols took control of Eurasia, briefly conquering Tibet when they ruled China (1280-1368). When the Mongols allied themselves with the Gelugpa sect of Tibetan Buddhism, a 'priest-patron' (cho-yon) relationship was formed between the Mongols and Tibet. In return for military protection, the Tibetans offered the Mongols spiritual guidance (Grunfeld 1999: 291). Additionally, the Mongols created the rule of the Dalai Lama (Grunfeld 1999: 291; Nakane 1978). This 'priest-patron' relationship, according to the Chinese, was extended to the rulers of China. The Tibetan perspective, however, states that Tibetan treaties referred to the Han as 'religious disciples', and the priest-patron relationship was not extended to the predominant Han people. Rather, it was solely with the Mongols and later the Manchus when they ruled China (Grunfeld 1987: 223; The Government of Tibet in Exile, c).

The Chinese argue that Tibet became a part of China under this Mongol empire, when Tibet was incorporated into China in the mid-Thirteenth century, and the rulers of China named Phagpa as the ruler of Tibet. Yet, Norbu (1998: 4) firmly refutes this argument as "untenable":

It is based on the reasoning that the Mongols were actually Chinese, and that China, as the homeland of the Mongols, was never subject to the Mongol conquest! (Norbu 1998: 4).

The succeeding Manchu empire included China, Tibet and Mongolia in its territories. The Qing dynasty was an empire whose rulers considered it to be the 'Middle Kingdom', the centre of the civilised world (Stockman 2000: 35). The Chinese argue that the ethnic Manchu Qing dynasty (1644-1912) had incorporated Tibet into a greater China (Grunfeld 1999: 291), and that the Qing Dynasty decided on the organisation of Tibet's local government (Grunfeld 1987: 224). Again, this is disputed in the Tibetan version of events:

But Tibet and Mongolia were never part of China, and when this empire collapsed in the early twentieth century both Tibet and Mongolia declared their independence (Norbu 1998: 4).

Yet, there are times when, according to the Chinese, the Ambans, the representatives² sent to Lhasa, were in almost complete control of the government in Lhasa, namely, from 1728 to 1911. While according to the Tibetan version of events, the Ambans were originally seen as 'security guards' to the Dalai Lama, and derived all of their authority solely through the government of Lhasa (Grunfeld 1987: 223):

The *Ambans* were not viceroys or administrators, but were essentially ambassadors appointed to look after Manchu interests, and to protect the Dalai Lama on behalf of the Emperor (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c).

After the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, Tibet was self-governed until the Chinese invasion in 1950. Tibet exercised full control over its internal affairs and had a "somewhat autonomous" foreign policy (Kaplan & Sobin 1982: 56). In 1912, the Dalai Lama declared independence while concurrently the Lhasa government evicted all Han residents and soldiers from Tibet (Grunfeld 1987: 223), including the Ambans (Mullin & Wangyal 1983; Donnet 1994). Therefore, Tibetans argue that from 1913 until 1950, the Chinese government had no control or influence in Lhasa:

For the next 38 years Tibet was for all practical purposes independent. The authority of the Tibetan government was absolute and China itself was plunged into civil war and chaos (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7).

Further proof of Tibet's autonomy during this time is demonstrated in Tibet's self-representation as an independent state at the Asian relations conference in 1947 (Grunfeld 1987: 223). From the Chinese perspective, however, it was only after a

² Tibetans point out that it is a common mistake to call the Ambans "Chinese Representatives" as the Manchu Emperors made a point of assigning Manchus or Mongolians rather than Han Chinese to these positions (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c).

protest from the Chinese Embassy that the organisers took down the Tibetan flag at this conference, confirming Tibet as part of China (Grunfeld 1987: 225).

Communism

Even before China declared itself as the People's Republic in 1949, the Tibetan Government was prompted by a fear of a Communist presence in Tibet to sever ties with China. The Tibetan Government decided to expel all Chinese connected with the Kuomintang (Guomindang) Government in July 1949. In addition, a curfew was imposed in Lhasa in case the Chinese might organise protests (Shakya 1999: 8), while a number of Tibetans from the East were also expelled on suspicion that they were Communist sympathisers (Shakya 1999: 9-10).

While these acts strongly demonstrated Tibet's desire to remain independent, they also provoked a Communist determination to gain control of Tibet. Hence, the Communist Party, prior to its rise to power in China, had developed strategies for the incorporation of 'Chinese National Minorities' within the People's Republic of China framework in its Common Programme of 29 September 1949 (Shakya 1999: 11).

The People's Republic of China was established on 1 October 1949, and a strong central government was formed, which focused on nationalism and communism. On coming to power, the 'liberation' of Tibet was a key task for the People's Liberation Army as the Chinese were determined to regain the outer boundaries of Qing rule. As Shakya (1999: 4) explains: "The question of Tibet was bound up with China's perception of itself as a new nation, and of its international status."

The Chinese perceived Tibet as Chinese territory and Tibetan issues were to be dealt with under the rubric of a 'National Minority' (Grunfeld 1999: 292; Shakya 1999: 3). Articles 50 to 53 of the Common Programme dealing with national

minority issues became the basis of China's long-term policy towards Tibet (Shakya 1999: 3). While the Chinese Communist Party's nationalities policy "included all of the contradictions acquired from Marxist-Leninist doctrine", it also included "those of traditional Chinese chauvinism as well" (Smith 1994: 55). Deeming the essence of the question of nationality as a question of class, Mao believed that "...nationalism had no significance except as a means of class suppression; once class suppression is eliminated nationalism would have no basis" (Smith 1994: 55).

Tibet's Reactions to Communism

The Communist victory caused alarm among the Tibetan ruling elite, which was composed of the aristocracy and religious elite. One month after the Communists assumed total control of China, the Tsongdu (Tibetan National Assembly) met in November 1949, and agreed to take measures to counter the Chinese threat. In order to defend itself from the Communist invasion, Tibet's first move was to make internal reforms to prepare for a possible Chinese attack (Shakya 1999:11). Tibet attempted to strengthen its army, despite major shortages of personnel, weapons, ammunition and training (Avedon: 1984; Shakya: 1999).

Nonetheless, Tibet's state remained politically weak due to the recent Reting conspiracy, in which the ex-Regent, Reting Rinpoche, supported by the monks of Sera, attempted to take over from the incumbent Regent, Takya, almost creating civil war and leaving deep divisions amongst its ruling elite. Further, the Dalai Lama³, himself only 14 years old, had not yet established political authority. Therefore, amid both military and political weaknesses, Tibet was not capable of opposing China either "militarily or socially" (Shakya 1999: 5).

³ The Dalai Lama is the spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet, and is believed to be the human manifestation of Chenrezig, the Buddha of Compassion. The reincarnation succession system requires that only a newborn child can succeed the Dalai Lama after his death. Thus, an inherent weakness in the system, as a political system, is that the enthronement of a successor could take place only fifteen years or more after he was designated. This interim period presented a critical period, during which the Regent would control the Tibetan administration as the representative authority (Nakane 1978: 39).

Many believed that with its vast mountain ranges, its greatest defence asset, Tibet would be able to hold off the troops of the People's Liberation Army (Avedon 1984: 27). However, with a growing realisation that Tibet could not hold off China permanently, the Tibetan government then tried to secure external support by endeavouring to seek diplomatic negotiations with India, Nepal, Great Britain and the United States, pleading with them to receive missions seeking help (Shakya 1999: 11).

However, only ever having had official relations with India, as Tibet had never "...deemed it necessary to establish ties to a world with which it had no contact..." (Avedon 1984: 27), the Tibetans were ill prepared and at a loss to gain the required international support. Further, the Tibetans had never become a member of the United Nations as Tibet followed a policy of 'peaceful isolation' (Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991:52). The final line of defence for the Tibetan government was to try to establish a dialogue with the Communists (Shakya 1999: 11). However, before this was achieved, China invaded Tibet.

Invasion: The 'Liberalisation' of Tibet: China's Reconstruction Phase 1949 – 1952

The People's Liberation Army marched into Tibet on 7 October 1950. The First and Second Field Armies invaded at dawn, with 84,000 troops crossing the upper Yangtze on small coracles⁴ into eastern Tibet, and destroying the small garrison force at Chamdo in Kham (Avedon: 1984; Donnet 1994). Military camps were set up in eastern and western Tibet, and throughout the provinces of Amdo and Kham (Donnet 1994: 21).

The Chinese Communists, however, did not regard themselves as invading a foreign country, as Chinese governments (Communist, and Nationalist and Imperial) over the last 260 years had regarded Tibet as part of China (Mullin in

⁴ Coracles are small round boats made of stretched animal skin over a wooden frame.

Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). From the Chinese point of view, Tibet was seen as an 'integral part of China', and it was in fact anti-Chinese and imperialist forces that had encouraged Tibet to break away from the 'Motherland' (Shakya 1999: 4).

United Nations Appeal

The Tibetan government sought United Nations help to stop the invasion on 11 November 1950. At the UN General Assembly the delegate from El Salvador called for a debate on Tibet. However, the British delegate proposed that the issue be deferred, "*sine die* on the grounds that the status of Tibet was under question." With the support of the Indian delegate, Britain and India moved that the subject be suspended, as it was believed that the matter could be settled through peaceful negotiations (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). Thus, the issue of Tibet was cast aside (Wangyal in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 16).

Despite brief assistance by the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to resist the Chinese, "...which was only too glad to assist, viewing Tibet as another opportunity to destabilize the Chinese government in its Cold War crusade..." (Grunfeld 1999: 292), the international community did not support Tibet in its fight for freedom.

The Sino-Tibetan Agreement of 1951: the Seventeen-Point Agreement

As a result of the Tibetan government's aim to establish a dialogue with the Communists, negotiations took place in Beijing towards the Sino-Tibetan Agreement of 1951. On 23 May 1951 the Tibetan delegates, lead by Ngabo Ngawang Jigme⁵, signed the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful

⁵ The Tibetans regard Ngabo Ngawang Jigme as a coward as he betrayed the Khampas and surrendered to the Chinese with a force 20 times their size. His actions resulted in the fall of Tibet, only 11 days after the invasion of Chinese troops (Avedon 1984: 32). Later he turned into a collaborator and leader with the Chinese (Avedon 1984: 227).

Liberation of Tibet, commonly known as the Seventeen-Point Agreement. The Dalai Lama and the National Assembly later ratified the Agreement on 24 October 1951.

The role of Tibet was defined as part of China in which Tibet agreed, "...to return to the big family of the Motherland" (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). The Chinese, under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government, gave national regional autonomy to Tibet. The Agreement promised cultural and political autonomy to Tibet but relinquished its independence. The principal elements of regional autonomy appeared to uphold the Tibetan form of government, and according to Article 11, the Central authorities should be not compel the government to reform along Communist lines (Richardson 1984: 189).

Under the terms of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, the establishment of the unified central control required the Tibetan army to integrate into the Chinese forces, and for a military and administrative committee to be established at Lhasa to implement the agreement. In addition, there was provision for the unrestricted entry of Chinese troops into Tibet, and the establishment of a Military and Civil Headquarters at Lhasa. In areas occupied by Chinese soldiers, a series of military/political committees were set up (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7).

The Central Government, according to Article 4, was not to alter the existing political system in Tibet, or the status, functions, and powers of the Dalai Lama. Meanwhile, officials of various ranks should continue to hold office. Article 7 provided for the protection of established religious customs and institutions (Richardson 1984: 189). However, despite these written assurances for the protection of Tibetan polity and religion from the Chinese, Tibet was no longer an autonomous state, as the Dalai Lama explains: "But for all these platitudes one

Introduction

Migration, the movement of people across space and time, is part of the human experience. In contrast to the major migrations of the Nineteenth Century which were voluntary, however, most of the migration waves of the Twentieth Century were involuntary, or forced migrations (Kliot 1987: 109). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 10,000 people flee their home each day, and "...that out of the world population of 5.5 billion, roughly one in every 130 people has been forced into flight" (UNHCR in Cohen 1995: 1).

Although the literature regarding refugees is broad, the various studies regarding refugee migrations have not well represented the points of refugees themselves (Chambers 1986: vii). This study adds to the body of refugee literature by using a qualitative approach to document the migration experiences of four Tibetan refugee women living in Dharamsala, India, from the time of the exile from Tibet to their present-day lives. Using refugee migration theories to analyse the contemporary Tibetan refugee movements, this thesis considers the question of why, after more than fifty years of Chinese occupation, Tibetans are still leaving Tibet to live in exile in India.

Data for this exploratory study was collected through various methods, including taped in-depth interviews, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Gender Analysis Frameworks, stimulus pictures, informal conversations and personal observations while in McLeod Ganj, India from 23 April 2000 to 28 May 2000.

Background to the Study

It was originally intended that a clear focus of the study would be on women's changing roles since their exile from Tibet. The journey into exile would be seen as a catalyst of change for the women to be interviewed. However, as the research progressed, the topic developed to incorporate additional areas of importance to the lives of the women: the Chinese presence in Tibet and the issue of Tibet's independence.

The inclusion of these topics of discussion was not without reservation, however, as initially I had sought to avoid collecting politically sensitive information regarding the Chinese presence in Tibet for two reasons. Firstly, I had purposely avoided the subject, as I was aware that there was already a large body of literature regarding the complex issue of Tibetan independence and Nationalism. Instead, I wanted to look at Tibetan life in exile. Secondly, I was concerned that my funding providers (Massey University, Asia 2000 Foundation) would have reservations regarding providing financial support towards a project that involved such a concept. Thus, I had relegated these issues to 'beyond the scope of my topic.'

However, during my fieldwork experience, I discovered that the development and culture of the Tibetan exile community in Dharamsala is inextricably linked to the inhabitants' previous experiences in Tibet. Without acknowledging these, only a fraction of their story could be told. Consequently, this thesis locates the women's stories within the context of the Tibetan refugee situation, examining the social, political and economic background from which their voices emerge. For as Rose (1981: 8) explains:

... refugees do not live in a vacuum. They are part of an intricate socio-political web that must be seen as a background against which any portrait of their travails must be painted and any dissection of their innermost thoughts and feelings must be paid.

In addition, investigating the historical background of the Tibetan refugee situation developed a more in-depth context for the women's flight into exile. Gaining an understanding into the context of China's presence in Tibet then enabled a greater understanding of how this presence has affected contemporary Tibetan refugee movements.

Tibet

It must be clearly noted that the use of the term 'Tibet' in this thesis refers to cultural and ethnic Tibet, an area that includes Tibetan areas that are now recognised as part of Sichuan, Gansu, Yunnan, and Qinghai provinces of China.

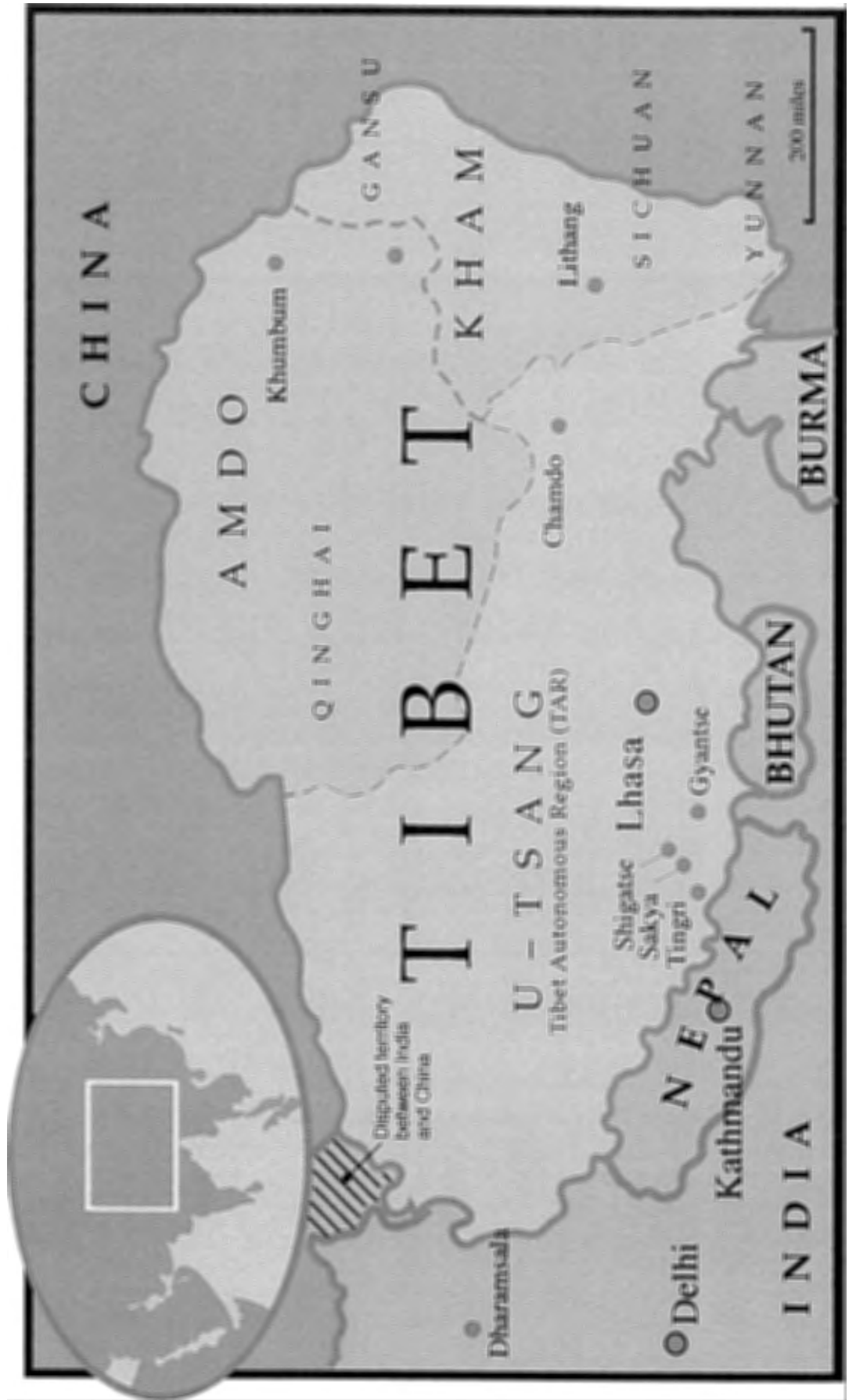
(See Figure 1, Map of Tibet, pp.4.) This is for two reasons, firstly, because Tibetans themselves use the term Tibet to refer to the three provinces of Amdo (now divided into the provinces of Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan), Kham (chiefly incorporated into the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and Qinghai), and U-Tsang. (U-Tsang, together with Western Kham, is known as the Tibet Autonomous Region). Secondly, the Tibetan exile community in India consists of Tibetans from all Tibetan inhabited areas of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and eastern Tibetan areas Amdo and Kham, (chol ka gsum), the “three provinces”, or (Bod chen mo) of “great Tibet” (Schwartz 1996:10). Tibetans do not only inhabit the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), the political area designated as Tibet by China in 1965, but in all three areas of greater Tibet that the Chinese incorporated into other areas of China.

In contrast, however, Chinese authorities use the term ‘Tibet’ to refer only to the TAR. The Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR), or Xizang in Chinese, is China's second largest provincial level administrative unit. Despite its size, the TAR has the lowest population of all China’s provincial regions. For instance, in 1982 Tibet had an average density of just over one person per square kilometre (Kaplan & Sobin 1982: 56). The following population statistics for China from the 1990 Population Census and the 1992 China Population Statistical Yearbook show that 2, 096, 718 Tibetans live in the TAR. This figure, however, did not account for the other 2, 496, 354 Tibetans living in the other areas now incorporated into the People’s Republic of China. This can be seen more clearly on the Map of the Main Chinese Linguistic Groups (see Figure 2, pp.5), which shows that Tibetan is spoken by those people who live in the Tibetan recognised area that makes up greater Tibet, not simply those in the Chinese designated area of the TAR.

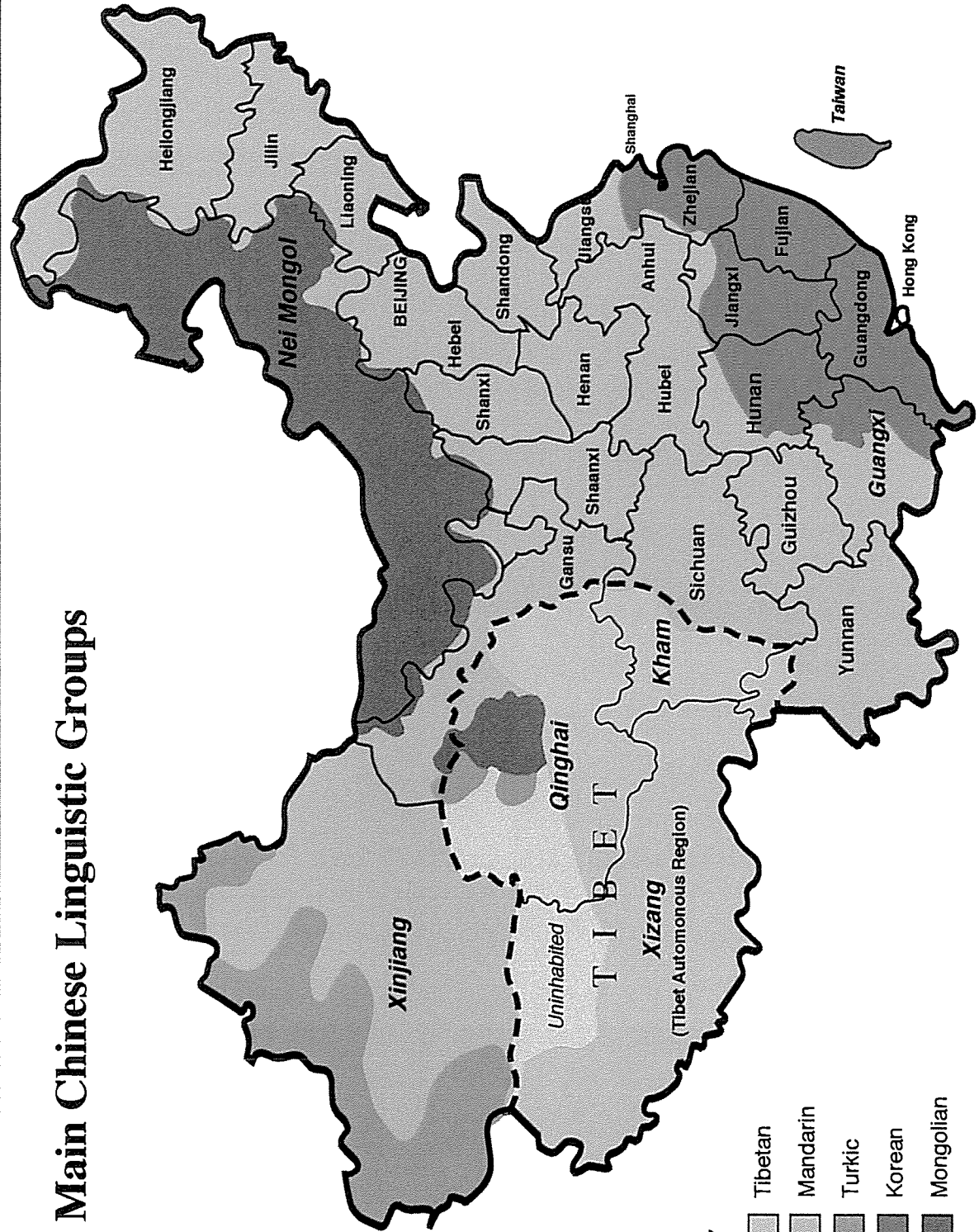
Table 1: The Tibetan and Chinese Populations in the Tibet Autonomous Region and the People’s Republic of China

Administrative Area	Tibetan Population	Chinese Population	Other Ethnic Groups	Total	Total %
TAR	2, 096, 718	80, 837	18, 474	2,196,029	3.7
Lhasa	327, 882	44, 945	3, 141	375, 968	12.0
PRC Total	4, 593, 072	1,039,187,548	86,730,018	1,130,510,638	92.0

Source: 1990 Population Census and 1992 China Population Statistical Yearbook in Tibet Information Network.



Main Chinese Linguistic Groups



- Tibetan
- Mandarin
- Turkic
- Korean
- Mongolian

(Adapted from: Chinese Linguistic Group)

Tibetan Refugees

In 1950, the Chinese People's Liberation Army invaded Tibet. In 1959, as a direct result of the Chinese occupation and annexation of Tibet, the Dalai Lama, the temporal and spiritual leader of Tibet, and approximately 100,000 Tibetans fled Tibet in exile. Today, however, even after more than 50 years of Chinese occupation, relatively large numbers of Tibetans are still leaving Tibet for life in exile. According to Tibetan officials in India, more than 35,000 Tibetans have arrived in India since 1990, and about 2,900 Tibetans arrived in 2000 (Refugees Daily 15 Dec 2000). On average 2,400 Tibetans arrive in India via Nepal each year. The Indian authorities hold the official position that the Tibetans are "on pilgrimage" and refoulement is not mentioned (UNHCR 1999).

As a result of Tibetan refugee movements over the past 50 years, Tibetans in exile now form part of a recognisable diasporic¹ population. Dispersed from Tibet, Tibetans now live around the world in Switzerland, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, Canada, the United States, Taiwan, Japan, England, France, Holland, Germany and Australia, and there are now over 130,000 Tibetan refugees living in over 30 countries outside Tibet (The 1995 National Report on Tibetan Women). The majority of exiles, however, have remained in India.

Tibetan refugee communities have had to adapt a new ways of life, while simultaneously working in a pro-active manner to maintain their Tibetan culture and identity. The structural elements of modern Tibetan refugee society have altered significantly from their traditional forms in Tibet, as refugee 'communities' are made up of a conglomerate of refugee seekers from various Tibetan regional and class groups. Despite the diversity and differences in backgrounds, there are two elements that create a sense of unity within the Tibetan settlements; a strong feeling of common national identity, and the Dalai Lama, the central symbol of Tibetan religion, culture and ethnicity (Von Fürer-Haimendorf 1989: 55). The strong determination of Tibetan refugees to maintain their national identity,

¹ Once associated with Jewish, Greek and Armenian dispersion, the term Diaspora is now also applied to other communities that experience forced expulsion that results in scattering of the population to two or more foreign destinations (Clifford 1994; Cohen 1997; Van Hear 1998).

rebuild their communities and re-establish the culture and institutions is clearly demonstrated in The Tibetan settlement of Dharamsala in northern India.

Dharamsala

Dharamsala is located in the Kangra District of the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. The snow-capped Dhauladhar ranges in the Pir Panjal region of the Outer Himalayas create a dramatic backdrop for the town, perched on a hill overlooking the Kangra valley. In 1849, Dharamsala became the military cantonment of the British, and later a small but flourishing hill station and administrative headquarters of the Kangra District. The two main areas at the time were McLeod Ganj, named after Lt Governor of Punjab, David McLeod, and Forsyth Ganj, named after a divisional commissioner. In 1905, a severe earthquake resulted in collapsed buildings and the moving of residents to the safety of lower Dharamsala. When India achieved independence in 1947, McLeod Ganj became a quiet village of vacated houses and shops.

In 1959 the Dalai Lama accepted the Indian prime minister, Nehru's, offer of Dharamsala as a place of refuge for the Tibetan government in exile and the thousands of Tibetan refugees arriving on a daily basis from Tibet. When the Dalai Lama arrived at the remote and isolated village of McLeod Ganj it was little more than a 'ghost town' inhabited by a small Indian population with one small shop run by the Nowrojee family (Pema 1997: 72), which is still in existence.

Today, Dharamsala has developed into a centre of pilgrimage for Tibetan refugees and Buddhists from all over the world that wish to receive blessings and teachings from the Dalai Lama, and as a reception centre for Tibetan refugees arriving in India. Dharamsala is now divided into two distinct areas: Kotwali Bazaar and areas further down the valley known as Lower Dharamsala, and McLeod Ganj and surrounding areas known as Upper Dharamsala. The Tibetan refugee population is estimated to be approximately 10,000, with a smaller number of Indian and Kashmiri residents who run local retail and restaurant businesses catering predominantly for the tourist trade.

Introduction to the Respondents

Deyang was born in a small village very close to Lhasa. Like other Tibetans, she does not know her exact date of birth but believes she is now around 26 years old. Her family consists of her mother, her father, her two sisters and one younger brother, and herself, the daughter of farmers. The family raised yaks, oxen, goats and sheep. Her home community was mainly Tibetan with a few Chinese inhabitants. She considers herself to be from an 'average' family of good 'caste' grouping. She had no education in Tibet because she had to take care of the animals and work in the fields. Although there was a very small school near where she lived, she was unable to attend, as her family required her productive labour on the farm, as there were not enough people to do all the work that needed to be done. She has never been married and has no children.

Lhamo was also born very close to Lhasa. She has no idea of her date of birth but thinks she's around 24 years old. Her family were farmers who had yaks, cows, goats, sheep and horses. There are 10 children in the family. The community she lived in was of average wealth but wide ranging. There were about 800 people in her village, (which was quite big); all were farmers. Her mother died when she was 13 years old. She was unable to attend school, as she was responsible for taking care of her siblings. At the age of 15 years, her parents arranged her marriage. Unhappy in the situation, (because the marriage meant she had to stay with the husband's family, and she couldn't help her siblings with their "bad" stepmother), she escaped after only one month and went to Lhasa for one month by herself, aged 16 years old. Upon her return, she stayed with relatives back in her village. Her parents don't know she escaped. She describes her stepmother as "too young" and consequently was "bad." As her stepmother had her own two children, she was not nice with her father's children. Coming to India meant for her a way to help her relatives with money. She has no children.

Sonam was born in Kham in eastern Tibet. She has no idea of her exact age though she believes she's around 29 years old. Her family are farmers with horses, goats, cows, yaks, and donkeys. She comes from a large family of 16

members; she has one brother and two sisters. In Tibet she stayed with her brother who has eight children and her sister-in-law, and a nun. She had no schooling in Tibet, as there was no school in her village. She says her parents would have liked to send her to school but it was too far away.

Ani was born in Lhasa on the 25th of June 1976. She is 25 years old. The family consists of her father, her mother, four sisters and one brother. Her parents are retired now; they used to work for the Chinese government service. She lived in No 3 community in Lhasa, near the Jokhang temple, in what she described as an averagely wealthy community. She spent 11 years at a “good” Chinese school where she learned English for a year. Then went to Chubsang nunnery in Lhasa at the age of 15.

Outline of the Study

Chapter One sets the context of Tibet in the Twentieth Century, and the subsequent exile of Tibetan refugees after the Chinese invasion and occupation in the early 1950s. Divided into two parts, part one discusses the history of Tibet up to the middle of the twentieth century, and includes a brief discussion of Tibet’s political status. The second part then continues with an historical overview of the development of Tibet under Chinese rule, outlining the historical, political and economic situation. The chapter will conclude with a critique of Chinese development in Tibet; examining the economic development of Tibet and the effects some of the policies have had on Tibet and the Tibetan people under the control of the Chinese Communist Party.

Chapter Two, the Literature Review, is also divided into two sections. Part one will begin by giving an historical overview of the evolution of the refugee in the Twentieth Century, and focus on the evolution of refugee definitions during this period. Part two will then concentrate on theoretical perspectives of refugees, including theories of migration and refugee migration, and the causes of refugee flows. Various aspects of refugee migrations will also be examined, including Third World refugees, development and migration, and gender and migration. In addition, it will briefly discuss the benefits of the ‘refugee’ label and the

consequences of labelling for refugees. The discussion will conclude by looking at the decision-making involved in refugee migrations.

Chapter Three, the Methodology, begins by outlining the approach used for the data collection, the ethical considerations involved in the collection of data, and the tools and methods used to collect the data. The chapter then goes on to discuss the researcher's inception and social relations with the host community and respondents, including the constraints experienced in the research environment. The chapter then concludes with a discussion of the issues raised from the fieldwork process and the subsequent process of data analysis.

Chapter Four focuses on the discussion and analysis of the data, using the three phases of the refugee experience (pre-flight, flight and post flight) as a framework for analysis. In conclusion, Chapter Five presents possible options for ameliorating the situation in Tibet, which in turn may assist in preventing further refugee flows.

As a final note to the reader, I would like to add that reading the women's stories in the following thesis is only part of the process of gaining an understanding of the Tibetan refugee experience. What you do not read about are the silenced voices of those who did not survive the arduous Himalayan journey, nor those who remain silenced in Tibet. Again, I would like to thank the respondents for their stories. These are stories of women who did take risks, who did leave it all behind for the hopeful chance of freedom. May these women have their voices heard for the sake of others left behind.

Chapter One: Historical Background

Introduction

This chapter will begin by discussing the history of Tibet up to the middle of the twentieth century, when China invaded Tibet in 1950. Following on from this will be a brief discussion of Tibet's political status. The second half of the chapter will then continue with an historical overview of the development of Tibet under Chinese rule, and the effects some of the Chinese policies have had on Tibet and the Tibetan people.

A History of Tibet

Introduction

The recorded history of Tibet starts from the Seventh century AD (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7), when Tibet made its first documented appearance as a political entity; the foundation of which was located in the region of today's capital, Lhasa (Nakane 1978: 35). It was during this period that Tibet evolved into an entity that resembled a state with a single monarch, Emperor Songsten Gampo; a state-sponsored religion, Buddhism; and a written language (Grunfeld 1999: 291).

To write about Tibetan history today becomes a difficult exercise in objectivity, as there exist conflicting versions of events over the centuries. As Mullin (in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7) states: "What view one takes of these competing claims depends on where one opens the history book." As an academic researcher, I sought to write an 'impartial' account of Tibetan history. Yet, after living amongst Tibetans during my field research, I realise that in the face of my experiences, this is perhaps no longer possible.

Therefore, while I have attempted to profile the two distinct views of Tibetan history, from both the Chinese and Tibetan perspectives, this account primarily reflects Tibetan history from the Tibetan viewpoint, and is intended to be read as a Tibetan history; a history for Tibetans, by Tibetans, a history that unites Tibetans in their call for a 'Free Tibet'. While certain historians may hold varying opinions of the events outlined in the following pages, it must be remembered that it is through the Tibetan perspective of Tibetan history that many Tibetans understand and make sense of their lives. Moreover, this account demonstrates the context of historical understanding within which the research respondents, as Tibetans, centre their lives.

The Status of Tibet Prior to the Chinese Invasion

Tibet first came into significant contact with China as a result of Tibet's rise to a great Asian empire. From the Second to Ninth century AD, Tibet extended its territory into Central Asia, Nepal, Upper Burma, and over large areas of Western China, even occupying the then Chinese (Tang) capital of Chang'an, and forcing the emperor to flee (Nakane 1978: 35; Norbu 1998: 4).

The political relationship between Tibet and China was established in the Seventh century when the King of Nepal and the Emperor of China offered their daughters to the Tibetan emperor, King Songsten Gampo, in marriage.¹ Not only were these imperial marriages of particular importance at the political level, but they also had religious significance, as these princesses were instrumental in the spread of Buddhism in Tibet (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c). The Chinese princess, Kongjo, brought with her a large golden image of the Buddha, the Jo, which remains to this day in the Jokhang temple in Lhasa, and is regarded as the

¹ Legend has it that King Songsten Gampo was an emanation of Avalokiteshvara; the Nepalese Princess, Tritsun was manifestation of the goddess Bhrikuti; and the Chinese Princess, Kongjo, was an emanation of the goddess Tara (Kunzang Lama I Shelung in Alam 2000: 29).

most sacred idol in Tibet (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). In later years, the ties between China and Tibet were further strengthened by similar marriages.

Commencing around the Twelfth century, the Mongols took control of Eurasia, briefly conquering Tibet when they ruled China (1280-1368). When the Mongols allied themselves with the Gelugpa sect of Tibetan Buddhism, a 'priest-patron' (cho-yon) relationship was formed between the Mongols and Tibet. In return for military protection, the Tibetans offered the Mongols spiritual guidance (Grunfeld 1999: 291). Additionally, the Mongols created the rule of the Dalai Lama (Grunfeld 1999: 291; Nakane 1978). This 'priest-patron' relationship, according to the Chinese, was extended to the rulers of China. The Tibetan perspective, however, states that Tibetan treaties referred to the Han as 'religious disciples', and the priest-patron relationship was not extended to the predominant Han people. Rather, it was solely with the Mongols and later the Manchus when they ruled China (Grunfeld 1987: 223; The Government of Tibet in Exile, c).

The Chinese argue that Tibet became a part of China under this Mongol empire, when Tibet was incorporated into China in the mid-Thirteenth century, and the rulers of China named Phagpa as the ruler of Tibet. Yet, Norbu (1998: 4) firmly refutes this argument as "untenable":

It is based on the reasoning that the Mongols were actually Chinese, and that China, as the homeland of the Mongols, was never subject to the Mongol conquest! (Norbu 1998: 4).

The succeeding Manchu empire included China, Tibet and Mongolia in its territories. The Qing dynasty was an empire whose rulers considered it to be the 'Middle Kingdom', the centre of the civilised world (Stockman 2000: 35). The Chinese argue that the ethnic Manchu Qing dynasty (1644-1912) had incorporated Tibet into a greater China (Grunfeld 1999: 291), and that the Qing Dynasty decided on the organisation of Tibet's local government (Grunfeld 1987: 224). Again, this is disputed in the Tibetan version of events:

But Tibet and Mongolia were never part of China, and when this empire collapsed in the early twentieth century both Tibet and Mongolia declared their independence (Norbu 1998: 4).

Yet, there are times when, according to the Chinese, the Ambans, the representatives² sent to Lhasa, were in almost complete control of the government in Lhasa, namely, from 1728 to 1911. While according to the Tibetan version of events, the Ambans were originally seen as 'security guards' to the Dalai Lama, and derived all of their authority solely through the government of Lhasa (Grunfeld 1987: 223):

The *Ambans* were not viceroys or administrators, but were essentially ambassadors appointed to look after Manchu interests, and to protect the Dalai Lama on behalf of the Emperor (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c).

After the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, Tibet was self-governed until the Chinese invasion in 1950. Tibet exercised full control over its internal affairs and had a "somewhat autonomous" foreign policy (Kaplan & Sobin 1982: 56). In 1912, the Dalai Lama declared independence while concurrently the Lhasa government evicted all Han residents and soldiers from Tibet (Grunfeld 1987: 223), including the Ambans (Mullin & Wangyal 1983; Donnet 1994). Therefore, Tibetans argue that from 1913 until 1950, the Chinese government had no control or influence in Lhasa:

For the next 38 years Tibet was for all practical purposes independent. The authority of the Tibetan government was absolute and China itself was plunged into civil war and chaos (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7).

Further proof of Tibet's autonomy during this time is demonstrated in Tibet's self-representation as an independent state at the Asian relations conference in 1947 (Grunfeld 1987: 223). From the Chinese perspective, however, it was only after a

² Tibetans point out that it is a common mistake to call the Ambans "Chinese Representatives" as the Manchu Emperors made a point of assigning Manchus or Mongolians rather than Han Chinese to these positions (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c).

protest from the Chinese Embassy that the organisers took down the Tibetan flag at this conference, confirming Tibet as part of China (Grunfeld 1987: 225).

Communism

Even before China declared itself as the People's Republic in 1949, the Tibetan Government was prompted by a fear of a Communist presence in Tibet to sever ties with China. The Tibetan Government decided to expel all Chinese connected with the Kuomintang (Guomindang) Government in July 1949. In addition, a curfew was imposed in Lhasa in case the Chinese might organise protests (Shakya 1999: 8), while a number of Tibetans from the East were also expelled on suspicion that they were Communist sympathisers (Shakya 1999: 9-10).

While these acts strongly demonstrated Tibet's desire to remain independent, they also provoked a Communist determination to gain control of Tibet. Hence, the Communist Party, prior to its rise to power in China, had developed strategies for the incorporation of 'Chinese National Minorities' within the People's Republic of China framework in its Common Programme of 29 September 1949 (Shakya 1999: 11).

The People's Republic of China was established on 1 October 1949, and a strong central government was formed, which focused on nationalism and communism. On coming to power, the 'liberation' of Tibet was a key task for the People's Liberation Army as the Chinese were determined to regain the outer boundaries of Qing rule. As Shakya (1999: 4) explains: "The question of Tibet was bound up with China's perception of itself as a new nation, and of its international status."

The Chinese perceived Tibet as Chinese territory and Tibetan issues were to be dealt with under the rubric of a 'National Minority' (Grunfeld 1999: 292; Shakya 1999: 3). Articles 50 to 53 of the Common Programme dealing with national

minority issues became the basis of China's long-term policy towards Tibet (Shakya 1999: 3). While the Chinese Communist Party's nationalities policy "included all of the contradictions acquired from Marxist-Leninist doctrine", it also included "those of traditional Chinese chauvinism as well" (Smith 1994: 55). Deeming the essence of the question of nationality as a question of class, Mao believed that "...nationalism had no significance except as a means of class suppression; once class suppression is eliminated nationalism would have no basis" (Smith 1994: 55).

Tibet's Reactions to Communism

The Communist victory caused alarm among the Tibetan ruling elite, which was composed of the aristocracy and religious elite. One month after the Communists assumed total control of China, the Tsongdu (Tibetan National Assembly) met in November 1949, and agreed to take measures to counter the Chinese threat. In order to defend itself from the Communist invasion, Tibet's first move was to make internal reforms to prepare for a possible Chinese attack (Shakya 1999:11). Tibet attempted to strengthen its army, despite major shortages of personnel, weapons, ammunition and training (Avedon: 1984; Shakya: 1999).

Nonetheless, Tibet's state remained politically weak due to the recent Reting conspiracy, in which the ex-Regent, Reting Rinpoche, supported by the monks of Sera, attempted to take over from the incumbent Regent, Takya, almost creating civil war and leaving deep divisions amongst its ruling elite. Further, the Dalai Lama³, himself only 14 years old, had not yet established political authority. Therefore, amid both military and political weaknesses, Tibet was not capable of opposing China either "militarily or socially" (Shakya 1999: 5).

³ The Dalai Lama is the spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet, and is believed to be the human manifestation of Chenrezig, the Buddha of Compassion. The reincarnation succession system requires that only a newborn child can succeed the Dalai Lama after his death. Thus, an inherent weakness in the system, as a political system, is that the enthronement of a successor could take place only fifteen years or more after he was designated. This interim period presented a critical period, during which the Regent would control the Tibetan administration as the representative authority (Nakane 1978: 39).

Many believed that with its vast mountain ranges, its greatest defence asset, Tibet would be able to hold off the troops of the People's Liberation Army (Avedon 1984: 27). However, with a growing realisation that Tibet could not hold off China permanently, the Tibetan government then tried to secure external support by endeavouring to seek diplomatic negotiations with India, Nepal, Great Britain and the United States, pleading with them to receive missions seeking help (Shakya 1999: 11).

However, only ever having had official relations with India, as Tibet had never "...deemed it necessary to establish ties to a world with which it had no contact..." (Avedon 1984: 27), the Tibetans were ill prepared and at a loss to gain the required international support. Further, the Tibetans had never become a member of the United Nations as Tibet followed a policy of 'peaceful isolation' (Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991:52). The final line of defence for the Tibetan government was to try to establish a dialogue with the Communists (Shakya 1999: 11). However, before this was achieved, China invaded Tibet.

Invasion: The 'Liberalisation' of Tibet: China's Reconstruction Phase 1949 – 1952

The People's Liberation Army marched into Tibet on 7 October 1950. The First and Second Field Armies invaded at dawn, with 84,000 troops crossing the upper Yangtze on small coracles⁴ into eastern Tibet, and destroying the small garrison force at Chamdo in Kham (Avedon: 1984; Donnet 1994). Military camps were set up in eastern and western Tibet, and throughout the provinces of Amdo and Kham (Donnet 1994: 21).

The Chinese Communists, however, did not regard themselves as invading a foreign country, as Chinese governments (Communist, and Nationalist and Imperial) over the last 260 years had regarded Tibet as part of China (Mullin in

⁴ Coracles are small round boats made of stretched animal skin over a wooden frame.

Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). From the Chinese point of view, Tibet was seen as an 'integral part of China', and it was in fact anti-Chinese and imperialist forces that had encouraged Tibet to break away from the 'Motherland' (Shakya 1999: 4).

United Nations Appeal

The Tibetan government sought United Nations help to stop the invasion on 11 November 1950. At the UN General Assembly the delegate from El Salvador called for a debate on Tibet. However, the British delegate proposed that the issue be deferred, "*sine die* on the grounds that the status of Tibet was under question." With the support of the Indian delegate, Britain and India moved that the subject be suspended, as it was believed that the matter could be settled through peaceful negotiations (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). Thus, the issue of Tibet was cast aside (Wangyal in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 16).

Despite brief assistance by the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to resist the Chinese, "...which was only too glad to assist, viewing Tibet as another opportunity to destabilize the Chinese government in its Cold War crusade..." (Grunfeld 1999: 292), the international community did not support Tibet in its fight for freedom.

The Sino-Tibetan Agreement of 1951: the Seventeen-Point Agreement

As a result of the Tibetan government's aim to establish a dialogue with the Communists, negotiations took place in Beijing towards the Sino-Tibetan Agreement of 1951. On 23 May 1951 the Tibetan delegates, lead by Ngabo Ngawang Jigme⁵, signed the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful

⁵ The Tibetans regard Ngabo Ngawang Jigme as a coward as he betrayed the Khampas and surrendered to the Chinese with a force 20 times their size. His actions resulted in the fall of Tibet, only 11 days after the invasion of Chinese troops (Avedon 1984: 32). Later he turned into a collaborator and leader with the Chinese (Avedon 1984: 227).

Liberation of Tibet, commonly known as the Seventeen-Point Agreement. The Dalai Lama and the National Assembly later ratified the Agreement on 24 October 1951.

The role of Tibet was defined as part of China in which Tibet agreed, "...to return to the big family of the Motherland" (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). The Chinese, under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government, gave national regional autonomy to Tibet. The Agreement promised cultural and political autonomy to Tibet but relinquished its independence. The principal elements of regional autonomy appeared to uphold the Tibetan form of government, and according to Article 11, the Central authorities should be not compel the government to reform along Communist lines (Richardson 1984: 189).

Under the terms of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, the establishment of the unified central control required the Tibetan army to integrate into the Chinese forces, and for a military and administrative committee to be established at Lhasa to implement the agreement. In addition, there was provision for the unrestricted entry of Chinese troops into Tibet, and the establishment of a Military and Civil Headquarters at Lhasa. In areas occupied by Chinese soldiers, a series of military/political committees were set up (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7).

