

**ETHNIC CONFLICT
IN
CENTRAL ASIA**
A Comparative Study of Tibet
and Kazakhstan

By
Dr. P. Geetha Lakshmi Ph.D.



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P. GEETHA LAKSHMI

The book is an excellent piece of comprehensive research carried out on the Ethnic Conflict in Central Asia. This region provides ideal cases for studying ethnic conflict due to its strategic location. The present work is the first ever-successful attempt made to study the problem from a comparative perspective. Tibet and Kazakhstan are the two cases considered for this purpose. Under Communist rule, both Tibetans and Kazakhs suffered great losses—in terms of human lives, destruction of cultures, under development of native languages and attacks on religion and its manifestations, ultimately reducing them to minorities on their homelands. This book analyses the nationalities policies of the two communist regimes—China and the former Soviet Union—mainly focusing on developments since 1980s. The study reveals that the four modernization processes in China, perestroika and glasnost in Russia gave more freedom to minority populations besides strengthening ethnic separation.

Concepts and methods from comparative studies, sociology, political science are widely used to make this study topical and relevant today. The main body of the study is historical analysis of ethnic conflict concepts and ethnic identity, as the two cases under study are rich in Buddhist and Islamic cultural identities.

The nature, content and consequences of ethnic demonstrations in Tibet (centered in Lhasa) and in Kazakhstan (Alma-Ata, Novy Uzen) are described in detail and compared with each other. Towards the end, the book views the emergence of central Asian states as a result of ethno-nationalist re-assertions and explains Tibet's failure to achieve a similar status in comparative terms.

About the Author

Dr. P. Geetha Lakshmi has a consistently high academic record throughout her career. Graduated from University College for Women (Osmania University, Hyderabad), she joined Jawaharlal Nehru University to pursue her academic interest. After completing MA in Political Science from Center for Political Studies, she joined School of International Studies of the same university to broaden her area of study. As a research scholar she learnt and excelled in Russian language, which enabled her to extract maximum from primary sources and bring out an authentic work. She studied the cases of ethnic conflict in Kazakhstan and Kirghizia (1986-1990) during her M Phil programme. With this background, Dr Lakshmi explored the possibility of comparative analysis of ethnic conflict in Central Asia so far untouched by research scholars in this area.

Dr Geetha Lakshmi's penchant for Indian philosophy, culture and spirit of service brought her back to native village. True to her name, she is well versed in Srimad Bhagwad Gita. Presently she is engaged in social service in Andhra Pradesh.



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