The Central Government, according to Article 4, was not to alter the existing political system in Tibet, or the status, functions, and powers of the Dalai Lama. Meanwhile, officials of various ranks should continue to hold office. Article 7 provided for the protection of established religious customs and institutions (Richardson 1984: 189). However, despite these written assurances for the protection of Tibetan polity and religion from the Chinese, Tibet was no longer an autonomous state, as the Dalai Lama explains: "But for all these platitudes one

thing was clear: from now on, the Land of Snows answered to the People's Republic of China" (Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991: 64).

Chinese troops entered Lhasa on 26 October 1951. While Tibetans gathered to watch the spectacle, very few understood the implications of the Chinese arrival. The Chinese government representatives explained to the Dalai Lama that the Chinese army had come to develop Tibet and protect it against imperialist forces. Within a few months China controlled almost all of Tibet (Donnet 1994: 20-21).

Sino-Indian Relations

Yet the Tibetans still hoped that their independent status would be recognised through the Simla Agreement, which provided international recognition of Tibet's independent status from China:

As far as the Tibetans were concerned, the status of Tibet was governed by the 1914 Simla convention. However fragile it might be, the Convention provided some sort of definition of Tibet's status (Shakya 1999: 15).

According to the 1914 Simla Agreement, India was "...required to deny recognition of China's suzerainty over Tibet until China itself acknowledged Tibet's strictly defined autonomy" (Avedon 1984: 27).

Regrettably, India had failed to mention its treaty interests and rights in Tibet, "...either in the exchange of notes with the Chinese Communist government or at the United Nations," and in doing so, held open the door for China's entry into Tibet by indicating that the Indian Government "...no longer regarded the 1914 agreements as viable" (Richardson 1984: 190). Therefore, even though the requirements laid out by the Chinese in the Seventeen-Point Agreement were clearly incompatible with the terms of the 1914 Agreement between Tibet and India (Richardson 1984: 189), India did not oppose them in any way. Thus, to a large extent, Tibet's ability to survive as an independent nation depended on India. Preserving Tibet as a natural 'buffer state' between China and India, and

India's willingness to do so, was crucial for the future status of Tibet (Shakya 1999:2).

However, newly independent India lacked the economic and military power of British Colonial India, and had many internal problems such as economic development, the cessation of sectarian strife, and strengthening its poor relations with the new Islamic state of Pakistan. Therefore, the problems in the Northern borders along the Himalayan range were "the least of their concerns" (Shakya 1999:2).

China made assurances of non-violence in Tibet to India. However, these promises were instead contradicted by the use of force. The Government of India, on 26 October 1950, informed the Chinese that they deeply regretted that peaceful methods were not employed towards Tibet (Richardson 1984: 184). China's brisk reply declared in no uncertain terms that:

...Tibet was an integral part of China, the Tibetan problem must be treated as a domestic one and no interference by any foreign country would be tolerated (Richardson 1984: 184).

China's assertion of control in Tibet through violent means, and its curt, undiplomatic response to India, put immense strain on relations between India and China transforming "...an avowed friendship between India and China into one of dangerous enmity" (Addy 1994: 39). Thus, according to Addy (1994: 39), despite the various differences and problems in both the political and historical outlook of China and India: "Sino-Indian relations would scarcely have plummeted in so dramatic a fashion in the late 1950s and early 1960s without the developments in Tibet."

Summary

Once the Tibetan government had signed the Seventeen-Point Agreement, Tibet as an independent state no longer existed. China annexed the country, deeming Tibet an 'integral' part of the Motherland, with little resistance from the outside world. Tibet instead faced forcible incorporation into Maoist China, encompassing a resolute Chinese military build-up in Tibet, repression, and Tibetan unrest under Chinese subjugation (Addy 1994: 39).

The Dalai Lama

Due to the Chinese invasion, the Dalai Lama was enthroned almost three years before the required minimum age, on 17 November 1950. At the age of 15, he was given full temporal power to lead Tibet as it prepared for war (Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991: 52-53; Donnet 1994: 16). Yet in reality, political power still remained in the hands of the Regent. The Dalai Lama, sheltered from the outside world, had barely been allowed outside the palaces since early childhood, and had "...no experience of governing and knew nothing about the outside world, foreign policy or military strategy" (Donnet 1994: 16).

To Tibetans, His Holiness represents the embodiment of Tibetan Buddhism and culture. The extent to which Tibetans uphold him as a spiritual teacher and political leader cannot be emphasised enough. In fact, it is this infallible devotion demonstrated by his people that the Chinese alleged stood in the way of implementing their Communist reforms in Tibet. Therefore, after first presenting themselves as 'liberators', the Chinese began a campaign:

...to gradually erode the immense political power and the pervasive spiritual influence of the Dalai Lama over Tibet. Step one was to neutralise his power, step two was to destabilise his position (Donnet 1994: 22).

On 7 March 1959, the Chinese delivered an invitation to the Dalai Lama to attend a theatrical show at the People's Liberation Army's brick-walled camp, Silingpu. Then, on 9 March 1959, Brigadier Fu summoned the Dalai Lama's bodyguard to the Chinese headquarters, where Fu informed him that the Dalai Lama should attend the performance, unaccompanied by his 25 soldiers. Fu insisted that the route was not to be lined with troops, nor were the Dalai Lama's bodyguards permitted to join him inside the armed Chinese camp. Furthermore, Fu insisted that the occasion be kept a secret from the public (Avedon 1984; Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991).

Within hours, the rumour had spread that the Chinese planned to abduct His Holiness, the Dalai Lama. However, this was not the first time that this type of deception had occurred by the Chinese. In the east, the Chinese had invited four high Lamas to performances and then imprisoned them, later executing three out of the four (Shakya 1999: 198). As the Dalai Lama explains, the Dalai Lama represents more to the Tibetans than simply a head of state:

They believed the Dalai Lama represented Tibet and the Tibetan way of life, something dearer to them than anything else. They were convinced that if my body perished at the hands of the Chinese, the life of Tibet would also come to an end (Dalai Lama cited in Nowak 1984: 25).

By 9am on 10 March 1959, almost 30,000 people had gathered in front of the Norbulingka⁶ in an effort to protect the Dalai Lama. The crowd turned their anger towards the Chinese presence in Tibet. The demonstration turned into a national uprising, denouncing the 17-Point Agreement, as the Tibetan people believed the Chinese had undermined the authority of the Dalai Lama (Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991; Shakya 1999: 197). The common people's vociferous uprising in the streets below the Norbulingka was in vast contrast to the government officials and Tibetan members of Chinese established

⁶ The Norbulingka, "The Jewel Park", is the summer residence of the Dalai Lama, about two miles West of Lhasa.

institutions, who felt they should not be seen as part of the demonstrations (Shakya 1999: 198).

On day three, organised by Kundeling Kunsang, women demonstrators took over the city and asked the influential women of Lhasa to attend the protest⁷ (Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991; Pachen & Donnelly 2000; Shakya 1999). After grouping Drebu Lingka⁸ at the foot of the Potala⁹ (Tibet Facts 10), the women took to the streets around the Barkhor¹⁰ daring the Chinese to shoot them, shouting: "From now on Tibet is independent!" (Avedon 1984: 53).

The Dalai Lama: Catalyst and Protagonist of the Tibetan Exile Community

On 17 March 1959, two Chinese shells landed near the Norbulingka, threatening the safety of the Dalai Lama. The Nechung Oracle pronounced it was no longer safe to remain in the palace and that evening the Dalai Lama, dressed in traditional layman's robes, along with his entourage, crossed the Kyichu River and headed out of Lhasa.

The escape route was not accessible to vehicles and was inside an area controlled by the Khampa resistance fighters (Shakya 1999: 204). The party proceeded southwards towards Lhuntze Dzong, 60 miles from the Indian border. Here, they intended to establish a temporary base to negotiate with the Chinese. However on 24 March 1959, they received the news that on 20 March, at 2 am, Norbulingka had been bombarded (Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991; Shakya 1999).

On 28 March 1959, Zhou Enlai announced China's dissolution of the Tibetan Government over the radio, ordering troops "...along the Bhutanese border to

⁷ Rinchen Dolma Taring, in her autobiography, wrote that the Tibetan Women's Association felt that this was an inappropriate action (Taring 1970: 226 in Shakya 1999: 198).

⁸ The Drebu Lingka is the ground below the Potala.

⁹ The Potala is the palace and winter home of the Dalai Lama.

¹⁰ The octagonal street encircling the Jokhang; a holy pilgrim circuit.

From the Tibetan standpoint, Tibet has both hosted foreign diplomatic representatives, (the Nepalese from 1856, the British from 1936-47 and the Indians from 1947-62), and sent its own diplomatic representatives abroad. Further, officials of Lhasa signed several foreign treaties; 1856 with Nepal, 1904 with Britain, 1913 with Mongolia and 1914 with Britain. Most importantly for the Tibetans, the 1904 Treaty stipulated that 'no foreign power' would be permitted to intervene in Tibetan affairs (Grunfeld 1987: 223). However, as far as the Chinese are concerned, Britain later renegotiated this treaty with China, "...thereby acknowledging Chinese sovereignty over Tibet" (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7).

Between 1911 and 1950, Britain, the United States of America, and several other countries, acknowledged Tibet's independence (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). For instance, the Shakabpa Trade Mission of 1947-48 travelled to several countries with Tibetan passports as their only travel documents. Various nations, by affixing their visas, showed their recognition of these passports (Grunfeld 1987: 223), and therefore Tibet as an independent state.

In support of Tibet's claim to independence, Chinese actions have been condemned by three United Nations decrees (Grunfeld 1987: 223) and prompted more than forty resolutions in governments across the world (The Government of Tibet in Exile, b). Most significantly, the International Commission of Jurists' Legal Committee of Tibet came to the conclusion that Tibet was, in fact, an independent country. The report on Tibet's legal status stated:

Tibet demonstrated from 1913 to 1950 the condition of statehood as generally accepted under international law. In 1950, there was a people and a territory, and a government that functioned in that territory, conducting its own domestic affairs free from any outside authority. From 1913-1950, foreign relations of Tibet were conducted exclusively by the government of Tibet, and countries with whom Tibet had foreign relations are shown by official documents to have treated Tibet in practice as an independent State (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c).

Influential as this report has been, however, it is also considered “extremely suspect” as the committee chose to start its consideration of the issues from 1912 (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7), precisely from the point that Tibetans judge Tibet’s political status at the time of the Chinese invasion. Therefore, by only taking into account Tibet’s modern history, critics argue that this report is biased in that it ignores the Chinese assertion that Tibet’s status must instead be understood from Tibet’s earlier history (Grunfeld 1987; Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983; Shakya 1999).

Perhaps the most controversial of all is the Seventeen-Point Agreement, which gave China rights over Tibet. For example, Richardson (1984: 189) describes the Agreement as a:

...long tendentious manifesto, masquerading as the preamble to the agreement, in which the Chinese took the opportunity of falsifying history and justifying the use of force, cannot conceal that Tibet had lately been a separate identity.

The Tibetans argue that the Chinese coerced the Tibetan delegates to sign the agreement. More precisely, they were left with no choice but to sign, as Chinese troops were in occupation of the eastern and western districts. If they repudiated, the alternative was for Tibet to face war. Secondly, the Chinese prevented the Tibetan delegates from seeking the Dalai Lama’s advice regarding the Agreement (Richardson in 1984: 189). Ngabo Jigme had not been empowered to sign anything on behalf of the Dalai Lama; he had only been given the power to negotiate (Bstan-’dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991: 64). Thirdly, the official seals used were reproductions made in Peking (Wangyal in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 16). The official seals of the state had been kept in Tibet purposefully by the Dalai Lama to ensure that nothing could be signed (Bstan-’dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV 1991: 64). By signing the Agreement with forged seals, the Tibetans declare that the agreement has been “null and void” from its inauguration (Grunfeld 1987: 223). Moreover, under international law, treaties

that are imposed by threat, or use of force, are not valid (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c).

Thus, according to the Tibetans, the Seventeen-Point Agreement cannot be served to legitimise an otherwise illegal invasion of Tibet (The Government of Tibet in Exile, a). As a result, this leads to the Tibetan assertion that, "...all of China's policies since then have been illegal under international law" (Grunfeld 1987: 223).

Conclusion

Although opinions differ over the political status of Tibet, it cannot be refuted that Tibet is ethnically, culturally and geographically distinct from China (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 7). For the Tibetan people, the Chinese military invasion and China's continued occupation of Tibet today, represent violations of both international law and of the "fundamental rights of the Tibetan people to independence" (The Government of Tibet in Exile, c). Conversely, for the Chinese, the official incorporation of Tibet into the People's Republic of China was simply a natural progression; Tibet is an inalienable part of China, regardless of the ethnic, cultural and geographic differences.

Despite the fact that the issue of Tibet's status remains at an impasse, any discussion of Tibet's history must pay heed to the issue of Tibet's political status which is central to the lives of many Tibetans, especially those in exile. Not only does Tibet's history, and consequent political status, provide the context for an individual to posit an understanding of their own life history, it also provides a collective appreciation of cultural, religious, and national representation for the Tibetan people.

Economic Development in Tibet

Introduction

This section will discuss the social and economic development of Tibet and the socio-economic impacts that Chinese economic policies have had on Tibet since Chinese occupation. However, it must be acknowledged that the literature concerning economic and social development within Tibet is severely restricted and highly subjective. This is not surprising, however, as from the early 1950s Tibet was closed off to the outside world, and only opened to tourists in 1983. Six years later, Tibet was closed off again, after several waves of independence protests. While the Chinese today permit tourists to visit restricted areas of Tibet, to the outside researcher, Tibet remains most illusive. A great paucity in academic literature exists regarding the social and economic development of Tibet, and the pattern of the Tibetan economy is one of the least researched areas in studies of Tibet (Ma 1995: 37). Regrettably, without more information, data, and more objective accounts, Tibet's economic development, like Tibet's history, remains problematical.

Opinions on the development that has occurred in Tibet are divided. On one hand, there is the Chinese colonial viewpoint that states that all development in Tibet has had positive results, and that without Chinese intervention; Tibetans would still be living under an oppressive feudal system (see Alam 2000; Epstein 1983). Those who espouse this view, often label opponents to China's development of Tibet as 'reactionaries', 'leftist splitists' or part of the 'Dalai Clique'. The Chinese view pre-1951-Tibet as having an entrenched feudal system, which demonstrated gross social and economic inequalities (Kaplan & Sobin 1982: 56). This system, according to the Chinese, needed to be purged so that the Tibetan people could enjoy the 'liberation' that Communism provided as demonstrated in other areas of the Motherland. On the other hand, various groups and individuals who oppose China's presence in Tibet have stated that all

of China's development efforts have categorically affected the Tibetan population in a negative manner. Those who hold this view rely on the information from Tibetan exiles and outsiders who support the Tibetan 'cause'. At present, no middle road or neutral ground between the two sides has been established.

The discussion will begin with a brief look at the Tibetan economy prior to 1952, in order to gain an understanding of the basic economic patterns established within Tibetan society prior to the Chinese invasion. Following on from this will be a chronological outline of Chinese development policies and initiatives since 1949, when the Chinese Communist Party came to power, to the present day, that have occurred in Mainland China or taken place in Tibet and have affected the Tibetan population. The discussion will conclude with a critique of Chinese development in Tibet from the Tibetan perspective; examining the economic development of Tibet and the effects some of the policies have had on Tibet and the Tibetan people under the control of the Chinese Communist Party.

The Tibetan Economy Before 1952

At the time of the Chinese invasion, Tibet was clearly not a 'developed' country in the sense of the modernisation paradigm: in general, there was no 'modern' industry, no roads suitable for automobiles, (possibly because there were only three cars in Tibet, imported by the 13th Dalai Lama during his rule (Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV. 1991: 33)), no transportation, (wheeled vehicles were not used as all transportation was done by porters and pack animals (Karan in Ma 1995: 42)), and no electricity (Ma 1995: 47). There was a very low level of urbanisation, and by 1958, the urban population represented only 7 percent of the total populace (Ruei in Ma 1995: 47).

Tibetans lived a simple but often-difficult way of life, due to the climatic conditions of the Tibetan plateau, averaging 12,000 feet (3,660 metres). At this altitude, few crops could survive and Tibetans lived on a staple diet of fresh and

dried yak/dri meat, milk, cheese, barley flour, and butter tea; a diet rich in carbohydrates, protein and fat, to supply the energy needed to work the land and to keep out the cold.

While some Tibetans worked as traders, Tibet was predominantly a pastoral society of farmers and nomads. For centuries, agriculture and animal husbandry constituted the major economic activities in Tibet, providing food, clothing, raw materials for handicrafts, and goods for trade. The agricultural economy relied on human labour, animal power, and basic tools. The state owned all land, granting estates to monasteries and individuals who had bestowed service to the state.¹ In the valley areas with relatively high population densities, the monasteries, government, and nobles controlled agricultural and pastoral production under a type of serf system. Agricultural production was self-supporting and exports of wool and other pastoral products were traded for tea, cotton, cloth, metals, and other food and handicrafts requirements (Ma 1995: 47).

The Buddhist religion was an integral part of Tibetan life, and provided the basis of Tibet's political system. Through the combination of political and religious systems, "...a distinct stratum of the elite was formed" (Nakane 1978: 40).² Religious institutions and lamas were very powerful: "Monasteries controlled the government and economy, owned over one-third of cultivated land, many pastures, and a large number of serfs and slaves" (Ma 1995: 47). In addition, monks made up 10 percent of the population, and over 50 percent of the urban population in the mid-1950s.

¹ Although at the time of invasion, the Dalai Lama was attempting to introduce land reform to redistribute land to the peasantry (The Government of Tibet in Exile a).

² Although this elite echelon was quite distinct from the rest of Tibetan society, new recruitment from the peasant population was possible: "Monkhood was open to males of whatever background: a poor peasant, through training and by passing examinations, could achieve higher status in the religious organization. New noble families were created as a new Dalai Lama was recognized. At the same time, a noble family occasionally took a commoner as an adopted son-in-law. The vertical integration between elite and commoners was greater than one might have thought in the Tibetan case" (Nakane 1978: 40).

First Five-year Plan: 1953-1957

Stalinist Strategy and the Soviet Development Model in China

Within Mainland China, socialist development began with a Stalinist model, which emphasised "...centralized bureaucratic planning and resource allocation"³ (Van Ness & Raichur 1983: 2). The First Five-Year Plan strategy had seven objectives: a commitment to achieving strong economic growth; industrial progress; a heavy-industry-oriented form of industrialisation and economic growth; a high rate of saving and investment to encourage the above objectives; a primary focus on industrialisation (over agriculture); institutional transformation in various sectors of the economy, including agriculture; and capital-intensive methods to be used for industrial production and technology (Eckstein 1977: 50-51).

During this period, Mao had "apparently" decided by 1955-56, that China was ready to take on socialism (Van Ness & Raichur 1983: 4). The form of socialism that Mao espoused was known as 'Sinified Marxism', which incorporated the belief that Marxism had to be adapted to China's specific circumstances and conditions (Stockman 2000: 25; Van Ness & Raichur 1983: 4).⁴ 'Sinified Marxism', then became the new orthodoxy, initially within the Chinese Communist Party, and then within the People's Republic of China as a whole, though not without its conflicts between different understandings of the

³ This is also referred to as a "command economy" by Western economists (Van Ness & Raichur 1983:2).

⁴ Even though Mao denied that the analysis of European history could be generalised to the rest of the world, Soviet and Chinese Orthodox Marxism viewed history as a fixed sequence of five modes of production; 'primitive communal, slave, feudal, communist and socialist'. Great debate surrounded how the Chinese history aligned with this periodisation, and "...when, if ever, primitive communism gave way to slavery and slavery to feudalism." Mao accepted the orthodox sequence of modes of production, arguing that in fact China had experienced capitalism. (According to Mao, China was pushed into capitalist development by foreign intervention and that a gradually commercialising economy in China "...would have allowed the 'sprouts of capitalism' to grow anyway, and Chinese historians expended considerable efforts to find evidence for these sprouts as early as the Ming dynasty"). Therefore, since China had a pre-revolutionary mode of production, this "...provided doctrinal justification for the building of socialism after 1949" (Stockman 2000: 26).

implications of Marxism and Chinese policy and development. 'Sinified Marxism' provided both the concepts and the vocabulary within which social and political movements could then be debated (Stockman 2000: 26).

The objectives of the Stalinist model resulted in rapid economic growth and large gains in industrialisation. With industrialisation came rapid urbanisation, placing an increasing burden on urban food supplies. However, agriculture was left behind, and this created divergent growth paths in agriculture and industry. Further, agricultural collections could not keep up with the rise in urban population, and per capita food supplies began to decline in the cities by 1956 and 1957 (Eckstein 1977: 54). While higher rates of economic growth and large development of heavy industry had been achieved, dichotomies were then realised between mental and manual labour, urban and rural, workers and peasants (Van Ness & Raichur 1983: 4). Disproportionalities and bottlenecks created severe strains in the economy; urban food supplies were tight, and industry faced shortages of agricultural raw materials (Eckstein 1977: 54). The macro-preoccupations of the First Five-Year Plan stifled initiative and enthusiasm at the sight of production, created imbalances in the economic sector and resulted in lower labour and capital productivity (Van Ness & Raichur 1983: 3).

The 'Modernisation' of Tibet Under Chinese Control

Almost since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) played a largely "developmental" role in national, economic and political life. In Tibet, the PLA's role was no less significant, maintaining a large military force on the plateau that upheld (and continues to uphold)⁵ Chinese control. After the signing of the Seventeen Point Agreement in 1951, the Chinese Communist Party officially asserted its political authority in

⁵ Within Tibet today, the majority of soldiers are situated in the capital of Lhasa. In the north of Tibet, China is said to have nuclear installations, warheads and testing grounds (The Government of Tibet in Exile a).

Tibet, setting up military/political committees in areas occupied by Chinese soldiers (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 8), and introducing Chinese Socialist models of modernisation (Forbes & McGranahan 1992: 2), already established within Mainland China.

Until the Chinese Communist Party could establish full authority within Tibet, however, the Chinese extensively used propaganda to convince the Tibetan working-class nationalities to unite with the Chinese socialist masses rather than with "...their own exploiting classes." The United Front policy, at the same time, recruited the upper classes by maintaining local leaders in authority "...with new titles and large salaries" (Smith 1994: 55). Chinese reforms launched in Tibet were portrayed as "...a step on the path towards the Socialist Paradise", with the common slogan: "The Chinese People's Government is our Great Mother. Yuan notes are falling like rain" (Tibetan Bulletin 1999).

After the initial stages of communist rule in Tibet, the Chinese Communist Party no longer designed its policies to appease the Tibetan population. The Chinese pushed hundreds of thousands of Tibetans, primarily peasants, largely illiterate and uneducated, into unpaid labour on the extensive road construction programme (Tabori 1972: 235). They then introduced the notion of competition between individuals and groups, to make the Tibetans work harder, and quotas were set for each day. The Chinese organised mass meetings at the end of the day in which rewards were handed out: "Mao badges were given to the best workers and banners to the most deserving groups" (Norbu in Donnet 1994: 22). Consequently, the first signs of 'modernity' in Tibet were two major highways from Lhasa to Chengdu in Sichuan, 1500 miles long, and the Xining in Qinghai in the North East, 1225 miles long; both were completed in 1954. In 1957, a third road 730 miles long was opened in the direction of the Muslim "Autonomous region" of Sikiang in the North (Donnet 1994: 21). These roads were of prime importance to Chinese strategists and enabled the Armed Forces to be optimally deployed and the rapid conquest of remote areas. Today, although the Chinese

state that the roads are important for the economic development of Tibet,⁶ Tibetans maintain that the roads are used more for the military to suppress the Tibetan population, to assist in the extraction of natural resources, and to facilitate Han migration into Tibet (Forbes & McGranahan 1992: 113).

The road construction and 'modernisation' in Tibet, however, did not come without cost to the Tibetan population:

The Sikang-Tibet highway demanded the bridging of high precipices and deep ravines and claimed hundreds of lives. The lamas hated their new masters who threatened their privileged position, and the attempts to impose land reform on the feudal and religious society aroused further opposition (Tabori 1972: 235).

Land Reform and Collectivisation in Tibet

From 1954, the Chinese began implementing both social and economic changes in Tibet, destroying monasteries, introducing land reform, and imposing collectivisation in Eastern Tibet. The aim of land reform was to free "...the agricultural base of the economy from the exploitative system of the landlord and rich peasant domination." Land was confiscated from the latter groups and distributed to the poorer classes of peasants. Collectivisation began with the promotion of mutual aid teams composed of several households that worked together, and various stages of collectivisation using cooperatives followed (Cannon & Jenkins 1990: 24). In 1959, monasteries lost their administrative power and 'serfdom' was abolished. During the "democratic reforms" of 1959-60, the Chinese redistributed Tibetan land and animals (Ma 1995: 51).

As a result of the Chinese Communist Party's political campaigns and socio-economic changes, Tibetans in the outer regions revolted at the disruption of their traditional way of life. Minor disturbances in Sichuan erupted into open revolt in 1956 and then moved west towards Lhasa (Grunfeld 1999: 292). Later,

⁶ By 1990, the road network totalled 13,567 miles, all constructed since 1959 (Ma 1995:52).

on 16 June 1958, in opposition to the Chinese occupation, Tibetans formed the resistance movement, the Voluntary National Defence Army, commonly known as 'Chushi Gandruk' ("Four River, Six Ranges"): "This marked in a sense the culmination of Khampa revolts that began in 1956-57 in Kham and Amdo" (Grinfeld 1997:358). The Tibetan revolts finally culminated in the Tibetan Uprising of 1959.

Second Five-year Plan: 1958-1962

The Great Leap

The Second Five-year Plan of 1958-1962, also known as the Great Leap, used a socialist mobilisation approach "...based on Party-directed mass movements to create a communist 'new man'" (Van Ness & Raichur: 1983: 2). The aim of this approach was to achieve simultaneous development of agriculture and industry, which involved the mass mobilisation of surplus labour in agriculture and "...greater reliance on production processes based on technological dualism" (Eckstein 1977: 36). However, the Great Leap was born from unrealistic expectations in its desire to close the gap between China and other foreign countries. These, and inadequate technology implementation, resulted in the acute agriculture and food crisis of 1960-1962 (Eckstein 1977: 56).

Tibet, now under Chinese rule, did not escape from the effects of the Great Leap. For instance, Ani Pachen, a Tibetan resistance leader, explains how China's development policies affected Tibetans, and how Tibet too had to play its part in helping the 'Motherland':

I was at Deyong Nang from 1961 to 1963. During those years there was a great famine throughout China and Tibet. We heard news in prison that the harvests were poor, and that the 'Great Leap Forward' had led to a split with countries that supplied grain to China. As a result, we were told, grain from Tibet was taken away from the Tibetan people and fed to the Chinese armies or shipped to China. Millions were said to have died of starvation across China, and tens of thousands starved in Tibet (Pachen & Donnelly 2000: 156).

The Great Leap Forward led to an estimated 30 million deaths due to the artificially induced famines resulting from its policies. In 1981, the Chinese leadership finally admitted that the Great Leap had been a "serious mistake":

A report by Beijing's Economic System Research Institute found that 900,000 people died during this period in Qinghai province alone (where a quarter of the population were Tibetan), probably from starvation. Tibetan nomads were particularly affected because the plan for the communes required that all flocks be brought together in one place: the animals died en masse once they had exhausted all the available pasture. The plan did not allow them to be moved (Barnett 1999: 183).

In 1965, China divided the Tibetan inhabited areas of greater Tibet, which includes inner (Western) and outer (Eastern) Tibet. The Chinese Communist Party formally organised the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR), as an autonomous region of China, an administrative entity that maintains the Chinese administrative divisions of Tibetan-inhabited areas. The TAR roughly represents the Dalai Lama's inner Tibet, an area that he and his government exercised political control over prior to the Chinese invasion. The Chinese consider the other Tibetan ethnic areas of Amdo and Kham to be Chinese regions, even though the people and societies are identical in culture to those of the TAR. These regions are now known as Qinghai and Sichuan (Grunfeld 1999: 295; Schwartz 1996:10).

Third Five-year Plan: 1966-1970

The Cultural Revolution

In China, the "Agriculture First" strategy of 1962 developed out of the shortfalls of the Great Leap, involving a technological transformation of agriculture (Eckstein 1977: 60). Agriculture received a larger allocation of investment and resources, which in turn required an increase in domestic chemical fertiliser production, chemical fertiliser imports, and growth in the farm machinery industry. Petroleum extraction and refining commenced with the intention to reduce import

dependency in a militarily important sector, and defence production increased (Eckstein 1977: 62).

The Agriculture First policy was maintained with strong reliance on material incentives in both agriculture and industry. Chinese sources, however, believed this created "capitalist tendencies" in the rural areas. Mao was concerned about "greater income differentiation and class gratification." These concerns unquestionably weighed heavily in the decision to "unleash" the Cultural Revolution (Eckstein 1977: 62). The Third Five-Year Plan, in reaction to earlier economic policies, proposed a more political solution to the problems experienced, through social mobilisation (Van Ness & Raichur 1983: 3-4).

The broad aims of the Cultural Revolution were firstly to develop and infuse a work ethic that would encourage the same objectives of previous policies without the need for the same material incentives (Eckstein 1977: 62). Hence, economic progress was sought through "...ideological struggle rather than economic incentives..." (Cannon & Jenkins 1990: 25). Secondly, the government sought to enhance the normative appeals of the adherence to Maoist values. Tremendous pressures were exerted to narrow wage, income, and status differences and in 1975, the crusade to reinforce "...the dictatorship of the proletariat and to attack bourgeois rights" commenced (Eckstein 1977: 62), with the mass movement of people to overthrow the followers of the 'capitalist road' from positions of authority (Cannon & Jenkins 1990: 25).

The Cultural Revolution was defined by the Chinese to last from 1966 to 1976. In Tibet, however, it continued effectively until 1979. For the non-Han peoples:

...the campaign included an attempt to eradicate their culture and their distinctive identity as a people, since ultraleftist ideologists declared at the time that distinctions between nationalities and any form of religious belief were the results of the class system. The consequences for Chinese people, let alone for Tibetans, Mongolians, and other nationalities under Chinese rule, were terrible: they were forced to dress like Chinese, to profess atheism, to destroy temples, to burn books, and to condemn, humiliate, and sometimes even kill the teachers, writers, thinkers, and elders in their communities (Barnett 1999: 183).

In Tibet, Red Guards who had arrived from other parts of China were shocked to witness such a slow rate of social progress, in comparison to other parts of China. Religion was still widely practiced and agricultural communes had hardly begun. Young Red Guards, with the task to destroy the 'four olds': old thought, old culture, old habits and old customs, went from village to village destroying religious articles, scriptures and other artefacts of the 'old order'. The Chinese set up committees and meetings were held (attendance was obligatory) where people were encouraged to denounce their former landlords (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 9).

During the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese invaders systematically destroyed 95 percent of Tibet's religious buildings, which included approximately 5,000 monasteries and temples. Tibet was transformed into "...a land of ashes, rubble and mass graves—unreported, untelevised and forgotten" (Powell 1992: 3). Following the Cultural Revolution, Tibet's economy was a shambles. In its wake remained failed communes and minimal trade with adjacent product provinces of China, India and Nepal, Tibet's former major training trading partners; "In sum, poverty was endemic" (Alling 1997: 7).

1978 Onwards: a Socialist Market Economy

In 1976, Mao died following the Fourth Five-year Plan of 1971-1975. Still within the strict political framework of Communist Party control, from 1978, under the leadership of Deng Xioping, officials began to systematically implement a more market-oriented policy following the 'Four Modernisations': agriculture, industry,

education, and science and defence (Cannon & Jenkins 1990; Van Ness & Raichur 1983). This new form of decentralisation proposed a more economic solution to the problems of earlier strategies through market and material incentives (Van Ness & Raichur 1983: 3-4).

By the early 1990s, the liberalisation that had begun with the economic reforms accelerated. In place of the collectivisation system, authorities moved to a system of household responsibility in agriculture. While the authority of local officials and industry plant managers increased, small-scale service enterprises and light manufacturing were permitted. In complete contrast to Maoist policies, increased foreign trade and investment were encouraged. The reforms have resulted in a quadrupling of GDP since 1978, and in 1999, China became the second largest global economy after the United States (CIA World Factbook, China).

In Tibet, the 7th, 8th, and 9th Five-Year Plans (1986-1990, 1991-1995, and 1996-2000) sought large investments "...to develop the Yarlung Tsangpo [Yaluzanbu], Lhasa Kyi Chu, and Nyang Chu [Nianchu] river valleys...to expand the Gongkar airport, maintain and repair the Qinghai-Tibet Highway, rebuild the China-Nepal Highway...to develop the mineral and natural resources in Tibet...and initiate other large and medium-sized key construction projects" (Forbes & McGranahan 1992: 5). However, for the average Tibetan, predominantly living a rural-based lifestyle, large-scale projects, such as mining have the potential to cause irreparable damage to their livelihoods and socio-economic welfare:

Look at this area - there's no grass. Last year and the year before they were digging for gold. There used to be the beautiful grass - now there's nothing. The roots are destroyed and the grass will not grow back. Our yaks have nothing to eat. Before our herds would increase - now, every year more of our yaks are dying. In ten years, with all this mining, the whole valley will be rock. What use is the gold - there will be no way to live (Tashi, Tibetan nomad cited in Lehman 1999: 114).

Critiques of China's Development of Tibet

Introduction

The Tibetan Government in Exile argues that the Chinese have used the term "development" as a metaphor for their control of Tibet since the 1950s and states that China publicises the figures it spends on development in Tibet to augment its international image and to legitimise its presence in Tibet. In effect, China's development of Tibet exploits Tibet's natural resources for the economic benefit of China. However, China has never disclosed the actual figure it reaps every year:

...from the wholesale looting of cultural treasures during the Cultural Revolution, deforestation and indiscriminate mining projects. The income China accrues from exploiting Tibet's natural resources - such as timber, minerals, oil and animal products - far outweighs the few yuan it spends in "developing" Tibet (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

By 1976, there were said to be 252 industries in Tibet:

In Ngapa there is a dairy plant that produces tinned dried milk, the leather factories in Kanze and Ngapa produce shoes, bags and leather jackets; and woollen mills at Dartsedo and Nyintri produce good quality woollen fabric (Wangyal in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 18).

However, these industries, like others in Tibet, all send their products to China, even to places as far away as Nepal and Hong Kong. (Officially, they are 'offered to the state'). Secondly, these products are out of the price range of the majority of Tibetans. Thirdly, 75-80 percent of the workforce is Chinese; Chinese immigrants hold all the crucial positions while Tibetans only occupy heavy manual jobs such as portering and labouring (Wangyal in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 18).

Another key industry in Tibet is logging. Today in the Ngapa and Dechen areas, this industry employs over 65,000 people. However, over exploitation of this

natural resource has resulted in vast areas of deforestation (Wangyal in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 18) and erosion, much to the dismay of many Tibetans:

In the time it takes me to drink one cup of tea, I count an average of fifteen trucks loaded with timber passing by. I see the wealth of our land being taken to China every day. I do not think this is right, but what can I do to stop this from happening? People don't think of the effect of cutting trees. They only think of themselves and making money (Sherab, a high school student cited in Lehman 1999: 106).

While the Chinese Government acknowledges that there have been difficulties in Tibet, it states that these are outweighed by the vast amount of infrastructure constructed over the years in the form of highways, bridges, dams and buildings in Tibet (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). However, during a visit to Tibet in 1980, Hu Yaobang, the Chinese Communist Party Secretary, publicly admitted that Tibetans had not benefited under Chinese rule, and was shocked by what he saw.

Hu, on 30 May 1980, made recommendations towards a new policy that became the foundation of reforms in Tibet during the 1980s. While in line with the reforms implemented in China, his recommendations attempted to redress the situation in Tibet. The six-point policy reform included the following directives:

1. The Tibet Autonomous Region government should fully exercise its autonomy.
2. Tibetan farmers and herders should be exempt from taxation and compulsory quota sales to the state as well as the assignment of work without pay. They should be free to negotiate prices for the sale of their products.
3. A flexible economy policy should be implemented in Tibet recognizing Tibet's special situation and tailored to Tibet's special needs.
4. Subsidies from the central government should be increased to develop the local economy.
5. Within the socialist framework, efforts should be made to revive and develop Tibetan culture, education, and science.
6. The participation of Tibetan cadres in the local administration should be increased and large numbers of Han cadres should be withdrawn from Tibet (Schwartz 1996: 15-16).

However, despite Chinese claims of greater liberalisation in Tibet, repression by Chinese authorities continues:

Beijing has outlawed pictures of the Dalai Lama, welcomed ethnic Chinese migration into Tibet, increased security personnel at Tibetan monasteries, inhibited religious practices, and forced monks and Tibetan officials to undergo "patriotic" retraining. These policies have led to continued, and growing, animosity toward Chinese rule, as well as public expressions of Tibetan nationalism that have included several bombings in Lhasa over the past two years (Grunfeld 1999: 294).

Opponents to China's occupation and 'development' of Tibet state that even though China has had fifty years to develop Tibet, 'development' has not made any marked improvements to the lives of Tibetans. Instead, any claimed positive impacts by China are far outweighed by the negative impacts on the lives of the Tibetan people. Although Chinese development has created significant infrastructure in Tibet, including roads, airfields power stations and bridges, these developments have been of primary benefit to the Chinese colonialists, government and military, rather than to Tibetans (The Government of Tibet in Exile, a). China's opponents therefore raise the question:

...whether the advantages of Chinese 'liberation', to the ordinary Tibetan, outweigh the systematic destruction of a living, thriving civilisation and the annihilation of a national identity, with all its attendant loss of life and human misery (Wangyal in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 14).

Economic Liberalisation in Tibet:

Economic Development for Political Control?

Despite the passing of nearly five decades under Chinese occupation, Tibetan resistance in the late Twentieth Century created problems for the Chinese. The period from 1987 to 1990, (labelled the "third dark era" in Tibet's history since colonial rule, following the Great Leap and the Cultural Revolution), was plagued by political unrest. During much of this period, Lhasa was ruled by martial law, "...and at least one hundred people are believed to have been shot dead by police for taking part in demonstrations" (Barnett 1999: 183). Civilian rule was re-

established in May 1990 when Chinese authorities, unnoticed by the Western press:

...announced that the security policy in Tibet was henceforth to shift from "passive" [mass arrests and street executions] to "active" policing. This meant, in the obscure code used by Chinese politicians, that the practice of shooting demonstrators and of mass torture and detention would be replaced by more cautious and more restrained forms of control (Barnett 1999: 183).

Following this dark era, it is argued that China's decision to undertake the recent economic liberalisation policies in Tibet has been influenced by the need of the state to increase its economic and political control of contested regions (Alling 1997⁷; Barnett 1999; Schwartz 1996). While the liberalisation strategy in Tibet is highly complex due to the region's separatist nationalism, the state has been "shrewd" in developing economic changes (Alling 1997: 8).⁸ Most recently, the state has proposed an acceleration of liberalisation policies to resolve separatist nationalism in Tibet (Alling 1997: 1).⁹ Vice president Hu Jintao, a member of the Chinese Communist Party Central Standing Committee, Political Bureau Standing Committee, corroborates this argument with his comment earlier this year, (2000), in speaking about China's development activities within Tibet:

The continuous development of Tibet's economic construction and other social undertakings and the achievements attained in recent years are inseparable from our efforts to maintain social stability (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

⁷ Alling (1997) undertook a comparative study of economic liberalisation and separatist nationalism in Sri Lanka and Tibet, studying the extent to which economic policies of the state, particularly the policy of economic liberalisation, are determinants of separatist nationalism. Alling found that economic development has been used "both as an ideology and as a practical means of implementing projects, with nationalistic intent." As long as the state is able to repress resistance through its coercive powers, "development is provided by the state in the name of society" (Alling 1997: 2).

⁸ Interestingly, since the Dalai Lama's escape in 1959, "...political, social, and economic reforms have proceeded more deliberately than in other minority areas of China" (Kaplan & Sobin 1982: 56).

⁹ Yet, Alling (1997: 9) suggests that the state's plan may be erroneous, as no strong evidence exists to prove that economic development will itself reduce Tibetan nationalism and, "...in reality liberalization may tend to propel separatism into a more violent movement" (Alling 1997: 1).

However, while tanks may not be on the streets and machine-gun posts may not be on the roofs, as they were at the beginning of the 1990s:

...there are tourist hotels, computer shops, public phone booths and all the other signs of affluence and luxury familiar to us from our own societies. Even the growing presence of an underclass, of unemployed Tibetans, is to us a sign of normal social disparity (Barnett 1999: 190).

Thus, while not necessarily apparent to outsiders, such as tourists, Tibet has become: "...an experiment in achieving targeted repression and cultural restrictions within a context of economic relaxation" (Barnett 1999: 190).

Han Chinese Migration into Tibet and Population Transfer

The Chinese have used population transfer as an indirect means of attempting to alter, direct and assimilate the nature of Tibetan culture and identity (The Government of Tibet in Exile, a), and as part of its strategy for eliminating Tibetan nationalism China employs population transfer (Kane 1995: 5).¹⁰

Initially officials and army personnel transferred to Tibet in the earlier years of Chinese occupation. Since the 1980s, however, when China decided to fully integrate Tibet into the Chinese economy and social structure, the Chinese government has transferred Chinese peasants, agricultural workers and other labourers, and traders into Tibet. Chinese settlers now make up 7.5 million habitants, compared to 6.1 million Tibetans (International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet 1992 in The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000), and today, areas of the plateau that were entirely populated by Tibetans prior to 1950 are now occupied by the Chinese majority (Kane 1995: 5).

The economic reforms of 1992, initiated by Deng Xioping, have further increased the number of Han settlers into Tibet, when it was announced that special

¹⁰ Kane (1995: 5) suggests that the Chinese may have read Machiavelli as: "Sending immigrants is the most effective way to colonise countries because it is less offensive than to send military expeditions and much less expensive."

economic zones near Lhasa and Golmud would be created (Tibet Facts 2 1996). Chinese immigrants began to enter Tibet, either as unofficial settlers or semi-skilled entrepreneurs. They set up shops "...with the support of officials with connections to China's emerging economy, connections that few Tibetans had or could make" (Alling 1997: 17). At present, the economic activity of Chinese settlers is more economically productive than that of Tibetans (Alling 1997: 9).

For Tibetans, the impact of Chinese settlers has had devastating economic effects. Chinese settlers dominate the Tibetan economy, owning and control in nearly all business enterprises in Tibet (International Commission of Jurists in The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). For instance, in July 1993, a survey of Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, showed that on the southern Lingkor, a street parallel to the Barkhor: "...in one stretch of 50 shops, west of the sports stadium, 46 were owned or operated by Chinese traders" (TIN News Update 15/08/93 in Tibet Facts 2 1996). In another example, after 21 years in prison, Ani Pachen explains how she felt when she arrived in Lhasa in 1981, and found that Tibetans no longer constituted the majority of the population:

I looked around, trying to get my bearings. I noticed that most of the shops were Chinese, and I suddenly felt lost. It was as if I were in a foreign city, not in the capital city of Tibet, and I felt angry that Tibetans had been pushed out of the shops, forced to sell their wares by the side of the road (Pachen & Donnelley 2000: 215).

The population transfer of Han Chinese into Tibet has created a Tibetan minority on the plateau, which means Tibetans are successively disenfranchised from future political processes (Tibet Facts 2 1996; The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). Further, by becoming a minority, Tibetans are not only turned into second-class citizens, they are also "...excluded from participating in and benefiting from the development that is being carried out on their land and in their name" (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

Tibetan Unemployment and Poverty

There are indications that inequalities in Tibet go beyond the rural/urban divide. Seventy percent of Tibetans in the Tibetan Autonomous Region are below the poverty line (International Commission of Jurists 1997 in The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). Regional inequalities are also apparent on the Tibetan plateau, with Amdo relatively more developed than other areas, and the Tibetan Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas ranked lowest on human development index of China.¹¹ While the population transfer of Han Chinese into Tibet has also impacted on Tibetan's "...access to land, food and meaningful employment" (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

There has been an increase in Tibetan unemployment for a number of reasons; first, Chinese is the only teaching language in schools and Chinese is required for most jobs (Bass 1992; Tibet Facts 2 1996). Therefore settlers have an immediate advantage over Tibetans, "...apart from any pure racial advantage they may have in dealings with Chinese authorities who dispense most of the jobs, residence permits and trade privileges" (Tibet Facts 2 1996).

Second, personnel are systematically imported, including technical experts and officials to work in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Incentives for the Chinese immigrants include "...altitude allowance, remoteness bonus, tax concessions, fewer hours, longer holidays and greater market opportunities than in China" (Bass 1992; Tibet Facts 2 1996). In addition, the Chinese government encourages Chinese migrants to western regions, including Tibet, by offering them higher wages and a more lenient childbearing policy (Bass 1992; The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). Third, it is alleged that Chinese officials refuse work and residence permits to migrating Tibetans while encouraging Han

¹¹ United Nations Development Programme, 1997. China Human Development Report in The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000d).

Chinese, especially shopkeepers and trades-people, to migrate and even to work without permits (Tibet Facts 2 1996).

The Nationalities Policy of the Chinese Communist Party

Described as "...another minefield where it is necessary to tread warily" (Stockman 2000: 40), national identity and ethnic composition in the People's Republic of China tends to be a controversial issue. China states that the Chinese population is made up of 56 'nationalities' (minzu). Each individual in the population is allocated to one of these minzu, and this classification is entered in each person's identity papers. Ninety-two percent of the population belong to the Han minzu, while eight percent make up the minority minzu (Stockman 2000: 40). However, Chinese understanding and knowledge of many of the nationalities, cultures and conditions is often minimal (Smith 1994).

The minority policy of the People's Republic of China, like Marxist evolutionism, is established on the stages of social forms, with the minority nationalities (minzu shaoshu) representative of the more inferior stages in the evolutionary arrangement. It is therefore the responsibility of the 'more advanced' Han Chinese majority to help develop "their less fortunate compatriots." This reasoning is thus used as a legitimisation of Chinese colonialism, with the notion of the "superior Han" as "representatives of progress" juxtaposed to the "backward Tibetan" (Bass 1992; Tibetan Bulletin 1999).

Minority nationalities in China are accorded specific rights under the constitution, "though not the right to succession from the state", and are often treated in distinct ways under laws and regulations. Minzu shaoshu, for example, are supposed to be excluded from the one child family policy (Stockman 2000: 40), however, this is not necessarily the case. Officially, the state holds progressive policies towards the development of minorities and the protection of the distinctive customs (Stockman 2000: 41). All the same, rather than protecting the

'national minorities', the essential goal of the Chinese nationalities policy has been:

... to deny nationalities' separatism in favour of multinational unity, to diffuse nationalist sentiments and to prepare the way for the socialist transformation of nationalities areas in a process common with Han China (Smith 1994: 55).

Sinocisation of the Tibetan Population

Since the Cultural Revolution, in an ethnocentric colonial policy, China has focused on the Sinocisation of the Tibetan population:

Despite lip service to the contrary-and in contrast to their earlier policy-it seems to have been the object of official Chinese policy since the Cultural Revolution to Sinocise the Tibetan people with little regard for local feelings (Mullin in Mullin & Wangyal 1983: 12).

The main features of this policy have concentrated on Han control in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, and maintaining Han domination of the highest levels of the party and administration. Further, the Han have failed to learn local languages or respect local customs, and instead administered secondary education in Chinese (Bass 1992).

Large Scale Development

The type of development that is occurring in Tibet involves large scale, infrastructure projects, which ignore many vast rural areas of the plateau. These top-down Chinese sponsored projects have been purpose-built to "...facilitate the settlement, fulfil military objectives and to expediate resource extraction." Future developments include highways, rail lines, international airports, and natural gas pipelines, which arguably "...have an underlying agenda to further dilute the Tibetan population and intensify the process of Sinicization" (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

Opponents to China's development of Tibet argue that large-scale development is inappropriate for the Tibetan social structure and fragile ecosystem. Further, China's development programmes do not target the poor (Australian Agency for International Development 1995 in The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). For example, China's poverty alleviation projects, such as the United Nations World Food Project in Amdo (Qinghai) are designed to increase "...wheat production for Chinese consumption rather than barley which is the subsistence food of Tibetans" (International Commission of Jurists in The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). Further, the poverty eradication plan is focused on income generation which:

...places emphasis on activities that are project oriented in nature and not necessarily on the participation of the poor in identifying and developing solutions to their poverty. It also places emphasis on large enterprise activities and does not target poor households (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

China has focused on income generation in certain areas of Tibet in the hope that increased incomes will demonstrate that poverty is no longer an issue in Tibet. However, the narrow focus on income cannot give a clear or accurate indication of the level of poverty in all its forms, and by doing so, China has ignored health, education, nutrition, clothing, housing, quality of life and access to participation in development, which may also indicate poverty levels. Furthermore, growth in income statistics often only reflects a change from barter to market economics and can give an artificial representation of prosperity. The replacing market economy may be inappropriate for people's needs unlike the pre-existing barter economy (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000):

...the average annual income measure in itself often underestimates the real extent of deprivation by not looking at issues such as access to health and education, the nature of substance production, the gap between official income statistics and actual consumption, and the more detailed surveys of the standards of living in Tibetan areas (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

Population transfer has also impacted on the type of development that occurs in Tibet. Funds from Beijing as well as the infrastructure in place:

...have been directed at maintaining a distinct, controlling Chinese community in Tibet. This can be seen to be mainly urban, administrative, mercantile or military, and segregated from the bulk of Tibetan communities (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

Alling (1997: 7) suggests that additional problems from the Chinese development of Tibet may arise from the determination of the Chinese development infrastructure itself, which is likely to exacerbate the anti-China reaction in Tibet. Most of the current development projects involve population transfers of Han Chinese settlers or workers to Tibetan areas, and employ a large disproportionate number of Chinese. In this manner, China secures and strengthens Beijing's control and occupation of Tibet (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). Thus, rather than benefiting the Tibetan people, development in Tibet "...has actually occurred at their cost resulting in a violation of the socio-economic rights, or broadly their right to development" (The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000).

Summary

China asserted its authority in Tibet in 1951, with the introduction of Chinese Socialist models of modernisation (Forbes & McGranahan 1992: 2), citing Tibet's economic "backwardness", and socio-economic and political situation as justification for its intervention in Tibet. Even though the lives of some Tibetans have been improved through economic development, by the early 1990s, the majority had not received any benefit. The socio-economic effects of liberalisation have favoured only certain members of society, while ignoring the remainder (Alling 1997: 9).

Today, China continues to use economic growth and development to dispel Tibetan resistance, and as an antidote to Tibetan separatism and increasing

nationalist activities. In addition, China promotes economic development schemes that aim to achieve a unified state, presupposing the acquiescence of the Tibetan population (Alling 1997: 1). Opponents to China's presence in Tibet argue that the aims of China's development of Tibet have been intentionally detrimental to the Tibetan people and their culture; the result of Chinese development efforts in Tibet is the suffering of millions of Tibetans (Alling 1997; The Government of Tibet in Exile 2000). Tibetans "...have been at the receiving end of economic development policies that exacerbate their impoverished situations and ignore their demands" (Alling 1997: 1):

Thus, from the Tibetan point of view, Tibetans now faced not only political imperialism from the East, but a growing economic development-driven imperialism that is nothing less than the current phase of history of Chinese expansion, that has successfully overtaken numerous cultures (Alling 1997: 8).

Conclusion

Although opinions are divided on the development that has occurred in Tibet under Chinese rule, it is nevertheless clear that Chinese development policies and actions have had dramatic social and economic impacts on Tibetan society. These policies and actions have, in turn, shaped the Tibetan society's view of the state, with various features of economic development in Tibet exacerbating anti-Chinese feelings; including the influx of Chinese workers, the growth in Chinese settlers and enterprises, and the state's encouragement of Chinese migration into Tibet (Alling: 1997), which have lead to employment bias and other forms of discrimination against Tibetans. What is clear, however, is that without significant government initiatives to enable Tibetans to participate, control and to receive the benefits of development, the opportunities for Tibetans to become equal benefactors of economic development in Tibet is not possible.

Chapter Two: The Evolution of the Refugee

A Review of the Literature

Introduction

In 1951, the first year the United Nations (UN) set out to count refugee numbers, it was estimated that there were only 1.5 million (Chalk 1998) to 2 million (Kane 1995) refugees. By 1997, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that there were over 30 million refugees worldwide¹, "representing an increase of 66 percent in 44 years" (Loescher 1992; Dupont 1996; & Stalker n.d.a. in Chalk 1998: 1). Conservative estimates suggest that the number of refugees has grown by at least 2000 per day since the late 1970s (Terrill 1984: 238). Today, in the year 2000, the number of 'people of concern' has reduced slightly to an estimated 22.3 million, or to one out of every 269 people in the world (UNHCR 2000a).

By 1980, every continent in the world contained large numbers of refugees (Gallagher 1989: 584). During the 1980s, the refugee population increased dramatically, creating a 'global problem' (Schmeidl 1997: 284), and further establishing the claim that the Twentieth Century was 'the century of the refugee.'

While recent refugee repatriations have been successful, the number of refugee-producing countries continues to increase. No apparent solutions to the crisis have been put forward by the international community, and as a result:

...agencies such as the UNHCR are moving away from traditional relief work and toward preventative diplomacy involving assisting the internally displaced or intervening in local conflicts to prevent future outflow (Schmeidl 1997: 285).

Part one of this chapter will begin by giving an historical overview of the evolution of the refugee in the Twentieth Century to show how the 'refugee' has become recognised as a social category in academic research, and as an international

¹ However, this figure does not account for those refugees who were not eligible for refugee status (Chalk 1998: 16).

legal and political concern. It will then focus on the two major definitions of refugees in use today at the international level, the United Nations definition and the Organisation of African Unity definition, which have arisen from this period, and most specifically on how these definitions characterise refugees. Part two of this chapter will then concentrate on the theoretical perspectives regarding refugees. It will focus on theories of migration, most specifically theories of refugee migration, and the causes of refugee flows. Various aspects of refugee migrations will also be examined, including Third World refugees, development and migration, and gender and migration.

While recognising that environmental refugees, which are produced by natural disasters and other ecological problems, constitute a large number of the global refugee population, time and space limitations will restrict this discussion of the causes of refugees primarily to those resulting from human agencies (Miller 1978: 365), for instance, political and Convention² refugees.

Historical Perspectives: The Evolution of the Refugee

Evolution of the Refugee Post-World War I

Although refugee movements have existed throughout history, it was only in the Twentieth Century, that political recognition of the need for international collaboration and assistance to deal with refugee situations developed. Prior to 1921, private voluntary agencies primarily carried out refugee aid, focusing on relief efforts (Kritz & Keely 1983: xviii).

Following World War I, refugees became "...an anomaly in the nation-state system" (Holborn cited in Kritz & Keely 1983: xix). Boundary shifts and changes of governments displaced millions of people, and left them in "legal limbo" (Newland 1981: 8). Russian refugees, for example, were left "...without documents of a recognised government, with few prospects for repatriation or

² 'Convention refugee' is the name given to refugees who meet the criteria outlined in the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

resettlement in an era of closing overseas borders" (Kritz & Keely 1983: xviii). As a result, the international community, prompted by clear repatriation difficulties, deteriorating prospects of settlement abroad, the ambiguous legal status of first asylum countries, and the pressures on relief resources, recognised refugees as an international problem (Kritz & Keely 1983: xix; UNHCR 2000b).

The Emergence of the Refugee as a Social Category

'Refugees' as a specific social category and legal problem of global proportions emerged in the post-war period of the Twentieth Century. From this period, the notion of a refugee has evolved into what is a recognised process involving a controlling model of physical displacement in which the individual is "...bounded by the spatial activity of movement" (Tuit 1999: 106). Most significantly, it is the refugee's unwillingness to depart, "...coupled with the political disaffection that pushes him [sic] to depart..." that distinguishes the refugee as a social category or type (Pedraza-Bailey 1985: 8).

Although refugees and crisis management techniques existed prior to this period, it was during the emergence of Europe from World War II, "...that certain key techniques and managing mass displacement of people first became standardized and then globalized" (Malkki 1995: 497)³. During the six years of World War II, both conflict and the redrawing of Europe's boundaries displaced around 30 million Europeans, and the subsequent movement of millions of people, "...created ethnically more homogenous countries than had ever existed in Central and Eastern Europe" (Weiner 1996: 3).

Seven million Soviet citizens, consisting of mainly prisoners of war and forced labourers, were sent back from Central Europe, including large numbers that were forcibly repatriated. Although many refugees were able to return to their country of origin, many were not able to return to their hometowns or villages, as these had been assigned to another country. Many Germans inhabiting Poland,

³ These practices have links to past forms of confinement, such as quarantine and the concentration camps, used by the British during the Anglo-Boer War (Malkki 1995: 498n).

for instance, relocated or were driven into Germany when their region was integrated into Poland. Meanwhile, some governments refused entry to returning minorities who had been forced out of their country during the war (Weiner 1996: 3).

In its wake, World War II had left 11 million survivors and 14 million refugees (Malkki 1995; Robinson in Boyle et al 1998; Weiner 1996), and in order to deal with the millions of displaced people, processes involving "...a more encompassing apparatus of administrative procedures..." were developed (Malkki 1995: 498).

The Refugee Camp

Towards the end of World War II, the refugee camp became a vital tool in controlling mass displacement. Existing institutional buildings, quasi-military in design and suited to mass control and care, such as labour and concentration camps, were transformed into assembly centres for refugees. The interiors of the camps enabled spatial isolation and management of refugees, and were arranged into disciplined, supervisable spaces (Malkki 1995: 499-500).

Consequently, refugee camps enabled and facilitated the segregation of nationalities, and ordered repatriation or third country resettlement, while, public discipline, including law enforcement, the control of refugee movements and black-markets could be kept under control. Camp workers monitored and managed the health and well-being of refugees through quarantine, and through medical, hygiene, rehabilitation and education programmes (Malkki 1995: 498).

Yet the refugee camp not only represented a site of control, but also a site of power, as Malkki (1995: 498) illustrates:

The refugee camp was a vital device of power: The spatial concentration and ordering of people that it enabled, as well as the administrative and bureaucratic processes it facilitated within its boundaries, had far-reaching consequences.

These consequences included the camp's vital role within the transformatory process of viewing the refugee problem from a military issue to a humanitarian issue. For, as Malkki (1985 in Malkki 1995: 499) points out, refugees were not always considered an international humanitarian problem; instead, refugees were initially considered a military problem, in which the control of civilians and refugees were defined as a combat problem.

Power was further demonstrated by those in control who instigated interventions over those seeking shelter in the camps. Documentation collection and the "perpetual screening" of camp inhabitants enabled refugees to be objectively studied (Malkki 1995: 498), and academics took advantage of the opportunity to study the 'objects' of the new social phenomenon under controlled conditions found within the confines of the camps (Malkki 1995: 500).

In the course of these processes, procedures, and transformations, it was principally in these camps that the modern, post-war refugee figure was formed (Malkki 1995: 500), and in which the refugee surfaced "...as a knowable, nameable figure and as an object of social scientific knowledge" (Malkki 1995: 498).

The Evolution of International Refugee Policy and Law

The procedures that were used to control people in the refugee camps, however, tended to be ad hoc, emergency, temporary measures that relied heavily on improvisation (Malkki 1995; UNHCR 2000b). During the final two years of the war, policy plans began to be written in response to predictions of mass disorder to come, such as the SHAEF plan, the definitive Allied operations plan, which took a strong military and administrator view of displacement (Malkki 1995: 498-99).

Later, in 1948 both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Genocide Convention were adopted (Malkki 1995: 500). Soon after in 1951, the United Nations General Assembly decided to establish the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for an initial period of three

years (UNHCR 2000b: 19). The United Nations Conference on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons adopted the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in July 1951. The Convention was then put in action on 22 April 1954 (UNHCR 2000b: 23).⁴

The temporary and non-operational measure had a two-part mandate that sets out the international protection of refugees, and assistance to governments and private organisations⁵:

The Convention spells out the obligations and rights of refugees, and the obligations of states towards refugees. It also sets out international standards for the treatment of refugees. It embodies principles that promote and safeguard refugees' rights in the fields of employment, education, residence, freedom of movement, access to courts, naturalization and, above all, the security against return to a country where they may risk persecution (UNHCR 2000b: 23).

The United Nations' official definition of refugees, found in the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, is regarded as fundamental in the institutionalisation of the post-World War II management of refugees (Zolberg et al 1989). This definition, despite long academic arguments over how refugees should be defined, is one of only two definitions of refugees in use today; both are legal definitions (Boyle et al 1998: 182).⁶

⁴ The international law pertaining to refugees arose "...within the framework of the international code of Human Rights" (Nobel 1988: 20).

⁵ Even today, nearly 50 years later, the UNHCR's mandate is only temporary and must be renewed every five years, although the agency has since become an operational one (Rogers 1992: 1114).

⁶ Today, European countries, in some cases, have defined a further refugee status that can be applied to those fleeing for humanitarian reasons, "...such as civil war, serious civil disturbances or economic deprivation in social discrimination." These asylum seekers, sometimes termed 'Humanitarian' refugees, may be granted resident permits as 'asylees', as 'humanitarian cases', as 'B-Status' refugees, or as 'de facto' refugees." The principle of non-refoulement is normally applied, but not always specifically stipulated in these exception laws (Jenny 1984: 393).

The UN Definition

The 1951 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' official definition (UNHCR 1954) states:

As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to 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 or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

This definition was drafted with the challenge of European refugees in mind, and convention status was given solely to those who were forced to move due to war in Europe. Only those who crossed international political borders were termed refugees. This was a deliberate anomaly as the United Nations could operate only with the consent of national governments. Those who were internally displaced were excluded, as the United Nations operating through the consent of national governments, had to distance itself from any involvement in the internal affairs of member states (Boyle et al 1998: 182).

In time, however, the Eurocentric bias incorporated in the United Nations 1951 Convention, proved to pose severe restrictions in the ability of states to deal collectively with refugees (Newland 1981: 9; UNHCR 2000b). After World War II, the emergence of newly independent states in Africa and Asia created new widespread refugee crises. The disintegration of colonial empires, the creation of multi-ethnic states, population transfers, (most noticeably in India and Pakistan), and a series of internal wars and conflicts, all produced vast numbers of refugees. In addition, the spread of Communist regimes, and revolutions created further refugees. While in the Middle East and Southwest Asia, revolutions, wars, and related conflicts all produced large refugee flows (Weiner 1996:3; UNHCR 2000b).

In order to remove the Eurocentric limits of geographical location and World War II-related time period out of the UN definition, the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, (the Bellagio Protocol of 1967), was created with the

intention to cover events that occurred both after 1 January 1951, and in countries outside European borders (Gallagher 1989: 583; Malkki 1995: 501; UNHCR 2000b: 53). By removing these restrictions and opening up the definition to include other countries outside Europe and periods covering those outside World War II, "...the Geneva Convention became the universal instrument of refugee law⁷ (Nobel cited in Malkki 1995: 501).

The fundamental right that refugees gain through refugee status is the right of "non-refoulement"; not to be sent back against their will to their country of origin (Newland 1981; UNHCR 2000b). Nations that ratify the United Nations 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, agree:

...not to expel refugees from their territory without due process of law, and, if grounds for expulsion are found, to give the refugee time to seek legal admission to another country of asylum (Newland 1981: 7).

Additionally, the host country must also issue identity papers and travel documents, allow refugees at least the same civil rights as those given to other legal immigrants, and assist refugees with assimilation and naturalisation (Newland 1981: 7).

The Organisation of African Unity Refugee Convention

The second definition of refugees was formulated in 1969⁸, when the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) put forward an alternative and broader definition of refugees incorporating a Third World focus. Today, this definition is used through much of Africa, yet, like the UN definition of refugees, there still remains great temporal and spatial variation in its interpretation and implementation (Boyle et al 1998: 182).

There are two parts to the OAU definition. Part one is modelled on the UN definition while part two extends this and includes victims of war, violence and

⁷ By 31 December 1999, 134 countries were signatories to both the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol (UNHCR 2000b: 53).

⁸ The OAU Refugee Convention took effect in June 1974 (UNHCR 2000b: 57).

civil disturbance, and introduces the idea that "colour, race, religion or political affiliation" should not result in refugees being treated any differently (Boyle et al 1998: 182). The OAU definition of refugees includes:

...every person who, owing to external aggression, occupations, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or whole of his [sic] country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his [sic] place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his [sic] country of origin or nationality (OAU cited in Newland 1981: 11–12).

Containing more objective criteria, the OAU definition extends refugee status to groups fleeing from 'unbearable and dangerous conditions', rather than necessitating that an individual faces targeted persecution (Newland 1981: 11; Nobel 1982 in Boyle et al 1998: 182; UNHCR 2000b: 57).

During the development of the OAU Convention, refugee crises were still assumed to be temporary and it was believed that "most of the refugees would voluntarily repatriate when independence was secured by newly formed governments" (Gallagher 1989: 584). Even though some refugees did go home when governments were established, it was clear that by 1980 that this definition was not applicable to "...large refugee populations in Africa who were fleeing from internal civil wars or conflicts between the sovereign African states" (Gallagher 1989: 584). At the first International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA I) held in Geneva in 1981, a more development-oriented approach was sought to cope with the continuing and long-term impact of refugees (Gallagher and Stein in Gallagher 1989: 584).

The Problems Associated with the UN and OAU Refugee Definitions

Both the United Nations and the OAU definitions of refugees assume that refugee situations are temporary. Further, international efforts to deal with refugees only provide temporary mandates for 'extraordinary situations', and call for solutions within a restricted time frame (Kritz & Keely 1983: xix).

Yet, the actuality of many refugee situations demonstrates that the circumstances can often become long-term, as the cases of Tibetan and

Palestinian refugees have revealed. While inadequacies in refugee approaches, due to the inability to find durable solutions to refugee problems, have resulted in massive build-ups of refugee populations, such as in Africa (Gallagher 1989: 595).

The United Nations definition tends to be controversial (Zolberg 1983b: 25). The motivation behind the restricted definition of refugees is to keep numbers down, while at the same time to define those people within the context of mass displacement, who due to exceptional circumstances, require the protection of the international community (Gallagher 1989: 581), Thus the United Nation's role is paradoxical; both restricting and facilitating access to refuge.

The narrow definition used by the United Nations, is in fact a "remnant of the Cold War", in which the purpose of the definition "...was to weaken the former Soviet Union and other states within its domain by granting asylum to people who fled from them" (Kane 1995: 1). Western governments thought they had a vested interest in combating the persecution they perceived as part of Communism, and protecting refugees became key in maintaining liberal democracy; those who fled demonstrated 'the tyranny of the East' (Harrell-Bond 1986: 11). In fact, 96 percent of refugees allowed into the United States during the period of the Reagan administration were from Communist countries (Kane 1995: 3).

In the UN definition, political persecution is emphasised over other forms of persecution (D'Souza and Crisp 1985 in Boyle et al 1998: 182); what is more, refugees are defined *solely* in terms of persecution (Kane 1995: 1). Further, the strict standard of the UN definition is concerned with individuals and not groups. Each individual must convince others that they personally fear persecution. Convention status is thus denied to those who are displaced by war or violence and have not been singled out for individualised persecution (Ferris in Boyle et al 1998: 182). Furthermore, while the definition guarantees the right of individuals to seek asylum, it does not guarantee that they will necessarily be able to receive it (Gurtov in Boyle et al 1998: 182).

Financial contributions to UNHCR come predominantly from the developed countries (Gallagher 1989: 596), enabling them to set the agenda for refugee admissions and relief programmes. Developing nations provide material and technical assistance as the primary focus, yet fund-raising from the international community to pay for such assistance is still required (Gallagher 1989: 595). In addition, financial resources are 'overwhelmingly committed' to providing material assistance within relief, care and maintenance phases of refugee responses (Gallagher 1989: 595), with limited, if any, considerations for the imminent phases of refugee situations.

Within the international relief system, different perceptions of government responsibilities exist (Gallagher 1989: 596), which results in refugees receiving heterogeneous treatment from host country to host country, as each nation state uses different approaches to deal with refugees. Developed nations have a more restricted definition on a case-by-case basis, and approved applications usually mean a permanent right to remain:

It is not assumed that people will return if circumstances change in their countries of origin, nor that international assistance will be available to offset the costs of receiving refugees (Gallagher 1989: 595).

Developing Nations, on the other hand, tend to use definitions such as the OAU Convention definition, whereby: "Temporary rights to remain are supported on the basis that groups of forced migrants have a *prima facie* claim to being in a "refugee-like" situation" (Gallagher 1989: 595).

While the existence of refugee definitions provides some security for at risk peoples around the world, the definitions are restrictive definitions rather than inclusive, thus, many vulnerable people are left without adequate international protection.

Conclusions

Post-war Europe was instrumental in providing our present-day understanding of the 'refugee', as a specific social category and legal problem of global dimensions. It was from this period that policies, procedures, and laws regarding the control and management, and official international recognition of refugees arose, including the main elements of international refugee law and related legal instruments, incorporating elements of the international code of Human Rights into refugee law.

However, seeking the 'global figure' of the refugee in post-war Europe, despite the historic justifications for this specific localisation, can be dangerous and lead to Eurocentric notions about refugees (Malkki 1995: 497). To this day, it is from these historical moments that a Eurocentric bias within the understanding and definition of refugees continues, as Tuitt (1999: 107) explains:

By privileging these historical moments, a general concept of displacement emerged which has both legitimated and sustained a specific type of humanitarian assistance. In other words, by reifying certain historically contingent moments of exile, the concept of displacement has been applied in a particular way, to a broad range of phenomena.

Ever since the latter part of the Second World War, when the refugee materialised as a social category, refugee problems have been continuous realities, and the policy and procedural attempts to cope with them have become progressively more formalised. The post-war refugee camps became both a locus of control and power from which administration structures and procedures could be tried and tested. Refugees became units of analysis that could be studied in a fixed location under controlled conditions, while it was within these camps that the management of refugees, initially seen as a military problem, moved to an international humanitarian problem (Wyman in Malkki 1995: 500).

In both world politics and academic literature, refugee crises have been treated as anomalies: "...self-contained, sporadic, unpredictable upheavals bearing no relation to each other" (Newland 1981: 5). While the definitions of refugees have been broadened and become more encompassing over the years, increasing the numbers eligible for refugee status, the definitions are still too restrictive to

provide protection for all people at risk. As Richmond (1988: 23) states: "... the present UN definition of a "Convention refugee" is inadequate in the face of the contemporary demographic realities." Instead, we require definitions for those refugees who do not necessarily meet the strict criteria set out within the UN definition, but still require protection from the international community at large.

Theoretical Perspectives

Introduction

The United Nations' definition of a refugee asserts that: a) a refugee is a person who flees their place of origin, and in doing so, crosses international borders in order to seek refuge, or, is already outside their place of origin and refuses to return; b) a refugee, additionally, has a justifiable fear of persecution in returning to their place of origin for "...reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion..." (UNHCR 1954).

Refugee migration, therefore, unlike other forms of migration, is considered *forced* as a consequence of certain factors or causes exhibited within the country of origin, which results in the involuntary movement of people across international borders. The refugee condition, therefore, implies "...fear, panic, confusion, and disorganization as a consequence of the need to escape in any way possible" (Allen & Hiller 1985: 439).

The United Nations' definition, however, does not question why refugees flee in the first place. Although the official definition requires the persecution of an individual in order to claim refugee status, this definition does not fully explain why people flee their homes (Kane 1995: 1). Hence, this thesis puts forward the assertion that although persecution is officially a prerequisite of refugee status, it is not necessarily the sole causal factor of refugees, and alternative causes of refugee flows must be examined.

Similarly, the focus on the involuntary aspects of refugee migration has ignored the "voluntaristic aspects" of such migrations, and "...*understated* the extent to which becoming a refugee is volitional and socially purposive behaviour" (Allen & Hiller 1985: 439-440). Therefore, by not taking into account the reasons why people migrate, this thesis asserts that it cannot be assumed that the migration of refugees is necessarily forced.

The following discussion will focus on the theoretical perspectives of refugees. It will begin with an overview of the evolution of voluntary migration theories and the development of the interrelated involuntary migration theories. Following on from this, the discussion will concentrate on the factors that help to create refugees and cause refugee flows. Various aspects of refugee migrations will also be examined, including Third World refugees, development and migration, and gender and migration. In addition, it will briefly discuss the benefits of the 'refugee' label and the consequences of labelling for refugees. The discussion will conclude by looking at the decision-making involved in refugee migrations, raising the question of 'how voluntary is 'involuntary' migration?'

Migration

Migration is subjectively defined. Unlike the two other components of population change, fertility and mortality, which involve straightforward measurements of births and deaths, migration involves complex movement processes over time and space dimensions (Skeldon 1990). Much of our understanding regarding migration comes from historical movements that have left a political impression on our perception of mass departure, such as the exodus recorded in the Old Testament, and the Pilgrims of colonial America. In the Twentieth Century, these movements have included the redistribution of people through the political ideologies of Stalin and Mao, and the division of lands, such as the creation of Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India (Kane 1995: 3).

In truth, however, migration is a multi-faceted phenomenon, not necessarily arising out of purely political motivations. Migration is a sub-component of international mobility, "...normally associated with permanent settlers, aliens in an irregular situation and refugees" (Jenny 1984: 389). In a broad sense, migration may be defined as:

... the movement of a person who leaves his [sic] country of origin, or the country of his [sic] habitual residence, to establish himself [sic] in another country, either permanently or temporarily for reasons and needs which are considered as being essential (Jenny 1984: 389).

This definition of migration identifies those who would normally be categorised as economic or labour-oriented migrants. It excludes those who travel for personal convenience, such as tourism or business purposes, but covers those who voluntarily decide to move to satisfy economic or social needs. Equally, Jenny (1984: 389) states that by understanding 'essential needs' in their "existential significance", this definition would also include refugees, for in the case of refugees; 'essential needs' would be directly related to the refugees' physical security that is at risk.

Theories of Migration

The 'classic' genre of migration theory, initiated by Ravenstein in the 1880s, identified the principles of migration as the transfer of people across space, internal or external to their country of origin, and endeavoured to create "an elegant formal model" that would explain such movements (Zolberg 1989: 403). 'Push-pull' theories were used to explain why migrants chose to move from one place to another, based on the individual migrant's reasons for resettlement and the personal consequences of their relocation.

For instance, Everett Lee's (1969) theory focused upon an individual migrant's reasons for migration, and built on the factors that hold, draw or deter people to and from varying locations. Lee's theory connected the factors that enter the decision to migrate with the perceived negative ('push') factors and positive ('pull') factors (Lee 1969: 285) that act like magnets attracting and repelling migrants to and from their intended destination and place of origin. In this way, predisposing factors and conditions of the country of origin are contrasted with the attracting features and perceptions of conditions in the proposed country of settlement (Lee 1969).

Lee's theory drew specific attention to the sets of intervening obstacles that stand between two locations, which may be small in some circumstances and insuperable in others, including distance, immigration laws, and the cost of transporting household goods. These obstacles then compel the prospective migrant to determine the risks of departure in view of their perceptions of the

current conditions (Lee 1969: 287). Lee also noted that different migrants are influenced in diverse ways by the same set of obstacles, and that "...there are many personal factors which affect individual thresholds and facilitate or retard migration" (Lee 1969: 287). Therefore, it is not so much the tangible factors at the point of origin or place of destination that result in the migrant's decision to leave, but the individual's perception of these factors:

Personal sensitivities, intelligence, and awareness of conditions elsewhere enter into the evaluation of the situation at origin, and knowledge of the situation at destination depends upon personal contacts or upon sources of information which are not universally available. In addition, there are personalities which are resistant to change - change of residence as well as other changes - and there are personalities which welcome change for the sake of change. For some individuals, there must be compelling reasons for migration, while for others little provocation or promise suffices (Lee 1969: 287).

Therefore, Lee concluded, the decision to migrate is never entirely rational due to the various personal factors of the migrants themselves (Lee 1969: 288).

However, while Lee recognised that not all people who migrate are able to make the decision for themselves, such as children, and wives accompanying their husbands¹ (Lee 1969: 288), Lee, like others who used the push-pull framework, overlooked the contrast between political and economic migration, "...except as different negative factors pushing the migrants at the origin and the personal traits selected" (Pedraza-Bailey 1985: 5).

Macro and Micro Theories of Migration

Challenged by ongoing global processes, critiques of conventional theoretical migration discourse opened the way for structural perspectives of migration (Pedraza-Bailey 1985: 5; Zolberg 1989: 403), which are now widely used for analysing economic migration (Pedraza-Bailey 1985: 5). Concentrating on the economic determinants of population movement, macro, or structural theories, focus on 'migration streams' and identify the conditions in which large-scale

¹ This idea was later picked up by Stark (1984: 207), in the recognition that although "...the model unit of (voluntary) international migration is the individual [this] does not necessarily imply that the individual is decisionally accountable for his [sic] migration. A larger entity - the family - is very often the effective decision-making unit."

economic factors are the predominant determinants of the outflow of people. The experiences of refugees, however, are rarely distinguished from those of economic migrants' in the consideration of questions of absorption in receiving countries (Richmond 1988: 9), even though refugees may not necessarily use the same economic or social determinants for departure as found in traditional migration analysis.

In contrast, however, there is an accepted inherent distinction between migration and refugee movements within academic migration research (Zolberg 1983b: 25). Consequently, many studies of migration have dichotomised international mobility (Boyle et al 1998: 187). Voluntary (economic) migrants have patterns of regularity; migration is viewed as the aggregate product of individual responses to economic circumstances, which can be detected, theorised, and explained. Refugee movements, conversely, are often left academically unexplored as they are assumed to be spontaneous, singular and unpredictable occurrences, peculiar events with unique causes and therefore, non-theorisable.

However, there is increasing evidence that this assertion is not necessarily correct (*Predicting Potential Refugee Crises* 1999: 1; Richmond 1988: 9; Stein 1981: 321; Zolberg 1983b: 25). Despite the fact that refugee flows certainly do tend to be unruly, as they may result from disruptive events such as international war, civil unrest and capricious governmental decisions, it is exactly because all of these events are manifestations of political trends and social problems that they can be studied and even predicted (*Predicting Potential Refugee Crises* 1999: 1; Zolberg 1983b: 25). Hence, according to Zolberg (1983b: 25), it is possible that refugees could be studied equally well in a political context, as migration is in an economic context.

As demonstrated above, refugee migrations, unlike other migrations, are considered those in which individuals are not given the option to acquiesce (Boyle et al 1998: 180), and instead come under the rubric of what Peterson (1958) termed "forced migration" (Boyle et al 1998; Pedraza-Bailey 1985). However, as the majority of (voluntary) migration theory today focuses on the decision-making factors and economic motivations of migrants, these theories

may not necessarily fully explain involuntary refugee migrations in which decision-making factors and motivations of migrants are either absent or severely restricted. Therefore, attempts have been made to develop a broader analysis of the refugees' situation, to encompass the socio-political context of refugee migration.

One of the earliest attempts at theorising refugee activities was Kunz's (1973) attempt to lay the foundations of a workable theory of refugee movements using a refugee typology with conceptual categories. Kunz differentiated between various subtypes of refugee movements: 'anticipatory', (those who leave before crises erupt), and 'acute', (those who leave as a direct response to current crises). He contended that the kinetics of refugee movements, carrying a person from their homeland to host country, and displacement forms, have selective effects on individuals, which in turn, condition later refugee outcomes (Kunz 1973: 146). Kunz later extended his analysis of the factors affecting refugee outcomes to include areas proceeding and succeeding flight (Kunz 1981: 42), and developed distinct refugee types, according to the refugees' ideological-national orientation in exile.²

Pedraza-Bailey (1985), later used Kunz's (1973; 1981) theoretical framework of refugee migration to explore Cuban refugees' varying experiences, at the same time as using the Cuban refugee experience to critique Kunz's abstract model. Pedraza-Bailey (1985: 14) proposed that specific historical or personal events might assist transit through the different role phases outlined by Kunz (1981). Yet, this hypothesis, and Kunz's typology, according to Pedraza-Bailey (1985: 14), could only be supported by future research "...that relies on oral histories and personal autobiographies..."

Causes of Refugee Flows

While migration and refugee theories attempt to explain the nature of migrations and refugee movements, one of the most important aspects in the area of

² Kunz (1981: 46) distinct refugee types included: the Restoration Activists, the Passive Hurt, the Integration Realists, the Eager Assimilationists, the Revolutionary Activists, and the Founders of Utopias.

refugees for academics and others is to gain an understanding of what creates and causes refugee flows. Schmeidl (1997: 285) in exploring the causes of forced migration found that sociologists such as Kunz (1973; 1981) and Richmond (1988) are inclined to differentiate between refugees and voluntary migrants rather than to explain the causal dynamics of the phenomenon. However, research into the causes of refugee migrations can be useful in understanding "...the complex interactions between different forces and processes which generate both the decision to move, and the form of migration" (Black 1991).

Furthermore, an understanding of the causes of refugee flight would not only enable us to predict, but possibly help in the prevention of future refugee flows (Apodaca: 1998). Moreover, at the national and international level, not only would understanding the causes of refugee flight help create better policy options for institutions concerned with stopping refugees (Weiner: 1996), it would also help to give refugees more support in the host country through a contextual understanding of their background, including the pressures to leave, giving an insight into the situations of both refugees and migrants (Kane 1995: 2).

In addition, as Weiner (1996: 2) points out, any effort by governments and international institutions to formulate options to deal with, and change the conditions within countries that produce refugees, must begin with an understanding of what causes people to escape. Further, in order to successfully achieve preventative diplomacy at the international level, it is essential to understand the dynamics that cause refugee migration (Schmeidl 1997: 285).

Therefore, the only way to address and alleviate the problem of refugees is not just to cure the symptom of people migrating, but to address why people flee (Kane 1995). Today, the UNHCR concludes that 'prevention is better than cure', and that a strategy to put up barriers against refugee movements is simply inadequate. Instead, in addition to the direct protection needs prompted by refugee migrations, states today must simultaneously manage the root causes of refugees (UNHCR 1993 in Scholdan 2000: 4).

Poverty

One of the first ideas put forward regarding the causes of refugees was the notion that poverty produces refugees. With regards to voluntary migration, poverty can be a major cause of relocation, for instance, when economic and labour migrants decide to move to richer countries in order to take advantage of higher wages paid in stronger currencies (Kane 1995: 11). However, in refugee situations, studies have shown that flight in response to economic disparities between the home and host countries, whereby poverty 'pushes' and wealth 'pulls' migrants, is not the principal factor in creating refugee migrations. While a relationship between poverty and refugee movements may exist, poverty alone is not necessarily the causal factor (Schmeidl: 1997; Zolberg et al 1989) since "...situations of extreme economic deprivation usually have not generated population outflows claiming international refugee status" (Zolberg et al cited in Malkki 1995: 503).

However, while poverty may not be a direct cause of refugees, it is a factor in the migration process, especially when poverty is combined with the other scarcities that go with it, creating a 'cycle of inadequacy', the likelihood of migration becomes higher (Kane 1995: 12). This is especially apparent in cases of environmental migration when environmental degradation, overcrowding, exceeding the carrying capacity of the land, resource limitations, disease, and failed poverty alleviation schemes, all contribute to motivate people into flight (Kane 1995). This is not to insight the Malthusian argument however, (unlike some who blame the 'demographic upsurge' in the Third World for large refugee movements such as Widgren (in Widgren & Miserez 1988: 1)), as it has been shown that "...high rates of population growth and low economic growth rates do not induce emigration" (Weiner in Zolberg 1989: 405).

Most importantly, perhaps, is Schmeidl's (1997) finding that advanced development and population density decrease the negative impact of political violence on refugee numbers. Therefore, by supporting appropriate development, refugee numbers may be decreased by way of a reduction in political violence.

Human Rights Abuses

Apodaca (1998) looks at human rights abuses as a precursor to refugee flight, with the aim of aiding in the development of an early warning system of refugee flight. Noting that there was paucity in systematic empirical research to test the relationship between human rights abuses and refugee movements, Apodaca surveyed patterns of human rights violations in countries that produced large numbers of refugees. Rather than using the continuing flow of refugees (refugee stock), a weakness of previous studies according to Apodaca (1998: 81), her study used the previous pattern of abuses as the dependent variable. Using the Political Terror Scale, Apodaca found that on average an increase of human rights abuses of 1.5 points in the years prior to flight, and that when this score reaches 3.5 - 4.5, refugees leave. Apodaca's research found that although an incremental increase in human rights violations to be an important cause of refugee flight, it is not the sufficient cause of refugee flows (1998: 88).

Similarly, Schmeidl (1997) developed and tested an empirical model of refugee migration. Schmeidl, however, analysed the roles of various structural factors involved in forced migration. Using a pooled time-series analysis over 20 years (1971-1990), Schmeidl regressed the number of refugees using various political, economic and intervening variables. Employing the hypothesis that: "*Human rights violations of any kind increase the likelihood of refugee migration. The higher the level of human rights violations, the larger the refugee exodus*" (1997: 288); Schmeidl's results also suggest that institutional human rights violations, in which the state is the actor, "...have weaker predictive power than do measures of generalized violence" (1997: 284). That is to say, that although human rights violations have a part to play in forced migration, such as triggering "small elite refugee migration", they do not appreciably predict mass flight (Schmeidl 1997: 302).

In contrast, the UNHCR identifies violations of internationally recognised human rights as a prime cause of forced displacement, regardless of whether people flee individual persecution, or en masse. As the UNHCR states: "Today's human rights abuses are tomorrow's refugee movements." While armed conflicts have

been the context within which most of the major population displacements of the 1990s have occurred, "...the immediate causes of flight are most invariably to be found in actual or anticipated human rights violations" (UNHCR cited in Apodaca 1998: 80). Violations of human rights often lead to political instability and violence, "...which in turn can cause forced displacement" (UNHCR 2000b: 150). There is a logical connection, therefore, between human rights violations and the creation of refugee flows.

Ethnic Conflict

Following on from investigating human rights abuses as causes of refugee flows, Schmeidl (1997) states that it is important to look at various other types of violence involved in refugee exodus in order to distinguish which types of violence produce particular forms of displacement (Schmeidl 1997: 302). Using the hypothesis that: "*Ethnic conflict increases the likelihood of refugee migration*"; Schmeidl found that even though ethnic conflict was important as a cause of small and middle-sized refugee movements, it could not "...significantly predict mass exodus" (1997: 284). Instead, in the cases of the majority of massive exit-migrations, these "...are more-likely to be caused by higher forms of political violence, such as genocide/politicide or civil war (genocide can even be seen as extreme ethnic violence)" (Schmeidl 1997: 303).

Weiner (1996) also sought to study the causal conditions of refugees. In his analysis of mass refugee flows, (which he defined as movements of at least 10,000 individuals who had crossed international borders due to conditions within their own country, and who, additionally had been recognised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or by governments as refugees (Weiner 1996: 5)), Weiner categorised the events and conditions that lead to refugee flows in the last quarter of the Twentieth Century. In examining how these have changed, Weiner attempted to demonstrate how better policy options may be devised for national governments and regional international institutions concerned with stopping refugee flows.

In reviewing the causal circumstances which have produced refugee flows, Weiner (1996), (while recognising that the categories could each be subdivided further), assigned each mass refugee exodus to one of the four following categories "...interstate wars (including anti-colonial wars), ethnic conflicts, non-ethnic civil conflicts and flights from repressive authority area and revolutionary regimes" (Weiner 1996: 6). In investigating the source countries of refugees in 1969, 1982, and 1992, Weiner distinguished two distinct types of ethnic conflicts that produce refugees:

...those involving a struggle for secession or autonomy by people who constitute the majority in the region in which they reside, and those involving territorially dispersed populations who are, or perceive themselves to be persecuted (Weiner 1996: 11).

Weiner, in contrast to Schmeidl (1997), found that ethnic conflicts are "the single most important determinant" of refugee flows in the world today. Further, that governments' inability to cope with ethnic diversity "...continues to be one of the most destabilising elements in the present system of states" (Weiner 1996: 13). In addition, integrally related to ethnic conflict is racism, which most recently, in a series of papers presented to the First Preparatory Committee for the World Conference Against Racism, has been named as one of the root causes of refugee flows (UN General Assembly 2000 in Scholdan 2000: 1).

Political Causes

Beyer (1981), however, in his widely cited paper, argues that refugees stem from purely political causes. In describing "...the human and socio-economic aspects of the political problem before and after World War II" (1981: 26), Beyer endeavours to explain what created refugee flows up to the early 1970s. In his description of refugee crises from the early Twentieth Century, he attempts to show that national and international refugee problems have predominantly the same political background (Beyer 1981: 33).

Yet, by attempting to reduce the causes of refugee flight down to a single variable, Beyer has fallen into the trap of reductionism. Refugee migrations are

not simplistic phenomena, but are complex multi-faceted events that require comprehensive analysis. For, as shown by Schmeidl (1997), refugee flows do not stem from a single factor but from multiple factors.

The media representations of refugee movements, however, often give a singular cause of flight, "...creating an impression that the problems are more short-term or specific in nature" (Kane 1995: 7). For instance, the Western media portrayed 'ethnic conflict' as the cause of the genocide in Rwanda, ignoring the harsh economic climate present in Rwanda (the collapse of the coffee market, macro-economic reforms by international creditors) which "...exacerbated simmering ethnic tensions and accelerated the process of political collapse" (Chossudovsky 1997: 1787).

Conflict

Throughout history, conflict has been one of the primary causes of refugee flows. As a result of revolutions, territorial annexations, boundary changes or local conflicts, over 100 million people have been uprooted from the beginning of the Twentieth Century, up to the 1980s (Gould 1982: 494). Since the end of World War II, there have been over 150 wars; the overwhelming majority of which have been located in the Third World (*Escaping From War* 1996: 2).

However inadequate the definitions of refugees may be, the majority of contemporary refugees, are created "...by war and the systematic processes of authoritarian regimes or the combination of both" (Zolberg 1983a: 21). Conflict includes anti-colonial wars, wars of independence and self-determination movements; internal conflicts; revolutions, coup d'etat, exchanges of governments; ethnic and tribal conflicts; partition of states; population transfers and population expulsion, which all create refugees (Kane 1995). For instance, in Afghanistan, the Soviet invasion and internal fighting between rival Afghan forces created an outflow of people that peaked at 6 million. Before beginning to return in 1993: "Afghan refugees far outnumbered those of any other nationality" (Kane 1995: 5).

Hansen and Smith (1982) maintain two major causal agents of refugee flight are war and other forms of socio-political unrest, and intentional or governmental removal or expulsion of people. Amongst these causal agents, there is a large variation in terms of predictability, frequency, expanse and speed of the onset of the stress. While some causal agents affect entire regions, others only affect specific localities. Some affect whole populations (entire ethnic groups), and others only certain individuals. Expanding on the work of Hansen and Smith (1982), Kliot (1987), details and classifies a further six causal agents which "typify" refugee flows since the 1970s. He explains that although not mutually exclusive, one third of the causal agents deal with the political decisions of governments to remove people, and two thirds involve overt conflict (Kliot 1987: 110).

The State

Taking a philosophical perspective, Shacknove (1985) objects to the conclusion that refugees are created through persecution and alienage alone, arguing instead that 'minimal bonds' between the state and its citizens may be broken when basic needs are not met by the state. Yet, while an unmet basic need is an essential condition for refugeehood, it is an inadequate condition to create refugee flows (Shacknove 1985), (as demonstrated by Schmeidl (1997), and Zolberg et al (1989)).

According to Shacknove (1985), although all displaced persons have been deprived of one or more of their basic needs, it is only in accessing assistance from the international community that individuals actually become refugees. Thus, refugees are created when the home state fails to protect its citizens' basic needs, and these citizens have "...no other remaining recourse than to seek international restitution of these needs..." and are "...so situated that international assistance is possible" (Shacknove 1985: 282).

Nation States

Keely (1996) points out that the supposition that countries 'ought' to be structured into nation-states is the key to appreciating the political basis of refugee production and of policies towards refugees in the Twentieth Century. He maintains that a nation state is responsible for producing refugees as: "Refugee production is rooted in the geopolitical structure" (1996: 2). Hence, a nation state has a tendency to create refugee flows for three reasons: "...it contains more than one nation; the populace disagrees about the structure of the state or economy; or the state implodes due to the lack of resources" (Keely 1996: 2).

Developing an integrated explanation for refugee flows, Zolberg (1983b) holds nation-states, as well as historical and political processes responsible for creating refugees. Resembling a watered down World-Systems theory, Zolberg (1983b: 30) argues that refugee flows are the result of "...a concomitant of the secular transformation of a world of empires and of small self-sufficient communities or tribes into a world of national states." It is through an analysis of this process that we gain an understanding of how refugees arise. This process begins abruptly:

...triggered by a change of internal or external circumstances. This first stage takes the form of the generalised political crises from which the victim groups are very likely to emerge (Zolberg 1983b: 30).

This process is rarely apparent in a single country, and is more common when encompassing a larger region, resulting in tensions of the various regions and countries interacting with each other simultaneously, which results in heightened tensions between states, "...often leading to international conflict, which in turn exacerbates refugee-producing conditions in each state of the region" (Zolberg 1983b: 30-31).

Since the transformation has very ambitious objectives within its ideological model in relation to the existing norms, success is rarely achieved in one phase, "...a process therefore commonly entails successive refounding within a given

country, each of which may result in a refugee-generating crisis" (Zolberg 1983b: 31). In addition, internal and international conflict tends to interact, and is often compounded by the incursion of external authorities with an interest in the area (Zolberg 1983b: 37).

Borders and Their Effects on Refugee Movements

Evidently, it is a truism that people can only become migrants when they have somewhere to go. Yet, no matter how difficult the circumstances may be within a country, and what people may be subjected to, migratory demands do not automatically give rise to large migrations if there is nowhere to run. History has shown that when people are not able to escape, the violence results in other outcomes such the dramatic consequences demonstrated by the fate of the Biafrans in the 1960s, or the Armenians and Jews in the first half of the Twentieth Century (Zolberg 1989: 406). Moreover, exigent situations can only produce refugees if people are able to physically cross borders.³

Migration incorporates strong political consequences because it not only entails physical relocation but also a change in "jurisdiction and membership" (Zolberg 1989: 406). No longer can borders be seen solely as eternal and physical geographic indicators of terrain, instead they "...are socially constructed lines from which we can identify different political and cultural constituents" (Papastergiadis 2000: 59). Therefore, one of the important developments in recent migration theory is the recognition of borders and their effects on refugee movements, which classical migration theory had simply ignored. Perhaps most appreciably, it is precisely through the incorporation of borders in the analysis of migration that a comprehensive analysis of the role of the state occurs (Zolberg 1989: 405). As (Zolberg 1989: 405) notes, it is specifically "...the control which states exercise over borders that defines international migration as a distinctive social process."

³ Consequently, while the role of the international refugee system is to protect those in danger, it remains a significant weakness of the system that those who cannot leave their home country borders are often left forgotten and unprotected by the international community (Gallagher 1989: 56).

While border control usually becomes an intervening determinative factor in the migration process, there are two other critical factors in determining whether migration will occur. The first and most important factor, independent of other conditions, is the state's actions with respect to borders (Pedraza-Bailey 1985: 6; Zolberg 1989: 405). If the state restricts migration across international borders, then 'refugees' in the traditional sense of the word cannot be created. The second important factor rests in the policies of potential receiving countries to determine whether movement may occur, and in what form.

The latter can be seen in the case of the New Zealand Government, who on the night of 15 June 1999, brought legislation to Parliament under urgency in order to give immigration authorities more powers to hold asylum seekers for an indefinite period until they could be sent home (The Press, 16 June 1999; Waikato Times, 19 June 1999). The introduced Bill brought forward the commencement date of legislation passed in March 1999 that changed immigration laws and gave authorities far wider powers to deal with those who arrive in New Zealand and claim refugee status. The new provisions enable asylum seekers to be detained until a decision can be reached about their status, (at the time it was only 28 days), and reduced the period that asylum seekers can remain in New Zealand while appealing against decisions (The Press, 16 June 1999).

The incongruity of the situation, however, was that the government employed such urgency to pass the legislation in order to restrict the movement of a specific group of asylum seekers; 102 Chinese 'boat people' suspected of heading for New Zealand to seek refugee status⁴ (The Press, 16 June 1999). The Government doubted that these asylum seekers were "...true boat people in the usually accepted sense"; instead fearing that they might be part of an organised immigration fraud scheme (The Timaru Herald, 25 June 1999). The implementation date of the Bill would have been 1 October 1999, too late to oversee the expected 'boat people'. Even though it was argued that the

⁴ A fishing vessel, named the Alexandra II, left the Solomon Islands with the "declared intention" of landing in New Zealand. The expected arrival date was thought to be 20 June 1999, weather conditions permitting (The Press, 16 June 1999).

legislation went against international law, which obliged the Government to admit not detain those claiming refugee status⁵ (The Press, 16 June 1999), the Government upheld its legislation regardless. The New Zealand Government's legislation demonstrates yet another example of states' power and use of policies to protect its interests through controlling the movement of asylum seekers.

Yet, despite the various attempts by states to control their borders, borders are not rigid, they are never firmly closed nor entirely open, and "remain relatively porous" (Papastergiadis 2000: 60). No nation has ever been able to maintain absolute control over its borders. Attempts to restrict flows only generate more innovation and resilience in seeking illicit methods to cross them (Papastergiadis 2000: 56; Weiner & Münz 1999). Further, the governing of movement across borders is consistently discriminatory (Papastergiadis 2000: 60), and as such, borders act an important device in maintaining global inequality (Nett in Zolberg 1989: 406). For instance, by preventing labour from commanding the same price everywhere (Arghiri in Zolberg 1989: 406).

This, however, is not necessarily an unintentional consequence of our global system. For some, such as Reubens (1983), borders are seen as necessary; as allowing free entry in an age of global disparities would create unlimited migration flows and lead towards worldwide equalisation. Rather controversially, Reubens suggests that Ricardo and Malthus's notion of natural increase of the local population might be carried through to international migration. If this were to occur, Reubens states that employment and consumption levels would fall dramatically in developed countries. These falls in developed nations would negatively affect less developed countries resulting in extreme difficulties for the inhabitants in the peripheral countries, and the incentives to migrate would become much more acute than previously experienced (1983: 179).

⁵ According to David Ryken, secretary of the Refugee Council of New Zealand (The Press, 16 June 1999).

Exiting Socialist Countries

An incongruity of the contemporary world system is that states with a population most likely to relocate tend not to restrict exit, while those countries that are most attractive to migrants tend to have restricted entry (Zolberg 1989). While restricting exit and entry appear to be contradictory, they "...are in fact complimentary techniques of control" (Zolberg 1983a: 23). Like other forms of migration, the restriction or prohibition of exit for migrants by certain states serves political objectives. The prohibition of immigration generally occurs in combination with "state directed economic autarchy", predominantly in states, which aim to "...catch up by imposing great sacrifices on the current generation" (Zolberg 1989: 413).

In this context, underdevelopment not only contributes to the creation of refugee flows, it also "...fosters the adoption of authoritarian strategies of state and nation formation, whose execution entails political persecution of certain categories of the population" (Zolberg 1983b: 37). Additionally, a paradox can be found in authoritarian regimes: the same category of authoritarian regime that creates refugees also prohibits those who may wish to depart due to the political and economic conditions. These states "...simultaneously increase international migrations above the level produced by economic causes, and depress them below what they would be in the end of free exit..." (Zolberg 1983a: 21).

Exit is tantamount to 'voting with one's feet'; an alternative to protest, and authoritarian regimes that declare to rely on democratic agreement "...cannot afford such concrete evidence of deep alienation" (Hirschman in Zolberg 1989: 413). Therefore, authoritarian states adopt no exit policies because of political and economic strategies for:

Not only is the population intrinsically valuable as an asset in the pursuit of economic and military goals, but the no exit policy is the requisite for the maintenance of the regime (Zolberg 1983a: 23).

What we are thus faced with is a paradox with regards to migrants exiting socialist countries, while a reduction in an international tension increases the

likelihood of exit from these countries: "...it also lessens the propaganda value of 'defection', and hence leads to the treatment of people desiring to leave as ordinary immigrants, having to face severe restrictions" (Zolberg 1989: 414).

In sum, how many displaced persons become refugees is largely dependent on their location "...in relation to international borders, existing migratory networks and the disposition of relevant neighbours" (Zolberg 1989: 416). The most important implication of the inclusion of borders in the analysis of refugee flows is that the investigation into the creation of refugees must be integrated with the examination of determinants of exit policies, and that both of these "...must be grounded in the more general study of regime dynamics in the contemporary world" (Hirschman in Zolberg 1983a: 21-22).

Clandestine Border Crossing

Investigating at a further aspect of borders with regards to migration, Singer and Massey (1998) attempted to develop a theory of clandestine border crossing through analysing the data gathered from undocumented migrants in 34 Mexican communities and United States destination areas. In looking at prior studies of border crossing, they found that a growing empirical literature had considered the process of undocumented border crossing from three points of view: organisational, evaluating the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) "...as a bureaucracy charged with a politically sensitive but nearly possible task"; qualitative approaches of border crossing from the migrant's point of view; and qualitative methods and data "...to measure and the likelihood of apprehension and to measure the effect of various factors upon apprehension" (Singer & Massey 1998: 562-63).

In assessing the qualitative studies of clandestine border crossing, Singer and Massey (1998) state that three general conclusions emerged. First, for first-time migrants, the border represents the treacherous, intimidating and frightening place. Second, that friends and family played a significant role in the explaining the hazards of the trip and pacifying the fears of new migrants. Thirdly, that

personal experience was important in conquering the barriers, both real and imagined, to undocumented border crossing (Singer & Massey 1998: 565-66).

Internal and External Causes of Refugee Flows

In looking at the causes of refugee flows, it is clear that there are two distinct lines of explanations that emerge, externalist and internalist. Externalist explanations for refugees allot proportional blame between the state of origin and the states that create policies or actions that lead to the outflow of refugees. The latter states are then pressured to absorb the refugees. Internalist explanations, on the other hand, place the state of origin solely responsible for refugee flows. Other countries, then, appear to have no obligation to assist those fleeing (Chimni 1998: 361).

However, while internalist explanations constitute a general focus of the discussion of causes of refugee flows, they "...are one-sided and do not capture the complex reality of the root causes of refugee flows" (Chimni 1998: 360). For example, poor or non-existing governance is often pinpointed as the core of all root causes of refugees, whether the root causes are:

...poverty, scarcity of resources, (national) inequality, chaotic and insecure living conditions, human rights violations, discrimination or violent conflict and even natural disasters as they often stem from exploitative and damaging environmental policies (Scholdan 2000: 1).

Further, the internalist approach emphasises the internal aspects of root causes while disregarding external influences of refugee flows such as:

...colonialism, unfair trade regulations, global inequality, the impact of transnational corporations on the local economy and the environment, arms trade and development cooperation itself, particularly the role of the International Financial Institutions and their structural adjustment programs (Middleton & O'Keefe in Scholdan 2000: 1).

Despite the often limited viewpoint of internalist explanations, however, the internalist argument holds two important ideas that ought to be noted: first, that the travels of refugees are "symptomatic of underlying problems" within societies

(Kane 1995: 2), and second, that overwhelmingly, the state plays a significant role in creating refugees, whether through economic policies that ignore the needs of people, the abuse of human rights, international conflict, political unrest, or ethnic conflict.

Nevertheless, both internal and external explanations are required to explain the causes of refugee flows as refugee migrations involve more than just internal economic triggers. As Kritz & Keely (1983: xix) demonstrate in the following quote, both national and international social and political elements are vital elements in producing refugees:

Refugee migrations are intimately linked to internal struggles within nation states for economic development, social justice, and relations between ethnic groups, as well as to the international struggle between developed and developing countries over global resources, trade and equity.

These complex pressures, exacerbated by such underlying tensions as rapid population growth, long-standing animosities, and resource shortages (Kane 1995: 7), lead to what is best described as 'the Molotov cocktail of insecurity' (Kane 1995). Thus, it is clear that refugees leave for more than just a single, simple reason, and therefore multi-faceted explanations are needed to explain refugee movements.

Third World Refugees

The Third World held the highest concentration of refugees and hostilities globally in the second half of the Twentieth Century. In any situation, the influx of a large dependent population creates a destabilising factor. In the case of Third World countries, where the poorest nations often hold large ratios of refugees, with well over 90 percent of the world's conflicts and casualties, developing countries carry the burden of the "heaviest loads" of refugees, however, are often the least equipped to do so (Kane 1995). Yet, one cannot overstate the importance of mobility to Third World peoples as the ability to move "...represents an essential means of dealing with the problems which beset many who live in the poorer countries" (Parnwell 1993: 3).

Most refugee migrations occur in Third World countries, and "...most refugees seek asylum in and return to the least developed countries" (Cohen 1995: 2), and as such, refugees have been considered primarily a Third World problem. In much of the sociological and anthropological refugee literature it is taken for granted that refugees are primarily a Third World problem (Malkki 1995: 503).

Mass migrations have enormous impact on the economic and social structure of poor countries, and development agencies and governments have found that development plans cannot easily be designed without taking into account the presence of refugees and displaced persons (Cohen 1995: 2). For example, the United Nations Development Programme for Women (UNIFEM) created the African Women in Crisis Umbrella Programme (AFWIC) because it realised that "...it is no longer possible to make significant developmental progress in Africa without addressing the impact of emergency situations and mass migrations" (UNIFEM cited in Cohen 1995: 2).

Causes of Refugee Flows in the Third World

In addition to the above stated causes of refugee flows, several other causes relating specifically to Third World refugees have been put forward. Refugees in Third World countries may arise out of historical processes, and do so as by-products of "...the formation of new states and confrontations over the social order in both old and new states" (Zolberg 1989: 416). While these are analytically distinct, they often combine to produce complex and exceptionally violent conflicts (Zolberg 1989: 416), which augment the creation of refugee flows.

Internalist explanations for the causes of refugee flows in Third World countries include underdevelopment (Zolberg 1983a: 37), the end of colonialism as shown in areas of Africa (Malkki 1995), and associated fragmenting borders (Kane 1995: 10), such as the decolonisation of India which led to the creation of Pakistan and India.

Externalist explanations for the causes of refugee flows in the Third World include increased international trade (Kane 1995: 13), structural adjustment programmes (Kane 1995: 13-14), and neo-liberal market policies. For example, in Eastern Europe: "...the policies recommended by international financial institutions created the conditions in which ethnic hatred could be mobilized in former Yugoslavia" (Petra & Vieux; Woodward; Chossudovsky in Chimni 1998: 361). In the case of the Yugoslavian situation, Chossudovsky highlights the role the international donor community played in establishing the conditions necessary for creating refugee flows:

The world community should recognise the failure of the dominant neoliberal system and take cognisance of the destructive impact of the economic reforms. While the international donor community cannot be held directly responsible for the outbreak of civil war in Yugoslavia, Somalia and Rwanda, the evidence nonetheless confirms that the macro-economic reforms imposed by international creditors in all three countries, played a crucial role in fostering the collapse of state institutions and creating a situation of social and political divisiveness (Chossudovsky 1997: 1788).

In addition, government policies initiated by some Western countries have led to the creation of migrant flows and networks that continued even after the termination of such policies. For example, the United States' policies established in Mexico during World War II, and the guest worker programme started in Germany in the late 1950s, both resulted in the unintentional creation of migrant flows and networks. Inconsistent policies have also played a role in creating flows that were not anticipated by policy makers, for instance, the United States policies towards Cuba, Haiti, and Central America and German policies towards the former Yugoslavia (Weiner & Münz 1999: 29).

In development assistance programmes for refugees in Africa, the 'push' and 'pull' factor of aid has been acknowledged as a cause of refugee flows. There is a fundamental belief that:

...material aid in and of itself has the power to move populations. Aid, it is believed, can attract people from point a to point b and back again to point a (Sadruddin Aga Khan in Harrell-Bond 1986: 10).

Therefore, balance is required in the distribution of aid to refugees. Not too much aid should be given to attract groups, and it should be distributed on a per capita basis. On the other hand, refugees should not be left destitute, for fear of attracting increased numbers. In addition, refugee aid should not create a situation where refugees appear to be better off than their hosts (Harrell-Bond 1986: 19), as this can lead to resentment by host country members and create further negative impacts for refugees.

The elimination of the root causes of migration in the Third World in order to prevent migration is now closely related to, and is argued, even determines, "...the paradigm of aid as a form of conflict prevention and resolution..." Hence, the identification of root causes of refugee flows is necessary in order to implement what is termed a "root cause strategy" in both conflict and Third World situations involving relief and development cooperation (Scholdan 2000: 1).

Migration and Development

Migration and development are inextricably linked, not only is migration a symptom of underdevelopment, it is also "...a contributor to Third World underdevelopment" (Todaro 2000: 304). Moreover, the causes and consequences of both domestic and international migration can be found at the centre of the present-day development problem (Todaro 1976). More constructively, however, while Third World migrations often offer "a 'litmus' test of unsuccessful development", they simultaneously "...hold the potential to counteract some of the inequities which are often associated with the process of development in the Third World countries" (Parnwell 1993: xi).

The significance of the impact of migration on the development process in developing countries lies not simply in the migration process itself, but in its aggravation of urban unemployment and underemployment, its impact on the allocation of human resources within the various sectors, and in "...its implications for economic growth in general and the character of that growth, particularly its distribution of manifestations" (Todaro 2000: 304).

The most prevalent form of migration in Third World countries is rural-urban migration (Parnwell 1993: 80), and hence within development literature, is the predominant migration issue. In addition, themes such as urbanisation, industrialisation, agriculture, gender roles, household structures, ideology (Kearney 1986), and labour supply and demand, have all made an appearance. While rural-urban migration has been the main focus, and may be of use in explaining internal migration (see Vutthisomboon 1998), and demographic changes affecting policy planning within countries, it does not go far enough to interpret the growing concern of international migration in Third World countries, especially refugees. As a result, there is a vast gap in the literature, especially regarding refugees and the development process, and development theory and refugees.

The migration phenomenon is central to the study of development as any economic and social policies have direct and indirect effects on the level and growth of rural and urban real incomes, which in turn, directly or indirectly influence the nature and scale of the migration process (Todaro 2000: 304). Some policies, such as wages, income policies and employment promotion programmes, have a more direct and immediate impact on other policies, and though less obvious, may be no less important in the long run. These include:

...land tenure arrangements; commodity pricing; credit allocation; taxation; export promotion; import substitution; commercial and exchange rate policies; distribution of social services; the nature of public investment programs; attitudes toward private foreign investors; the organization of population and family planning programs; the structure, content, and orientation of the educational system; the function of labor markets; and the nature of public policies toward international technology transfer and the location of new industries (Todaro 2000: 304).

Therefore, at the national (or internal level), it is vital to recognise and support economic and social development policy that meets the needs of the population, satisfies those needs, and in a progressive manner, looks towards the future needs of the population. Further, as internal migration can be a first step in the immigration process (Kane 1995: 2), it is important to understand which development policies affect and are affected by internal migration, in turn, affecting external migration.

The Myth of Difference

The amendments to the United Nations definition of refugees, and the creation of the OAU definition of refugees, demonstrated recognition at the international level that both the temporal and geographical circumstances of European and Third World refugees are markedly different. However, this has resulted in the representation of Third World refugee flows as being vastly different from European refugee flows, for the notion of a "white, male and anti-Communist" refugee who was the 'normal' escapee from the European countries was, and still is, in complete contrast to the individuals escaping the Third World (Chimni 1998: 351).

Consequently, Third World refugees became positioned as the 'other' to the 'normal' European refugees. This 'myth of difference', as it is referred to in refugee discourse, represents "...the idea that great dissimilarities characterized refugee flows in Europe and the Third World" (Chimni 1998: 350). Yet, according to Cells (1989: 189), refugee studies discourse has incorporated 'the myth of difference' from the very beginning; even though refugees were present in the Third World when the 1951 Convention was drawn up, they were not regarded as being of concern.

The central problem is that the myth of difference is closely related to an internalist interpretation of the causes of refugee flows, blaming "...post-colonial societies and states underestimating the significance of external factors" (Chimni 1998: 351). The 'difference' argument then took a new turn almost suggesting that a person *intentionally* invited upon themselves the events that made them a refugee, not only blaming the refugee for their actions to escape, but went on to claim the refugee status as a privileged status (Chimni 1998: 356):

We tend to think of refugees as among the world's most unfortunate persons - exposed to dangers and persecution at home then cruelly uprooted to seek an uncertain fate outside the country of their birth. But paradoxically, to be a 'refugee' today - to fall into the class of persons whom the world community is prepared to treat under that potent label - is also to assume a position of privilege (Martin cited in Chimni 1998: 356).

The problem with this argument is that refugees are not only blamed for their present situation, but also are punished for attempting to do something about their past situation, whatever the circumstances they were in or the pressures they faced. What this argument ignores, however, is that as long as refugees are vulnerable due to their circumstances, they are certainly not in a position of privilege. Moreover, refugees have not remained passive to the disruption around them; instead they have taken decisive action to escape. Rather than punishing refugees, we should be supporting them.

Gender and Migration

What is perhaps one of the most notable exceptions in all of the various migration and refugee theories and research on the causes of refugee flight, is that gender analysis is not involved in the general approaches to migration. While 'sex' has been a variable in migrant selectivity for a long time, it is only in recent times that female migration has been included in migration theories. Yet, neither the reasons for, nor the characteristics of, gender-differentiated mobility have been sufficiently dealt with by theoretical means; "...migrating subjects are assumed to be gender neutral, while reasons for population movements are generally presented as gender blind" (Chant & Radcliffe 1992: 19). As Gomez (1999: 201) points out:

Notably, social science constructions of gender have left unexamined the complexity of the conditions of transnational feminist practices in the postmodern era of diaspora and displacement.

Before 1980, gender issues also received little attention in the area of refugee studies; refugees were seen in terms of a "genderless stereotype" (Indra 1999). In the process of building an essentialist and historically reductive discourse about refugees in general, and women refugees in particular, Western scholarship ignored, "...the complex interconnection between First and Third World economies and the profound affect of this on the lives of woman in all countries" (Mohanty in Gomez 1999: 201). Despite the large proportion of women refugees globally, it has only been in recent years that the plight of refugee women and displaced women has gained increasing international

concern and focus has been given to their needs (Burns et al: 1997; Cohen 1995: 1).

This was not a simple oversight, however. For, as Tuitt (1991: 112) explains in her post-modern analysis of the concept of the refugee, historically the notions of “[a]sylum, and by extension refuge” were never neutral or abstract categories. Instead, the people to whom the label ‘refugee’ was attached faced the classic notions of religious and political ideologies. These concerns were believed to be “so seemingly universal” and its victims “so seemingly comprehensive” that academics ignored the fact that the classic refugees who came from revolutionary and nationalistic movements or traditional religious organisations “...come from a world seldom inhabited by women...” (Tuitt 1991: 112).

Further, Tuitt (1999: 113) argues, asylum is yet another “site claimed by men” which expresses hegemonic power; the low numbers in official statistics of women seeking asylum, is clearly proof of this. Men have always marginalised women, and as such, asylum and refugeehood are simply additional examples of the alienation and domination faced by women throughout history:

Women, after all, are rendered less mobile by structural conditions, cultural patterns and above all by a ‘broader universe’ which privileges the public sphere over the private sphere in terms of the general recognition of, and thus by extension access to, human rights (Tuitt 1999: 113).

Until the mid-1970s, women were not represented in studies of migrants, and if they were mentioned, they were generally categorised as dependants of men (Morokvasic in Buijs 1993: 1). This holds true for studies of Tibetan refugees in exile, with so far only two studies specifically mentioning Tibetan refugee women published (see Alam 2000; Majupuria 1990). However, while there has been a noticeable increase in research into refugee women’s situations, women remain “...peripheral except in regard to conventional ‘women’s issues’” (Matsouka & Sorenson 1999: 221).

Women, Gender and Refugees

Women refugees, despite the fact that they, and their dependents, make up 80 percent of refugees worldwide (Giles et al 1996: 12), remain ignored in refugee discourse; while gender is simply an add-on box to tick, or category to consider in the general refugee situation (Gomez 1999: 201). Literature about refugee women has traditionally focused on health care. Refugee women's needs were addressed under the rubric of 'family health care' and/or 'maternal and child health' (see Simmonds et al 1983), and focused on the mother-child unit, rather than women as individuals. Later, this moved to an actual focus the health of refugee women, including mental health (see Burns et al 1997), and women's reproductive and sexual health (see Pierotti 1996), but ignored other areas of their lives that were not 'illness' related.

A second area of literature focuses on the ways in which aid can best be delivered to refugees (see Burns et al 1997), including women's basic needs, such as food, water and fuel, and protection from sexual violence, and ensuring that women have access to aid (see Cohen 1997). Most recently, the literature has grown to incorporate issues of refugee women's access to income-generation and employment opportunities, improving education, mobilising women, participation, and encouraging women in leadership roles (see Cohen 1997).

The reality of the refugee situation, however, is that women refugees are largely marginalised and neglected, face discrimination in accessing relief supplies, often receive limited health services, benefit only in limited numbers from education and training, and usually have a few or no opportunities for participating in income generating and employment opportunities (UN in Cohen 1995: 1).

Refugee Women

In many communities, it was the women's responsibility to assume the productive role within the household and provide for the family's basic needs in the country of origin; for example, by growing crops, preparing food, collecting water, managing the home and its upkeep, and managing family healthcare. In refugee situations, women may still maintain this responsibility and may suddenly find that outside assistance is required to meet the basic needs they otherwise would have provided. Further, that aid may be inadequate or simply unavailable. In refugee situations, women's domestic role increases in both time and responsibility as the task of obtaining basic needs becomes more time consuming and much more difficult, and often much more dangerous (Burns et al 1997: 448), thus increasing their burden and placing them at greater risk.

Women-headed households are common in refugee situations, as men have sometimes faced physical injuries or died in combat, been recruited in resistance armies, or have migrated in search of paid labour (Burns et al 1997; Cohen 1995: 2). Consequently, women and the roles they perform are key to the survival of the household unit in exile as they play a crucial role in the social and economic survival of the household. However, without economic self-sufficiency or support, women are not able to adequately fulfil this role, and women and their families are put at risk.

Gender Differences in Refugee Situations

Some researchers have shown that there are visible gender differences in the experiences of refugee women and men, such as Colson (1987: 4), who notes that women refugees and migrants seem to demonstrate greater "resilience and adaptability" than do refugee and migrant men. Similarly, in Matsouka and Sorenson's research, it was a respondent herself who expressed a belief that in the case of Eritrean refugees in Canada, it was the women who "...accepted new responsibilities and adjusted better than men" (1999: 224). Studies on the resilience of refugees show that the resilience factor is dependent on the interrelationship of a number of factors, which include:

...the uprooted person's attitude towards migration in the host country; the motive for migration; the extent to which the immigration was voluntary; the level of identification with the host country and its values-including ability to communicate in the language of the host country; the possibility to re-establish a social network - including family reunification; the quality and conditions of reception by host community, employers, social services, employment etc.; and the possibility to reclaim satisfying social status (World Council of Churches 1996: 57).

Further gender differences in refugee groups are shown in the different types of situations men and women find stressful, and in the different physical reactions to the stresses they demonstrate, as Colson (in Buijs 1993: 6) explains:

Men appeared more vulnerable to economic stresses and to the strain of trying to gain or hold social status when they lacked the required resources, while women were strongly affected by stress linked to family events which were associated with the burden they bore for managing family relationships and domestic affairs.

A suggested explanation for the gender differences found in refugee situations is that women have the occupational responsibility for maintaining household routines and "...are less conscious of status deprivation associated with the failure to find positions comparable to those that they left behind" (Colson in Buijs 1993: 6). Similarly, Eastmond (1993: 35) argues that the loss of status for men may be more severe than that of women and, as such, she refutes the argument that women are the most vulnerable group in refugee situations, as many men are not able to resume their former occupations.

However, many would reject Eastmond's argument, this author included, as various studies have in fact shown that while refugee women face many of the same risks and difficulties as refugee men, they also face the fear of sexual violence, and "...exploitation, and neglect because of patriarchal ideologies that construct them as less valuable human beings" (McSpadden & Moussa 1993; Moussa 1993; in Matsouka & Sorenson 1999: 226).

Matsouka and Sorenson (1999: 233) found that many Eritrean men found their identities "(emphasizing authority and the desirability of economic autonomy and control)", threatened by the new circumstances of exile. Many men experienced an abrupt loss of status, especially with regards to unemployment. Those who

had previously held highly prestigious positions now faced the prospect of "...unemployment and dependence on welfare." Both conditions, however, were looked upon as "...demeaning and degrading, and conflicted with prevailing Eritrean constructions of masculinity", as they contradicted the strong work ethic that existed in the Eritrean community, "...which was based on the traditional precepts and EPLF's ideology of self-reliance."

In addition, many Eritrean men experienced a loss of status due to underemployment. Many men and women took on menial positions, regardless of their qualifications:

...hoping that such arrangements would be temporary. Many such men and women consoled themselves with the idea that they would return to Eritrea (and to their prior statuses) once independence had been achieved (Matsouka & Sorenson 1999: 233).

Refugee men are also more likely to express their frustrations in ways that are socially disruptive, such as violence and alcohol abuse, than women (Harrell-Bond 1986: 282), and it is precisely these actions by men that augment the difficulty of refugee women's lives.

Women's Roles and Women's Status

For many women, the exigencies of migrancy and refugee life and status have led to women taking on more active roles in the management of family affairs, both in the household and public spheres (World Council of Churches 1996):

Forced migration frequently leads to situations in which women must confront a variety of new gendered demands in order to survive and support their dependants (Matsouka & Sorenson 1999: 226).

Similarly, Buijs (1993: 10) notes that a change in the *context* of women's roles may mean improved status for women. In addition, the same demands have forced women "...to examine their preconceptions and to adopt both social and economic roles which would have been rejected at home" (Buijs 1993: 2).

However, while the newly adopted roles may work to improve the status of women, this form of critical self-examination has sometimes been followed by an (often difficult) process of conscientisation and identity dilemmas among women of exile. This process or "remaking of self" is often traumatic, exacerbated by the need for adjustments in a woman's relationships with men, such as their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers (Buijs 1993: 2), and tensions with those who do not approve of her anticipated role, such as a woman's in-laws (World Council of Churches 1996).

Long-term Displacement and Refugee Women's Roles

As has been shown, not all human displacements are short-term, with some lasting more than a decade, such as the Tibetan refugee situation. This realisation has amplified the growing international consensus that the capacities and skills of refugees should be enhanced during this waiting period. Unfortunately, many host governments and international humanitarian agencies share the assumption "...that refugees constitute a problem, a burden, rather than an economic opportunity (Harrell-Bond 1986: 10-11). However, this not only benefits the refugees, their families and community, but also their host community. With skills and capacities training, refugees may become self-reliant, contributing to the host country and to their countries of origin when (*or if*) refoulement occurs (Cohen 1995: 1-2). They can also create "...opportunities and become a source of positive social change." Refugees bring human capital and skills, while international agencies may assist by attracting investment in transportation or new industries, may create new markets, cultivate marginal land, set up schools, and establish health services (Harrell-Bond in Richmond 1988: 18).

With the realisation of women's central role in the household, focus has been given to integrating women into development-oriented programmes and projects to utilise their productive labour. This approach, which moves assistance efforts from a relief orientation towards an emphasis on social and economic development, has a twofold effect. First, it aims to ease the burden on host countries. Second, it seeks to increase refugees' economic independence

(Cohen 1995). From the global perspective, the intention behind women's integration has been to relieve dependency on relief aid and agencies, and therefore, reduce the amount of aid needed to be provided by predominantly the developed countries.

Women In Development

This approach to women refugees is clearly centred on the Women in Development (WID) approach, a gendered focused sub-field of development. The WID approach recognises women's exclusion from the development process as the underlying cause of Third World women's oppression. It is believed that alienating women from productive labour has removed women's access to the marketplace and its ensuing benefits, such as employment, income, and advancing Third World economic growth.

According to WID proponents, development programmes have only focused on half the population, and therefore only half the productive resources of Third World countries are utilised. Hence, the solution lies in integrating women into the existing socio-economic structures and development processes. It is held that if women are made full economic partners in development, gender relations will change (Rathgeber 1990: 492). Thus, strategies and action programmes to minimise women's disadvantages in the productive sector should also end discrimination against them.

Further, by modifying mainstream development policy for women, WID proponents argue that the approach:

...would increase women's effectiveness and productivity at work, thus assisting both economic development and women's lives. Reduced fertility would be a side benefit (Parpart 1995: 259).

With a primary emphasis on egalitarianism, education and training are recognised as vital elements in enabling women to achieve self-sufficiency, while legal and administrative changes advance the integration process. What is needed, therefore, is a special recognition of women and their needs.

Programmes, including credit, extension services, and education and training need to target women to ensure equal opportunities with men (Parpart 1995: 259).

WID upholds a technocentric view, identifying technology as a key factor to enable women to participate in the private sphere, and enabling them to participate further in productive labour with the new-found 'free time' associated with the labour saving devices. In the refugee context, the technology focus of the WID approach can clearly be seen in Roberta Cohen's (1995) Refugee and Internally Displaced Women: A Development Perspective, in which she recommends that the following steps be taken to assist refugee women:

...gender clauses, labour-saving devices and the designing of special components for women have all worked to enlarge women's access to development projects and should be widely introduced (1995: 34).

Problems with the WID Approach

There are problems, however, associated with the WID approach. The first is WID's acceptance of existing social and political structures. The fact that these existing structures and strategies of development could be equally oppressive and hinder the development of women is ignored. Secondly, while focusing on women's economic potential, the WID approach often fails to deal with the reality of women's oppression in the Third World. Yet, when WID proponents did attempt to focus on the oppression of women, the non-confrontational approach of WID avoided questioning the nature and sources of women's oppression, focusing on advocacy for more equal participation in education, and employment in society as a whole (Mblinyi in Rathgeber 1990: 491).

Yet by looking at women as productive units, WID ignores the other facets to women's lives, such as their reproductive roles and the responsibilities and time commitments that women's additional roles entail. Secondly, WID tends to be ahistorical, ignoring the impact of class, race, culture and colonialism. Thirdly, WID is criticised for acting in a patronising manner by portraying the Third World women as victims. In this sense, with its clear focus on modernising women,

WID often fails to recognise women's social realities, especially those of Third World women.

To overcome the difficulties of the WID approach to women's development, the more recent approach known as Gender and Development (GAD) emerged. Evolving from a feminist socialist background, GAD encompasses a holistic perspective, looking at social organisation and the economic and political life of society. Emphasis is placed on the role of the state, which GAD views has the duty to provide social services, such as healthcare.

In addition, GAD is concerned with the social construction of gender roles and the relations between men and women. GAD focuses on labour both within and outside the household, and attention is given to the oppression of women within the household. For example, analysis of the household environment is conducted to look at "...the assumptions upon which conjugal relationships are based." Yet, concurrently, GAD rejects the public/private dichotomy of Western feminism. Further, GAD calls for women to find political voice and organisation, upholding a focus on women's legal rights (Rathgeber 1990: 494).

GAD uses an empowerment approach, focusing on the participation of women, whereby participation involves not only benefits but also control. The full participation of women in development is encouraged to enable women to construct their own realities. The GAD perspective views women as agents of change, not passive recipients of welfare (Rathgeber 1990: 494). However, the true essence of the GAD approach has not been implemented in the refugee context, most likely as GAD is seen as a long-term approach to women's development, as refugees are viewed as short-term 'problems'. Nevertheless, as experience has demonstrated, refugee circumstances can often be long-term, which means that refugee situations, such as refugee camps, provide excellent opportunities to empower women. New skills, literacy, and leadership roles, administrative and organisational capacities can all be acquired, including those in non-traditional occupations.

For instance, Sollis (1994: 4) cites the case in point of Salvadoran refugees in Honduras, who, once emergency relief had been achieved, became known for their high levels of organisation in refugee camps. With the support of external NGOs and the UNHCR, the refugees managed the administration systems of the camps, coordinating literacy and skills training programmes, schools and clinics. Upon arrival, only 25 percent of the refugees were literate. Later literacy rates reached 85 percent, of which large numbers were women who had learned to read and write while in exile. In addition, these women took on "...camp leadership roles, acquired administrative capacity and organizational skills and moved into non-traditional occupations such as carpentry and mechanics" (Sollis 1994: 4).

Disappointingly, however, while there are increasing calls for participation of refugees in decision-making processes, this has not been matched in practice, "... and that the omission remains particularly glaring in terms of women" (Indra in Matsouka & Sorenson 1999: 221). Therefore, we must highlight and take seriously the notion of gender and "...work to eliminate unilinear concepts of refugeeism (Gupta 1992; Malkki 1992; in Gomez 1999: 201).

Labelling Refugee Status

The importance of the taxonomy of displaced people was recognised from an early stage. From 1921, a person holding a League of Nations⁶ Passport, a Nansen⁷ Passport, was more likely to be recognised by national governments as deserving of refugee protection than those without one (Boyle et al 1998: 180). Even today, Convention refugees are given preferential treatment in accessing welfare services in host countries to those with other legal statuses (Black in Boyle et al 1998: 181).

Moreover, the benefits of the Convention classification are internationally guaranteed. The UNHCR mandate puts the UNHCR under obligation, in

⁶ The League of Nations was the forerunner to the United Nations.

⁷ Named after Fridtjof Nansen of Norway, High Commissioner for Refugees (1921-1930) (UNHCR 2000b: 15).

conjunction with other United Nations bodies, to offer protection to refugees. Under the Convention, the UNHCR must provide assistance, including access to food, shelter, health services in the short-term, and resettlement opportunities in the long-term (UNHCR in Boyle et al 1998: 180). Thus, Convention status can alter "...the life-chances of an individual dramatically, even making big difference between life and death..." (Boyle et al 1998: 181). What this demonstrates, then, is that the label 'refugee' is highly potent, not only can it protect those in danger; but also those displaced persons without refugee status can be at risk, as they are not able to access the international protection that the Convention provides.

Refugees, however, even after they have acquired refugee status, are acutely vulnerable to the labelling process; labels lead to stereotypes where needs and prescriptions become assumed (Boyle et al 1998: 180-81). In a refugee situation, this may become particularly dangerous when the assumed needs do not meet the actual needs of those at risk, resulting in insufficient or inappropriate aid delivery.

The labelling of refugees, however, may not necessarily be done in a deliberately destructive manner. Aid workers, for instance, do not necessarily use stereotypes for negative reasons. Instead, stereotypes are used as 'coping strategies' for staff or organisations with the extreme pressure of limited resources, in order to deal with the mass of refugees. In an emergency situation, aid workers often attempt to group the refugees into manageable categories. In these situations, refugees are not treated as individuals. Instead, a single label and identity, 'refugee', is given to all:

...even though this might conceal a range of (contrasting) identities: political refugees versus environmental refugees, or the imposed label versus how refugees see themselves (Boyle et al 1998: 181).

Nevertheless, once labels have been fixed, especially in circumstances involving unequal power relations, "...stereotypes may become self-reinforcing, with refugees feeling that they have to conform to demonstrate their gratitude and merit further assistance." For refugees then, labels may become "...passive consequences of the actions of others..." (Boyle et al 1998: 181). Thus, through

the indiscriminate labelling and consequent stereotyping of outsiders, refugees become objectified.

For instance, Zetter (1991), in his analysis of an aid programme designed to resettle displaced Cypriots from the North, (of the 1974 partition of Cyprus), demonstrates clearly some of the unintended but harmful consequences of labelling refugees. The project was considered a success as it resulted in 150,000 people being rehoused in 40,000 new habitations, and the reshaping of the economy to provide the Cypriots with employment (in Boyle et al 1998: 181).

However, as a result of the 'refugee' label being placed on the Cypriots, four negative consequences arose: first, state-provided housing was on spatially segregated, highly visible estates, of a different type of those traditionally found on Cyprus. Residents felt stigmatised, marginalised and dependent on the state, which they felt controlled them. Second, due to the allocation system imposed on them, refugees had to compete for housing. This divided the refugee group rather than creating solidarity from which they would have clearly benefited. Third, the provision of permanent housing for 'refugees' "...was perceived as weakening their continued demands for an international solution to the partition, which would allow them to return to the real homes and possessions in Turkish-controlled northern Cyprus." Fourth, the burden of the label and identity 'refugee' destabilized traditional cultural values and customs, "...such as the dowry system and the communal residence of extended households" (Boyle et al 1998: 181-82).

In a second example of labelling refugees, Harrell-Bond (1986) studied an emergency assistance programme in the Yei River District in Southern Sudan. The aim of the research was to "...describe the actual living situation of the refugees, the impact of the various assistance groups, the interconnections, and the impact on each other" (Harrell-Bond 1986: xiv). During the course of her research, Harrell-Bond (1986: xiii) discovered that journalists contribute to stereotyping refugees as helpless. Further, that aid agency advertising still tends to focus on "the starving child appeal", concluding that "...the nature of the

contemporary refugee problem suggests that this former marketing of refugees will continue" (Harrell-Bond 1986: 11).

The labelling of refugees furthers the continuation of refugees being represented as helpless victims of social forces, with no choice but to flee. This objective stereotyping on the part of outsiders portrays refugees as passive victims, at the will of others, without agency and without hope. Yet, this is not necessarily the case. For example, during 1979, world news coverage of the Vietnamese "Boat People" proffered stories of thousands of people "...struggling across the South China Sea on leaky boats, prey to storms, pirates, and the winds of international politics." These reports implied that these destitute people were "helpless victims" who needed outside assistance in every possible form. In fact, the reality of the situation was quite different (Anderson & Woodrow 1989: 71):

As soon as Vietnamese refugees came ashore, whether in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, or the Philippines, they organized themselves. They made lists of families by name, age, boat etc. They chose leaders. Within camps, they established zones, set up clinics, appointed security units. They created a hierarchy of authority and responsibility for camp life. In short order, they replicated the administrative and social organization of a Vietnamese city (Anderson & Woodrow 1989: 71).

Development work with these refugees required the acknowledgement and understanding of the skills of the participants, which unlike many other refugee situations involved people with a high degree of skills. The "Boat People" in the earlier years came from the wealthier and educated parts of the former South Vietnamese society: "People engaged in medicine, law, government administration, business, and other professions dominated the group, mixed with smaller numbers of farmers and fishermen" (Anderson & Woodrow 1989: 71). This example shows that before assumptions are made about refugees, development agencies must identify the skills of refugees.

In addition, the above example demonstrates that development agencies, rather than simply working out what to give to refugee groups, should encourage refugees to participate in community development. Despite the assumptions of some aid workers, experience has repeatedly shown that refugees "...always have identifiable capacities-skills they brought with them, social structures that

remain intact, leaders still respected, "survivor" instincts which motivate people" (Anderson & Woodrow 1989: 71). These capacities are not lost in flight and present the foundation for development work (Anderson & Woodrow 1989: 70-1).

Equally, labels can also act as a "...powerful momentum for change" (Boyle et al 1998: 181). For example, Westerman (1998) describes the Central American refugees in the 1980s that used their own life history testimonials to educate North Americans about the situation in their countries of origin, and to gain financial and political support. Westerman illustrates how these oral histories were directed "...for maximum political effect and presented through a range of narrative forms: as performance, in writing, and etched into the bodies of victims of torture" (Thomson 1999: 31). In this example, it was the refugees themselves, who were able to give their own personal voice to the often-ambiguous and objective label, and thereby through creating subjectivity, they not only educated others, but also empowered themselves.⁸

Labels, Definitions and Theories

Shain (1988), in seeking a 'political-behavioural' definition of exile, built on the various definitional approaches to exile in an attempt to suggest a workable definition more useful to political scientists. Shain (1988) explains that while Kunz (1973; 1981) had developed a typology of refugee types, classifying exiles into subgroups according to their background and form of resettlement, he did not denote a special category for politically active exiles. Despite identifying some unique traits and attributes of this group, political activism was seen as a minor part of the dynamics of exiles (Shain 1988: 393).

In addition, through looking at the literature of various academic disciplines, Shain concluded firstly, that the sociological literature "...reduces the political exile to a mere case of social deviance..." and secondly, that when seen from a social psychology perspective, the political refugee is seen simply as a variant of the refugee. Thirdly, that the legal profession works without a clear definition of

⁸ For another example of the use of personal voice to create subjectivity see: Menchú. R. 1984. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian woman in Guatemala*. London: Verso.

political refugees and instead "...reduces the discussion about exiles to technical and practical problem solving" (1988: 388). What Shain demonstrates is that these three approaches have failed to recognise a distinct group of exiles, 'political activists' who take part in political activity designed to end their exile.

Consequently, Shain's definition of political exiles is an attempt to overcome the oversights of previous academic work. At the collective level, Shain argues, exile organisations are defined as those that seek to change the home country's political and social order. Revolutionary exile organisations as opposed to reform exile organisations, which make only partial claims, "...strive to overthrow and replace the home regime and usually endeavour to reconstruct the entire social order" (1988: 394). Three different is types of revolutionary exile organisations can be distinguished: first, organisations which fight from outside their home countries to oust the home regime; second, organisations which struggle "...from outside their claimed national territory to gain independent political status inside an international order of sovereign states", also termed pre-state self-determination or decolonisation political exiles; and third, organisations which struggle from abroad against a foreign vanquisher to regain political independence or territory lost in battle (Shain 1988: 395). Most importantly, at the individual level, Shain (1988: 393) argues that: "No exile should be regarded as a 'political exile' unless he [sic] participates in exile politics."

Refugees and Exiles

Any discussion of the labelling of refugees cannot ignore the semantic arguments that take place both in the field of refugee studies and across the various academic disciplines regarding the ways in which refugees and exiles are both defined and distinguished. However, as there is such an extensive array of literature, (in fact, an entire literature review could be written on the topic alone), this thesis will discuss only a few works pertinent to the study.

One such work is Edward W. Said's (1984) often-quoted essay, The Mind of Winter: Reflections on life in exile. Said argues that refugees "...are a creation of the twentieth-century state," and that the term 'refugee' has become politicised,

“...suggesting large herds of innocent and bewildered people requiring urgent international assistance, whereas ‘exile’ carries with it, I think, a touch of solitude and spirituality” (1984: 52). The benefit of this quasi-romantic notion of an exile is that it creates a space for the subjectivity of the exile individual and/or culture. While refugees may constitute a political space in the international order, the notion of exile, in this sense, establishes a private space for the subjective understanding of exiles and exile culture.

Building on Said’s (1984) perception of exiles, Abu-Lughod (1988), in her sociological study of Palestinian exiles, also differentiates between ‘refugees’ and forced ‘exiles’. She contends that the concept of ‘refugee’ is generally defined as a collective or group condition, seldom applied to an individual. Instead, “[c]lassification as a refugee, requires collective status; it not only requires that there be many dislocated persons but that the displacement results from a common cause not of their own making” (1988: 62). In addition, according to Abu-Lughod, within this concept of refugee is hidden the option of return, even if it is in the distant future. In contrast, forced exiles, (such as the Palestinians), while they also experience forced migration, lack the option of return:

Only forced exile creates that unhealable rift between the ‘self and its true home’ which leaves the mover in limbo, unable and unwilling to become fully part of his life [sic] in exile for fear that in doing so he [sic] will forfeit his [sic] life in his [sic] ‘native place’ (1988: 62).

Therefore, Abu-Lughod argues, “...the difference between a refugee and an exile is just this option of return” (1988: 62).

Perhaps of most importance in Abu-Lughod’s (1988) study is her introduction of an additional part of the Palestinian experience, the concept of being in exile on one’s home soil. This phenomenon of exile without moving is a form of political exile that starts before a person leaves their home country, and may occur during colonial occupation. Individuals who experience this form of exile, “...in the sense of an ‘unhealable rift between the past and present’...” are usually those who are rooted in a native land and in a native social environment (Abu-Lughod 1988: 62).

For example, Zarosa (1998: 189), using Abu-Lughod's (1988) concept of exile, describes in her own words how she, became a member of the defeated sector of Chilean society after 11 September 1973. She was allowed to keep her professional status yet this was meaningless for her as she had "...no control and constructive participation in academic life":

I became an instrument of the new regime. I felt alienated even though I 'was part' of the new social order. This was exile without moving. Almost all that I identified with was destroyed. Even space ceased to have the same meaning for me as it became *their* domain for their repressive practices. I was scared of the 'soil' (streets, beautiful countryside, rivers and sea) as there were always people being arrested, tortured or even killed there. Chile was my country of origin but ceased to be my home. Internal exile constituted a rift between past and present within myself and is a social actor in my own physical environment. Home was being destroyed (Zarosa 1998: 189-190).

As Zarosa (1998) explains, the majority of the meanings of "home" had been lost while still on home soil during her 'internal' exile (1998: 192): "Our meaning had been defeated and had been replaced by the new order. I was left deprived of any social value" (1998: 189). Exile, as Abu-Lughod (1988) and Zarosa (1998) explained, can arise regardless of whether one has crossed international borders or remains within their homeland.

Economic Migrants or Political Refugees?

In looking at the causes of refugee flows, there are those who attempt to distinguish between economic migrants and political refugees by arguing that some migrants leave for economic rather than political reasons. As has been shown, refugees (involuntary migrants) are distinguished from economic (voluntary) migrants by their unwillingness to abandon their homes "...and by the absence of positive original motives to settle elsewhere..." (Kunz 1973: 130). However, to complicate matters, there lies a (narrow) distinction between political refugees and economic migrants, and in the majority of cases, "...the economic and political motives for flight are inextricably linked" (Parnwell 1993: 45-46), which makes it difficult to distinguish between the 'political refugee' and the 'economic opportunist' in refugee flows (Parnwell 1993: 70).

Parnwell (1993: 45), in raising discussion about the differences between political refugees and economic migrants, uses the example of the Vietnamese 'boat people'. Until 1979, the refugee status of more than half one million Vietnamese and ethnic Chinese, after the Communist takeover in Vietnam, faced few challenges. Many were readily accepted for resettlement in the United States, having worked closely with the Americans before the South fell to the Communists in April 1975. Further waves of refugees, a large proportion of which were Vietnamese Chinese, fled due to:

...political persecution, the Communist regime's firm clampdown on the capitalist sector, and because of Vietnam's deteriorating relationship with China, which particularly affected the safety and economic well-being of the ethnic Chinese community in Vietnam (Parnwell 1993: 45).

However, since 1979, the vast majority of people who have left Vietnam have been ethnic Vietnamese, predominantly from the lower and middle classes; those who do not necessarily seem to have been the immediate intentional targets of state repression. In addition, these people left at a time of economic crisis in Vietnam, which has led to the assumption that they are leaving to seek better economic opportunities abroad. Yet, although economic factors do feature in the migration decisions of many, they do not tell the whole story. Many refugees have fled Vietnam "...because they face discrimination, fear, persecution, or because they are ideologically opposed to the Communist regime" (Parnwell 1993: 45-46).

The first asylum countries of these refugees (including Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand) have focused on the economic basis of the post-1979 migration, and have sought to distinguish the 'economic opportunists' from the 'genuine' political refugees. Coinciding with a narrowing interpretation of refugees, several Western nations have been afflicted with 'compassion fatigue', "...which has led to drastically reduced resettlement quotas for Vietnamese refugees" (Parnwell 1993: 47). Unfortunately for the refugees, the combination of these factors means that they are faced with life in camps throughout South East Asia or forced resettlement by the very authorities (Parnwell 1993) they believed would shelter them.

In a further study focusing on the issue of political refugees versus economic migrants, Jones (1989), using a quantitative approach, analyses the causes of Salvadoran migration to the United States, examining the linkages between civil unrest in El Salvador and migration to the United States. Jones explains that although the underlying causes of Salvadoran migration to the United States are related to conflict, the issue of whether the immediate motivations to migrate are political or economic has become a controversial issue.

Groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the United States committee for refugees, the sanctuary movement, various church groups and a large part of the academic community hold that the Salvadoran migration stems from political violence and persecution. In contrast, the United States State and Justice Department maintained that although increased violence has increased the incentives to escape El Salvador, "...the migrants have been motivated chiefly by economic difficulties that the onset of civil war has worsened" (Abrams in Jones 1989: 183). Jones' results suggest therefore, "...that economic setbacks are more important than political violence..." in creating Salvadoran migrations (Jones 1989: 183).

In the case of the Vietnamese 'boat people', it is clear that the United States and South East Asian authorities have created their own definition of refugees according to their interpretation of the refugees' reasons for flight. Although on becoming party to the Convention, states were able to make a declaration limiting and obligations under the Convention to European refugees (UNHCR 2000b: 24), states have since taken it upon themselves to dictate their responsibilities to the Convention in providing refuge and assistance to non-European refugees. Unfortunately, what we are witnessing more and more, are states with vested self-interest creating their own definitions of refugees to protect their own political aspirations.

The Decision-Making Involved in Refugee Migrations

In a study of Angolan refugees in Zambia, Hansen (1981) examines the decision-making dynamics of the Angolan refugee movement. He distinguishes

between refugees and "nonrefugee" immigrants who "... were arriving during the same period and undergoing side by side the process of social and economic absorption" (1981: 186). Both of these subpopulations consisted of males and females of all age groups, although the refugee populations generally tended to be older than the later arrival migrants. This difference in age Hansen (1981: 186) suggests, "... illustrates a significant difference between forced and nonforced migrations":

Older people are more established and less desirous, under normal conditions, of moving. Nonforced movements are generally of young people, while forced movements include all ages (1981: 186).

Further, the refugee's decision to flee is a manifestation of their perceived inability to protect themselves in their current location, as Hansen (1981: 190) explains:

The decision to flee obviously reflects the individuals belief that his or her power over others and self-control are now inadequate to protect the self from insult, injury, imprisonment or death at the behest of others who oppose the self. Thus, flight represents the perceived inadequacy (a subjective judgment about relative strength) and an attempt to utilize whatever power, control and mobility the person still possesses to escape from a threatening situation to safety.

As such, argues Hansen, refugees are migrants who, in fact, do *choose* to leave. There are alternatives to becoming a refugee; some choose flight over international borders, while others do not. While some may flee "in blind panic or without any forethought," Hansen believes that for most refugees, the refugee chooses both the flight and the destination with great deliberation (1981: 190).

This belief totally conflicts with the previous theories of refugee migration that assume that flight is the expression of absolute powerlessness, and refugees are passive victims of social forces. For example, Kunz's (1973: 131) quote, demonstrates the belief that refugees have no control over flight and the decision-making process that is involved. The existence of kinetic or dynamic inner self-propelling force:

...is singularly absent from the movement of refugees. Their progress more often than not resembles the movement of the billiard ball: devoid of inner direction their path is governed by the kinetic factors of inertia, friction and the vectors of outside forces applied on them.

Summary

Refugee discourse, both historically, and in the contemporary world, has involved Eurocentric notions, and objective labelling. Refugees are portrayed as victims, rather than (political) agents of change, and are seen as passive not active. Although refugees may be at risk and vulnerable, this does not automatically make them victims. Refugees need to be recognised for the positive steps they have taken to better their lives and should be supported as such.

Traditionally, migration theories have ignored refugees, focusing exclusively on voluntary migration, such as Lee (1969), and provided little direction and analysis of refugee flows. While, some migration theories have considered forced migrations (Jenny 1984; Peterson 1958; Schmeidl 1997) it is also vital to explore migration theories that focus specifically on refugee movements. Moreover, even though there is a growing literature of the empirical analysis of the causes of refugee movements, there remains a shortage in qualitative analysis of refugee movements; few academics have actually recognised the need to ask the refugees themselves why they actually decided to leave.

As has been noted, the 1951 Convention on Refugees in defining what constitutes a refugee, does not question why refugees flee in the first place. Although a well-founded fear of persecution is a required prerequisite for obtaining refugee status as a Convention refugee, this fear is with regards to returning to, not leaving the place of origin. Nonetheless, it is clear that persecution may not be the only causal factor of refugee migration.

There are both internal and external causes involved in creating refugee migrations, and although singular causes for refugee flows are often sought, refugee migrations tend to be complex, multifaceted occurrences involving

economic, social and political tensions. As Allen and Hiller (1985: 439) explain, the migration decision-making process is not simply mechanistic; rather, migration must be seen "...as a blend of both the consequences of structural and objective factors (involuntary) and personal decision and choice (voluntary)." However, if 'refugees' do leave for reasons other than direct persecution, the dilemma then occurs as to whether their migration can be seen as involuntary; raising the question whether these migrants can be classed as refugees.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

Data for the study were collected through various methods, including taped in-depth interviews using a Tibetan translator, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis (CVA), stimulus pictures, informal conversations and personal observations while living in McLeod Ganj, India from 23 April 2000 to 28 May 2000.

I chose to use a qualitative approach for the study as I recognised this approach would be best suited to the exploratory style of research that I wanted to undertake. I needed methods of data collection that were flexible and easily adjustable to the changing needs of the project. The beauty of the qualitative approach for the researcher is, of course, its flexibility; as a set of interpretive practices, no methodology is privileged over another, and there is no set of distinct methods. Further, qualitative research has no characteristic theory or paradigm and can be many things at the same time, as Nelson et al (in Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 3) explain: "Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and sometimes counter-disciplinary field."

Qualitative research has inherently a multi-method focus (Brewer & Hunter in Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 2). The use of multiple methods, or triangulation is used simply to gain an in-depth understanding of the research topic (Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 2). Thus, I chose to use a variety of methods of data collection so that if one method was found unsuitable in the field, then another could be utilised. The benefit of using more than one method meant that I was also able to gain a greater understanding of the topic as the combination of methods, materials, and perspectives in a study works "...as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, and depth to any investigation" (Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 2).

Interviews

I decided that interviews would be the most appropriate method for data collection for the research as the respondents were most likely to be illiterate, (which was indeed the case), and the information that I required was not available in written records. Further, the oral tradition is an important aspect of Tibetan life because in Tibet literacy rates are extremely low.¹ As Rinchen Lhamo (1997: 8) explains, it is through the Tibetan oral tradition that many "old tales" are passed down verbally from generation to generation:

We learn them in our childhood by hearing grown-up people tell them. Then we tell them ourselves in our turn. They are told, some of them, partly in song. In being written down they lose, of course, their music. It is as though you read your operas in a book instead of hearing them. But still the story remains, and it is the most important part of these tales of ours, for they are allegories.

Initially I chose oral history² interviews as the primary method of data collection, as I liked the idea of listening to women's stories with minimal interruption from the interviewer. Similarly to Anderson and Jack (in Gluck & Patai 1991: 11), who state that oral histories are valuable for uncovering women's perspectives, I wanted the respondents to narrate their stories in ways that were meaningful to them.

Further, interviews are an appropriate method of data collection in researching migration as personal testimony is advantageous to the researcher as it is able to offer unique "...glimpses into the lived interior of migration processes" (Benmayor & Skotnes 1994: 14 cited in Thomson 1999: 26). Phillippe Joutard even goes as far to say that modern-day migrations "...could scarcely be studied nowadays without first-hand accounts from the emigrants" (cited in Thomson 1999: 26).

¹ In Tibet, education is largely inaccessible to the general Tibetan population both today under Chinese rule, and before 1959, the exception being those individuals who were able to study in monasteries and nunneries.

² Terms used interchangeably with 'oral history' include "...case studies, in-depth life history interviews, biographical interviews, life histories, and personal narratives" (Reinharz 1992: 129).

Ethical Considerations in Interviewing Refugees

Before embarking on fieldwork, there are a number of issues and ethical considerations that need to be taken into consideration with regards to interviewing refugees. Most importantly, as with all social science research, there is the general consideration of *not harming subjects* (North 1995: 35). This consideration, however, must also be adhered to in the post-interview phase. We must ask ourselves what the respondent is left with after the interview (Jones: 1998), and what we leave behind in the wake of the process. On the positive side, it can be helpful for respondents to talk; researchers may alter people's perceptions and memories, or encourage the respondents to think in different ways (Jones 1998: 54), and as such, may well help people "...to put events into coherent frameworks" (Jones 1998: 52). However, interviews can also have negative consequences, for instance, respondents being left with exposed feelings that they must cope with in the up-and-coming future (Jones 1998: 54).

In addition, the researcher must be particularly aware of the vulnerability of the refugee population, who are vulnerable quite simply because they are classed as 'refugees'. They may also have health problems (North 1995: 36), experience stress, and have to cope with mental and physical trauma that further exacerbate their vulnerability. Specifically within the research context, refugees constitute an exceptionally vulnerable population because they are often new to the host country; they are not necessarily acquainted with their rights to discontinue their participation in the research process and/or they may have a desire to please those of the host country, this includes consenting to participate in the studies of visiting researchers (North 1995: 36).

Alternatively, refugees have often had previous experience with outsiders; before the first researchers get to ask their questions, refugees have already experienced several interviews and conversations with an assortment of "helpers" (Knudsen 1995: 29). By the time interviewers arrive; refugees may have had enough of telling their story of past events in their lives, and may prefer to move on with their lives. Conversely, interviewers questions and interpretations may represent a threat to a refugee's present and future well-

being, as recalling their past can bring up unwanted memories and feelings. Interviewers must respect a refugee's wishes to put the past behind them and move on with their lives, even if that means the researchers must go home empty handed.

Correspondingly, researchers must be aware of their role as gatekeepers "...to landscapes of emotions" (Knudsen 1995: 30). Refugees have suffered trauma and loss, and some may have even experienced torture. The refugee may be "...attempting to deal with trauma in ways such as silence, withdrawal, and protection of private feelings and emotions..." (Knudsen 1995: 30). Yet, in discussing these experiences, the interviewer may in fact create further trauma for that person (Knudsen 1995; North 1995). A further point that Knudsen (1995: 30-31) raises is that researchers who "open the door to such landscapes" need to have adequate professional and personal abilities to deal with the information. As researchers, Knudsen then suggests we ask ourselves whether, in bringing up traumatic experiences, we are: "Prepared and willing to accept the ethical responsibility to function therapeutically - if necessary?"

Personal Narratives, Representation, and Writing about Third World Women

Although researchers can speak against hegemonic discourses oppressing refugees (Knudsen 1995: 31), doubts have been raised in feminist discourse as to the legitimacy and advisability of outsiders writing about other less privileged women. The question is whether Western researchers can truly represent less privileged others as an (unintended) reproduction of colonial domination occurs in academic writing. Even if researchers do take a postcolonial position, this does not guarantee that the researcher can or will convey the truth (Ong 1995: 354).

Moreover, no matter how much a 'well-meaning' feminist tries to make the writer-informant relationship more equitable, the researcher will probably gain more from the research, than the informant, in terms of their career:

It seems especially unethical when Third World women's stories become the means for Western feminists to participate in different translinguistic forums, thus extending their academic authority to transnational contexts (Ong 1995 353).

Further, the researcher can sometimes even profit through the tragedies of informants, and therefore betray the egalitarian ideology of their work (Stacey & Geiger in Ong 1995: 353). Therefore, the question of how the exchanges will benefit both sides must be assessed.

An even greater betrayal is encountered when the researcher lets personal doubts obstruct the representation of the respondent's stories, perspectives, and ideas. Respondents must be recognised as "active cultural producers in their own right," without interference from the researcher. Therefore, it is crucial that researchers help disseminate the views of the informant "...without betraying their political interest as narrators of their own lives" (Ong 1995: 354). In the case of refugees, Knudsen (1995: 31) explains that it is not the role of the researcher in this situation to sort fact from fiction, but to aid the refugees in their efforts to re-establish their lives. Refugees have been through enough without a researcher questioning the "truth" of their responses.

While questioning the "truth" or validity of a person's statements from a scientific point of view is justified and a necessary part of analysis (Kleinman & Copp 1993), for myself as a researcher, it is morally unacceptable to gain the trust of the respondent then break that trust by attempting to discredit the stories in case there are 'making them up'. However, as Kleinman & Copp (1993: 14) explain, sociological analysis does involve elements of such cynicism:

...we do not want to give readers the commonsense story that they already know or just feed them with what participants told us. To win credibility from our readers, we want to convince them that we did not accept participants' "sad tales" at face value.

While readers tend to expect a sympathetic account of our "underdog" respondents, they "expect to learn that appearances are deceptive" (Kleinman & Copp 1993: 14). Sociologists, according to Kleinman & Copp, tend to write that while the respondents had difficult lives and circumstances, they have managed

to "work the system" or create alternatives. Respondents are therefore portrayed as "...gritty, savvy and streetwise, responding in creative ways to bad situations" (Kleinman & Copp 1993: 13). Yet, by idealising our respondents in this way and turning them into 'heroes', we not only overcome the taboo of portraying participants as victims, we also ignore the central feature of their experience: "...the physical emotional and psychological pain of living under harsh material conditions" (Kleinman & Copp 1993: 14).

Therefore, in writing about Third World women, especially refugee women, not only must the question of how the exchanges will benefit both sides be assessed, and a relationship of trust established between researcher and the respondent, but also a researcher must uphold the respondent's right to be recognised as an active (political) agent, by maintaining the integrity of the respondent's stories, perspectives, and ideas.

In sum, personal narratives, representation, and writing about Third World women are highly politicised areas in qualitative research, which are complicated by the fact that the representation of 'other' women by privileged Western women is dependent upon negotiating trust and avoiding betrayal within a relationship of inherently unbalanced power. In order to overcome (or at least ameliorate) some of the problems associated with research practices, Ong (1995: 353-54) suggests feminist researchers should not confuse their personal and wider social responsibilities, and in recounting Third World women's stories, Western researchers should help "challenge and destabilize" Western cultural knowledges.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

There are two main reasons why I chose to use PRA for data collection. Firstly, as my research is concerned specifically with women's lives, I wanted to make it participatory as possible. Secondly, as PRA is generally used as a method in the development projects to understand the needs of local people, I was interested to assess whether PRA would be suitable in the field-research environment.

Participatory research attempts to counteract the notion of respondents as passive sources of information who "...usually gain little if anything (and are sometimes adversely affected) by the research and its findings" (Overton 1999: 30). Instead, participatory research seeks:

... for people to be an integral part of the research by being fully aware of what the research and the researcher are all about, by helping to set the research goals through identifying and articulating their own needs, and by being fully made aware of the research outcomes (Overton 1999: 30).

Moreover, PRA can be empowering as the methods and approaches used can enable the local people, "... including the poor, illiterate, women and the marginalised...to appraise, analyse, plan and act" (Chambers 1998: xvi). As Murkherjee (in Holland & Blackburn 1998: 1) explains: "Participatory approaches provide the space for local people to establish their own analytical framework and thus challenge 'development from above'." Therefore, PRA is centred around the concept of people's own right to determine local development, and the recognition of the need for local participation towards people's own solutions in which power and control are maintained, in order to achieve sustainable local development (Attwood 1997: 2).

PRA has evolved out of practices that have been found to work in the field (Chambers 1997: 104), and well-conducted PRA involves visual and verbal open-ended approaches and methods that are done by small groups of local people (Chambers 1998: xv-xvi). PRA is suited to a qualitative research approach, similarly to other participatory approaches, which are promoted "...for their post-positive *qualitative explanatory power* in providing 'depth, richness and realism of information and analysis' (Chambers in Holland & Blackburn 1998: 1). However, PRA is not just an approach to appraisal, but also an approach to supporting an ongoing empowerment process through:

...facilitating or empowering local people to identify their own needs and priorities and to initiate change in their situation. The role of outsiders becomes one of facilitating and supporting such processes (Massey University 1999: 12).

In order to achieve local empowerment, PRA emphasises the need for outsiders to change their behaviour and attitudes, as changes and reversals of roles, behaviours, relationships and learning are the essence of PRA (Chambers 1998: xv):

Outsiders do not dominate and lecture; they facilitate, sit down, listen and learn. Outsiders do not transfer technology; they share methods that local people can use for their own appraisal, analysis, planning, action, monitoring and evaluation. Outsiders do not impose their reality; they encourage and enable local people to express their own (Chambers 1997: 103).

This then gives us the three foundations of PRA:

- the behaviour and attitudes of outsiders, who facilitate not dominate;
- the methods, which shift the normal balance from closed to open, from individual to group, from verbal to visual, and from measuring to comparing; and
- partnership and sharing of information, experienced, food and training, between insiders and outsiders, and between organisations (Mascarenhas *et al* in Chambers 1997: 104-05).

The PRA tools I intended to use were:

- Mobility maps, in order to show the patterns of spatial mobility of women with respect to different activities (Mukherjee 1993: 73).
- Venn diagrams, to show the relations between various organisations, and the women's relationships with these organisations. Venn diagrams may also demonstrate support networks that are, or are not, available to the women.
- Timelines³ to create a list of the key influences in the history of Tibetan community in Dharamsala, including influences that have specifically impacted upon women's lives. I would endeavour to involve older women in this activity, as they would be more knowledgeable about past events.

³ I realised that the Tibetan calendar would need to be taken into consideration, with regard to timelines, as Tibetans follow a lunar calendar that changes from year to year. The year begins in February or early March, depending on the calculations of the Astrology Department of the Tibetan Medical and Astro Institute, which publishes an annual calendar based on the Tibetan system of astrological calculations.

Timelines enable the researcher to understand the events at the community/local level and at the national and global levels. Timelines show what communities consider to be important in their history and how the community and individuals have dealt with crises in the past, identifying past events, difficulties and achievements (Macdonald 1994: 104).

PRA as a Research Tool

Not only does participatory research have the potential and role to augment and complement conventional research, it can also go beyond this "...to explain (local perceptions of) the causes of trends that are described by official statistics" (Holland & Blackburn 1998: 2). Additionally, PRA has certain advantages over other traditional research methods in that it can help break down barriers between the researcher and the researched. First, PRA breaks down language barriers as it creates a 'visual language' that may also enable more direct interaction between the researcher and the community. Second, PRA breaks down social and cultural barriers by encouraging activity between the researcher and the community (Robinson-Pant 1996: 5).

However, like other research tools, PRA has its disadvantages; PRA is time-consuming, and people have to stop their daily activities to gather into a group at a set time. Demands on people's time such as those made by PRA activities need something worthwhile to be given back to in return, and as with other forms of data collection, assumptions and suspicions are formed about the purpose of the techniques involving mapping, ranking and diagramming. Further, these assumptions will affect participation and the success of PRA is a research tool (Robinson-Pant 1996: 5).

In addition, it has been suggested that participatory research is possibly more unethical than traditional research as it has the potential to raise the expectations of a community. Even by 'explaining' to community members that any delivery, action or development from the research should not be expected, this may not

work in all situations as: "The very nature of activities (methods) designed for the sharing and analysing of information, raises expectations" (Attwood 1997: 9).

PRA and Postgraduate Research

PRA methodology is designed to be non-extractive and empowering, yet the way in which these tools may be used for extractive postgraduate research counteracts this goal (Attwood 1997: 4). Cassara even asserts that the value system and commitments required to practice such research, "...is not inherent in traditional social science research" (in Attwood 1997: 5). However, the main point of contention that arises when considering the use of PRA for postgraduate research is the conflict of interests that exists between the philosophy of PRA and the way in which PRA may be used by post-graduate researchers; while some researchers believe that PRA should always be part of an empowering process, "...others have used the method for research, to learn more and more accurately about the realities of the poor" (Chambers 1998: xvi).

The intended goal behind PRA, firstly, is that it is meant to be part of an approach that involves local ownership of the process and of the information gathered, and therefore facilitates empowerment. Yet, the use of PRA methods to acquire information for research purposes or to inform policy "...does not necessarily have a built in component to ensure a local process of ownership and empowerment" (Holland & Blackburn 1998: 3). Instead, PRA research of this sort involves a focused predefined agenda, emphasising the product rather than the process itself, thus: "The tension is ultimately between process and product in participatory research" (Holland & Blackburn 1998: 3). Secondly, PRA is supposed to be part of an approach that leads to action. However, in the postgraduate research setting this is not usually practicable (Robinson-Pant 1996: 4):

As an academic researcher with time constraints and one's own agenda of research interests, it may be very difficult to follow up the PRA with the support that is required unless you have the agency backing and staff commitments (Robinson-Pant 1996: 5).

To overcome this situation, Attwood (1997: 4) suggests that if a researcher cannot attempt to achieve local empowerment and action, they could attempt to aim for positive local outcomes in addition to that which is intended to be produced e.g. the thesis report and data. This may include, for example, putting communities in touch with those who can assist them, providing communities with reusable form of the data gathered⁴, lobbying outside organisations and/or assisting in local community members to draw up their own proposals for action.

Further, with regards to the nature of the participation involved in postgraduate research, students are not usually able to develop a research proposal in collaboration with the community being studied, due to time and funding limitations, which is normally a pre-requisite for PRA exercises (Attwood 1997: 4). Supplementary dilemmas may be experienced by postgraduate researchers using PRA, including the reconciliation of the student's own research interests with that of 'the community'. A negotiation process is required between the two to establish grounds that meet the needs of the community, as well as those of the researcher. Even if they agree on a topic, flexibility is required by the researcher in order to redefine their preconceived goals and issues. At the same time, the community needs to be able to have the flexibility to redefine the issues as the process evolves. Additionally, the community and the researcher will have different time constraints and commitments. The most obvious example of this is the fact that a development process is continual while researchers are restricted by time limits (Attwood 1997: 4).

Moreover, the motivations behind implementing PRA research for the community and the researcher may not be the same. The community may want local change and development, while the researcher may wish to produce a thesis and related research articles. Therefore, to use 'PRA' in research, the term must be clarified, to outline the researcher's interpretation and understanding of what participatory research means for the project and for the community (Abbott 1996: 4). In recognising that no solutions to these problems can be universal, Robert Chambers (1998: xvi) notes that two points are widely agreed:

⁴ Attwood (1997: 4) suggests that when reporting information, it may be best to draw up two reports, one for the community and another for research purposes.

Transparency: facilitators should make clear from the start who they are, what they are doing, and why, and what can and cannot be expected; often, even when nothing can be expected, local people will collaborate, not least because they find activities interesting and enjoyable, and themselves learning from them.

Selection for follow-up: communities and groups can be chosen where responsible follow-up may be possible through an ongoing programme.

Additionally, Gill, while recognising that the nature of the research process is inherently less participatory, points out that the underlying motive of the work is not exploitative, "...being intended ultimately to benefit the local people" (Gill in IDS Workshop 1998: 195).

In sum, practical field research for students requires constant flexibility in the research design to enable adequate incorporation of communities' agendas in the research. While the establishment of strong links with communities and local organisations can function as a facilitating factor for communities and students on common research issues (Attwood 1997: 10). Perhaps, however, Robinson-Pant best explains the use of the ever evolving and 'unpredictable process' of PRA with postgraduate research in the following statement:

Only when you get to know the community and fully understand the limits of your role as a researcher, can you assess how far the use of PRA would be justified or feasible (Robinson-Pant 1996: 5).

In conclusion, despite the efficacy with which PRA tools may be used in a research setting, enabling them to be well suited for research, some believe that PRA may even be more disempowering than traditional research methods. Like other research tools, PRA can be time-consuming and assumptions and suspicions can be formed about the methods being used, however, PRA also has the likelihood of raising expectations. As a research tool, PRA methods do not necessarily achieve the intended goals of PRA, as local ownership of the process and product, (and therefore empowerment), is not an inherent part in the research process, additionally, follow-up and action may not be feasible for the researcher. Therefore, the researcher must clearly define what they interpret PRA to be in the research situation, and must be honest with community as to

who they are, what they are doing and why, what the outcomes will be for the project and the community, and what the community can and cannot expect.

Stimulus Pictures

I had collected a number of photographic images of Tibetan women participating in various roles and activities in Tibet, from childcare to manual labour.⁵ I wanted to hear the women's reactions, views and opinions about these images, and to see if the women would reflect on gender stereotypes through the pictures. I was aware that these images could possibly recall feelings of homesickness, and realised that sensitivity and discretion was needed on the part of the researcher.

Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis (CVA)

Gender Analysis Frameworks are practical tools used to help development practitioners understand the way men and women can be affected in different ways by development projects and initiatives, and can be instrumental in directing development initiatives in certain ways to benefit both men and women (Nowak & Scheyvens 1999: 2). One such framework is the Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis Framework.

CVA is a developmental approach to relief in emergencies, such as refugee situations, which views development as "...a process by which vulnerabilities are reduced and capacities increased" (Anderson & Woodrow 1989: 12). CVA is founded on the principal belief that people's existing strengths (capacities) and weaknesses (vulnerabilities) govern the impact an emergency has on them, as well as the way they act in response to the emergency (March et al 1999: 78-9). In this sense, an emergency develops into a disaster "...when it outstrips the society's capacity to cope" (March et al 1999: 79).

The term 'capacities' describes individual's and social groups' existing strengths:

⁵ See Appendix 3: Stimulus Pictures. Photographs taken from: El Popola Ĉinio Magazine. ed. 1987. Tibet on the Roof of the World. Beijing. China Esperanto Press; Distributed by China International Book Trading Corporation.

These are related to people's material and physical resources, their social resources, and their beliefs and attitudes. Capacities are built over time and determine people's ability to cope with crisis and recover from it (March et al 1999: 79).

'Vulnerabilities' are the long-term characteristics that undermine the capacity to cope with the sudden onset of disaster, or with prolonged disasters. Vulnerabilities also make individuals and social groups more susceptible to disasters. They are present prior to crises erupting, add their seriousness, increase the difficulty in providing effective disaster response, and persist after the crises is over (March et al 1999: 79).

Using an analysis matrix, CVA makes a distinction between three categories of capacities and vulnerabilities: physical/material, social/organisational, and motivational/attitudinal. Physical/material capacities and vulnerabilities include:

...features of the climate, land, and environment where people live, or lived before the crisis; their health, skills, their work; their housing, and technologies, water and food supply; their access to capital and other assets. All of these will be different for women and for men (March et al 1999: 79).

While both women and men experience material deprivation during an emergency, they always have some resources (capacities) left, including skills and possibly goods, upon which development organisations can build (Anderson & Woodrow 1989; March et al 1999: 79). In assessing the physical or material capacities and vulnerabilities, CVA encourages us to ask:

- What were/ are the ways in which men and women in the community were/ are physically or materially vulnerable?
- What productive resources, skills, and hazards existed /exist? Who (men and/ or women) had/ have access and control over these resources? (March et al 1999: 80).

The social/organisational capacities and vulnerabilities category denotes:

...the social fabric of the community, and includes the formal political structures and the informal systems through which people make decisions, establish leadership, or organise various social and economic activities. Social systems include family and community systems, and decision-making patterns with in the family and between families (March et al 1999: 80).

Gender analysis in this category is crucial, because women's and men's roles in these various forms of organisation differ widely (Anderson & Woodrow 1989; March et al 1999). CVA asks us to consider:

- What was the social structure of the community before the disaster, and how did it serve them in the face of this disaster?
- What has been the impact of the disaster on social organisation?
- What is the level and quality of participation in these structures? (March et al 1999: 80).

Motivational/attitudinal capacities and vulnerabilities include:

...cultural and psychological factors that may be based on religion, on the community's history of crisis, on the expectation of emergency relief. Crisis can be a catalyst for extraordinary efforts by communities, but when people feel victimised and dependent, they may become fatalistic and passive, and suffer a decrease in their capacities to cope with and recover from the situation (March et al 1999: 80).

People's vulnerabilities may be amplified by inappropriate development assistance that does not develop their own abilities, increase their confidence, or present them with opportunities for change (Anderson & Woodrow 1989; March et al 1999: 80). CVA encourages users to ask:

- How do men and women in the community view themselves, and their ability to deal effectively with their social/political environment?
- What were people's beliefs and motivations before the disaster and how has the disaster affected them? This includes beliefs about gender roles and relations.
- Do people feel they have the ability to shape their lives? Do men and women feel they have the same ability? (March et al 1999: 80).

The next step in CVA is to disaggregate the communities by gender, focussing on their gender roles. Other dimensions of social relations, which work to stratify the community, such as wealth, political affiliation, ethnic or language groups, age and so forth are then also disaggregated to assess "...how different people and groups are differently affected by crisis and interventions" (March et al 1999: 81). The collected data are then presented in a matrix from which recommendations can be made.

Inception and Social Relations

Acclimatisation

Prior to my arrival, I had planned to take about a week to settle into my new home environment, to get a feel for the place, and to work out where people and organisations were located. However, this acclimatisation period was extended to about ten days due to my body struggling with jet lag (not helped by the 14 hour sleepless overnight bus ride from Delhi), a cold, the heat, low blood pressure in the new environment, and an unexpected bout of altitude sickness that left me feeling permanently dizzy, despite the fact that McLeod Ganj was only about 1800 metres above sea level!

Rather than fighting these experiences and feeling anxious about them, however, I let them come and go, realising that this was all part of the research process. I took this time to try some of the local Tibetan medicine, explore the area on foot, and experience some of the holistic medicine offered by Westerners in McLeod Ganj, such as Reiki.

During this period, I also started teaching English to Tibetan refugees at an organisation that helps newly arrived refugees in Dharamsala. I had planned on teaching English before I left New Zealand as a way that I could give something back to the community while I was there. I saw a sign up outside a café, applied, and two days later was teaching.

Finding Interview Respondents

I knew I would be interviewing women who were first generation refugees, yet, I also had the preconceived notion that these women would be at least in their thirties, and most likely older. This perception came from reading the literature from the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) that used testimonies from older women who had escaped from Tibet. However, this was not the case. Rather than going through the TWA to find respondents for the research as initially

intended, I actually interviewed four students from my English class who were around my age group.

Initially, I had not intended to use this group to collect data, as I was aware that there could be power imbalances involved since I was providing a service to the group, and there could be a fear of removal of those services if they did not agree to participate in the research. However, this was not the case as good friendships were established with some of the women, which had developed out of the formal student/teacher relationship.

At a dinner that I had been invited to one night, I explained the objectives of my research to two women, one was a student of mine and the other worked with the other women students. One immediately volunteered herself⁶ and her colleagues to be interviewed, much to my surprise, as I had not expected to interview these women at all, let alone to volunteer themselves to be participants. With such an overwhelming and eager response I then decided that perhaps this group would indeed be suitable to interview as we had already established good relations.

Soon after, over a meal of some "strange" New Zealand food that I had prepared for them,⁷ I explained again the purposes of my research to another woman and one of the women who had attended dinner several days earlier. These women then went away and discussed it with another friend and English student. The fourth, a nun who was also in my English class, was asked at a later stage after I had completed the other three sets of interviews whether she would like to

⁶ Unfortunately, due to the time constraints of childcare with her daughter returning for a holiday from the TCV School, this woman could not be interviewed.

⁷ As Halcolms Evaluation Laws (cited in Patton 1990: 143) explain: "A fieldworker should be able to sweep the floor, carry out the garbage, carry in the laundry, cook for large groups, go without food and sleep, read and write by candlelight, see in the dark, see in the light, co-operate without offending, suppress sarcastic remarks, smile to express both pain and hurt, experience both pain and hurt, spend time alone, respond to orders, take sides, stay neutral, take risks, avoid harm, be confused, seem confused, care terribly, become attached to nothing.... The nine to five set need not apply"

participate. Due to her willingness to educate others about the current situation in Tibet under Chinese rule, she had no hesitation in doing so.⁸

Obtaining Informed Consent for Interviews

Before the interviews commenced, the participants had the Information Sheet⁹, which was written in English, read to them by the translator. I posed several questions about the Information Sheet to ensure that they were aware of their rights with regards to the interview procedures such as stopping the tape recorder/interview whenever they so wished.

Finding a Translator/Interpreter

After I had found my respondents, I then sought out a translator. I asked many people, including the respondents themselves, if they knew of any one who might be suitable. I was specifically seeking a woman translator as I felt that this would be most appropriate because my subject matter involved a lot of gender issues, and I felt that the women would feel more comfortable talking to another woman about these issues, rather than to a man.

The woman I eventually chose came highly recommended, and had a lot of experience. Despite this, however, we experienced difficulties due to my New Zealand accent, which I had never before realised had been so difficult to comprehend, and lead to some moments of resounding laughter when we both realised what the other was trying to say. Further, I found that rather than obtaining a word-for-word translation of what the women were saying, I in fact was being given an *interpretation* of their responses.

That is to say that the translator was in fact an *interpreter*. This made it difficult for me to use direct quotes in my work. Further, the language knowledge of the interpreter was not one hundred percent perfect and phrases had to be repeated

⁸ Similarly, Aiwha Ong, in her research on Chinese women immigrants using service agencies in San Francisco, found that some of her respondents were driven by anger to tell (Ong 1995: 354).

⁹ Please refer to Appendix 1: Information Sheet.

and/or reworded for them to understand what I wanted to ask. In fact, sometimes it became so complicated that the translator asked me to turn the tape recorder off so that they could ask me more in-depth about what I wanted to ask. Further, some questions were just too difficult to ask, for example, beliefs about women, and phrases relating to them.

About half way through the interview data collection period, the original translator was not able to attend and sent her son instead, without warning. At this point, we had two options, to wait until his mother was available, or to continue, except this time with a male translator. I left the decision up to the respondents themselves, if they were happy to continue then we would, otherwise we could postpone the interviews until a later date. The women however, had no problem talking to her son, and later told me that they liked talking to someone their own age as they had found the previous translator somewhat domineering and “scary”. So we continued with the male translator, (whom I might add, also had trouble with my New Zealand accent!), for the remainder of the interviews.

The final set of interviews with the nun utilised a monk from the refugee organisation in which she lived as a translator, chosen by the respondent herself. I explained to the woman that she may prefer to use a female translator due to the subject matter but the respondent, after a discussion with the three other respondents, felt that his level of translation would be much higher than that of the previous translators we had used. In fact, she told the translator in no uncertain terms that he must do a good job of translating her account, “Make sure you do this properly”, she had warned him.

The Interview Guide

Before leaving New Zealand, I wrote up a detailed Interview Guide¹⁰ for the interviews. The Guide was divided into five sections, each with specific topics, each section representing approximately one interview. During the course of the interviews, certain topics took less time than earlier predicted, and this reduced

¹⁰ See Appendix 2: Interview Guide.

the number of interviews held with each participant down to three, (with the exception of the nun, with whom I did two interviews). While I was in Dharamsala, I also included some additional questions as I became more familiar with the women's lives, and was able to ask questions specific to their situations.

Much to my surprise, (except for the interruptions due to translation difficulties, as outlined above), the Interview Guide worked extremely well, and enabled the interviews to flow naturally in a conversational style. I found during the course of the interviews that certain topics could be explored in more depth. The flexibility of the Guide meant that I was not fixed to set questions, and that could move in and out of the themes and back to the Guide as much as I wished.

After each interview session, I compared the data actually obtained during the interview with the data I sought to collect, as outlined in the Guide, in order to prepare for the next interview, by reviewing the tape and taking notes the following day (see Patton 1990: 362). In one case, I was not able to do this, and it showed up in my interview the next day when I asked participant one about men's and women's changing roles in exile. I had a clear and strong response of "you asked me that yesterday!" Realising my error, I vaguely tried to cover by replying that, yes, I realise this, and that I was wondering if she could tell me anything more. Unfortunately, this was not her favourite topic of discussion and was followed by an acute negative response. After this, and I made sure to review my interviews the following day, and this practice worked effectively.

PRA Research in Practice or "Always be suspicious of research that goes according to plan"¹¹

My original intention to collect the PRA data was to use the women who had already participated in the interviews, as well as some additional participants who had not yet participated in the study, so that would be a group of approximately 10 women. However, what I instead used was my English class, made up of both

¹¹ -From *Halcom's Evaluation Laws* (cited in Patton 1990:143)

men and women of various ages. I had asked permission from my English class whether they would like to participate in my research by doing a class activity using PRA. I explained in English what the activities involved, that it would last approximately an hour, the same length of time as our English class, and that if they did not want to participate I could quite understand, and that way would carry on with the English lessons as usual. Like most students, the idea of 'skipping' a class was appealing, and they all agreed that they were it would make a nice change from the usual verbs and vocabulary.

So, the next day I went out on a mission in search of coloured card and coloured felt pens. I then spent the morning tracing various circular objects in my room - a bucket, a rubbish bin and a water container, - to produce enough circles for the Venn diagram exercise to be held that night. Full of energy to test out the 'wondrous' PRA, I walked down the hill that night just before 6 p.m. to find most of my class walking up the hill towards me! They were off to yet another candlelight march that they hadn't told me about the night before. Therefore, class was cancelled.

The next day, rather deflated after the night before, I went down to teach, where we had a very good turnout. This raised my spirits and with great enthusiasm (and I must add expectations!) I explained the Venn Diagram exercise, while one of the students attempted to translate my instructions into Tibetan. We began by listing all the names of the institutions (in Tibetan and English) that the students have contact with in Dharamsala and others that they are aware of.

The class was split into two groups of males and females with four men in one team, and five women in the other team. What proceeded from there is not what the books tell you will happen: the men individually grabbed the circle at random and started writing the names of the institutions on a circle each in Tibetan. The women, however, collectively discussed and wrote as the team, the names of institutions as the groups saw fit.

After a few minutes of this, I then asked the men why they had not discussed with the others on their team what they were doing - had they noticed that the

person beside them, the example, had written the name of the same institution on a different size circle? All the while, albeit with some gaps and mistranslations, my words were being translated into Tibetan and Tibetan was being translated back into English. What the men had done was of course hilarious for the women, who couldn't stop laughing at the men looking particularly sheepish on the other side of the tables!

So, take two. Everyone now realised how things needed to have group consensus to work at the same time, however, class members were arriving late for the exercises needed constant and re-explanation and re-translation. After about half an hour, my handy translator and another class member had to leave to make a phone call. All I can say is that from here onwards it was a downhill situation! Another translator was called upon but he himself could not understand what was going on. Then five minutes to seven o'clock, I suggested we break for dinner (served at 7pm) and start afresh the next day. If it did not work out next time, I said we would drop the whole idea. The class looked most relieved.

That night, after I had interviewed one of my students, I was able to explain to her, through the translator what I had been hoping to achieve with the class using the diagram exercise. The translator was then able to explain to her full directions for the exercise to give the others in the class and she seemed more than happy to assist me with the class.

Day two, second attempt. I knew the class had gone poorly the previous day, however, from this experience I had realised they needed more circles for the group, and I would not divide the class by gender as this had not worked well and segregation did not seem to differentiate greatly the data that had arisen. I arrived just before 6 p.m. and eagerly awaited the class. However, only half the class turned up: 'Was this was because they had prior engagements, or did my class go as terribly as I had feared?' I kept wondering.

Despite a smaller group, the exercise, with the help of my 'trained' translator, actually went fairly smoothly. We again began by listing all the organisations and institutions in Dharamsala that they were aware of, have contact with, or had

supported them. With the much smaller group, the exercise seemed much easier. Certain group members weren't so disruptive, and today, people weren't coming and going as they had the day before. Today, the group seemed much more cohesive and willing to participate as a whole. By the end of the hour we had a large, a beautiful looking diagram and some interesting results. (Not to mention the class who couldn't understand, despite my explanations, as to why I (or they!) Should find this information so useful and interesting!)

Ethical Considerations

In addition to the aforementioned ethical considerations required in interviewing refugees, there were additional considerations¹² that needed to be taken into account when I was interviewing:

- *My presence as an outsider/New Zealander/Westerter:* Although I had built up a relationship with the women, being interested in their lives, problems, learning about their culture and religion, I was still a foreigner. I remained a privileged outsider. I was educated, a university student, and this in itself gave me a position of status. The women commented that I was 'so lucky' to have the opportunity to study-something that I had previously taken for granted.
- *My role as a researcher/teacher:* As a teacher of English, I was given greater respect and status within the community. I was seen as not just a tourist, but also someone who was trying to help the Tibetans.

The above points demonstrate that in many ways I had privileges and status that could create barriers in an interview situation. I could not unlearn my privilege as suggested by Gyatri Spivak, who states that privileged women must: "...unlearn one's privilege: so that, not only does one become able to listen to that either constituency, but lives to speak in such a way that one will be taken seriously by

¹² In addition, I ensured that at all times I wore clothes that were suitable to the social norms of the community, both Tibetan and Indian. I always wore trousers or a skirt that came to my ankles, and a loose fitting, preferably long-sleeved shirt or top.

that other constituency" (in Ong 1995: 354). To do so would be dishonest in this situation: the women knew who I was, what my background was, and trying to reverse that would be fraudulent.

Constraints

Culture Shock

In addition to experiencing illness, low blood, and altitude sickness, as explained above, I can see in hindsight that I also experienced a mild form of culture shock. My diary entry dated 30 April 2000 shows just how miserable I was feeling:

I am so sick - I'm all blocked up and my head is still woozy. Today is the first day that I have thought 'I want to go home'. I want a warm bath and a comfy bed and to sleep all day. I had Vegemite toast and hot chocolate for breakfast and it made me feel slightly more human.

My desire for a warm bath and comfy bed, both of which were unavailable to me in my new environment, are key elements that I associate with 'home'. By eating Vegemite toast and drinking hot chocolate, two staples of my New Zealand diet, (I had brought the Vegemite over from New Zealand with me, and later requested that my mother send me over some more!), enabled me to have some home comforts, which I equated with feeling 'human'.

The constant slogan "This is India!" could be heard from the tourists, and sometimes even myself if any thing went wrong or caused delays. I knew that if I were to survive this time I would just have to 'chill out'. Many a tourist had cracked over just the slightest thing – I would just have to go with the flow, to push simply creates resistance. This worked well for me, and seemed culturally appropriate. For example, one evening I turned up to my English class but no one else had. The classroom was locked, I could have got upset, after all I was leaving in a few days and really wanted to gather the PRA data. But to stress about this would be a waste of energy. They weren't here today, but perhaps they would be tomorrow. The same thing happened when I went to interview one of my respondents; she was not there but returned the next day.

Climate

The main problem I had was adapting to the new hot and humid climate, and I found my energy levels were considerably lowered in the heat.¹³ What I thought could be done easily in New Zealand was very difficult in India. To cite an example, when I went to the library there was very little air circulating, the windows were shut and I often had to leave as I felt dizzy and faint. In the end, I gave up my library attempts and thought I'd just request the books from New Zealand.

Yet, despite my tiredness, I found that I consistently had trouble sleeping. Without fail I would wake up at 5 am each morning, something that could never be achieved at home! Even though the shops would not open until about 9am, people were up and about getting on with their day bright and early. In addition, due to the heat, Dharamsala often experienced power cuts, which created problems when I wished to use a photocopier for either my English class, or photocopying my notes to send home. I came to understand why most people preferred to use manual machinery, such as sewing machines, rather than machinery that relied upon electricity.

Timing of the interviews

The interviews could only be conducted at times convenient to the participants, this meant after work, the English classes, and dinner, so the interviews were held at 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. For both the respondents and myself, this was relatively late and we were tired, but also relaxed. Mondays were their only days off; therefore, interviews could be done during the early afternoon. This earlier time, however, did not seem to make any difference to the interviews.

¹³ When I left Delhi, the temperature was 46c degrees!

Language

Surprisingly, language did not prove too much of a barrier to me, and was a lot less than I expected before I arrived. Many Tibetans learn English either in Tibet or when they arrive in India. Despite their often basic knowledge of the English language, I was able to make myself understood by facial expressions and expressive body language if verbal communication failed. I did not once refer to my Tibetan phrase book for language assistance when meeting people in the public environment. Only in the private sphere, when trying to have a personal in-depth conversation with friends, was a phrase book or dictionary used in order to get an 'exact' translation of a word or phrase.

Conclusions

All these constraints have given me the opportunity to understand the experience of living in Dharamsala in more depth. I have gained a better understanding of the difficulties associated with moving to a completely new climate and environment. However, unlike my respondents, I was in the privileged position of being able to leave whenever I wanted. Moreover, I have the privilege of being able to make choices in my life as to where I will go and when. Unlike myself, the women I interviewed do not. The confusions that I found in the new environment are only a fraction of what they faced upon arrival and even now, as they continue to adapt to the "strange" environment of India. Further, the constraints have given the important insights into the functioning of both institutions such as the Tibetan Welfare Office, and the difficulties of living in the new environment, so totally foreign to my own. Without these, I would have no personal experience and less of an understanding of their problems.

As previously stated, my initial intention was to use oral history interviews. However, due to the constraints experienced with translation, I found that the interviews tended more towards in-depth interviews than an oral history of the women's lives. What I derived from this observation is a realisation that the translation level required for oral history interviews would need to be at a very high level, and this was just not available at the time. The method of interviewing

that was used in the field adapted into more of an in-depth style of interviewing. I felt that this in no way affected the data collection process. Instead, due to the flexible nature of qualitative research, I was able to confidently develop the project and remain true to the project goals. Further, I felt that the in-depth interviews enabled a more interactive and relaxed conversational style between myself, (the researcher), and the participants, than perhaps oral history interviews would have allowed. Secondly, after my experience of using both a male and a female translator for interviews, I did not perceive a male translator would negatively affect the interview process as many feminist researchers had suggested.¹⁴

Discussion of Issues Raised from the Fieldwork Process

Once upon a time, the Lone Ethnographer rode off into the sunset in search of "his native." After undergoing a series of trials, he encountered the object of his quest in a distant land. There, he underwent his rite of passage by enduring the ultimate ordeal of "fieldwork." After collecting "the data," the Lone Ethnographer returned home and wrote a "true" account of "the culture" (Renato Rosaldo 1993: 30).

Modesty or Objectification of Experiences?

As a researcher, I refused to become a "...masculinized hero who confronts and makes sense of the subject's life situation" (Denzin 1994: 507). At the same time, however, I found that I became modest about my "adventures." As far as I'm concerned, all I had to do was hop on the plane or catch the right buses, take a couple of taxis, and as long as I didn't get that wrong there was no real issue with it at all.

Yet, by being modest, I realise that I have objectified the entire travel process. I have suppressed the memories of hesitation and my primary thought of "what am I doing here?" when I arrived in Dharamsala, (after a 14-hour overnight bus ride from Delhi to 'somewhere at the base of the Himalayas'). I have ignored the jet lag, the heat, the noise, the people, the smells, not only of my travel

¹⁴ See Reinharz, S. 1992. Feminist Methods in Social Research, New York, Oxford University Press.

destination, but also of the places before I got there, namely New Zealand, Singapore and Delhi, and other places I had travelled to years before including Tahiti, France, London, Fiji. I must remember that if I had not been to these places, my contextual understanding of travel would have been completely different. The notion of travel was not foreign to me, I felt confident about the process and I looked forward to the experience. Had I not had this sense of assurance by my experiences of travel, I'm sure my journey, and therefore, the research experience, would have been viewed quite differently.

“What are you researching?’ Topic Disclosure

In New Zealand I had said to those who asked about my research that I was looking at Tibetan women refugees in Dharamsala, India. When I arrived in Delhi however and gave the same response to the staff at the hotel I was staying at, I found they had another reaction: "What about the Indians there? Will you be studying them too?"

By this stage, the explanation of my research had changed to "I'm looking at women living in Dharamsala." However, for many men, this response still posed a problem, "What about their husbands?" I was asked. So finally, by the time I left Delhi my research involved: "looking at communities in Dharamsala." This bland, vague statement involved enough ambiguity to keep those who asked happy. However, this raised the moral question for me as a researcher: Should I be blatantly honest about the group of people I wish to look at, upholding the integrity of my research topic and offend those who inquired? Or, would the ambiguous nature of the topic of proposed, while it satisfied enquiries, be dishonest about the research? I decided that I would rather keep people happy as I was a guest in the country and so took the latter option of not disturbing the peace.

When I arrived in Dharamsala however, the situation was again altered. On my first night here, rather jet lagged and tired, I went out late for a meal. The first cafe I found was run by an Indian man who later told me he acted as a sort of social worker for the Indian community. We started talking and his response to

my topic (in which I had explained my interest in Tibetan women,) was, "I could tell you something about Tibetan women." I could tell from his sarcastic tone that this was obviously not a topic dear to his heart! Later, I found that Tibetan men could become indignant about their absence in the project. Several offered themselves to be interviewed and seemed most put out that they were not needed. 'What did women have to say that they did not?' they wondered.

The process of topic disclosure brought about two interesting points in my research. First, was that of Indian and Tibetan relations. Indians are often annoyed that Tibetans receive funding from the government because they are classed as refugees, while many Indians often remain in greater poverty than Tibetans, even though they are indigenous to India. Second, was the patriarchal views expressed by Tibetan men, and demonstrated that patriarchy was in fact alive and well within Tibetan society, despite what some may say (see Alam 2000).

Interviews: Why Do People Tell Us Things?

Jones (1998: 50) suggests that in trying to understand what it might mean for a respondent to talk in an interview we must first ask ourselves what are the respondent's motivations for taking part in the study, and what the interview may represent for them:

Obviously it is wrong to forget that people do have agency, they may have their own strong agendas about being interviewed. It may be that people have specific points, grievances that they want to get across. It may be that they are seeking validation, that they have not had the opportunity to share certain things with others and they very much want to do this (Jones 1998: 50).

Other reasons for taking part in the study may include loneliness and wanting to help the interviewer, (what Jones terms as being a 'nice' person (Jones 1998)). Jones (1998: 51) states that these latter two groups of the lonely and the helpful, may become more vulnerable in an interview and more care should be taken with these groups:

They may be in less control if they do not have specific information they want to get across. Perhaps they might find themselves exposing themselves more than may feel comfortable with (Jones 1998: 51).

With my research, I made a special effort to explain what the study involved, what I was intending to do with the data, and what role the women would be playing. During the interview stage, even though friendships were established with the women, I believe that all of the women chose to take part in the study primarily to tell their stories to others outside India; they wanted their voice to be heard.

Interviews: The Impact on the Interviewer

I thoroughly enjoyed interviewing the respondents. Talking to people seemed such a natural process, for as Tonkin (1992: 3) states, orality is "...the basic human mode of communication." However, although I was sensitive to the fact that my questions could affect the respondents, as I was discussing issues that could be emotionally upsetting for them, and the need for interviewers to be aware of the effects of interviewing upon themselves, I didn't realise how deeply the interviews could also affect myself as a researcher, nor to what extent this could occur.

Another researcher who had a similar experience was Jones (1998). He faced difficulties in an interview he had with an elderly woman discussing her childlessness for the first time in her life to the researcher: "I certainly found this interview quite disturbing. During the interview I felt distinctly uncomfortable, I thought about turning off the tape recorder" (Jones 1998: 50).

I myself did in fact turn off the tape recorder. I was nearing the end of my second interview with Ani, the nun, and her explanations of her experiences were becoming quite graphic. She, herself, seemed content to continue. I, on the other hand, found the information she was giving particularly disturbing. I had taken several pauses earlier on to ensure that she was happy to carry on (and to take a break myself), but in the end I had to stop the interview. I just found it too difficult to continue.

After the interview, I went for a big long walk through the noisy, crowded streets. I just wanted to escape but as it was dark I couldn't walk up into the hills. I questioned whether I was cut out for this work, after all, 'aren't researchers supposed to remain objective, analytical and detached at all times?' I thought. Although some may question whether I, as a researcher, could represent Ani as I had stopped the interview, it must be realised that the decision-making process involved in stopping the interviewing was not arbitrary.

Within the context of the interview itself, there were certain factors taken into consideration: firstly, I asked myself 'If I were finding the interview distressing, how was the respondent coping?' While she appeared happy to continue, I was aware of other Tibetan exiles that had had similar experiences to Ani who told me that they didn't like talking about their experiences as they often had headaches afterwards. Although Ani assured me that this wouldn't occur (I had discussed this issue with her before arranging the interviews), I didn't want to take the risk of 'harming the respondent'. Secondly, I realised that I had already collected enough data for the study. To continue the discussion into what could be a sensitive area would simply be indulgent on the part of the interviewer. Morally, I was not prepared to collect data that may harm the respondent just for the sake of a few more minutes of tape.

It wasn't until I returned to New Zealand that I started questioning the issue of the impact of interviewing on the researcher. In looking at the issue of the affects of interviewing on the researcher, Jones (1998: 54) states that distress that he experienced during the interviews "...can be regarded as significant communication", and that feelings, especially distressing feelings:

...can lead us to the heart of social and political problems that need to be examined. It seems to me that if we are obtaining information from interviews that have been painful for interviewees to talk to us about, and have been painful for us to listen to, then we do have a duty to look hard at the material and perhaps do something constructive with it. If we are doing interviews that are distressing and then not doing anything with the material, then perhaps we should be questioning what we're doing (Jones 1998: 55).

Jones (1998: 54) explains how he faced difficult experiences in completing oral history interviews with families who had relatives living with them who experienced mental health problems:

It was very tiring and upsetting to do those distressing interviews. Perhaps that was also my own sense of guilt, to do things that drew me to this kind of research in the first place - wanting to help people, which I felt in this context I could not.

To overcome this and reconcile some of his feelings, Jones did the best that he could to represent the feelings of those interviewed. He came to feel that he 'owed' his respondents: "I owed them that I should help others understand their point of view, and some of the very mixed and difficult feelings that they have to manage." In his particular case, this involved trying to help mental health professionals to better understand the personal conflicts in families (Jones 1998: 54). Similarly, I have told others about the respondents and their experiences so that they too may gain a better understanding of the respondents lives and needs. Further, I hope that future publications of related research will competently represent the feelings and needs of the respondents.

The Process of Data Analysis

Making it all come together...is one of the most difficult things of all...Quite apart from actually achieving it, it is hard to inject the right mix of (a) *faith* that it can and will be achieved; (b) recognition that it has to be *worked* at, and isn't based on romantic inspiration; (c) that it isn't the solution to a puzzle, or math problem, but has to be *created*; (d) that you can't pack *everything* into one version, and that any one project could yield several different ways of bringing it together (Atkinson cited in Loftland & Loftland 1995: 181).

Developing Analysis

Judith Meloy, in her book, Writing the Qualitative Dissertation, describes how one never knows how qualitative research will look until one gets to the end:

Those of us who have completed at least one major research project using qualitative methodologies have learned that it is only AT THE END of the experience that we begin to see the whole we constructed (1994: 1).

I have come from a sociological background where there are often set ideas about how the research should be constructed: a researcher has relatively general expectations about what they will find in the field, and just to prove this point, ideally writes a complete literature review before setting off into the field to administer questionnaires. When they return, the researcher then writes up what they found and/or why they couldn't find that they were expecting. In the positivist sense, other researchers could replicate the methodology.

However, this study has, as an alternative, developed over the course of the fieldwork, evolving from the environment and the data collected. While this is not necessarily the 'orthodox' method of research, it has been most appropriate to this particular study. The flexibility of the qualitative approach and the methods involved in the study enabled the project to adapt to the needs experienced in the field - this is what I believe makes qualitative methodologies and methods so suitable to Development Studies research, where one does not necessarily know what one will find in the field.

I was aware that interview data are never "raw" but both situated and textual (Mishler in Silverman 1993: 199). As Silverman (1993: 199) explains, researchers who ignore this fact, and simply look for the 'authentic' experience end up having communalities with either media interviewers, "(whose perennial question is 'How do you/does it feel?')" or as tourists, "(who, in their search for the 'authentic' or 'different' invariably end up with more of the same)." Researchers, therefore, must move beyond curiosity to systematic analysis (Silverman 1993).

Strategies of Analysis

I began by drawing 'mind-maps' of the ideas and concepts that I wanted to explore, and ideas that were found in the literature, before I left New Zealand for fieldwork in India. These included maps about oral history (definitions, history/tradition, Tibetan culture and story telling traditions, and refugees and their stories); Tibetan women (women's changing roles, levels of political

awareness, involvement in organisations/community affairs, types of labour performed, and levels of education); refugees (definitions, history, gender, exile, key themes); Tibetan refugees (history, causes, religion, and changes in society); and identity (women's roles, exile, and key themes).

When I was doing fieldwork I was able to challenge some of the previous notions from the literature, and to add new ideas that were emerging from the data. I also drew further maps from the data obtained, all of which illustrated the key themes and links within the data. The beauty of this process for the fieldworker is of course the fact that you don't have to carry around a huge pile of notes. I was able to get all of my ideas down without the bother of having to lug round stacks of paper. Further, during the interviews I was able to quickly draw diagrams of the linkages between key ideas without interruption to the interview process.

Upon returning to New Zealand, by mapping further literature searches in similar ways, I was able to see not only the links, but also the gaps in the literature when I compared and analysed the maps. Miles and Huberman (cited in Loftland & Loftland 1995: 197) use the term "diagramming" to explain this process which they describe as an excellent way of unravelling the links and connections between the ideas, themes and concepts, and defining key themes and expanding on interrelationships of ideas. This succinct way of visually representing my thoughts, although not included in the final copy, enabled the systematic presentation of information in a clear visual format.

To give structure to the analysis, I decided to use the three phases of the refugee experience suggested by Allen and Hiller (1985) as a framework to the final analysis. In their examination of the social development and organisation of refugee migration in the pre-flight period, Allen and Hiller (1985) suggest that the refugee experience can be described in three phases: pre-flight, flight and post-flight. Within this framework, I discuss the respondents' experiences within in each phase of the refugee experience, and use the data to critique the various theories and concepts of refugees in current academic thought.

Chapter Four: Discussion

Introduction

The following discussion will explore refugee concepts and ideas in the context of the contemporary Tibetan refugee situation. The chapter will begin with an examination of the phases of Tibetan refugee flows after the 1951 Chinese invasion. Following this, the three phases of the refugee experience¹, 'pre-flight', 'flight' and 'post flight', will be utilised as a framework for analysis in which the respondents' experiences will be interwoven. This framework sets the context for further discussion and analysis later in the chapter.

Tibetan Refugee Migrations

Phase One: Tibetans Who Left Before the 1951 Chinese Invasion

Immediately after the Chinese army arrived in Lhasa in 1951, Tibetans began to leave in small numbers. The migrants tended to be wealthier and aristocratic Tibetan citizens (Nowak 1984: 10) weary of future threats to their economic standing and material possessions (Woodcock 1970: 410). A number of noble families, along with their portable possessions, journeyed to Calcutta, where some still live, while some of the more affluent merchants of Lhasa transferred their business activities to the Darjeeling-Kalimpong region (Woodcock 1970: 410). These initial migrants, who departed prior to the Uprising in 1959, between 1951-59, numbered few, and passed almost unnoticed, as they did not require assistance (Woodcock 1970: 410).

Using Kunz's (1973; 1981) typology of refugees, however, members of these preliminary flights out of Tibet could be classed not as migrants, but as 'anticipatory' refugees; those who sensed danger at an early stage and left in anticipation of crises to come. The advantage in leaving in these earlier years, of

¹ The three phases of the refugee experience used are those suggested by Allen and Hiller (1985) in their examination of the social development and organisation of refugee migration in the pre-flight period.

course, is that escape could be achieved in an orderly fashion before the crisis erupted, something impossible in the midst of a crisis (Kunz 1973; 1981; Stein 1981). Like other anticipatory refugees who are generally educated, wealthy and perceptive (Stein 1981), the Tibetans, pushed by the perceived or actual changes, left as soon as they could find a country to permit their entry. What is interesting about anticipatory refugees, and can be seen clearly in the example of the first Tibetan asylum seekers, is that they often resemble voluntary migrants: having planned preparations for a new life, and bringing resources with them, the entire family migrates. The difference between voluntary migrants and anticipatory refugees, however, is that there is not necessarily a preferred destination for refugees. The anticipatory refugee wants to leave and will do so as soon as they can find a country that will allow them to enter (Stein 1981: 322). In the case of the Tibetan refugees, who not only had significant religious connections with the country in which Buddhism was founded, but also often had trading contacts in the Darjeeling-Kalimpong region, India was the obvious destination for resettlement.

Phase Two: Tibetans Who Left After the Dalai Lama's Escape

From the mid-1950s, the Chinese strictly controlled Tibetan life; the state took control of the assets of noble families, dismantled the economically powerful monasteries and communised farmers and nomads (Alling 1998: 7). Tibetan resentment of the Chinese political crusades and socio-economic alterations to daily life eventually culminated in the Tibetan Uprising of 1959, and the clandestine flight of the Dalai Lama to India.

After the Dalai Lama fled, approximately 80,000-100,000² Tibetans followed, fleeing Tibet. As people began to understand their altered circumstances and what life was like under Chinese rule, families began to seek asylum in large numbers (Dharma Publishing 1992: 53). Made up of all classes of Tibetans from all walks of life (Nowak 1984: 24; Woodcock 1970: 14), these asylum seekers feared religious persecution; collectivisation of their herds, especially the nomads

² This figure does not represent those who did not survive the long arduous flight over the Himalayas on foot.

along the frontier areas of Ladakh and Nepal; and many, such as the Khampas, fled because had been defeated against the Chinese army (Woodcock 1970: 410). Principally, the farming families fled for fear of being moved to another part of Tibet by the Chinese, the broken promises of the Chinese, and by the meagre rations on which they could barely survive (Richardson 1984: 239). In addition, among the first to flee were the monks from the Lhasa area who were aware of the changes, and who were able to organise themselves to depart quickly (Dharma Publishing 1992: 53).

These refugees shared a common experience of threats to their lives, livelihood and culture of such a magnitude that, according to Ström (1985: 4), they were left with no other option but to flee. Unlike the first wave of anticipatory refugees, these people did not flee to save material wealth "...as most had to leave everything behind" (Ström 1985: 4). Again using Kunz's (1973; 1981) typology, these refugees would be classed as 'acute', those refugees who left mid-crises. Their flight was initiated by "an overwhelming push" of factors within the country (Stein 1981: 322) including conflict, political crisis, and government policy, which emphasised the necessity of immediate flight.

After the peak years of refugee flight from 1959-1961, the number of refugees declined. The primary cause in this drop Nowak (1984: 9-10) suggests, is the tightening of borders by the Chinese, with support from Nepalese border guards. Following this period, Tibet remained closed off from the rest of the world for over thirty years.

Assistance to the Tibetan Refugees in India³

Initially, state authorities placed the Tibetans asylum seekers in temporary transit camps in the border areas of Missamari in Assam and Buxa in West Bengal (UNHCR 2000b: 63). The camp at Buxa (Duar) near the border of Bhutan was a former British prisoner of war camp where Mahatma Gandhi had once been

³ For an in-depth investigation of the early years of the assistance to Tibetan refugees see: Woodcock, G. 1970. "Tibetan Refugees in a Decade of Exile". Pacific Affairs 43: 410-420.

imprisoned. The site consisted of 30 concrete barracks, surrounded by a barbed wire fence. However, as the site was inhospitable and ill-suited to housing refugees, it was no longer used after the summer of 1959. The camp at Missamari consisted of 300 bamboo barracks constructed in the spring of 1959 as emergency shelters. Each was home to at least 30-40 refugees, and at times, up to 100 people sheltered in a single barrack (Dharma Publishing 1992: 54). At these camps 'non-official Indians' set up an unofficial Central Relief Committee to oversee their affairs, which included the provision of additional food distribution, medicines, clothing and other necessities (Richardson 1984: 236). Although the committee received some assistance from overseas, international organisations such as the UNHCR did not become involved at this stage (UNHCR 2000b: 63).

The Indian government offered the refugees a temporary option of road building in Jammu, Kulu and Manali, in northern India. Many refugees transferred from the camps to mountainous road construction sites in the Himalayan region of northern India, where groups of 200 or even 300 refugees were formed for the task (Pema 1997: 73). The dangerous and strenuous tasks involved in the carrying and breaking up of rocks were difficult for the refugees who were weak and dispirited from the arduous flight from Tibet, and resulted in many fatalities on the high mountain passes (Dharma Publishing 1992: 56). The makeshift camps of the road-workers were so unhealthy that children had to be sent to residential schools or children's homes (Woodcock 1970: 416), which resulted in further separations for the refugees. For those who could not send their children to schools, the difficult life they faced, constantly on the move, with both parents working very long days, and with minimal supervision for small children, additionally had damaging effects on family structures (Dharma Publishing 1992: 56).

From 1959 to near the end of 1962, major international aid organisations such as CARE, Red Cross, YMCA, Friends, and Catholic Relief assisted the refugees in India. By 1960, agencies specifically devoted to assisting the Tibetans emerged, these included Schweizer, Tibethilfe, the Tibet Society of Great Britain, and the Tibetan Refugee Aid Society of Canada, the American Emergency Committee

for Tibetan Refugees, and similar agencies in Australia, New Zealand and Scandinavia (Woodcock 1970: 412). Despite these efforts, however, assistance to the refugees between 1959 and 1964 remained "...haphazard and dominated by a sense of emergency" (Woodcock 1970: 415). Additionally, rather conspicuous, was the complete absence of aid from organisations within Buddhist countries (Woodcock 1970: 412).

By 1959, the Indian government made more permanent settlement plans for Tibetans to live in India. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru generously offered Dharamsala⁴ as a place of refuge for the Dalai Lama and his people, and on 24 October 1960, the Dalai Lama moved to the North-Western hill station and established the Tibetan Government in Exile. The region is both geographically and culturally appropriate for the Tibetans with its mountainous setting, cool climate and view of the Himalayas,⁵ and features "...in the lineage of the teachers of the Tibetan saint and poet Milarepa" (Von Furer-Haimendorf 1989: 59). Tibetans recall that even at this stage they believed the asylum was temporary, and that it would only be a matter of weeks before they would return to Tibet (de Voe 1987: 55).

Two years later in 1962, the Sino-Indian border war marked a defining point for Indian authorities. They acknowledged that the Tibetans would not be returning to Tibet in the near future, and for the first time gradually sought international assistance to deal with the increasing numbers of Tibetan refugees (UNHCR 1999). From 1964, the UNHCR began providing assistance to the refugees in India, although a formal presence was not established in New Delhi until 1969. Official international assistance has been limited however, as governments and international organisations have been hesitant in providing assistance to the Tibetans in case the Chinese authorities see such actions as interference in China's domestic affairs (UNHCR 2000b: 63).

⁴ See Figure 3: Map of McLeod Ganj, pp. 159.

⁵ See Plate I: Mountain View from McLeod Ganj, and Plate ii: View of McLeod Ganj, pp. 160.

Since the 1960s most international assistance for the Tibetan refugees has been channelled through the Tibet Bureau of the Dalai Lama (UNHCR 2000b: 63), enabling Tibetan control and decision-making in the distribution of aid and allocation of funds. Commencing in 1962, Tibetan refugee support has included assistance with the establishment of agricultural settlements and vocational training. State governments in India have allocated land and provided assistance towards housing construction, and have also assisted with the establishment of water supplies, civic amenities, handicraft centres and schools (UNHCR 2000b: 63).⁶

The Contemporary Tibetan Refugee Situation

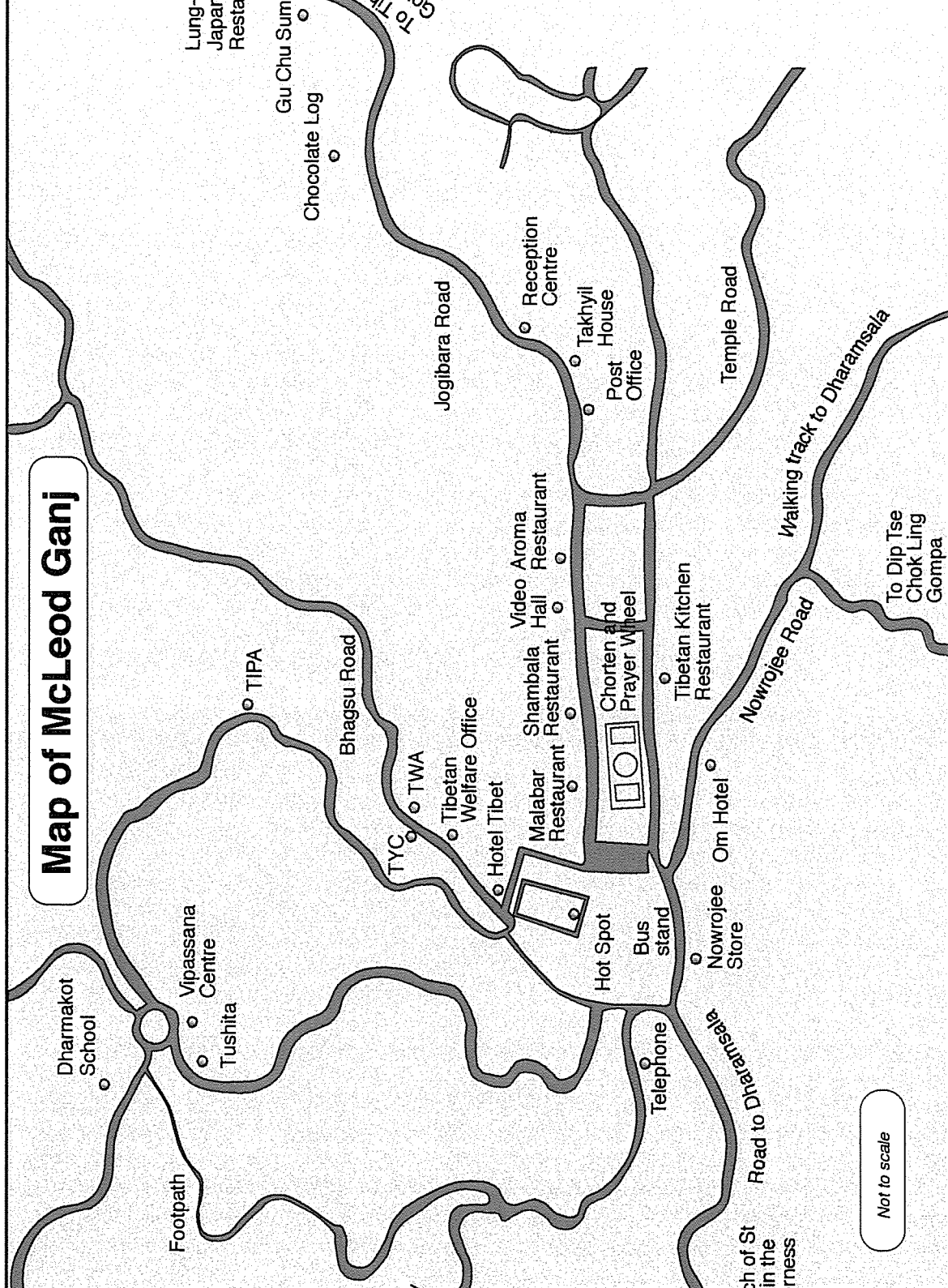
To the observer, it appears that both Tibetan and Indian officials believed that the Tibetan refugee situation would be temporary, and repatriation would be a near possibility (de Voe 1981: 89). Even today, however, more than 40 years after the Tibetan Uprising in 1959, a continuous flow of refugees from Tibet is still evident. What is interesting about the current Tibetan refugee situation is that Tibetans, are leaving Tibet in what could be termed a “post-crises period” (Hansen 1981).

Since the 1990s, the number of Tibetans crossing international borders and heading for India and other international locations has increased. Unlike those who fled decades ago and are officially recognised as refugees, the new arrivals often live in India illegally and invisibly. More than half of the new refugees are Buddhist monks and nuns who have been expelled from monasteries or nunneries (Refugees Daily 15 Dec 2000).

According to Tibetan officials in India, more than 35,000 Tibetans have arrived since 1990, and about 2,900 arrived in 2000 (Refugees Daily 15 Dec 2000). On average 2,400 Tibetans arrive in India via Nepal each year. The Indian authorities hold the official position that the Tibetans are “on pilgrimage” and refoulement is not mentioned (UNHCR 1999).

⁶ See Figure 4: Map of Tibetan Settlements in India, pp. 161.

Map of McLeod Ganj



Not to scale





Plate i: Mountain View from McLeod Ganj with the snow-capped Himalayas in the background.



Plate ii: View of McLeod Ganj showing the terracing used for cultivation.

Tibetan Settlements in India



(Adapted from Ahmad 1995: 9)

The Three Stages of the Refugee Experience: A Discussion of the Respondents' Experiences

Pre-Flight

Forced migrants do not take to flight without provocation; unless there is a situation of "acute social unrest" taking place, it is highly improbable that people will flee (Allen & Hiller 1985: 441). In other words, forced migrants require a 'push' (or 'pushes') from within their country of origin great enough to necessitate escaping one's homeland. Flight, however, contrary to media images of forced migration, does not generally occur simply as 'fright-flight' response to intense social unrest. Instead, Allen and Hiller (1985) argue, the flight response evolves in the period prior to migration, during which three separate processes occur: 'the social development of the refugee situation', 'the social development of flight perspective', and 'the development of a social organisation for flight'. It is during these three stages that the prospective migrant determines that flight is the most appropriate course of action, in fact, the *only* course of action that should be undertaken.

The first of these processes, the 'social development of a refugee situation' involves the individual's evaluation of the shifting social situation and conditions in which they presently find themselves, and how these subjectively perceived changes impact on their life to such an extent that the individual no longer considers them bearable. In the words of Allen and Hiller (1985: 441) this initial process entails:

...a mix of structural factors, their objective impact on people, and the subjective negative assessment of the changing conditions by the persons so affected. The key idea is that of disruption of normal patterns, reversal of expectations, or, in a word, change, leads to the growing conviction of intolerable conditions.

Therefore, for a 'refugee situation' to develop, a person must experience a sense of dissatisfaction or distress that emerges in the midst of stressful circumstances (Allen & Hiller 1985: 441).

Particularly pertinent to this first process is the situation of Ani, who, as an ex-political prisoner, found herself repeatedly harassed by the police and other state authorities after she was released from prison. While living with her parents, the police would visit her parent's home if there had been political protests such as demonstrations, letters sent, or a bomb explosion in Lhasa, asking if she had participated and to ask her whereabouts that day. (Ani explained that for ex-political prisoners and demonstrators, this is a common recurrence in Tibet). The disruption that these 'visits' placed on her life initiated the process of self-realisation that she needed to escape from Tibet, and instigated a growing awareness of her 'refugee situation'.

Lhamo, on the other hand, went to Lhasa in search of work after she had run away from her arranged marriage at the age of 15. Unable to find work in Lhasa, she returned to relatives in her village. Her sense of discontent grew, as she realised she was unable to return to her father's house because she was a "married woman", and was unable to find employment in Lhasa because of her lack of education and the fact that she "...was Tibetan." For Lhamo, flight, as she saw it, became the only option available to her.

Deyang and Sonam, however, did not experience any disruptions in their normal patterns from changing conditions. Instead, their 'refugee situation', developed out of the discontent they were facing in the midst of the stressful conditions they experienced in their daily lives in Tibet, such as high taxes imposed on agricultural production, lack of options available to the women, poverty, and their inability to access education.

The second process in the pre-flight stage is the 'social development of a flight perspective'. This is the developmental stage between the previous 'refugee situation' and refugee 'flight', "...an intermediate condition in heightening and intensifying the identification of flight as the appropriate, feasible, and logical course of action" (Allen & Hiller 1985: 443). This perspective is gained predominantly through social interaction. Feelings of despondency and social unrest play a part in the active consideration on the part of the individual, and the acts of relocation and flight are "...modelled by others or considered jointly with

others” (Allen & Hiller 1985: 443). Deyang, for example, who envisaged moving to India as an option and means by which she could gain a good education and meet His Holiness the Dalai Lama, first raised the possibility of leaving Tibet with her parents. Deyang had a relative who had recently returned from India, and in the initial discussions held with her parents, the family considered her relative’s experiences in great detail in order to weigh up whether flight would be the best option for Deyang.

The ‘social development of a flight perspective’ can be seen acutely in the case of Ani. On the 24th June 1998, there was a bomb explosion in Lhasa. The police again visited her house, and then took her to the police station for questioning. After that, they came every day, often at night to ask her about activities. The pattern of interrogation was never the same; sometimes they questioned her at her parent’s home, sometimes at the police station, and sometimes at the security office, each time the interrogations involved different members of the police. Mostly they cross-examined where she and her parents had been on that day and when they had left home.

This constant harassment by the authorities heightened and intensified her need of flight. Before this period, she had been in a state of limbo, not able to work, study or participate freely as a nun, due to the actions of the authorities, and had mixed emotions about her situation. However, when the visits became a daily occurrence affecting not only her, but also her parents, Ani became conscious of the need to seek safety, not only for herself, but also for her family. For Ani, the extent of her victimisation resulted in escape becoming what Allen and Hiller (1985: 444) term “a paradoxical ‘unavoidable possibility’”. In others words, she wasn’t left with any option save escape.

Even though the notion of rationality in refugee behaviour may seem antithetical to our understanding of refugee flight, as conventional conceptions of refugee actions emphasise the fear and panic involved in refugee migrations, Allen and Hiller (1985: 444) challenge these conceptions to suggest that since there is a necessity to overcome intervening obstacles in flight (as demonstrated by Lee (1969)), “...some type of rational action that goes beyond the single decision to

leave must be involved.” Therefore, the third process in the pre-flight phase is the ‘social organisation for flight’, the organisational stage prior to flight which involves the coordination of the passage including transport, connections, plans, and strategies (Allen & Hiller 1985).

All of the respondents used friends or family networks through which they made contact with a guide to help them make the journey. After Deyang’s parents had made their assessment of the situation, they decided that it would be a good idea for her to travel to India, and much to her surprise, (and somewhat horror), her parents made her leave. Deyang, however, although the subject of the flight activity, played a minor role in the pre-flight ‘organisational stage’ as her parents organised her flight and sought out a guide (a Tibetan who lived in Nepal) for the journey for her. The guide charged her parents 2000 Yuan (approximately 8000 rupees, or NZ\$400).

In the case of Ani, it was one of her close friends, a nun from Kham, who found and made the initial contact with the guide (who was also from Kham). In addition, some of Ani’s very close friends helped her with money for the journey. Her friend told the guide about her difficult situation and he gave her a discount because of her circumstances. (She only paid 300 Yuan while others in the group paid 700 Yuan). Sonam, on the other hand, already knew her guide who was also from Kham. When Sonam reached Lhasa, she joined her guide, paying her approximately 800 Yuan (about 3200 rupees, the equivalent of about NZ\$160) for the journey.

Once the decision to leave has been made, Allen and Hiller (1985: 446) assert that prospective migrants put in place “mechanisms of dissociation” which take the form of “taking up roots”. These procedures involve considered and conscious actions such as deciding to whom farewells should be made. A major concern at this stage is ensuring that authorities or informers are not made aware of the impending flight (Allen & Hiller 1985: 447). Ani explained how she and her family had to be careful even of her “own” [Tibetan] people because there were many spies in the community. In such circumstances, it is not surprising that she left covertly. Ani said she was scared of being captured by the

Chinese as she had already been in prison for 3 years, and she worried what would happen to her if she were recaptured. In fact, she was so concerned about alerting the authorities to her disappearance, that she did not even tell her parents that she was leaving.

Indeed, all the respondents left under a shadow of secrecy for fear of the authorities finding out, and facing imprisonment. Lhamo never told anyone about taking the trip, even though she wanted to. She explained that to tell someone would be very dangerous, as the Chinese would know along on the way, as she explained: "Tibetan people may tell the bad Tibetan people such as Chinese spies who get money from the Chinese."

Flight

Flight or "transit" is the intermediary component of migration (Van Hear 1998: 41). This stage involves physical movement from the home country to the (intended) destination. The journey is often extensive, demanding and perilous. The respondents each travelled hundreds of miles, many of them by foot. Deyang, for instance, along with her guide, travelled from Lhasa by bus to Shigatse. From there, she then walked for 15 days to Dum, at the border of Tibet. Lhamo left Lhasa by herself on pilgrimage to Shigatse to visit the temple. It was there that she met her guide and started her flight from Tibet with her cousin. The group, made up of 12 people, set out in June when there was no snow. She never met any Chinese guards along the way, as most of the Chinese are concentrated in Lhasa. She journeyed from Shigatse to Tingme to Dur and then on to Nepal via Mt. Kailash, a pilgrim site in Tibet. From her home to Nepal, it took her about two months to make the journey: twelve days by car, and the rest by foot.

Ani's journey also took two months; she left Lhasa and walked to Shigatse, Sakya, Tingri, and Sulukim and then on to Nepal, walking for 22 days with the guide. Sonam travelled from Kham by car to Lhasa, (which took about three days), where she stayed for one month on pilgrimage before continuing on with the rest of the journey.

Without recognised passports or travel documents, the women hid from authorities to avoid detection. The women used a variety of techniques to avoid being caught, including travelling at night. Lhamo stated that it was very difficult not knowing the way, especially when they had to travel at night without a torch. What made this even more difficult was that her guide “wasn't very good” and didn't know the way that well.

Ani, for example, changed out of her robes and instead wore trousers and a coat, both to avoid the cold on the journey and to reduce the chances that “enemies” would see her and she would be captured. Sonam’s guide took extra precautions by insisting she made the journey during the winter. The guide said that this would be a good time to go because it would be easy for them to escape Tibet. According to the guide, there would be no police waiting, as the snowy winter months are too cold for the Chinese, and this meant there would not be anyone to stop the group crossing the border; therefore, they would reach India very quickly.

Clandestine border crossing was a feature of all the women’s flight experiences. For instance, when Deyang’s group reached the large bridge at Dum, which marks the border between Tibet and Nepal, they all dressed in Nepali clothes they had hired so that they did not stand out as Tibetans. At the same time as many small Nepali children crossed the bridge, Deyang wearing the Nepali clothes, crossed the bridge pretending to be a Nepali child so that the border guards didn't know what nationality she was. Deyang didn't have any problems at the border, as her guide had taught her some Nepali phrases. She knew just enough to get her across the border. (They took about 2 hours to learn). The guard asked, “Where you going?” To which she was able to reply, “I am going home.” However, the Chinese captured Deyang’s first guide at the Nepalese border, taking the guide’s belongings, including Deyang’s bag that she was unable to carry as she was pretending to be a Nepalese schoolgirl.

Ani also stated that her group didn’t have any problems crossing the border at Nepal, as the guide took them through the border at midnight so the guards couldn’t see them enter. After arriving in Nepal, however, the Nepalese police

took Ani's group off the street and to a police station. The police kept them in the police cells for two days. Ani said the police treated them fairly well because there were children in the group, and they even shared some sweets with the children. Then the police took them to the refugee centre, a camp near Kathmandu. She states that at the time she came over, in 1998, the police were "not so bad."

Lhamo, on the other hand, who left earlier in 1995, had quite a different experience. The Nepalese border guards kept her in jail for five days. The guards stole her clothes, watch and anything else of value. While she was fortunate that the guards left the girls in her group alone, the guards beat the boys and men in her group while they were in prison. Five days later they took her to the Kathmandu refugee reception centre.

Not surprisingly, the long journey through the Himalayas proved extremely demanding for all the respondents. A major difficulty experienced by all the women during the journey was the shortage of food and water. For example, Lhamo's group had no food, only water for seven days. Conversely, Deyang's group, carried tsampa from Tibet, and some places they reached had no water. Deyang explained that the problem is that you need water to make tsampa, if you don't have water there is no use for tsampa - it is pretty dry! Ani also packed some tsampa and some yak butter for the journey and her guide also carried tsampa, which they shared around. By the time they reached Nepal, her group had been without food for two days. In desperation, she sold her blanket to a Nepalese man in exchange for two biscuits.

The trek also created major physical difficulties for the women. Deyang's group, for instance, made up of mostly children, didn't have any good shoes. With only canvas shoes, the group experienced blisters and many foot injuries. Lhamo, on the other hand, while she didn't have any blisters, had swollen feet and legs and couldn't walk the day before she arrived in Nepal, and had to be carried for a day by other members in her group. Some of the other members of her group also became ill. When she reached Nepal, she had to go to hospital for 15 days. Ani also had foot problems from the trip. Her feet had wounds from the journey and

she went through two pairs of shoes. She said she was fortunate in that other people in her group had extra shoes and gave them to her.

Sonam undoubtedly had the most difficult journey of all the women. While her guide's advice to make the journey in winter helped the group avoid detection, travelling in below zero temperatures made the journey exceptionally physically demanding. After crossing the Nangpa La, the group arrived at Kunde hospital in Nepal where a New Zealand doctor and nurse met them. Elizabeth Harding, the doctor at the hospital at the time, explains the poor state in which she and the other staff members of the hospital found Sonam's group:

It was just getting dark on a cold February evening when I wandered out from the kitchen to go into the flat. A flash of movement caught my eye at the gate, and I saw someone duck down behind a small juniper bush. Pretending I saw no one I continued as if to go into the flat, then quickly turned around to see a frightened and wild-looking Tibetan man cowering by the gate. I immediately called Kami to find out what he wanted before he ran away.

He turned out to be part of a group of Tibetan refugees who had become ill after crossing the Nangpa La on their way to see the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala. He was soon followed by another ten men, two guides and a small boy. The atmosphere was very tense as we tried to get information from our patients, who looked more like a pack of frightened animals ready to make a run for it any minute.

We started with the first five, removing their cheap sandshoes and nylon socks to reveal badly frostbitten toes and feet. Bare hands showed similar injuries to fingers. The freezing had occurred about six days previously, and they had all suffered the very damaging freeze-thaw-freeze cycles over the past few days. It was too late for immediate first aid or medications, so we soaked their feet in lukewarm, antiseptic water, and tried to document some personal details and specific injuries.

They were very anxious about giving their names, and one person kept telling us she was a man. She certainly was dressed in male clothing but looked definitely female to us. But we didn't push it, deciding that wasn't going to affect our treatment, and maybe she felt safer disguised as a man (Harding 1997: 171).

The woman was, of course, Sonam. After travelling in the deep winter snow across the Himalayas, she, like many other members in the group had frostbite, and had no idea what it was. Her fingers turned black and she couldn't feel the areas where her fingers had changed colour. Below the frostbite there was a lot of pain. Her hands "... all swelled up and became white and full of pain." She had no idea what had happened to them. At the hospital, the staff told her what was happening, applied medications to her feet and hands, and made her plunge her

hands in “very, very hot water.” When she found out that she had to get them amputated she was “very sad and cried.” During this time, she prayed often.

The next day she had the operation as the frostbite was not getting better. She was told that if she went to India without getting the frostbitten digits removed, the frostbite would get worse with the heat and spread and she would die. In the end, she had five toes on her right foot removed and both little fingers amputated. She stayed at the Kunde hospital for one month and 29 days. From the hospital, she was flown by helicopter to Kathmandu, where she was in hospital for a further one month and 15 days, as her feet were getting worse; the stitches became infected and she couldn't walk.

For the women, the journey was not only physically demanding but also psychologically stressful. The women experienced many uncertainties along the way, such as Deyang, who was very concerned about her family and was “always crying every night.” Ani suffered from loneliness, and although there were 19 people in her group, she knew none of them, being the only nun amongst the children. Often, the psychological hurdles were greater than the physical ones during flight. As Ani explained, being without food or shoes on the journey did not scare her, but the thought of capture terrified her.

Post-Flight

Even once the women had reached India, their journeys had not ended, and as they soon came to discover, life in exile required further relocation. Deyang, for instance, who had a somewhat complicated journey, stayed for two months in Nepal. There she spent a month in the guide's home waiting for the guide to arrive back from the border. However, the guide did not arrive. Fortunately, however, the first guide had introduced Deyang to a second guide. The second guide, who worked with the first guide's family in Nepal, took her to Delhi.

When she reached Delhi, the first guide arrived. Deyang spent only three days with this first guide who then went back to Dum to collect her belongings from the

Chinese authorities, who had taken them when they captured her at the border. Deyang then lived with the first guide's family while the guide was away and she worked in the Tibetan settlement of Manju Kotilla. Fifteen days later, the first guide returned. However, in the meantime, the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) was alerted to the fact that her living situation was not satisfactory, as the guide's family yelled at her constantly. The TWA visited Deyang and then sent her to Dharamsala.

From Dharamsala, Deyang went to Bir School, a branch of the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV), four hours from Dharamsala. The boarding school was free for her to attend and she was given a school uniform. She was there for four years, and during that time an elderly Japanese man sponsored her through the Snow Lion Friendship Association. Sadly, he passed away and she was never sponsored again. At Bir School, she contracted tuberculosis for the first time. From Bir, she joined the TCV handicrafts shop in Dharamsala, but again got sick and was unable to work. Then she moved to the refugee organisation of Gu Chu Sum but got tuberculosis for a third time. Both the TCV and the refugee organisation paid for her when she was sick with tuberculosis.

Similarly, Sonam's journey involved further relocation once she had reached India. From Nepal she went to Delhi, which took a day. Then she travelled to Manju Kotilla Reception Centre by bus. From there she went to Dalek Hospital in Dharamsala where she stayed for one month, still recuperating from the frostbite. When she left the hospital she had not completely recovered, so her sister, who is a nurse, took care of her. When she had recovered she went to study at the TCV for a year. Then she stayed with her sister in Bir for eight months, after which, she joined Gu Chu Sum handicrafts, where she is now working at their tailor shop.

The third respondent, Lhamo, after arriving in Dharamsala, was then sent on to the Tibetan Transit School (as she was too old for the TCV) where she learned Tibetan, English and a little maths. After three years boarding there, she then worked at the TCV handicrafts centre for three-months without pay in order to

learn new skills. Later, a nun she knew told her about the job at Gu Chu Sum which she then applied for.

Lhamo, Deyang and Sonam although never having worked previously as tailors, since they had previously come from farming backgrounds in Tibet, all now work at the tailor shop. The women are very grateful for this work, as finding work in Dharamsala can be difficult due to the high level of surplus labour. For these women, working in the dimly lit and cramped workshop with treadle-operated sewing machines (at first they look archaic, however, with the number of power cuts, this is probably the most appropriate equipment), this is a "good life." The women work six days a week, Tuesday to Sunday 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

Deyang and Sonam are both paid approximately 1000 rupees a month for 26 days of work. (Deyang says this is a good remuneration as at the Tibetan handicrafts centre at the TCV she was only paid 850 rupees a month for rug-making). Deyang's personal expenses are approximately 300 rupees a month. In addition, electricity costs her 350 rupees a month and then on top of this she has to pay for gas for cooking her own food on holidays. Food is already paid for by Gu Chu Sum, which takes approximately 500 rupees a month out of her wages above the 1000 rupees she receives. If she has a day off, however, her wages are cut accordingly. Deyang, like the other women, is unable to save any money.

Lhamo lives on a very low salary, in fact, she receives the lowest wages of all the women, only 450 rupees a month. She says that this is because she is new, she has only been there for one year and five months. If she stayed longer, this amount should increase, but she does not know when this will be, saying that its up to a monk in the Gu Chu Sum office as to when and how much she will receive. She cannot ask for more as its part of the Tibetan culture not to. He's already said she will get more, but hasn't come through with it yet.

On their 'days off', the women often sew prayer flags at Gu Chu Sum's headquarters as, according to Lhamo, this is compulsory "women's work" at the organisation. In addition, the women supplement their regular wage by making friendship bracelets (knotted wristbands) after-hours for which they receive five

rupees (NZ4¢) per bracelet. The office at Gu Chu Sum places orders which the women then fill. Deyang says she makes approximately four a night, and Lhamo says that if she works from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. she should make about 15 bracelets.

Deyang states that she would like to do extra paid work in addition to the work she already does, if she could find some. Lhamo states that she too would like to get more work, especially on her day off, but as she doesn't know how to sew or make patterns well enough, she cannot make clothes for people to earn any extra money. Lhamo also says that if she could get another job she would take it. However, she explains that if she were to find another job, her wages would remain virtually the same, but she would have additional expenses, therefore creating further financial difficulty, as she would have to find her own room, (which is expensive in McLeod Ganj at 600 to 1000 rupees a month), and pay for her own food, electricity and gas.

For Ani, as a nun, life in exile is quite different compared to the other women. When she first arrived in Dharamsala, she stayed in the nunnery near Norbulingka for six months. She had been in the nunnery for two days when she experienced post-traumatic stress, panicking that the police might catch her again. (Ani explained that this was a common experience for many of the nuns at the nunnery who were ex-political prisoners). She says she was so frightened as she had been imprisoned for three years, and was afraid that she might be recaptured and feared what might happen to her.

Later, she passed the examination for the Voice of Tibet radio station as a newsreader. She works from 9am to 5pm each day, except Sunday. Her day is very busy; she wakes at 6 am, gets up and dressed, and does prayers in her own room (her daily commitment). Then at 8:30 am she leaves to go to the Voice of Tibet office. From 9am to 1 pm Ani records the Chinese language programme, and then from 1 o'clock onwards she researches for upcoming programmes. At 5 pm work finishes, and she goes back to Gu Chu Sum to prepare her dinner. From 6 pm to 7 pm she attends English classes, then she does some study, works on her radio news stories, and then goes to bed at 11 pm.

Chapter 5: Analysis

This analysis section is divided into two distinct parts. Part one will begin by discussing the more practical issues involved in the contemporary Tibetan refugee situation in Dharamsala, pertinent to the respondents' situations as shown through the data collected via Stimulus Pictures, Capacities and Analysis Frameworks (CVA), and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). Part two will then focus on the theoretical considerations involved in the contemporary Tibetan refugee migrations.

Part One: Practical Issues

Stimulus Pictures

As a means to stimulate discussion about women's roles in the pre-flight situation, I showed the respondents (Deyang, Lhamo and Sonam) 17 photographs¹ (Stimulus Pictures) of women performing various productive and reproductive and social roles in Tibet. All three of the women, all from farming backgrounds, had very similar responses. In the first three images of women performing agricultural and horticultural tasks, the women noted that they had never had the opportunity to use such industrial machinery; instead, all the work on their families' farms was highly labour intensive and done by hand with simple tools on a much smaller scale. They simply could not afford to purchase such equipment as tractors, greenhouses or grain harvesters. Sonam for instance, ploughed the fields with her oxen. She also said that if they had machines like this in Tibet then the Chinese would come, not to take the machines but to take their crops, as they would the machinery would increase production on their land. She stated that in Tibet when agricultural production increases, Chinese officials come and "...take lots of things".

¹ See Appendix 2: Stimulus Pictures. Photographs taken from: El Popola Ĉinio Magazine. ed. 1987. Tibet on the Roof of the World. Beijing. China Esperanto Press; Distributed by China International Book Trading Corporation.

In picture 3, Lhamo pointed out that the women are wearing Chinese caps and the Chinese flag is attached to the tractor. She said this was not such a common sight in Tibet nowadays. In addition, Sonam pointed out that the women seemed really happy, but from her own experiences, she felt that in reality women have lots of work to do, and would not be smiling like this. Commenting on picture 5, the women noted that although not common in their district, certain regions of Tibet were well known for their apple growing. Pictures 4, 5, and 6 raised some concerns as to why the women were wearing their good clothes to perform manual labour tasks.

Looking at picture 7, the women all noted that the woman in the grey overcoat in the centre of the picture (and assumed by the women to be the manager of the factory), was Chinese. Sonam, however, believed that all the women in the photo were, in fact, Chinese. The respondents commented that even though in Tibet today, some Tibetans may get the opportunity to work in a factory, they are never the managers as the Chinese always take the well-paid positions involving power and control. Similarly, the women believed that the women in image 8 were Chinese and not Tibetan. Image 9 raised some concern, as the women believed that it is only the Chinese who trade in animal furs and products because, according to Buddhist belief, selling the products of killed creatures is seen as a spiritually unmoral way of earning a living.²

While image 10 did not raise any concern, image 11 did. The respondents all expressed the opinion that most Tibetan women did not have their children in hospital; health services before, during and after pregnancy were just not an option for Tibetan women in Tibet as they were simply not available in their districts. Instead, Tibetan women have children in their homes. Sonam said that if there were very serious complications with the birth then a Tibetan woman may go to a hospital, but they were not allowed to stay in the hospital and could have paid help for only one hour or so. Therefore, Sonam concluded, this is not a “normal” photo.

² Right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*) is the fifth path on the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariyamagga*) to Awakening (Thanissaro Bhikkhu 1999: xi).

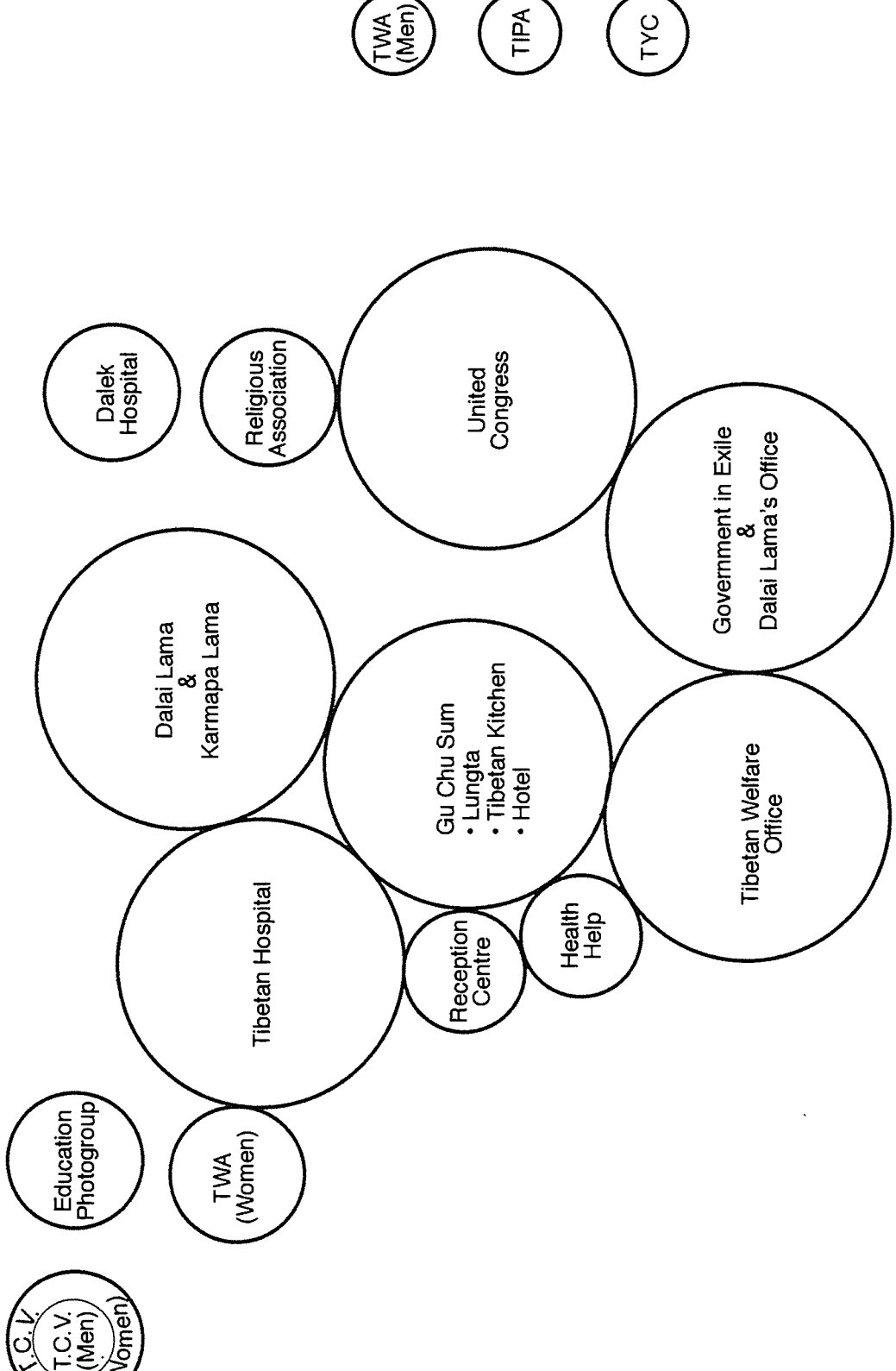
The women all commented that image 12 looked posed for the camera. They all agreed that Tibetan women did not generally eat sweets or have the time to socialise in such a manner-and certainly respectable women did not drink chang³ together. The women also thought that image 13 may have also been posed, as they had never seen anything like a travelling doctor before. Instead, they all raised the point that in their respective villages, healthcare was limited. Sonam even went as far to say that this photo “was not possible” as there are no medical facilities available for Nomads in Tibet. Image 14 reminded the women of traditional Tibetan picnics sometimes held at Losar (Tibetan New Year). Although Chang is again present in this photo (centre), the women felt that this was acceptable at this type of occasion.

Pictures 15, 16 and 17, showing various educational images raised a great amount of discussion with the women. All three women noted that one of the main reasons they left Tibet, if not the main reason, was to gain an education. They stated that educational opportunities for them in Tibet were so low that it was in fact necessary to escape into exile in order to go to school.

In discussing the images of Tibetan women in the context of the pre-flight situation, the women pointed out the similarities and differences they recognised in their own personal situations and those in the wider community. What is important to note from this exercise is that even though the women were questioned separately, they all had similar responses to the images. Further, they all questioned whether the images depicted were truly representative of Tibetan life. (Consequently, it is important to note both the date and place of publication of the book from which the photographs were taken, and to query the possible motives behind publishing such images of Tibetan life).

³ Tibetan alcoholic beverage made from fermented barley.

Venn Diagram of Organisations in Dharamsala



Venn Diagram of Organisations in Dharamsala

In looking at the post-flight situation, the following chart⁴ presents the Venn diagram of organisations in Dharamsala the English class created on the 18 May 2000. The diagram shows Gu Chu Sum in the centre of the frame, as this is where the group lives, and who the group is employed by, and is supported by in a variety of ways. Within this circle are listed the two restaurants that Gu Chu Sum has set up: Lungta and Tibetan Kitchen. The 'Hotel' that is referred to here is the accommodation that Gu Chu Sum provides for the group. What the group did not mention that should be included in this circle is, of course, the tailor shop where the respondents work.

Touching this circle is the smaller circle 'Health Help' which the group described as an organisation designed to help Tibetan refugees with health care support. Next to this is another smaller circle labelled 'Reception Centre'. The group explained that although this was important at the time of their arrival, as the reception Centre is the first point of help for all new arrivals, they no longer require direct support from the organisation, thus, the reason for its smaller size in the diagram. However, as refugees often come directly from the Reception Centre to Gu Chu Sum, the group positioned the organisation next to Gu Chu Sum.

Located above the 'Reception Centre' is the large circle of the 'Tibetan Hospital', which treats patients using traditional Tibetan methods. In contrast, 'Dalek Hospital', the Hospital that uses Western Allopathic treatments, is located far from the organisation in a smaller-sized circle that is detached from the core of the diagram. However, it is not clear which type of treatments 'Health Help' provides so it cannot be established at this stage what is the preferred healthcare choice of the group. However, if a healthcare project were to be established in Dharamsala, this obviously would need to be one of the first questions addressed.

⁴ See Figure 5, Venn Diagram of Organisations in Dharamsala, pp. 177.

To the left of the 'Tibetan Hospital' is situated the 'TWA (Tibetan Women's Association) (Women)'. Differences in gender across the group could be seen in both the placement and sizing of this organisation. The women wanted a medium-sized circle as many of them had contact with the organisation, which often arranged peace marches in Dharamsala against China's presence in Tibet. The men, on the other hand, who had practically no contact with the TWA, placed the organisation in a small circle to the right on the outskirts of the diagram far away from Gu Chu Sum. Similarly, below the circle labelled 'TWA (Men)' can be seen two other small circles named 'TIPA (Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts)' and 'TYC (Tibetan Youth Congress)'. Although these are two well-known organisations in Dharamsala, the group had very little to do with them, as can be seen by both their size and location on the diagram.

Gender differences were also apparent in the sizing of the 'TCV (Tibetan Children's Village School)'. As the group did not have any children of their own at the school, they chose to place it away from Gu Chu Sum. However, the women chose a medium-sized circle as they often visited relatives or friends' children at the school and it therefore had some importance in their lives. The men, however, again had virtually no contact with the school and therefore relegated it to a small circle.

Next to the 'TCV' is located the 'Education Photogroup' which prints religious texts in Dharamsala. As Buddhism is central to Tibetan Society, the group chose to use a medium-sized circle. However, as they had no direct contact with the organisation, it was placed outside the core of the diagram. It is important to note, however, that the majority of the group cannot read or write Tibetan, and many are still illiterate in their own language due to the lack of education in Tibet for Tibetans, while some cannot communicate in Tibetan as after 50 years of Chinese occupation, they have lost their indigenous language. Today in exile, however, many (predominantly men) are learning to read, write and even speak Tibetan. Thus, the 'education Photogroup' is an important resource for the dissemination of Tibetan language teaching resources in exile.

Below 'Gu Chu Sum' is the 'Tibetan Welfare Office'. This is perhaps one of the most important organisations in Dharamsala as, apart from its other responsibilities, it is responsible for sorting out disputes that may occur in the community. Tibetans avoid going to the Indian Police at all costs for two main reasons. Firstly, they do not wish to create conflict as they see themselves as guests in the country, and secondly, they believe that the Indian authorities are biased towards the Tibetan community. Thus, the Tibetan Welfare Office plays a crucial role in sorting out internal disputes amongst the Tibetan community in exile, and upholding local harmony.

To the right of the 'Tibetan Welfare Office' is another large circle representing the 'Government in Exile and Dalai Lama's Office'. Although the refugees do not have any direct contact with these organisations, these bodies are very important to them as they represent the Tibetan exile community at an "unofficial" international and national level, and develop law and policy for the Tibetan exile society. They also provide support for Tibetan refugees outside Tibet, collect taxes from each member of the exile society, and aim to maintain the Tibetan cultural heritage through religious institutions, schools and other organisations in exile. Above the 'Government in Exile and Dalai Lama's Office' is another large circle representing the 'United Congress'. This organisation is closely associated with the Government in Exile and represents the three main areas of greater Tibet (chol ka gsum): Amdo, Kham, and U-Tsang.

Finally, above the 'United Congress' is the medium-sized circle that represents the 'Religious Association'. Again, this is an important institution in the community as Buddhism is an integral part of Tibetan society. Tibetan Buddhism has been the life force of Tibetan culture since the 7th Century AD, and today Buddhism has "...become integrated in the society to such a degree that is impossible to talk of Tibetan culture without reference to Tibetan Buddhism" (Havenevik 1994: 263). Further, unlike those who fled decades ago, more than half of the new refugees are Buddhist monks and nuns who have been expelled from monasteries (Refugees Daily 15 Dec 2000).

Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis (CVA)

Again in assessing the post-flight situation in McLeod Ganj, the following Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis Frameworks demonstrate the women's needs in exile. Gender analysis frameworks are normally used in conjunction with development project and/or planning situations for which specific data need to be collected. However, as a development project was not involved in this research situation, the data gathered over the course of the study (via in-depth interviews⁵, personal observations and informal conversations) have been used to develop the CVA. Additionally, as the CVA assessment used only a small homogenous group of women, disaggregating the group by gender or other dimensions of social relations was not necessary. While there are recognisable limits to data collected for academic purposes through indirect means such as this, the following analysis gives a reference point from which to develop further analysis in any later development or planning programmes.

Evidently, the next step in the CVA would be to compare these findings with PRA group discussions of the women's capacities and vulnerabilities, including those listed, as well as additional capacities and vulnerabilities that they may identify. In these discussions, the women could evaluate each 'capacity' and 'vulnerability' and discuss the ways in which solutions to these could be found. However, with both the time constraints of the study, and those experienced in the lives of the women themselves, this step was not a viable option.⁶

The benefit for researchers using CVA is that it gives "...a snapshot of a given moment..." although can be employed over time to assess change, such as before and after a disaster (Anderson & Woodrow 1989: 17), which means that data may be collected at discrete points in time. The following analysis takes advantage of this factor, showing both a 'before' and 'after' situation of the women's situation, so that the data may be used for comparative purposes.

⁵ See Appendix 1: Interview Guide, Interview Five, 'The future and their personal aspirations' for specific questions relating to this section.

⁶ Refer to 'Postgraduate Research and PRA' for similar reports.

The first set of tables, (Table 2 and Table 3) is taken from the People Oriented Planning Framework in Refugee Situations (POP), (originally adapted from the Harvard Analytical Framework), to profile women's socio-political position (March et al 1999: 51). The socio-political profile of the pre-flight period shows that women's socio-political position compared to men's was lower at all levels across society.

As the Literature Review illustrated, refugee women often had the responsibility to assume the productive role within the household in their country of origin, which was also the case for many of the women before they left Tibet. The tables show that the women's socio-political position compared to men's has greatly increased since exile across all areas of society, and since exile, changes have taken place in women and men's roles. For instance, Deyang explained that: "In Tibet men are more powerful and women are inferior." Women and girls did all the household chores, while the men and boys did not do any household work as they did very hard physical work during the day.

Now in exile in India, the women have found that their productive roles have been reduced. Deyang explained that women are "free" in Dharamsala compared to Tibet as in Tibet the housework is principally done by girls and women. She doesn't have to do as much housework in Dharamsala, especially at night after work, and is able to take a complete rest if she wants. In Tibet, she had chores to do at night, and was expected to do a lot more work. In Dharamsala, the chores are shared much more equally; the boys as well as the girls do household work. Another difference that Deyang pointed out was the increase in the sharing of reproductive roles and tasks amongst men and women in exile. For example, in Tibet, the women carried small children, while in Dharamsala the men as well as the women carry the children.

Generally, the respondents live without relatives or dependants in India, which may also be a factor in reducing their workloads. The exception to this is Sonam, who now takes care of her sister's daughter. In 1992 and 1993 the Tibetan government sent 1000 Tibetans to the United States for resettlement, two of whom were her sister and brother-in-law. Sonam's sister had applied to go to the

United States but in the meantime had her baby. However, she and her husband had to leave their child behind, as there was not enough time to obtain an Identity Card for the child. She applied one year after leaving for the child to come and join her in the United States, but is still waiting on a letter from the United States. During the day the child goes to Yong Ling School, only on Sundays does Sonam have her for the whole day.

When questioned as to why she thinks these changes in gender roles have come about, Deyang replied that the changes were due to education they have received in India; men have become more tolerable, not short tempered, and "cool." Deyang also stated that Tibetan women are more powerful in Dharamsala than in Tibet. However, she is unsure whether this change in is a good or a bad change. Similarly, Lhamo gave details of the changes that have occurred in Tibetan-exile society. In Dharamsala, work is shared according to who can do it the best; there are no specific gender divisions. Lhamo views the changes in women's roles as both good and bad.

Lhamo explained that in Tibet, it is much better to be a man than a woman, as a woman has low status. "Men are smart as they get the education, and as such, men do 99 percent to 100 percent of business in Tibet." "People respect men more, and women are looked down upon." "Men in Tibet are always in a higher position as they can read and write," and "everything women can't do, men can do." Women do not have a very good education. "Men can do what ever they want." Women are expected to take care of the home in all of its various productive and reproductive aspects; this includes women participating in the roles of housewife, mother, and looking after the home animals such as cows.

Like Deyang, Lhamo revealed that a major difference in Tibet compared to Dharamsala is that men work out of the home and never do housework. "Women have to take care of everything." In Dharamsala, work is shared fifty-fifty. Women and men go to work and/or stay at home. Lhamo sees this as a good change. "Big change is that in India, men and women are equal."

In addition, Lhamo spoke of how changes occur in women's behaviour in exile. In Tibet, women are "shy, quiet", but then when they get to India they change, sometimes they have due to life's difficulties, and they become less shy and more self-reliant. For example, in Tibet women didn't sell "luffin"⁷, but they now do so in Dharamsala,⁸ as there are no other jobs available for them. In Tibet this is considered a "bad job" but in Dharamsala "it's okay" as work is very difficult to find. Thus, with this example, it is clear to see that Tibetan women's roles have changed to meet the exigencies of life in exile.

The second set of tables (Table 4 and Table 5) shows the women's capacities and vulnerabilities pre-flight and post-flight. The CVA shows that the women took with them skills upon which they are still able to draw while in exile, such as language and labour skills. What it also shows is that some of the women's previous skills are not appropriate for their post-flight environment and new skills needed to be acquired in order to find employment in exile.

In development project situations, recommendations would then be made to combat vulnerabilities and build on capacities from the data collected in the CVA (March et al 1999: 87). The final CVA table (Table 6) demonstrates a needs-assessment of the women's situation in exile. The needs are divided into the categories outlined in the CVA for ease of use.

⁷ A type of gelatinous noodles made of rice-flour (white colour) or wheat flour (yellow colour) to which chilli is added.

⁸ See Appendix 3, Plate vi: Women selling "Luffin" at a street stall on Jogibara Rd, McLeod Ganj.

Table 2: Women's Socio-Political Profile Pre-Flight

Women's socio-political position compared to men's	Lower (worse)	About equal	Higher (better)
Women's participation in decision-making: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the household • at the community level • within society at large 	+ + +		
2. (Self) image: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-image of women • Image of women in society 	+ +		
3. Organisational capacity	+		
4. Other	+		

Table 3: Women's Socio-Political Profile Post-Flight

Women's socio-political position compared to men's	Lower (worse)	About equal	Higher (better)
1. Women's participation in decision-making: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the household • at the community level • within society at large 			+ + +
2. (Self) image: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-image of women • Image of women in society 			+ +
3. Organisational capacity			+
4. Other			+

Frameworks adapted from March *et al* (1999: 51).

Table 4: Women's Capacities and Vulnerabilities Pre-Flight

	Vulnerabilities	Capacities
<p>Physical/Material What productive resources, skills, and hazards exist?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal education for the majority of the Tibetan population. • Formal education uses the Chinese language as the main teaching medium. • Girls are less likely to be sent to school than boys. • High taxes imposed on agricultural production (predominately Tibetan occupation). • Low income levels for Tibetans. • High unemployment levels for Tibetans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who are able to access formal education are often bi-lingual or tri-lingual (in Tibetan, Chinese and sometimes English). • Food and other necessities are affordable in Tibet. • Often skilled in manual labour and agricultural production.
<p>Social/Organisational What other relationships between people? What are the organisational structures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Totalitarian society under Chinese rule. • The Chinese regard Tibetans as second-class citizens. • Unable to gain employment due to ethnic discrimination. • Fear of the authorities. • Unable to practice religion freely. • Strict controls on religious institutions • Men dominate society in Tibet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often had strong family ties and support. • Nunneries provide support and education for many Tibetan women.

Social/Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to achieve change due to domination by Chinese authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in peaceful protests
Motivational/Attitudinal How does the community view its ability to create change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often a sense of high anxiety, fear and frustration due to their circumstances in society. • Often too scared to attempt to create change. • No sense of security (physical, material, or spiritual). • Sense of not being able to take control of their lives. 	<i>(Escape often seen as the only solution).</i>

Framework adapted from March *et al* (1999: 81).

Table 5: Women's Capacities and Vulnerabilities Post-Flight

	Vulnerabilities	Capacities
<p>Physical/Material What productive resources, skills, and hazards exist?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of education • Lack of \$\$/credit • Not able to purchase land/No access to land to grow own food • Few assets (if any) • Polluted environs • Food and other necessities are expensive in India. • Low skill levels/ Skills not suitable to urban situation • Poor health • Water supply unreliable and non-potable. • Poor working conditions in tailor shop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who are able to access formal education are often bi-lingual or tri-lingual (in Tibetan, Chinese, and sometimes English). • Often skilled in manual labour and agricultural production. • Cramped but satisfactory housing. • Food provided • Reasonably safe living environment. • Women have learned new skills such as tailoring and radio presentation. • Some opportunities exist for the women to access English classes. • Women have taken on extra work plaiting friendship bracelets for tourists to earn additional income.
<p>Social/Organisational What are the relationships between people? What are the organisational structures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household composition highly variable: Female-headed single-parent households are very common. • Often no relatives live in the area or country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong friendships exist amongst the women, providing a good support network for each other. • Able to practice religion freely.

<p>Social/Organisational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of Indian authorities. • Shortage of paid employment in Dharamsala. • Low wage levels due to high levels of surplus labour. • No control/ participation in setting or negotiating wage levels (cultural factor). • Dependent on an outside individual to set wages • Democratic society in exile. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tibetan community in exile demonstrates greater gender equality than in Tibet.
<p>Motivational/Attitudinal How does the community view its ability to create change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morale can often be quite low upon arrival, and once the realisation that they cannot go home sets in. • Women without relatives in India especially affected by low morale. • Women feel 'stuck' by their circumstances e.g. unable to access education, lack of employment opportunities and funds. • Many women had relatives who were tortured, killed or missing in Tibet, while others experienced torture and face subsequent psychological stress. 	<p>The women are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient • Willing to learn • Enthusiastic • Very hard-working • Have a good sense of humour • Live in the present and not the past.

Framework adapted from March *et al* (1999: 81).

Table 6: Ways of Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building on Capacities in the Post-Flight Period

	To Reduce Vulnerabilities	To Build on Capacities
Physical/Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop means for the women to increase their education. • Fix the ladder in the tailor shop so that women may move from the ground to mezzanine floor without risk. • Improve lighting, ventilation, and seating in the tailor shop. • Give the women eye checks and prescribe appropriate eye care as required. • Align wages more closely with skill levels and hours worked. • Improve the water supply to the refugee organisation to ensure daily showering is available. • Access to credit to start own businesses in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase women's long-term economic security. • Support women's efforts in learning English and developing skills. • Develop alternative ways of increasing income.
Social/Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish affordable, accessible general healthcare. • Schooling located closer to Dharamsala for Tibetan children born in India. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise with other women at the collective level. • Develop links between Tibetan and international organisations to ensure that the services are not of a stop-start nature.

Social/Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop support networks for those with no relatives and single parents • Build bridges between Indian authorities and Tibetan society in exile. • Develop further employment opportunities in Dharamsala. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communication systems between India and Tibet. • Improving access to resources, health services, funding and credit. • Improve women's access to information services so that they be active agents in their own development. • Provision of support facilities so that women may have opportunities for further education.
Motivational/Attitudinal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop community programmes to increase morale and self-esteem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage far greater levels of participation and control from the grassroots level of the community. • More bottom-up projects required, rather than top-down development.

Practical and Strategic Needs

Another way of assessing needs is by implementing a Needs Assessment. This is usually carried out in development project situations to determine community needs, identify projects, consider whether the proposed projects meet a community's needs and interests, and take into account the various ways in which projects could be adapted to better meet the needs of a community (Canadian Council for International Co-operation et al 1991: 139-40).

In assessing the needs of a community, it is possible to segregate needs into two categories: 'practical needs' and 'strategic interests'. Practical needs concern living conditions and/or material requirements, which can often be met through short-term solutions. Strategic interests, on the other hand, often involve long-term solutions, and are concerned with "...a particular group's subordinate position relative to the social and economic standing of the advantaged" (Canadian Council for International Co-operation et al 1991: 138). Strategic interests can be measured by disparities in income and employment opportunities, access to participation in decision-making, and by vulnerability to certain elements such as poverty (Canadian Council for International Co-operation et al 1991: 138).

As previously explained, this particular exploratory research situation did not involve any specific project, and the data gathered over the course of the study have been used to develop a summary of the women's practical needs and strategic interests. Similarly to the CVA, the next step in the needs assessment would be to compare these findings with PRA group discussions of the women's needs, including those listed, as well as additional needs they may identify. In these discussions, the women could evaluate the importance of each need/interest and discuss the ways in which solutions to these needs/interests could be found.

Table 7: Women's Practical Needs and Strategic Interests

Practical Needs	Strategic Interests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable, accessible general healthcare. • Improve working conditions at the tailor shop, including lighting, ventilation, and seating. • Eye checks and appropriate eye care as required. • Fix the ladder in the tailor shop so that women may move from the ground to mezzanine floor without risk. • Align wages more closely with skill levels and hours worked. • Improve water supply to the refugee organisation to ensure daily showering is available. • Locate schooling closer to Dharamsala for Tibetan children born in India. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education for women. • Provide support facilities so that the women have the opportunity to study. • Improve women's access to information services so that they are active agents in their own development. • Access to credit to start own businesses in the future. • Improve access to resources health services funding and credit. • Increase women's long-term economic security. • Organise with other women at the collective level. • Develop support networks for those without relatives in India and single-parent households. • Build bridges between Indian authorities and Tibetan community. • Develop further employment opportunities in Dharamsala. • Develop programmes to increase morale and self-esteem. • Encourage far greater levels of participation and control from grassroots level of the community. • Create more bottom-up development projects rather than top-down development. • Develop links between Tibetan and international organisations to ensure that services are not of a stop-start nature. • Improve communication systems between India and Tibet.

Analysis of Practical and Strategic Needs

Table 7 shows the women's practical needs in the left column and their strategic interests in the right-hand column. The women's practical needs tend to be short term, with the exception of the last need: 'Schooling located closer to Dharamsala for Tibetan children born in India.' Although none of the respondents have children themselves, (although it is possible that this last need may become a concern in the future for the women, as they may have children themselves at a later date), this need has been included as it arose as a key concern from discussions during the course of the research with various other Tibetan women who did have children born in India.

These women explained that the TCV boarding school in Dharamsala only takes children who have arrived directly from Tibet, and the children of Exile Government officials. While parents in Dharamsala desperately seek places, as it is the top school in the region, children who were born in India post flight are not eligible to attend.⁹ In addition, there is a severe shortage of locally available schooling which means children must be sent, often great distances, to attend school. For example, the translator whose husband left her with three children, had to live on 800 rupees per month and send her children to Dehra Dun at the lower end of Himachal Pradesh, a bus ride she explained would take from 7 PM to 10 a.m. to see them.

The practical needs are predominately related to the women's daily needs, especially their work environment at the tailor shop where they spend most of their time during the day. Another daily need is the water supply to the refugee organisation, which at times is unreliable. Sonam explained that she has trouble with the water supply sometimes. Sometimes she can't take part in the work in the kitchen and often she cannot wash because there is no water. While Sonam was the only one to specifically raise this concern, during the interviews Deyang explained that increased personal hygiene was one of the key ways her life has changed since she arrived in Dharamsala, and as such has become a concern

⁹ The exception to this rule is when a mother of a child dies and the father must raise the child. Yet, when the father dies and the mother is left to raise the child, the child is not allowed to attend.

of hers. Deyang pays a lot of attention to her personal hygiene now, for example by washing clothes. She has to wear cleaner clothes, as it is hotter in India, often "too hot". In Tibet it was cold and she didn't have to wash often. In Tibet, she used to wear vests under her clothes but stated that if you do that in India, people make fun of you. "In Tibet it is nothing." In addition, she is more choosy about what is good or bad food during food preparation, (especially after a particularly nasty bout of food poisoning from rice and dhal when she first arrived in India).

While there are many options available for healthcare in Dharamsala, including Western allopathic medicine, Tibetan medicine, and homeopathic medicine, to name just a few, the women would avoid seeking medical attention unless absolutely necessary (or in the case of one of the respondents, being taken to the doctor by the researcher). The prime reason for this reluctance to seek medical attention seems to be financial. Although the refugee organisation will pay for treatments associated with severe illnesses and accidents, basic health checks are not covered. The practical health needs of the women, therefore, could be met by specific inputs, such as the introduction of a regular healthcare clinic at the refugee organisation.

In looking at the women's strategic interests, it is clear to see that in comparison to the women's practical needs, these tend to be long-term. Secondly, the interests are common to almost all the women. A long-term solution for the women would be access to, and provision of credit to start their own businesses in the future. Many of the women showed interest in purchasing their own sewing machine to do home-based sewing work to earn additional income. Although most would in fact prefer to do home-based work at present, they were well aware that by doing so, they would no longer be able to access the food and accommodation currently provided by the refugee organisation (Gu Chu Sum). In this sense, they are caught in a 'catch-22' situation: they are currently dependent on refugee support services because if they were to find another employment situation, which is not directly linked to Gu Chu Sum, this would result in an overall lower standard of living. Therefore, the women require some form of assistance to achieve greater independence in the long-term.

This is particularly the case for educational aspirations. The women all wanted to expand their educational opportunities; in fact, three out of the four stated this as their primary reason for leaving Tibet. However, upon arrival they soon discovered that they were unable to access the schooling they so desired, as they were too old.

Today, the respondents are explicit in citing their desire to acquire more education, however, they are uncertain as to how it could be accessed. In addition, the women cannot work and receive education at the same time, unless they attend night classes, as they work full time, six days a week. Unless the women can have obtain support to cover their living expenses over the duration of their study, further full-time education is not an option for them.

Unfortunately, without further education, however, the respondents are in a situation of not being able to improve their circumstances. Secondly, even though they may be able to obtain alternative, higher paid employment, they would lose their entitlement to accommodation, and be required to pay for accommodation and other living expenses currently paid for by Gu Chu Sum. Therefore, the provision of support facilities (e.g. food and accommodation) is necessary in order for women to have the opportunity to study.

A further strategic need is to improve the women's access to information services. Clearer and more integrated information is required from the education organisations as to where and how to obtain further education and at what cost; study assistance programmes available such as funding, scholarships, and grants, as well as possible employment opportunities. In addition, there is a need to increase the women's long-term economic security, including greater income, independence, options for education and work, accommodation, and opportunities. One way of meeting these long-term needs could be for the women to organise with other women at the collective level e.g. those at the tailor shop for all the strength, solidarity and action.

Summary

Unmistakably, the women's lives have altered dramatically since exile. They have received minimal education; have extensive social support networks within the community specifically for Tibetans, and managed by Tibetans; have greater healthcare options; have experienced dramatic changes in gender roles and expectations in exile society; and have found that they have fewer responsibilities and do not need to spend such long and intensive periods performing manual labour. Perhaps most importantly, they have become socially and politically aware of their situation, both in exile and in Tibet.

However, there are other difficulties that have arisen unexpectedly for the women since exile. They have lost their family support networks and often struggle with homesickness; they experience language difficulties with the Indian population and feel that they must always be on their best behaviour as they are "guests" in India, which places additional strain on their lives. The women also face limited employment opportunities, which are compounded by their lack of education.

Conclusions

At the research level, there were two key findings that emerged out of the CVA and analysis of Practical and Strategic needs. First, during the course of questioning the women about their needs, the women were distinctly modest, even though it could be quite clear to an outsider to assume/judge the women's needs. Two possible explanations for this occurrence are that firstly, the women may not recognise or be aware of their 'needs' as an outsider may assume. The women have come from a very different environment in which their needs were often quite different due to climate, occupation and so forth, and may not be aware of the options available to them. Secondly, as Buddhism traditionally upholds a non-materialistic culture, this may be an explanation of why none of the women cited money, clothes, housing and so on as one of the needs they required. Even when asked why they denied a 'need' for these, they replied that yes it would be nice, but not a necessity as such.

The second key finding was that although the women cited their material/practical needs as low, the women clearly recognised their strategic needs, such as education. In fact, the women repeatedly stated that education was the one key factor that they identified would improve their lives, income, self-esteem, and future well-being. For both the women and the researcher, education is recognised as the key to any future development work in the Tibetan exile community in Dharamsala.

Part Two: Theoretical Perspectives

Features of Contemporary Tibetan Refugee Migration

"When the horse runs on wheels and the iron bird flies, the Tibetan people will be scattered like ants across the face of the earth..." Padmasambhava¹⁰

In assessing contemporary Tibetan refugee migrations, it is clear to see that there are certain features generating, facilitating, and adding to pressures producing the refugee migrations. The first of these features is a greater flow of information between Tibetan exiles in India and Tibetans in Tibet. While large parts of the world's population have benefited from technological change that has increased global communications, and therefore the flow of information (Van Hear 1998: 2)¹¹, Tibet still remains relatively closed off from the outside world; state censorship remains intense, and journalists are still banned from entering Tibet (Barnett 1999; Bass 1992).

Instead, the flow of information that does occur comes from those returning to Tibet from India and vice versa. Informal mail delivery systems exist between Tibet and India, which although irregular, are dependable. For instance, Lhamo receives information about Tibet about once a year from nuns who "know other people." She may also receive news of her family in this manner. She says this information makes her sad and cry and want to return to Tibet.

The problem, however, is that the information passed along these lines is often distorted from reality. For instance, it is evident that the respondents' pre-flight images of Dharamsala gained through such information sources were quite different to their post-flight experiences. Consequently, as their post flight experiences did not meet their pre-flight expectations, they are disappointed in many ways with their current situation in exile. Yet, the women I spoke to said

¹⁰ The Tantric Guru who brought Buddhism to Tibet.

¹¹ As Conner states: "Advances in communications and transportation also tend to increase the cultural awareness of the minorities by making their members more aware of the distances between themselves and others" (Conner cited in Alling 1997: 9).

they often explained their situations in Dharamsala in euphemistic language as means of 'keeping up appearances' and to avoid upsetting those they left behind in Tibet.

In this way, information about life in exile becomes 'glamorised', creating greater 'pull' factors for those inside Tibet to seek refuge abroad. Once the refugees arrive in India, however, they realise that life is not as easy as they were lead to believe, and again, in order to hide the difficulties they are facing, employ euphemisms in their correspondence with relatives, thus continuing and recreating the flow of misinformation between India and Tibet.

A feature facilitating refugee migrations from Tibet is the loosening of constraints by China on internal population movement, which has led to greater external movements (Van Hear 1998: 2). Within the People's Republic of China, the system known as the 'Hukou' system of registration, established in the 1950s, regulated internal, mainly rural to urban migration, by tying entitlements to residence. This system is slowly loosening, however, with the instigation of market-based reforms (Van Hear 1998: 34), and in 1990, the Chinese authorities lifted martial law on 1 May, enabling Tibetans to travel more easily within Tibet (Ruiz 1990: 3).

Sonam, for instance, stated that she left Tibet at the age of 21 years as she couldn't leave earlier because the "Chinese Government" imposed movement restrictions. When the Government relaxed the rules, lifting the restraints on internal movement, she then left. What is clear about this situation is that it can indeed be shown that Kane's (1995: 2) assertion that internal migration a first step in the immigration process is correct. Since the removal of China's restraints to internal movement within Tibet since 1990, greater internal migration has been possible, and in turn, this facilitates internal movement, which leads to greater external migration flows.

Additionally generating and adding to pressures producing Tibetan refugee migrations is the Chinese authorities' suppression of Tibetan Nationalism. At about the same time as the authorities lifted martial law on 1 May 1990, Chinese

authorities expelled monks and nuns they suspected as adversaries to Chinese authority. Suspected of pro-independence actions, Chinese authorities escorted a number of monks and nuns to their home village where they were handed over to the local authorities and forbidden to practice religion (Ruiz 1990: 3-4), as was seen in the case of Ani.

For the Tibetans, however, Tibetan Nationalism is integrated with the resurgence of Tibetan culture, and as such, the actions on the part of the Chinese are interpreted as suppression of Tibetan culture,¹² hence creating further motivation for protest and continuing the cycle of Chinese suppression and Tibetan remonstrance.

In addition, China's economic development of Tibet as a means to integrate Tibet into China and repress Tibetan Nationalism has created further dissent amongst the Tibetan population. Moreover, Beijing's recent renewed efforts to further integrate Tibet are creating further momentum to the exodus of Tibetans (Refugees Daily, 17 Nov 2000). Since 1992, the TAR economy has increased "...by more than 10 percent each year, according to official government statistics, faster than the rate in China as a whole, and far above the world average" (Barnett 1999: 185).

However, while this development may be economically beneficial to China, few Tibetans are able to benefit from the reforms and remain an underclass in their own land. For example, Sonam explained how even though her family had good fields; others often struggled financially because of the high taxes they had to pay. The Chinese imposed a tax of 1500 gamma each season in barley. (One gamma is the equivalent to just under 1 kilogram). While her family could usually keep enough grain for the next year, for a poor family this tax is very difficult.

What annoyed Sonam particularly was the fact that the Government called these payments "tax". In actual fact what occurs is that Tibetan farmers are forced to sell their barley to the government at low rates. Sonam explained that the

¹² See: Schwartz, R. D. 1996. Circle of Protest: Political ritual in the Tibetan uprising. Delhi: Motilal Barnarsidas Publishers Private Limited.

government says it "pays" the farmers but it only pays about 50 paise (2 mosse) per gamma (equal to about half a rupee per gamma). However, the going price should be about two Yuan (eight rupees) per gamma. Therefore, by being given a poor price for their grain by the Government Tibetan farmers are drastically underpaid and consistently remain in poverty.

Sonam explained that if farmers don't have 1500 gamma of barley in the fields to pay the tax, then the Chinese take half of what they do have. For instance, if a family only produced 1500 gamma of barley in their total harvest, then the authorities would take 750 gamma, and leave the family with 750 gamma of barley. However, 750 gamma of barley is not enough feed a family for a year. In this situation, Sonam explained that the "Chinese Government" would come to the home and look at the whole situation of the family. The government might then give clothes, food, and money to the family for one month only. Sonam explains that the Government then "makes big story" that "oh we are helping the Tibetan people." Yet, after this month has ended, the family must then has to go searching for food somewhere else. Thus, the Government will take half of what the family has, then, only after a big investigation, give the family food for one month, but subsequently leave the family to starve for the rest of the year.

Force, Choice and Agency

As has been demonstrated in the Literature Review, migrations are conventionally portrayed as either voluntary (economic) or involuntary (forced), however, migration is never so black and white; there are aspects of choice and compulsion involved in all migrations, whether voluntary or involuntary. As Van Hear (1998: 42) explains:

It has become received wisdom that few migrations are wholly voluntary or wholly involuntary. Almost all migration involves some kind of compulsion; at the same time almost all migration involves choices.

While it is clear that economic migrants make choices, "...they do so within constraints" (Van Hear 1998: 42). Equally, forced migrants, make choices, but "...within a narrower range of possibilities" (Van Hear 1998: 42). Therefore, while

all migrations involve some degree of choice, involuntary migrations involve less choice than voluntary migrations.

Similarly, while compulsion is involved in nearly all migrations, this is especially so for forced migration, which involves extreme degrees of compulsion. In the case of the latter, it is clear that the compulsion (or 'push') within the country of origin must be so intense as to force migrants to risk their lives in escaping, whether it be crossing oceans on unstable and often overcrowded boats, or trekking across the treacherous snow-covered Himalayas for weeks on end.

Contemporary Tibetan Migration

The modern-day Tibetan migrations occur in what could be termed a post-conflict situation, and as such, the most appropriate label for these contemporary migrations is Hansen's (1981: 184) term, "post-acute".¹³ Additionally, from the data collected, it is apparent that there are in fact two different forms of migration occurring amongst the respondents. At first glance, it appears that the respondent's migration patterns could be recognised as both economic (or voluntary) migration, and refugee (or involuntary) migration. However, closer analysis of the data, utilising a qualitative perspective, shows that rather than a dichotomous relationship existing between 'economic' and 'refugee' migrations, there are in fact two distinct forms of *involuntary* migration taking place.

The first form of involuntary migration demonstrated in the data is what this thesis terms the 'persecution' model. This form of involuntary migration, like the original definition of refugees established by the United Nations, involves *direct* persecution of the individual "...for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion..." (UNHCR 1954). It is for these reasons of persecution that the individual is forced to leave their country of origin, in order to seek asylum across international borders.

¹³ Hansen, building on Kunz's (1973; 1981) typology of refugees, labelled the later (post-1966) Angolan refugee waves as "post-acute" to demonstrate "...that they occurred as a secondary response, often delayed several years, to the outbreak of war" (1981: 184).

The second form of involuntary migration is what this thesis terms the 'economic' model. This form of involuntary migration appears to be very similar to economic (voluntary) migration, (hence its name), as the reasons for flight appear to be economically based. However, while on the surface the cause for flight may appear to be for economic reasons, further investigation shows that it is in fact *indirect* persecution that provides the 'push' for flight.

These two forms of involuntary migration are demonstrated in the following discussion of the respondents' pre-flight situations.

Persecution as a Form of Involuntary Migration: Ani's Story

In order to illustrate how persecution can be the main 'push' for refugee flight into exile, the following section details Ani's story. Just before the final examination at school, Ani decided to become a nun at the age of 15 years. She firmly states that it wasn't because she couldn't pass the exam that she decided to become a nun; instead, it was that she was young and strongly believed in her faith, and her parents were also religious.¹⁴

Ani stayed at Chubsang nunnery for two years. While she was there, her parents gave her food and built a "shack" for her, as there was not enough food and accommodation at the nunnery. Ngawang Dekyi, another young nun living at Chubsang nunnery during the same period as Ani explained that that it was after the Chinese authorities banned the performance of prayers on behalf of the public that the nuns had to rely on their own families. When the nuns could no

¹⁴ Without wanting to question Ani's motivation to become a nun, Havenevik (1994: 262) raises an interesting point that the growing interest in Buddhism amongst young Tibetan women, may be recognised "as part of the revitalising process" of finding Tibetan culture and values in a society which Chinese hegemony subjugates 'Tibetanness':

Without doubting the religious motives of young Tibetan nuns today, one can believe that more than religion is involved when they choose to embrace monastic life, which is more than a commitment to religion; it is also a commitment to the survival of the Tibetan people and culture (Havenevik 1994: 261).

Thus, committing to a nun's life becomes an avowal of their own Tibetan culture, which is intertwined with the values and institutions of Buddhism at every level (*Why are the Nuns Leaving Tibet?* 1994).

longer perform services for the community, offerings were no longer given to the nunnery: "As a result nuns had to return to their families to obtain food, clothing, and other necessities. Nuns who came from far away found this very difficult" (in *Why are the Nuns Leaving Tibet?* 1994: 2).

During Ani's stay at Chubsang, a "Chinese Work Team" came to the nunnery. (These Work Teams (*las don ru khag*), made up of government appointed officials, are assigned to each nunnery and monastery in the Lhasa area to try to prevent further political demonstrations through imposing political re-education (Schwartz 1994: 112)). The Work Team stayed in the nunnery and observed the nuns during their daily routines. The Team also held patriotic re-education meetings with different groups of approximately 20 nuns, to which attendance was compulsory. Throughout these meetings, the Team insisted that the nuns must go against the Dalai Lama and their religion.

The experiences of Ngawang Dekyi, another young nun from Chubsang nunnery, document how the Work Team strictly controlled the nunnery:

Three times a day the nuns were called to meetings, at which they were shown propagandist films against religion. Sometimes they were told to express their feelings which would be recorded. In general, they were not able to perform prayers or rituals on a regular basis, since the time was mostly taken up by [sic] these official meetings. Even their personal religious practice was limited to the breaks between meetings. The only Lama there capable of teaching the scriptures was in his eighties (in *Why are the Nuns Leaving Tibet?* 1994: 2).

These re-education programmes are also highly time-consuming, creating little time for the study of religious texts. The Chinese officers assigned to the nunneries, along with the "education programmes" they enforce create a climate of hostility and fear of informers; expulsion is a continual threat (*Why are the Nuns Leaving Tibet?* 1994).

During the Work Team's stay at Chubsang nunnery, Ani went to the top of a nearby mountain to burn incense with 12 nuns from her nunnery in celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama winning the Nobel Peace Prize on the 10th December 1989. Later that night, the Work Team woke her up from her sleep as

they had found out what she had done. They accused her of ordering and inspiring the others to do it. In strong reaction to these claims, however, she asserted: "I never!"

Nevertheless, the Work Team then expelled Ani from the nunnery and forbade her from ever being a nun in Tibet again. Subsequently, the Chinese authorities returned her to the head of her community and then back to her family, where she stayed in her parents' home for one year. Later, on the 19th of August 1989, Ani went to a demonstration with four other nuns in her local area of Lhasa. That same day the Chinese Police arrested her. The police sentenced Ani to prison for nine months, and transported her to Gutsa¹⁵ prison; a prison situated 10km east of Lhasa renowned for interrogating and detaining political prisoners without trial (Tibetan Women's Association Central Executive Committee 1995: 2). She was only 17 years old.

At Gutsa prison they gave Ani a piece of paper that stated her crime. She was not given a trial, as she describes: "But you know, actually that there is not any trial. There is not any legal avenues, never. Just they decide, the authorities decide."

The prison authorities then transferred Ani to another prison called Tusun, where she remained for two years and three months. She was released in 1994 at the age of 19. When released from the prison, the Chinese official said that she had been completely rehabilitated: "Now you [are] changed, you are completely changed. Now you are a new person. So you must go in nunnery and practice religious [religion] well."

However, as the Chinese authorities had deleted her name from the list of nuns at Chubsang nunnery, she never got the chance to go back there. The Chinese authorities had even placed a letter on the doorway of her shack outside the nunnery which stated that her parents had to take the roof of the shack otherwise the Chinese would confiscate it for the wood.

¹⁵ See Figure 6: Map of Lhasa City, pp. 209.

During Ani's stay at her parents' home, the Chinese police would visit her parents' home if there had been political protests such as demonstrations, letters sent, or bomb explosions in Lhasa, asking if she had participated. (For all ex-political prisoners, and all demonstrators this is a common recurrence in Tibet.) Repeatedly, the Chinese appeared at her parents' house if there had been a demonstration to ask her whereabouts that day. On 24 June 1998, the Police came to ask her and took her to the police station for interrogation.

The 24th June 1989 is, of course, the date that a bomb exploded in the centre of Lhasa on the eve of Bill Clinton, the President of the United States, visit to China. Sometime between 10pm and 11pm, a bomb exploded near the City Public Security Bureau (PSB) Building, situated one kilometre north of the Jokhang Temple. There were unconfirmed reports of three-four casualties from the explosion. However, the timing of the explosion suggested that, similarly to other attacks since 1996, the target was the building rather than people. Streets in the area were closed until early the next morning. Although the area did not remain cordoned off, six truckloads of security personnel were present (Tibet Information Network, 1 July 1998).

After that date, the Chinese authorities came every day, often at night to ask her whereabouts. The pattern of interrogation was never the same; sometimes they questioned her at her parents' home, sometimes at the police station, and sometimes at the security office; each time the interrogations involved different police officers. Mostly they cross-examined where she and her parents went on the day and when they left home. Ani stated that her family had to be careful even of "her own" [Tibetan] people because of spies who lived in the community.

While living at her parents' house, she began to think about her situation and how restricted her life had become; a life in which she, as a nun, couldn't even practice her own religion, as the translator explains:

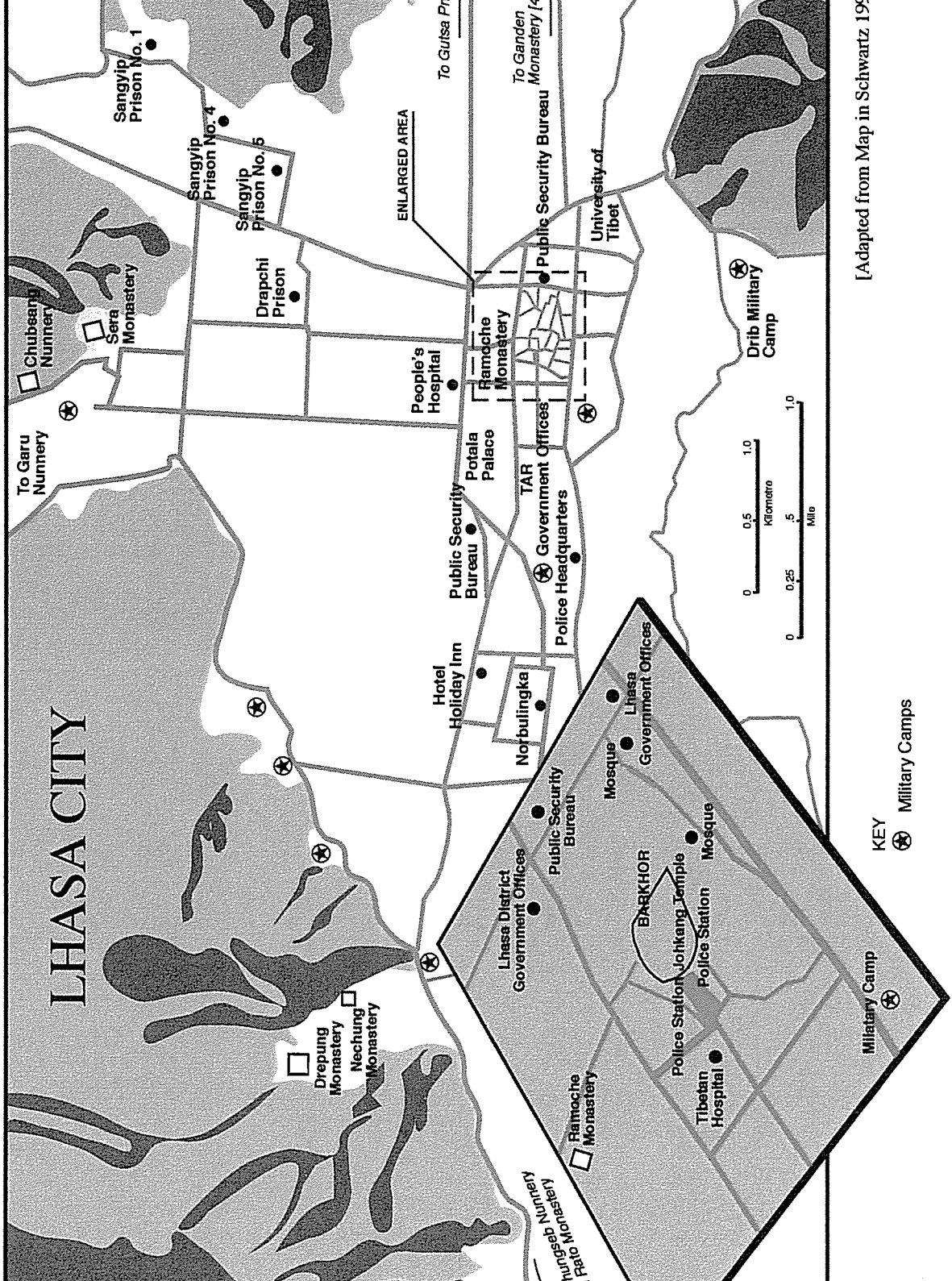
She was thinking over the situation, she knows that everybody needs their freedom, and she did not do anything while at home. It [her "crime"] was really made up by the Chinese it did not happen, this we do know. She needs her freedom and religious freedom.

Ani explained that her parents were scared and physically sick with worry about her. So from June 1999, she stayed at home for two more months and then left for Dharamsala. Ani's situation is not peculiar to her, however. After being imprisoned and/or expelled from the nunnery, Tibetan nuns remain under house arrest:

They are forbidden to join in community events and are fined heavily for any external sign of religious practice. Denied ration cards and permits necessary to earn a living, they become a burden to their families and isolated from the community. It is during this time that many decide to make the journey to India, drawn to the protection and hope of His Holiness the Dalai Lama (*Why are the Nuns Leaving Tibet?* 1994).

Ani's situation of being forced to rely solely on her family for food and shelter, unable to practice religion, and cut off from the community for fear of repercussions from the authorities, left Ani in a state of isolation. This sense of segregation is akin to Abu-Lughod's (1988) notion of internal exile, of being in exile on one's home soil. Similarly to Zarosa's (1998) experience, Ani was subjected to the phenomenon of exile without moving. Thus, Ani found herself in a form of political exile imposed by the Colonial Chinese authorities before she had even left Tibet.

Ani's story demonstrates clearly how direct persecution by the Chinese authorities augmented the development of her flight perspective. She was without control, unable to participate constructively in society, and alienated in such a way, that she was left with little choice but to escape.



[Adapted from Map in Schwartz 199...]

Economic Involuntary Migration: Lhamo, Deyang and Sonam's Stories

Perhaps one of the most controversial points discovered in the interviews was the women's main reason for departure from Tibet. Despite what was said to the contrary by other Tibetans in Dharmasala, Lhamo and Deyang did not cite the Chinese presence in Tibet as the direct reason for their departure. Indeed, Lhamo was not even aware of the problems other Tibetans were facing until she tried to get a job in Lhasa and was not able to find employment because she was not Chinese.

For both Lhamo and Deyang, despite their awareness of the high taxes imposed by the Government, they had no idea about the political situation of Tibet. The subject of politics was out of bounds for most Tibetan families living in Tibet due to the fear of "spies" overhearing parents talking to their children, and/or children talking then talking to "spies" about what their parents had said. It was not until the women arrived in India and attended school that a process of political and social conscientisation commenced. It was at school that they learned about Tibetan history, and began to develop a social and political awareness of the political situation.

Lhamo, Deyang and Sonam explained that their main reason for leaving, in addition to wanting to see the Dalai Lama, was to obtain an education. In Tibet, Deyang did not receive any formal education. Even though there was a very small school near where she lived, as she was unable to attend because her family required her productive labour to assist with the farm duties. Sonam, who also had no formal schooling, as there was no school in her village, says her parents would have liked to send her to school but it was too far away.

While it may appear that the respondents could not access education in Tibet because of either distance from schools, or the fact that the women had to fulfil family responsibilities, there are deeper issues behind their inability to access education. As Sonam explained earlier, state taxes on farm production ensured that farmers maintained a subsistence lifestyle. Families, therefore, could not

afford to hire labour or machinery to reduce their workloads, which in turn, meant that children had to remain at home to assist with farm production. In doing so, this successively meant that children were unable to attend schooling, even if it were available in their area, as seen in the case of Deyang.

Additionally, however, despite the many changes that have occurred under colonial rule, including the migration of Han Chinese to the Plateau, agricultural production in Tibet today remains a predominately a Tibetan domain. The Chinese, on the other hand, maintain control of the state, which directs and determines the collection of taxes and the administration of the education system. Thus, as long as the Chinese population controls the state, Tibetans, who, under the present system, must survive on subsistence standards of living, and unable to access education, remain an underclass in their own land. Consequently, for Lhamo, Deyang, and Sonam, in order to escape the prejudice they experienced in Tibet from indirect persecution, flight became the only option available to them.

Models of Contemporary Tibetan Migration

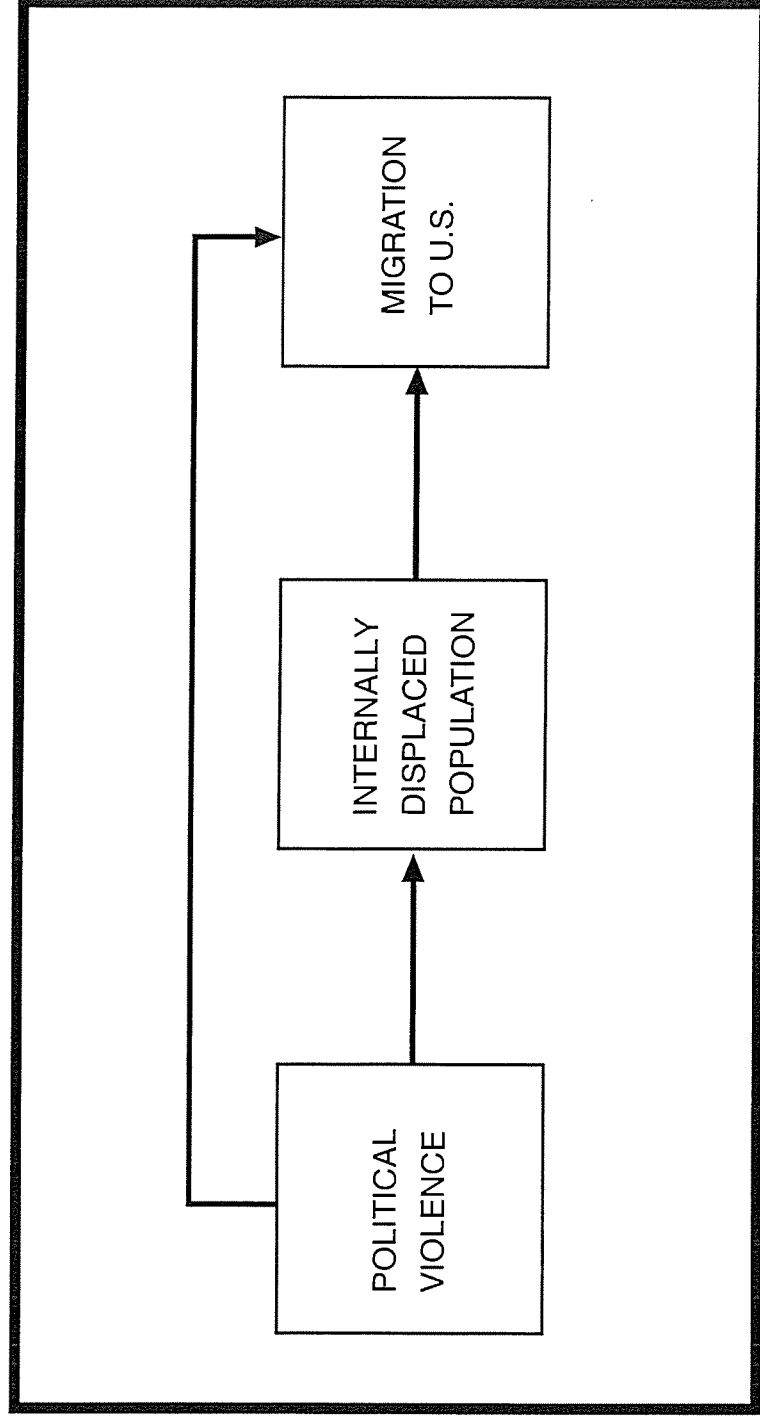
As discussed earlier in the literature review¹⁶, Jones (1989) analysed the causes of Salvadoran migration to the United States. Jones found that while data regarding the widespread political killings and extensive civil unrest "...leave little doubt as to the root causes of Salvadoran exodus to the United States, they do not reveal its proximate causes, the immediate forces compelling migrants to leave the country" (Jones 1989: 183). Jones explains that the proximate causes of migration, which have been the subject of great debate in the United States, are in fact different from the root causes of migration (1989: 184).

Expanding on the earlier work of William Stanley (1987), who also analysed the causes of Salvadoran migration to the United States, Jones' quantitative analysis focused on the spatial origins of Salvadoran asylum seekers. By comparing data related to maps of the areas of political violence in El Salvador with data related

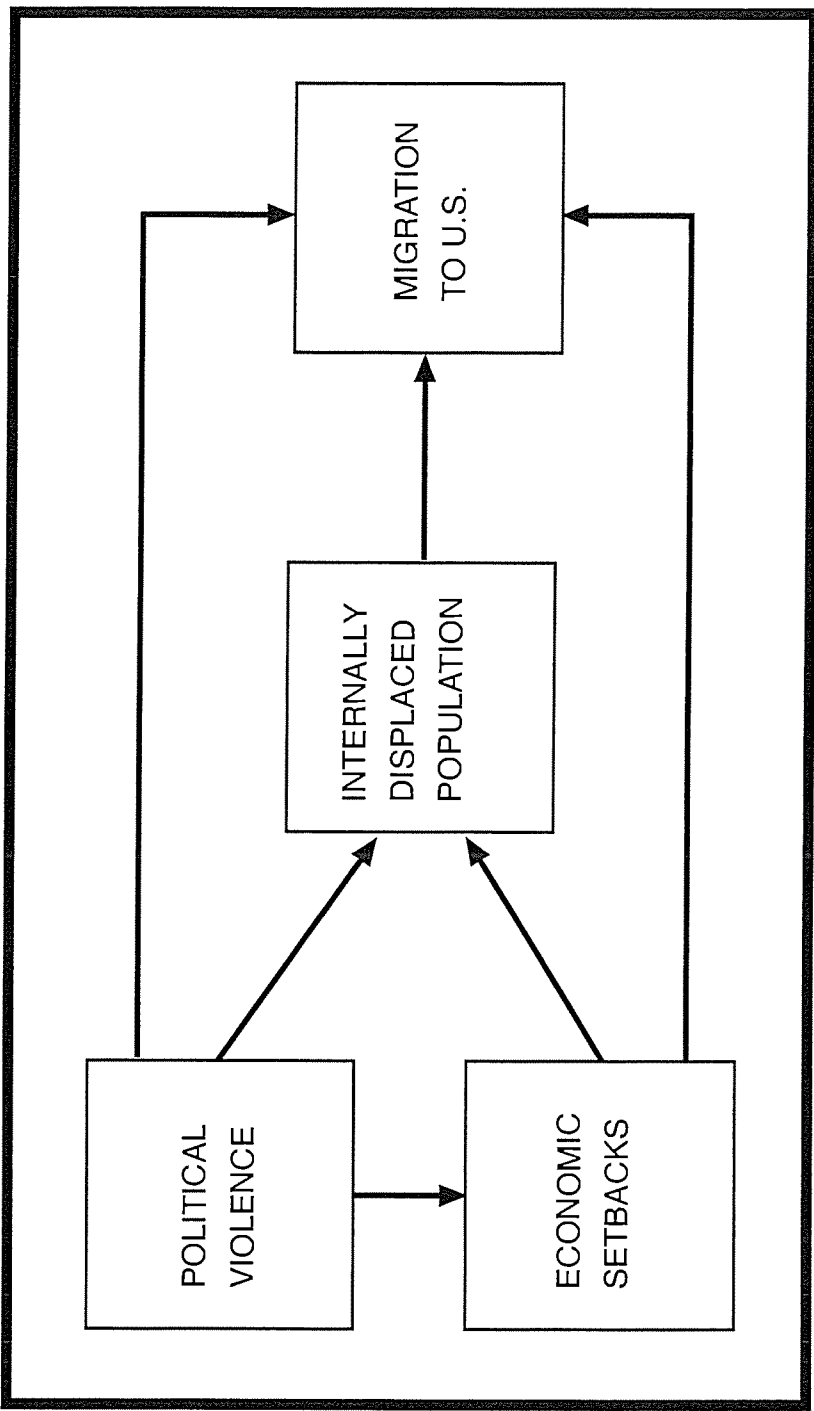
¹⁶ See Chapter Two, the Literature Review, Theoretical Perspectives, 'Economic Migrants or Political Refugees?'

to the maps of origins of Salvadoran asylum seekers to the United States, Jones was able to demonstrate the proximate causes of migration.

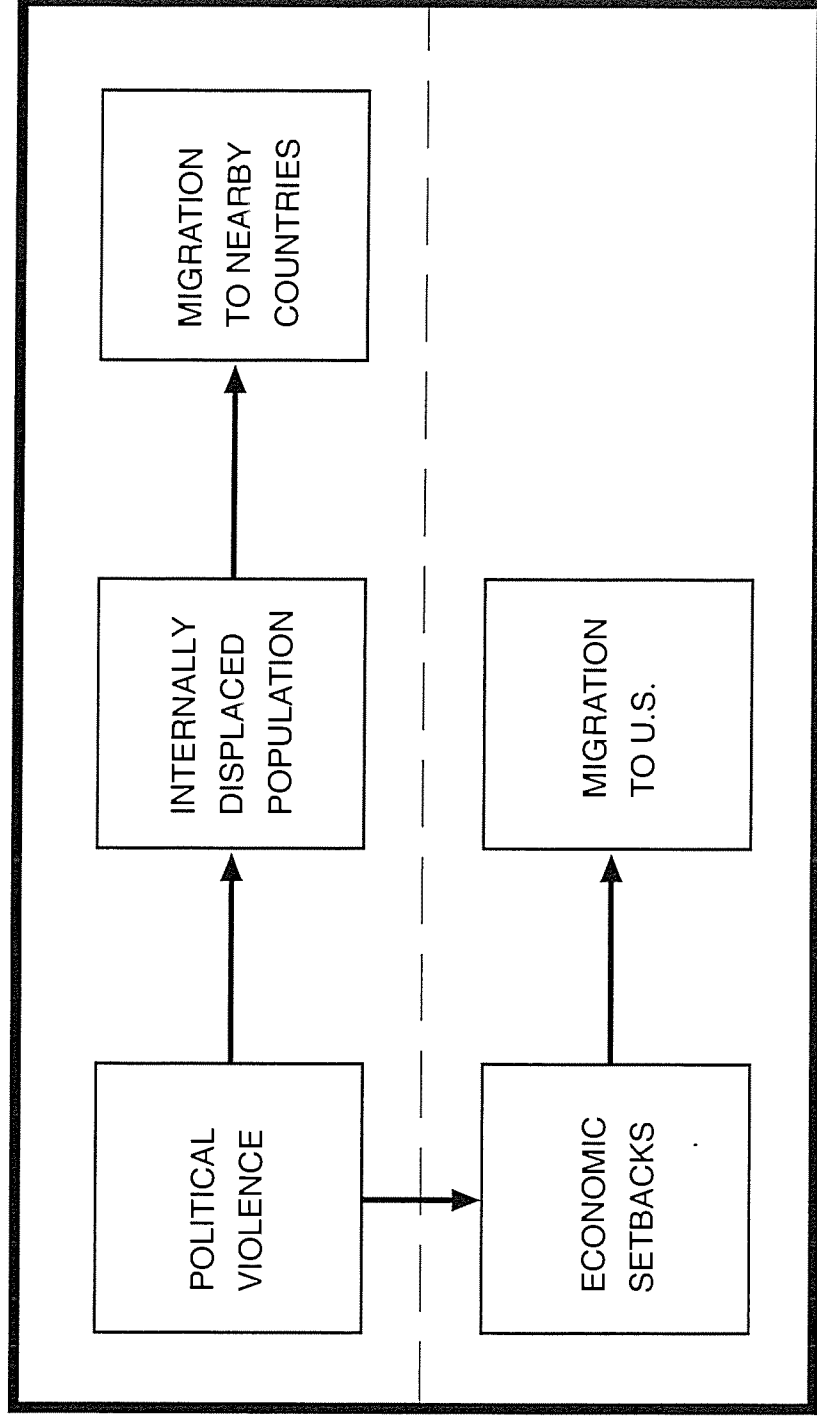
Political Model of Salvadoran Migration to the US



**A Joint Political-Economic
Model of Salvadoran Migration to the US**



**A Segmented Political-Economic
Model of Salvadoran Migration to the US**



In addition, Jones depicted the spatial model implied by Stanley's argument, what Jones termed 'the political model'.¹⁷ The political model, "...holds that political violence prompts migration to the United States from the affected departments both directly and indirectly through the intervening process of displacement within El Salvador" (1989: 185). In other words, political violence in El Salvador can lead to direct migration to the United States, or, political violence could lead to an internally displaced population within El Salvador, which leads to migration to the United States. Although not articulated by Jones, the finding that an internally displaced population can lead to migration across international borders concurs with the notion that internal migration can be the first step in external migration.

Additionally, Jones developed two alternative models for Salvadoran migration to the United States: 1) a joint political-economic model,¹⁸ and 2) a segmented political-economic model.¹⁹ Jones' first alternate model, the joint political economic model "...implies a pattern in which both political violence and economic setbacks across departments generate migration to the United States and in which political violence directly spawns economic setbacks" (1989: 188). The second model is a segmented political-economic model in which two separate processes are assumed. In the top segment, political violence leads to internal displacement, which then leads to the migration of asylum seekers to nearby countries. In the lower segment, economic setbacks lead to migration to the United States. In this latter model, migrants tend not to come from conflict zones (1989: 188).

However, Jones' models of Salvadoran refugee migration cannot be applied to other refugee situations, as they are specific to the context of Salvadoran physical and social geography (Jones 1989: 194). Further, while they may show a broad conceptualisation of the refugee situation, they are not able to draw conclusions about the migrant decision-making process at the individual level (Jones 1989: 193-4), as they are derived from quantitative analysis, which,

¹⁷ See Figure 7: Political Model of Salvadoran Migration to the United States, pp. 213.

¹⁸ See Figure 8: Joint Political-Economic Model, pp. 214.

¹⁹ See Figure 9: Segmented Political-Economic Model, pp. 215.

although mathematically rigorous, is not able to incorporate the qualitative complexities involved in migration processes.

Hence, in order to demonstrate the patterns of the contemporary Tibetan refugee migration, and to draw conclusions about the migrant decision-making process at the individual level, this author has developed two models of refugee migration using qualitative data collected over the course of the study. The following models depict the two types of refugee migration apparent in the contemporary Tibetan refugee situation. The first model, 'A Political Persecution Model of Tibetan Refugee Migration',²⁰ is most similar to the above model of Stanley's political migration, as illustrated by Jones (1989). However, instead of an internally displaced population, an individual may experience 'internal' exile. The model begins with political persecution from the (Han-dominated) authorities that may result in one of two possibilities, either direct external migration (flight), or, internal exile, which is subsequently followed by flight. The concept of internal exile is taken from Abu-Lughod's (1986) concept of 'being in exile while still on home soil', clearly demonstrated in Ani's experience of being in a form of exile even before she left Tibet.

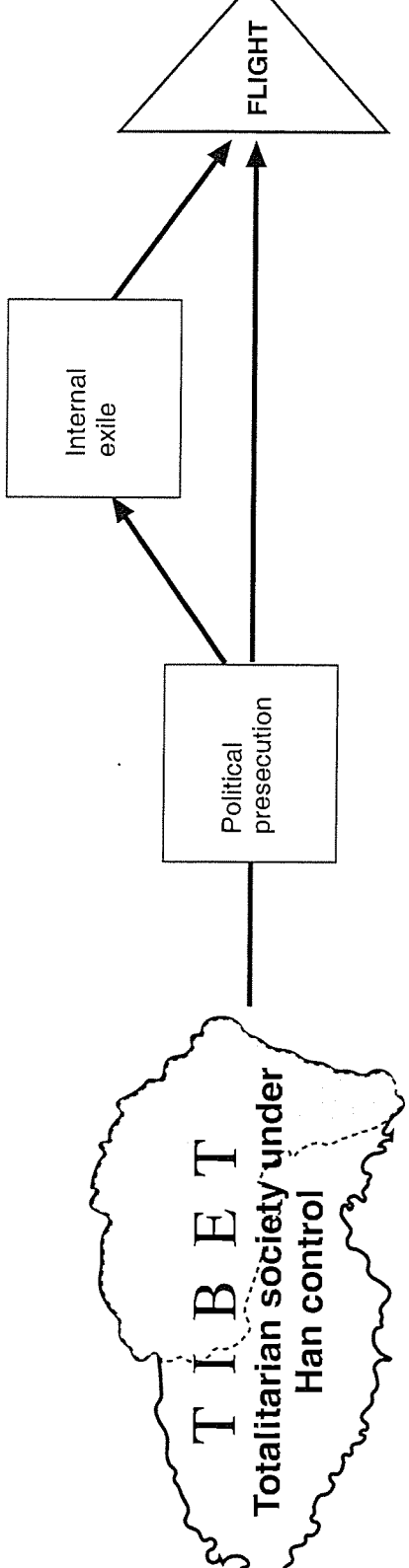
The second model, 'An Economic-Political Model of Tibetan Refugee Migration',²¹ shows an alternative form of refugee migration that has become more frequent since the early 1990s due to the acceleration of liberalisation policies in Tibet. While there is usually a dichotomy between economic migrants and political refugees (an individual is either a voluntary migrant or a forced migrant, such as shown in Jones' (1989) segmented model), this model rejects this dichotomy (which is often made on the part of the receiving countries to reduce the number of refugees considered eligible for refugee status). Instead, rather than seeing refugee migration as a question of choice, this thesis views refugee migration as a *lack* of choice. For refugees, flight is recognised as the *only* option.

²⁰ See Figure 10: A Political Persecution Model of Tibetan Refugee Migration, pp. 219.

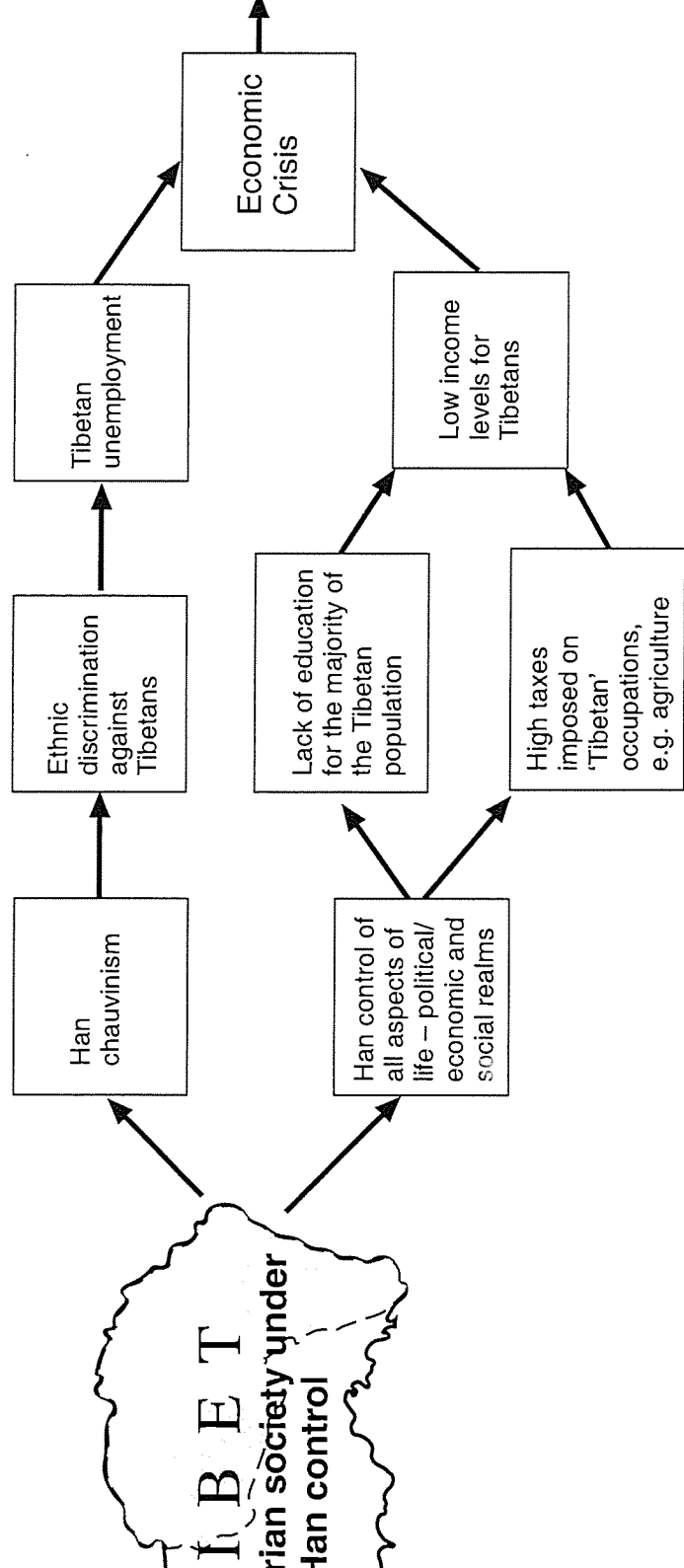
²¹ See Figure 11: An Economic-Political Model of Tibetan Refugee Migration, pp. 220.

primary reason for economic migration. What this model in fact shows is that there are political instigators that culminate in economic crisis, which in turn leads to flight. Therefore, as political factors are the indirect cause of this form migration, this thesis recognises this migration pattern as a form of refugee migration.

Political Persecution Model of Tibetan Refugee Migration



Ethnic-Political Model of Tibetan Refugee Migration



Conclusion

From analysing the data, it is clear to see that the causes of refugee flight are multifaceted and involve interdependent economic, social and political factors. Using the three phases of the refugee experience (pre-flight, flight and post-flight) as a framework for analysis, it has been demonstrated that each distinct phase of the refugee experience involves many exigencies, both physical and psychological. Additionally, the study has shown that even though the respondents' lives in exile have improved dramatically across many areas, because the women cannot access education as they originally intended in their pre-flight situations, the respondents' post-flight experiences did not meet their pre-flight expectations. In order to improve this situation, further initiatives in adult education for Tibetan refugees are required in Dharamsala.

As we have seen, although it is not apparent in the United Nations' definition of refugees, receiving countries of asylum seekers have used the issue of decision-making in migrations as a point of distinction between voluntary and forced migrants, in order to limit the numbers receiving countries will allow to remain within their borders. However, this thesis argues that this distinction cannot be the basis of accepting or declining refugee status. For, rather than seeing refugee migration as a question of choice, this thesis views refugee migration as a *lack* of choice, in which flight is seen as the only option.

While the socio-political situation of Tibet is a highly complicated, controversial and a divisive matter, what can be ascertained from the situation, however, is that after more than 50 years under Chinese colonial rule, the state has failed to meet the needs of the Tibetan people. As we have seen, Chinese development policies and actions have ignored the fact that Tibet is ethnically, culturally and geographically distinct from China. Consequently, these policies have had dramatic social and economic impacts on Tibetan society, including employment bias and other forms of discrimination against Tibetans. In turn, development policies have shaped the Tibetan society's view of the state, with various features of economic development in Tibet exacerbating anti-Chinese feelings.

Today, despite being in a state of post-conflict, the combination of the above factors has intensified the need for Tibetans to escape Tibet. As we have seen, however, the tightening of border controls does not prevent migration as this only leads to the creation of more innovative and resilient means by inhabitants to escape. Therefore, an amelioration of the situation in Tibet is the best possible solution to assist in the prevention of further refugee flows.

The opportunities for Tibetans to become equal benefactors of economic development requires significant government intervention, both to facilitate Tibetan participation and control in development, as well as ensuring Tibetans receive the benefits of development itself. Thus, in order to improve the situation in Tibet, the state authorities must:

- Ensure the participation of the Tibetan people at all levels, including economic, social, environmental and political decision-making.
- Increase employment opportunities for Tibetans.
- Provide education for all school-age children.
- Aim to increase the literacy rate of Tibet which currently only stands at approximately 30%.
- Promote the Tibetan language and culture.
- Increase religious freedom, including reducing the level of state control of religious institutions.
- Eliminate Han chauvinism in Tibet.
- Promote the understanding and appreciation of the Tibetan language and culture by the Han population.
- Reduce poverty and human rights violations in Tibet.

Appendix One: Information Sheet

**Women of Exile: Tibetan Women Refugees Living in
Dharamsala, India.**

**Participant Information Sheet
Interviews**

Hello, my name is Leesa Roy. I am a University student from New Zealand. As part of my Masterate studies in Development Studies, I am undertaking field research. I will be researching the life experiences of Tibetan refugee women living in Dharamsala, from the time of their exile from Tibet, to their present-day lives in Dharamsala.

Dr Barbara Nowak is my university supervisor. She may be contacted at:

Dr Barbara Nowak
School of Global Studies
Massey University
Private Bag 11-222
Palmerston North
NEW ZEALAND
Telephone: 00 64-6-350-5799 extn. 2502
E-mail: b.s.nowak@massey.ac.nz

Listed below is my contact address in New Zealand:

Leesa Roy
c/o School of Global Studies
Massey University
Private Bag 11-222
Palmerston North
NEW ZEALAND

I am inviting Tibetan women, aged 20 years and older, who were born in Tibet, and have lived in Dharamsala for at least three months, to participate in the study. I hope to be able to interview up to six women. I will be asking women to take part in the study through organisations who work directly with helping Tibetan women refugees in Dharamsala.

Research participants will be asked for their consent to discuss their life experiences as refugees in a series of interviews. The interviews will develop what is called an 'oral history' of Tibetan women's experiences.

In the interviews I would like to discuss, your experiences of leaving Tibet, your arrival in Dharamsala, the changing roles of Tibetan women, what you would like to see happen in the future, including your personal aspirations.

The interviews will be conducted at dates, times and locations convenient to you, the participant. The interviews are expected to last up to one hour at each sitting, and up to five interviews may be required in total. The interviews will be tape-recorded.

I realise that recalling some of the events and experiences may be difficult and painful for you. During each interview, you have the right not to answer any questions you do not wish to answer, to stop talking during an interview, to ask for the tape-recorder to be turned off, or to stop the interview at any stage.

You may have a support person of your choice present, or close by, during the interviews. A translator may be present at the interviews, if required. If you do not wish to work with this translator, another translator may be requested.

The interview tape recordings will be transcribed (written down) so that they may be studied in detail. To protect your identity, your real name will not be used in the study. Instead, you may like to create a new own name for yourself, or I can choose one for you. In addition, the names of people and addresses that may be mentioned during the interviews will be altered to protect the privacy and identity of them and yourself.

The cassette tapes of the interviews will be kept secure by the researcher during the course of the study. Upon completion of the study, the cassette tapes of the interviews will be destroyed.

The responses collected will form the basis of my research project, which will be put into a written thesis report. The thesis will be submitted for marking to Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand, in 2001. Sections of the thesis may be used towards the publication of academic journal articles, teaching materials, or talks, so that others may hear about the experiences of Tibetan women living in exile in Dharamsala, and the issues that these women face today.

Participation in the study is on a purely voluntary basis. There is no obligation to take part in the study, and you may decline to participate. If you agree to participate, you have the right:

- To refuse to answer any questions you do not wish to answer.
- To withdraw from the study at any time.
- To ask questions about the study at any time during participation.
- To choose the dates, times and locations of your interviews.
- To ask for the tape-recorder to be turned off.
- To stop talking during the interview.

- To stop the interview at any stage.
- To have your name kept confidential, including any information that could lead to your identification.
- To receive a summary of the research findings upon completion of the study.

If you wish to participate in the study, please advise the translator.

Yours thankfully,

Leesa Roy

Appendix Two: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Interview One: 'The Big Picture': a brief overall review of the woman's life

- Place and date of birth
- 'Family', household and 'Community': relatives, kinship links, occupations, and class groupings.
- Educational background: literacy, languages, type of education, and number of years of education.
- Marital status, dependents
- Date of leaving Tibet
- Date of arrival in Dharamsala
- Current activities in Dharamsala: including paid labour, unpaid labour, voluntarily work, community activities etc.

Interview Two: The women's experiences of the leaving Tibet. *Exile, the Event.*

- Summary of previous interview, clarification of any terms etc.
- Background: Why? The motivations, personal/family decisions-forced/voluntary? If they were forced to leave, by whom?
- The fears about leaving/remaining in Tibet.
- What fears did they have about the journey?
- Did they talk to anyone about the journey before leaving?
- What fears did they have about their 'new life' in exile?
- Did all family members leave, who stayed, why? Have they since left?
- The journey: physical and psychological hardships experienced.
- Directions - how did they know the way?
- What precautions that they take? E.g. travelling by night etc.
- The border - what problems that they face? How was this overcome?

Interview Three: The arrival in Dharamsala: Adaptations

- How do they believe that the experience of the journey of exile affect their lives in Dharamsala?
- Who greeted them? And what happened from there?
- What hardships have they faced since arriving?
- What have been their support networks?
- What contacts have they had with people remaining in Tibet? How do they obtain news and information about the situation in Tibet? How does this information affect their lives/choices/experiences in exile?
- What possessions did you have when you arrived in Dharamsala? What was the worst thing to lose?
- Did you know/understand what legal rights you had?
- What was the attitude of the host country?
- Did they meet development assistance workers from other countries? If so, how did they find them?

Interview Four: Women's Roles in Exile

- What beliefs existed about women in Tibet? E.g. moles on women's face made her deadly to her husband, and formidable to his enemies. "Girls and garlic should be sold before their scent dies" (Norbu 1997: 81).
- Do these beliefs still exist in Dharamsala today?
- How was labour organised in Tibet? Was there a gender division of labour in Tibet? If so, what were men/women expected to do? How did this differ from what they actually did? Who was the head of the household?
- Romance, marriage, divorce in Tibet and Dharamsala: Changes and similarities.
- What differences have they noticed in Dharamsala from the situation in Tibet? Social structures, women's roles, lifestyles, work, income etc.
- How have their roles changed as a result of the exile? How has being a refugee changed what they are expected to do in the community? Why do they think this change has come about?
- Their cultural identity as a Tibetan refugee, has it changed since their arrival in India? How? What do they believe facilitated this change?
- What role models exist for Tibetan women in Dharamsala? Are these empowering/positive?
- Do women have more options/freedoms in Dharamsala than they did in Tibet? Why?
- What other activities do they do to create income? How much do they earn from these?
- Did they choose to work at the tailor shop rather than the restaurants run by the refugee organisation? Did they have any choice in the matter?
- What job training did they receive? Were they paid for this?
- Did The refugee organisation provide them with medical assistance? Did they have to pay for this? How?
- Did you receive any economic assistance? What form did this take? How much?
- Did they receive any education from the refugee organisation? What? How long did this take? Did they have to pay for this?
- Where are they currently living? How much do they pay? Do they share a room? Do they do their own cooking? How much do they pay per week or per day for food?
- Once your expenses are paid, how much money do they have left over? What does this go towards? What do they spend it on?
- Do they send money back to Tibet? Why? How? How do they know that their relatives in fact receive this money?
- During the week they work in the tailor shop from Monday to Saturday. What do they do on their day off?

Interview Five: The future and their personal aspirations

- What has been of the most benefit to them while living in Dharamsala?
- What difficulties existed for the women in the past? How have these been overcome?
- What difficulties exist for the women today?

- What would they like to see done in Dharamsala for Tibetan women refugees? Who should do these actions/activities?
- What additional support do they require? From whom do they wish this support to come from?
- Would they return to Tibet? For what reasons? In their opinion, is this a likely event in the future? When?
- If you could say something to the outside world about your life and the things you have done in the past and are doing now, what would you like to say?
- What would you like the world to know about Tibet?
- If you could have a 'perfect' life, what would that be? Can you describe it to me? What would you be doing? Where would you be living?
- What would you like to see happening in your life in the future?

(Optional - the interviewer may pick up on particular themes that stood out from any previous interview during the course of the interviews).

Appendix Three: Stimulus Pictures

Stimulus Pictures



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2.



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17.

Appendix Four:
Additional Photographs of McLeod Gani



Plate iii: Tibetan man and woman at the Chorten, McLeod Ganj.



Plate iv: Altar at Amdo Café, McLeod Ganj. Note the addition of Ghandi on the right of the Panchen Lama.



Plate v: Women Setting up Street Stalls on Jogibara Road McLeod Ganj.



Plate vi: Women (on the right) selling "Luffin" at a street stall on Jogibara Rd, McLeod Ganj.



Plate vii: Vegetable market on Jogibara Road, McLeod Ganj.



Plate viii: Plastic Bottles. While tourism provides the main source of income for the area, the plastic waste that tourists produce from purchasing bottled water has a severe environmental impact.

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